



The Three Mrs. Parkers

Joan Medlicott

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From Joan Medlicott, the nationally bestselling author who created the wonderful world of Covington, comes a heartwarming story about three generations of women who find their way past old hurts and losses to understanding, forgiveness, and love.

Winifred Parker climbed her way out of poverty by marrying into one of Philadelphia's oldest, wealthiest families. Now seventy-two years old, she has always felt that her son married beneath him and she has had no contact with her daughter-in-law, Zoe, since her son was killed in Korea.

Zoe Parker lives alone on twenty-eight acres of rural Carolina land that she inherited from her parents. Determined to preserve her property when faced with the threat of foreclosure, Zoe, now in her fifties, has no choice but to turn to her wealthy, estranged mother-in-law.

Katie Parker is a young divorcée whose daughter recently passed away. When she returns home to Zoe's land to heal, she knows enough about her mother's history to be surprised to find her grandmother living there, too.

Though old grievances stand between the three women, new challenges and grave danger cause them to forge a new path together, and they soon find unexpected bonds forming along the way. Joan Medlicott has created an entirely new group of characters you'll want to spend time with in this warm, rich novel about family, friendship, and where the two meet.

The Three Mrs. Parkers Details

Date : Published March 15th 2005 by Gallery Books (first published 2005)

ISBN : 9780743487962

Author : Joan Medlicott

Format : Paperback 304 pages

Genre : Fiction, American, Southern

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From Reader Review The Three Mrs. Parkers for online ebook

Kitty Tomlinson says

Zoe takes in her estranged mother-in-law to keep from losing her family home. Zoe's daughter, Kate, also moves home after the death of her handicapped child. Good story about forgiveness and family.

Mary Lou says

Mediocre chick-lit.

Marianne Jay says

This book was just good....not great...but good. There were some things that REALLY bugged me about it.

I wanted to tell Zoe to "Man Up". My gosh, she was such a wishy-washy character.

I loved Winifred. I'm all about the strong women.

Ailish says

I did not enjoy this book. It reads as though it has been cobbled together from a counsellors' or therapists' training manual and thinly disguised as a novel, and the writing is dreadful.

The characters' thoughts, interactions and gestures are over-studied and are generally included to serve some didactic purpose or as features to foster discussion (in fact there are study guide questions at the end of the book).

An example of contrived dialogue between sole parent Katie and her mother and grandmother after the death of Katie's only child:

"I really need support from both of you now. I've been so consumed caring for Laurie Ann that I feel like a phone off the hook, dangling and twisting on its cord."

Winifred said wistfully, "You're feeling a loss of identity. You've been cut off from someone who gave your life meaning and purpose. You need to grieve, of course, but in the end the best thing you can do for Laurie Ann is to carry on with your life."

"You're so wise", Katie said.' (p 122)

Or another,

'Zoe lowered her voice. "She makes me feel incompetent and insignificant."

"Please don't get angry with me, Mom, but I learned in counseling that no one can make you feel anything

you don't choose to feel. Maybe in time, if you get to know her better, you'll feel differently.'" (p 145)

or

"Now I must find a way to stop blaming myself and forgive myself. That way I can truly forgive Winifred, and not just because she saved Katie."

Maudie said, "Anger and blame are things that hurt the one who feels them."

"You're so right. I see that now.'" (p 212)

or again,

"Guilt also leads to depression, and depression thwarts action," Maudie said. "People need help to overcome depression. I know; I was like that once." (p 209)

Finally, my favourite handy hint for coping with trouble in oneself or others:

"I'll make some tea sandwiches, with the crusts cut off. Small, soft eats will help to soothe us all, and they're nice with tea," Maudie said. (p 205)

The writer is determined to drum into the readers' heads that everyone has their own story, and that, when a person seems bad or difficult, there is always some cause for it in the sufferings experienced in their own past. It's a great point, but the delivery lacks subtlety and the characters lack life.

The other thing that annoyed me about the book was the stereotyping of the Irish - Irish men are violent drunks; Irish women wear themselves out in miserable drudgery under the burden of too many children; and, of course, they believe in leprechauns.

There are some good hints here about dealing with anger, guilt, hurt, and the struggle to forgive; but, for someone struggling with these issues through an experience of abandonment, rejection, bereavement, domestic violence, or child physical or sexual abuse (all of which rate a mention in the book), I suspect that time spent reading this book would be better employed in real personal counselling or therapy.

Some other positive aspects of the book are the way it portrays how hard it can be to forgive, but the happiness that it brings when bitterness and resentment are left behind. It also shows the joyful possibilities of discovering a friend in a person you long disliked, and the way love and forgiveness enrich family life.

Overall, if it is therapeutic advice you are seeking, this is the book for you, but if it is a novel about forgiveness, then look elsewhere.

Nancy Barta says

Various circumstances place three generations of women living together. Although they had a tough time at first they learned to forgive, finally understood, and eventually love one another.

Lisa says

Non Ladies series / book one

Pat says

Enjoyed this book very much. I like reading about different generations of women.

Kelly says

Kind of a blah book. Very predictable. If you are looking for an extremely easy read, then this book would work. I found the characters a little annoying. If you like books that are tied up at the end with a neat little bow, then you might like this one.

Carrie says

Easy read. Not very exciting but enough to hold your attention.

Mrs says

a very lovely story
makes you think more about forgiveness.....

Joshua Berkov says

An easy read with a feel-good ending, though not as well written as her Ladies of Covington series.

Marion Marchetto says

Ingredients:

1 aging widow with hidden illness and secrets aplenty
1 middle-aged widow (daughter-in-law to the aging widow) with plenty of secrets of her own
1 young widow (daughter and granddaughter of the first two widows) with a tragic background

Mix together until a lumpy dough forms. Add a token male hero, a few well-intentioned neighbors, a heinous villain, an I-could-see-it-coming climactic moment. Place in a rural southern US setting, and voila!

This generational story tells of three women, each a product of her upbringing, and what they bring to the lives of each other. Secrets aplenty abound but they aren't given depth. For three women to overcome their stubbornness and meld as one family it takes a lot more than these three give to the plot.

I thought Maudie was the best character in the book and she's just a nurse. We learn more about her, her Irish upbringing, and her mam than should be needed for a secondary character.

I think this story has possibilities that needed to be fleshed out and broadened. The writing was okay, the story okay (easy to read but leaving one with a 'so what?' attitude), and that's why I've given it three stars. Okay?

Laura says

Just o.k. book. The forgiveness theme was heavy handed and got in the way of the story. Clean read with a happy ending . . . just wished it was better.

Claudia Cheyne says

This book is about three generations of women who come together at a very difficult time in their lives. Winnifred needs help from the daughter-in-law she despised and never had any use for. Zoe needs the Parker family money keep her from losing her family's home. Katie (the granddaughter) is grieving the death of her nine-year-old daughter who was severely disabled from birth. There is plenty of blame and old grievances to overcome before these women can forge a new path together.

Great story.

Lisa says

I loved this book! The three generations of strong women are delightfully real with strengths and weaknesses that they need to overcome to reconcile their relationships. In addition to leading you on the path to understand their history and feelings, this book also has riveting action that pulls you in. For me that's the perfect blend of a storyline. I didn't want this book to end.
