



Silk

Penny Jordan

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The first in a multi-generational trilogy by mega-seller Penny Jordan is set in the decadent world of the silk industry.

Dangerous liaisons...

Skeletons in closets...

A scandalous web of lies and deceit...

The Pickfords are just your average family.

1920s Cheshire. A time of great glamour and decadence, high living and loose morality. A time where anything goes - and does.

Amber Vrontsky is the heiress to the wealthy Pickford dynasty, presided over by the formidable Blanche.

Obsessed with social climbing, Blanche wants nothing more for her granddaughter than a titled husband - a prize which she herself failed to secure, despite her immense wealth.

But free spirited Amber is intent on forging her own artistic career with the silk she loves so much. Unable to disobey Blanche, however, she moves to society London to become a debutante - and enters a world of illicit affairs, drug-taking, gambling, lavender marriages...

From the lavish decadence of society London to the opium dens of the Far East, the chic boutiques of Paris to the Nazi-controlled streets of Berlin, Silk spans the depravity and the glamour of this tumultuous time.

Spoil yourself with this dazzling, decadent treat by international multi-million-copy selling Penny Jordan - the ultimate read for fans of Danielle Steel and Penny Vincenzi.

Silk Details

Date : Published June 16th 2008 by Avon

ISBN : 9781847560735

Author : Penny Jordan

Format : Paperback 672 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Romance

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From Reader Review Silk for online ebook

Janélle says

Rich. Smooth. Classy. Velvety. It was *Silk*.

This book was buried deep under in one of those everything-must-go book sales. A steal!

Being a sucker for all things British and/or set in the days of yore, this book had my heart from go. The detailed-but-not-annoying way Penny Jordan narrates the tale, you are instantly sucked into the setting, like you're right there watching it all unravel from the sidelines. (More like a balcony seat, though. This book has a distinctly regal air about it)

LOVED.ALL. the characters!

Amber, the protagonist, was respectful yet determined at the same time. Independent, she took charge of her life and turned it around even when the wind threatened to rip the sails apart. She inspired me, she really did. ooooh yes scandal, there's tons of it! Considering i'm not exactly a history buff, the fact that i wanted to hear MORE! MORE! about the age and its events is.. well.. you get it.

The men! *swoons typical Mary Sue-fashion*

I cried, I awww-ed, I ooooh-ed, I lived the book. I am still reveling months later in its silky aftertaste...

Harrie says

I bought this book in a rush when I was looking for something to read on the train home. I saw the cover, saw the title, and for some reason thought that it was the book on which the film *Silk* was based, which is apparently very good.

I was wrong. I realised fairly swiftly (by the third page) that *Silk* was a) not the same book, and b) one small step up from a romance novel - in fact, the author, Penny Jordan, is known for her romance writing for Mills & Boon; and romance novels have never been my cup of tea.

That said, I decided to give it a chance, and read the whole book. To give Jordan credit, she has clearly done her research, and done it well, both on the time period she's set the book in (the 1930s), and on key aspects of the book like the silk trade and high society: though I disliked the use of real people from the era, such as Diana Guinness and Brian Howard, as characters in the book. I have never been a fan of authors blurring the lines between fact and fiction in this way.

The story is reasonable, though again it is only one step up from a romance novel; it's let down quite heavily by the ending, which is a bit of a cop out. Ditto with the characters, with the exception of Robert.

Pick this up if you're a fan of romance novels, looking for something slightly heavier. If you dislike romance novels, steer clear.

Jennifer says

Either I've read this book before or the situations and people were so hackneyed, I feel like I've read this before--or both. Usually I remember everything I read, but this is not a memorable book. Amber was incredibly weak, despite the many characters who said otherwise. I kept thinking, "Just because you say she's strong doesn't mean I'm gullible enough to believe you." I was very disappointed by the author's weak plot turns just to bring together Amber & the guy she finally realized she loved (sorry for the ambiguity--trying not to have plot spoilers). Such a shallow book with very little about the silk industry. Decent smut parts, though.

Dark-Draco says

This is the story of Amber, a 17 year old orphan, brought up by a strict grandmother, packed off to London to be a debutante and find a rich husband, except she wants to go to art college and design silk patterns.

I have to say that I got a bit bored of this and after 10 chapters, decided to give up. I quite liked the writing, but I just got fed up with some of the repetition. Nothing had hugely moved on in the story, but I could kind of see where it was going to go and wasn't sure I wanted to invest the time it would take to get there! I think if some of the scandal and intrigue promised in the blurb had happened sooner, I would have stuck with it, but as it is there are far too many really good books out there for me to stick with this one.

Kimchi says

I was kind of surprised by how much I enjoyed this. It was one of those reads where you think you're not enjoying it as much as you really are or that you're convinced it's just not the type of thing you usually like... But at a certain point you realize you're hooked and can't stop reading it. Sort of like a guilty pleasure but one I don't feel guilty about because it was such a well-constructed, researched and written novel.

I found a lot of comfort in reading this. I'm usually not a fan of novels with a lot of time jumps in them, where it covers a long period of the character's life with many skips in between major events. But I didn't mind so much with Silk. In fact it felt a lot similar to the comfort I find in tuning into a tv episode or two of a show everyday. Everyday I felt like I wanted to catch up on what was happening in Amber's life and where it would take her. And that simple pleasure of relaxing and immersing myself in her world was really comforting. I think that's a really nice sentiment. I've suffered a lot this year and it's changed me a great deal and this book really soothed and comforted me.

SPOILERS AHEAD.

This novel reads much like a soap drama set in the historical romance genre with many dramatic things happening that I feel like I've read a million times in other historical romances. Pregnancies, sudden deaths, damsel in distress situations, sexual awakenings. With the same unrequited love story-line so familiar to the genre spanning years and years only to be requited in the last 10 pages. But these are all mainstays of the genre so I guess it's to be expected.

Despite all these familiar dramatic situations I found myself pleasantly surprised by a lot of other story elements and became invested in the characters. The character's were all really well fleshed out and individual. From the differences between Luc and Emerald, Lydia's mental illness, Cassandra's deviancy and manipulating ways, Blanche's character and Robert's gentle persona but naive detrimental obsession with "love".

I especially wasn't expecting the trouble Amber had with Emerald and felt extremely sorry for her that she didn't get a gently loving child who really wanted her and who looked set to become hard and self-important like Blanche. I felt the sadness and disappointment all these character's had and thought all their developments were interesting.

There were a lot of predictable events but also a lot that surprised me. I wasn't expecting the marriage with Robert and the complications that came with his sexuality. My heart skipped a beat when Luc died. I had a suspicion Robert would but the added loss of a child made me hurt. The scene where she went to see them in the morgue hit me hard, especially considering her discovery of Robert's physical state. A lot of what happened to Amber felt too cruel to me. But I understood why it was like that, not only for drama and tension related reasons but to emphasize Amber's growth through all the struggles through her life.

Recently in my own life I learned what grief truly was and feels like, and this novel really made me feel and empathize with Amber going through her losses. I felt the message through the book that yes the world is too cruel, but yes we also have no choice but to keep going. To keep going and try our hardest to continue to be strong and open to future good that may come our way.

I feel like that message as well as the growth of her character, especially her struggle to finally accept her sexuality instead of demonizing it, were the strongest aspects of the novel.

I loved the clear and strong development of Amber's growth from a teenager with misguided and immature ideas about love and sex to a mature, selfless, grown woman. This passage in particular was a favourite of mine,

"She was a woman now, with a woman's complex, many-stranded emotional claims on her heart. She had grown too far beyond being able to revisit her girlhood's innocent belief that physically desiring a man meant that one loved him."

Penny Jordan is an admirable author and I really respect the depth and detail she's gone to to flesh out the world in which her characters live. The backdrop of the 1920s onward and the 2nd World War was interesting and added a lot of tension and realism to the story. Like you could feel like these characters were people who could have existed at the time.

The addition of the passages in Hong Kong were bittersweet but again well researched and fascinating. Her descriptions of all aspects of the world (fashion, housing, cities, etc.) were so flawlessly executed and from the impression I get, rather accurate.

Overall I just really enjoyed reading this. One of my only complaints was that the end felt cut off. Like everything was summed up and explained in the last few pages. BUT as I just realized this is actually the first in a trilogy so that makes sense. I think I will want to read the rest of the series. I want to know where Amber's life will take her next.

southernmyst says

[especially the part where Amber blames herself for the deaths of her husband and son, which is drawn out too much. (hide spoiler)]

Belinda says

I started this book a long time ago and was about 209 pages in when I picked it back up again on Sunday. After that I demolished the final four hundred pages because Silk never eats too bogged down in its own plot, breezing along quickly. It is definitely only a minor step up from a romance novel, but if you like writers like Paulina Simons, as I do, Silk will draw you in enough to want to seek out the sequel.

Ria says

Another brilliant full length novel from Jordan.

Not many Mills and Boon authors successfully make it in the full length novel genre but she adapts and enlarges on her shorter stories to make a believable sweeping saga.

Can't wait to read Sins the next in the series.

This one dealt with the 30s and the war years.

The first in this series ends with the world war as its closing scene and the next one follows on into the 50s - 70s.

Shannon says

This novel was just ok. Heroine, Amber, was incredibly bland. She lets everyone dominate her throughout, never stands up for herself once. Even Beth, her sweet best friend, turns catty in the end & Amber just sits there & takes it. If not for such a placid heroine, the story would have been more entertaining.

Amee says

Brilliant.

Follows the life of Amber Vrontsky, and dips into the lives of others around her. Plenty of travel and the book is mostly set over a period of about 10-15 years.

Well written, believable characters, plots and scandals. Not everyone gets a happy ending. Interesting to start reading into a period where I recognized bit of history (from the little I learnt at school).

Diane says

This nice, chunky book follows Amber, who was orphaned when her beloved parents died in a crash and she was brought up by her austere and grandmother who had disapproved of her daughter's choice of a handsome Russian artistic immigrant. The family business is a silk mill in Macclesfield and the estate is run by the grandson of a neighbour. Amber has an irresponsible cousin, Greg and the estate manager, Jay is a good

friend. Her life changes when her grandmother makes her go to London to be presented at court and launched into society. There is heartbreak, betrayal, love, tension, birth and death over the next 10 years or so, throughout the 1930s and into WWII as the characters deal with life.

This is the kind of book I always liked and I believe it's the first of a trilogy that will follow the next generations.

Dora Okeyo says

I love a strong heroine and it's by reading such stories that mark the highlight of my weekend. From, a strong Matriarch- Amber finds herself in a web of societal expectations of class and marrying into a higher social status, and she yearns to go to Art school and follow in the footsteps of her Designer Father, but when Blanche-her grandmother- controls the purse strings, she finds that freedom is something out of her grasp. This story highlights the scandals, affairs, beliefs and mannerisms of the elite and rich, and you cannot help but feel compassion for Blanche and root for Amber. I'm glad I've got this book in my library.

Sarrah says

Usually I find novels with historical settings far more easier to get into than novels set in the modern world. Perhaps it's because I have an underlying regret that I was born far too late to experience the fashions of centuries gone by but I digress. Our heroine in the epic 19th/20th century this time around is Amber, a young girl who aspires to go to art college much to the chagrin of her grandmother who's only hope for her grandchild is that she becomes a part of high society one way or another. However, Amber's life takes a turn for the worst when during a family vacation in France, she falls pregnant to a French painter whose way of life had seduced her. In order to keep her secret, Amber becomes befriended by Robert, a man with connections and mingles with the cream of society. Thus, Amber makes her family happy by installing herself into society while at the same time keeping her child from wedlock a secret, as far as everyone is concerned, Lord Robert is the father. Yet, we find that Robert himself has a secret and it becomes clear that although he wished to protect Amber, he also saw her as the one person who can help him. Sort of a 'you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours' situation. The two live a lie and stage a sham marriage while Robert engages in his own indulgences, Amber becomes imprisoned in a loveless marriage. Both their actions have wider consequences as the end draws close for their friendship, Amber realises far too late that despite everything, Robert had treated her with the utmost respect. It's her unwillingness to accept that which results in her losing the thing most precious to her.

In my opinion, the book was overly long and there was far too much going on at any one time purely because there were too many important characters where their impact was non-existent. Nevertheless, this would make a decent programme for ITV. Whether or not that is a compliment is up for discussion.

Seeing as I read this book a long time ago, what I remember of it is quite scarce. Basically, if there was a need for a one sentence review this would be it:

Silk is what Gossip Girl would be if it were set in Cheshire in the 1930s, there's sex a plenty, death, scandal and more sex.

Meg_inthecity says

This book reminded me of the Penny Vincenzi Spoils of Time trilogy, except a much "liter" version - kind of like Cheez Whiz to a block of old cheddar. The story was enjoyable, if predictable, and though the characters found themselves in some high-stakes situations, there were often tidy resolutions to their problems. Great description of fashion and design, and a time period I find quite fascinating. I'll read the next one in the series, but I'm not in a rush to go out and buy it tomorrow.

Kate says

Ugh - as someone said the historical research was good but the rest of it was bad. Random characters cropping up who never really did much or went anywhere e.g. Greg and Cassandra, main character was a bit flat, didn't really get the gay marriage thing and felt the car accident was an obvious device to get out of a tight hole the author was in. Throw in a bit of slightly kinky sex scenes and you're done. Stick to Penny Vincenzi for this kind of thing as she does it MUCH better.
