



Dreams of Sleep

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Alice Reese knows that the cheerful sounds of her family eating breakfast mask a ten--year marriage falling apart. As Alice and her husband, Will, struggle to understand--and perhaps recapture--the feelings that drew them together in the first place, their interior lives are sensitively and convincingly explored.

Dreams of Sleep Details

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Author : Josephine Humphreys

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From Reader Review Dreams of Sleep for online ebook

Laura McGregor says

Another book which I could pick up and re-read. It helps that the author is from my hometown

Asia says

Love, love, love this author. She is amazing, so insightful and with a spot-on ear for dialogue. I find myself re-reading passages a lot.

Heidi says

Well written fiction about the south. Could have done without some of the chapters. Actually I skipped over several of them.

Shelly says

Very easy to read. I enjoyed getting to know the characters and following their journey. It was a very well written book.

Chel says

Hemingway Prize winner.

Will is having an affair to stave off boredom. Alice is in a suffocating embrace of inertia and dependency. Iris Moon comes to the babysit the Reece' children.

Each character is well explored complete with their interactivity with other characters. Narrative very strong, reminiscent of Tyler. Heroine similar to Rebecca in 'Back When We Were Grownups'. Alice and husband have become estranged.

Enjoyed this book, especially the narrative, but the storyline was depressing. I did not endear myself to any one character.

Stephanie Williams says

This book taught me a lot about writing. I didn't like the characters, no sympathy, so I was reading for reading's sake, and it crept up behind me. I think this author gets behind Charleston's facade, shows depth

and the description of the neighborhoods in this book were right on.

Cheryl says

Enjoyable, well written. Love the depiction of Charleston. These characters are pretty depressing. But it is beautiful too how they struggle.

Best dynamic is that between the two doctors. More real than real.

Wish Emory had been a little more fleshed out. He's almost saintly in comparison to everyone else. But that makes him almost bland or flimsy.

All in all, a very good read.

Marguerite says

I thought this was extraordinary when I read it in 1985. Recently, I pulled it from my add-to-GoodReads shelf. (Six other books in this category sit on my desk, plus a fairly long list of others. They mean too much to me to toss off in a quick review.) I was facing some fairly insipid fiction and got drawn into rereading this, instead of new books from the library. And, *Dreams of Sleep* holds up beautifully. I probably appreciate it more now that I've been married almost 30 years. It's the portrait of a marriage on auto-pilot, and seven years into my own marriage I might have had a clue, but not much of one. Now I have perspective, and it makes all the difference. Josephine Humphreys writes beautifully, as the many underlined passages and Post-It flags attest:

"This marriage is like a place where the language is not her native tongue. She has managed to pick up the words and idioms and intonations gradually, so that now they sound almost right coming out of her mouth, but she knows they are his."

"You have to feel sorry for anyone in whom love grows so big it edges out the feelings of normal life, including hunger."

"It dawned on him that the loneliness of marriage, the thing Alice had so feared, starts out of the love itself, which can never deliver on its promises."

"But we are not joined. We only touch, Alice thinks."

"The difference between love and no love is slight, anyway. People are fooled every day about whether they have it or not."

"The web of love and anger is so dense between mother and child, it is never clear what thread is laid down first: the child's cry or the mother's sympathetic caress; the mother's anger or the child's misbehavior and remorse."

"It isn't that nothing is left. It is that what remains is such an old sad ghost of the thing that used to be, and he can't bear lying down with the vestiges."

There are only one or two other Southern women writers who can hold a candle to Josephine Humphreys. I can't wait to reread them!

Jeanette says

Maybe it was my mood or the type of book just wasn't my thing, but I was bored and it was depressing so I stopped at page 167. Not for me.

Mary D says

I read this for a book group and was much better than I expected. I had not heard of the author before this. It is well written and has a lot of emotional insight. The relationships were very real.

Lee Ann says

This book was good enough for me to stick with it all the way through. Three main characters - Iris, Will & Alice. Much of the book delves into their inner thoughts and insecurities which for Alice & Will seem extremely selfish and self-centered. I know that it's possible for married people to almost completely not know each other and for people in general to be completely unsure of their reason for being, but for Alice and Will, it almost seems like a ridiculous amount of navel-gazing. All of their issues both real and in their heads seem to scream of 1st world problems and privilege. Most people are too busy working and raising families to be as self-focused as these two. Iris, on the other hand, is a delight. A tenacious teenager from the projects whose entire life has been about taking care of others and abandonment - both by her father who comes in and out of their lives, and her mother who is emotionally dependent on Iris. If you ever read my reviews, you know that I end the more critical ones with a "maybe it's me." Maybe it's me, but at this stage of my life, I have a tough time sympathizing with self-absorbed character. This book is not on par with my favorite Humphrey's books, Rich in Love & Nowhere Else on Earth. One last comment - I will read anything that takes place in the Charleston area. One thing I always look for is accuracy of the setting, if it is a real place that I'm familiar with. I could imagine myself walking from Will & Alice's to Iris' house or her mom's place in the projects. I could get from Will's to his mother's on The Battery. I give Ms. Humphrey's kudos for this - not every author gets it right. When you say that someone could walk out their front door and turn right to get to XX street, it's important that it's accurate!!
