



Ways of Leaving

Grant Jarrett

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Chase Stoller's life is crumbling. He just lost his job, his wife Jennifer has filed for divorce, and now his brother Aaron wants him to return to Pennsylvania and help care for their ailing father.

When he arrives at his brother's house, years of repressed rage float to the surface—along with two married women, one virtual church, several bottles of scotch, one schizophrenic sister, five helpings of Brussels sprouts, three boxes of purloined panties, and a gun-wielding husband with a grudge. But Chase's greatest challenge comes when his sister attempts to end her life.

Infused with empathy and compassion, bristling with humor, *Ways of Leaving* explores the impulses and actions of a troubled man whose struggles with isolation, despair and desire illuminate the fierce yearning for a sense of purpose that characterizes the human condition.

Ways of Leaving Details

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Author : Grant Jarrett

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From Reader Review Ways of Leaving for online ebook

Denise says

This book made me laugh out loud at times. Some of the humor reminded me of Jonathan Tropper who I adore. But somewhere along the way, I started losing interest and the jokes lost their glimmer.

Dan says

Chase Stoller's life is a wreck' his wife left him, he lost his job, his estranged father just passed away and his brother who doesn't care for wants him to come back home. And his beloved sister is in a mental institution. Going back home means he has to deal with what life throws at him head on.

You would think with a guy like Chase with so much going against him, how could you like him, but Grant Jarret writes with a way that you do like Chase and hope for the best. At times, it is funny, sarcastic, sensitive and graphic. As the novel progresses, we get to understand how Chase has become who he is and I understand his situation. Some of the characters seem familiar and I believe many of us could relate to dysfunctional lives.

Wendy Hines says

Ways of Leaving is a well written novel about a time in one man's life that seems like an extra double helping of undesirables. Poor Chase - not only is he going through a divorce, but he just lost his job and now his brother wants him to come home and help with their ailing father. He tries to keep calm and ride the storm but he is angry.

He's angry at everything and it's his anger that sometimes creates moments of laugh out loud humor and other moments of stunned disbelief. He makes some poor choices, but he is only human and let's his emotions get the best of him at times. But Chase is a good man and his past is slowly revealed to the reader to show how he came to be where he presently is.

There are many explicit scenes, as well as some gritty, sensitive subjects touched upon but Jarrett handles them all with firmness and with sometimes dry wit. His writing is sublime and the pages just flew by. A multilayered story that kept me riveted, not knowing what was going to happen next. A solid, good read!

Morninglight Mama says

Wayward child returns home for parent's funeral, and forced to be among family members from whom he has been distant, he faces a whirlwind of personal challenges all in a short period of time. I've read novels that follow this basic premise before, but I have to admit that I haven't met a character exactly like Chase Stoller in any of them. In this novel, a series of disaster after disaster await Chase, some brought on by fate or bad luck, and others clearly a result of his own terrible judgment. While there is some eventual maturation

for Chase, it is a huge uphill battle, and his character itself was often abrasive enough to turn me off from the book as a whole. At times I was struck by incredibly witty and insightful pieces of the narrative, and at other times, I felt dragged through the mud by the constant whirl of absurd situations in which Chase finds (or puts) himself. Overall, I was happy to see Chase in a better place in life by the end of the novel, but I wished that I hadn't been witness to his entire journey.

Anna says

We all can identify with the main character, Chase, in a way.

The novel is a journey into one's very self with all their weaknesses. The story becomes a deep analysis of how we tend to judge people easily without attempting to find out real reasons for their decisions and behavior. However, the novel doesn't become severe criticism of human weaknesses but it shows that life is about constant remaking and improving of our life and ourselves.

The vivid depiction of scenes makes a reader engrossed in Chase's life from the first page.

Chris says

I love this book! The author puts words together in such clever and intriguing ways that he gently pulls the reader in and forces a look at life through the eyes of a conflicted quick minded main character.

There is little doubt that the author deals with difficult topics but scattered throughout the text are bursts of humor which are so well played and unexpected that I literally laughed out loud.

I'll read this book again as I'm sure there are nuances sprinkled throughout that I missed the first time through. Great read!

Larry H says

I'd rate this 4.5 stars.

Full disclosure: I received an advance readers copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an unbiased review.

Chase Stoller's life is kind of falling apart. He's lost his job as a reporter, his marriage is over in all but the legal sense, and to top it off, his estranged father has just died. He now must return to his hometown in the Poconos, a place he doesn't have many warm feelings for, and face his unresolved feelings about his childhood. Plus, his brother, Aaron, resents him for not being around much and forcing him to care for their father, and Chase's beloved sister, Hannah, has been languishing in a mental institution. It's understandable why Chase has stayed away so long, isn't it?

Growing up with a distant, disengaged father and a mother barely able to contain her simmering rage and depression, Chase really only had Hannah to turn to and protect him, and the two were inseparable until mental illness took hold of her life. And Chase certainly has his own problems—he's addicted to sex and

alcohol, has a bit of a rage issue, and his self-destructive tendencies manifest themselves mainly in uncontrollable sarcasm and not knowing when to be quiet. His return home is marked by more than a little bit of abuse (both self-inflicted and inflicted by others), not to mention unabashed flirting and a few sexual encounters, with an old girlfriend and a fragile, married woman.

"Perhaps everyone found comfort in convenient little myths created out of need, out of desperation. Or maybe some lives were truly wholesome, replete with the rich, sustaining byproducts of love. But what did it matter? Searching for answers was like studying a map after arriving at your final destination. All the information in the world wouldn't alter where he was or what he'd become."

Chase recognizes the problems he sees around him—his brother is so self-centered and self-righteous that he doesn't see how fragile his young children are, and he desperately wants to help his sister out of the catatonia all of her medications have her in, and perhaps bring her back to some semblance of how she used to be. But at the same time, Chase can't seem to help himself. He knows he has problems, he thinks he understands the root of them, but he can't seem to pull himself off the path he's on. He wants to love and be loved but doesn't want the emotional entanglement of relationships, because relationships hurt. He wonders if it would just be better if he died, but he's not courageous enough to take his own life. But it takes a decision only he can make to push him onto a road that might help him recover—or destroy him completely.

I really enjoyed this book so much. Grant Jarrett's writing style reminded me a lot of Jonathan Tropper's, and I really liked the way he developed his characters, particularly Chase. The dialogue is funny, sarcastic, and sensitive at times, and while you may wonder if one person really could find himself in that much trouble all the time, every time Chase opens his mouth or does something, you can see why people have the desire to hit him. *Ways of Leaving* definitely made me laugh a lot, but it also was poignant and emotional in places.

"Do we all just eventually give up, take what comes to us, convince ourselves it's what we've always wanted and get on with whatever our sad little lives have become because, well, because that's what we do?"

If you like books that combine comedy and emotion with some great storytelling, definitely pick up *Ways of Leaving*. You may not love Chase's character, but you won't be able to keep away from his misadventures just getting through life.

R.I. says

I loved this story. It was really well done. You start with a guy whose life is literally coming apart at the seams, if there ever really were any seams. Add beautiful narrative and an engaging voice and style, and you've got a story that you can't put down. And one that leaves you thinking about it well after the story is over.

As a writer myself, this is one of those novels that makes me ask myself what in the heck I think I'm doing trying to write a book and wishing I could be this good.

Time richly spent in this one.

*FTC Disclosure: I received this book free through the GoodReads Giveaways and the opinions in this review are my own.

Peggy Roberson says

I was very disappointed after reading the first few pages of this book. It wasn't anything like I had expected the reviews and the synopsis to be like, and thought about giving up, but I continued reading. What a mistake!! To me, the main part of the book was about sex - any way the main character could find to hook up with a waitress, an old classmate, etc. I don't want to give any more away about the characters, but the sex parts were very crudely written. An example - How many words can you use to describe sex? Write them down, word for word. There's your sex scene!! The Author also jumped around a lot, going from one thing to another, not sure of where he wanted his story to actually go. When you finally got to the last 25 - 30 pages of the book, approximately, it actually got pretty good, and kept your interest. I don't know if Mr. Jarrett is planning on writing another book, but I do have some advice for him. Please- keep your day job!! This book was really bad, and you can't write sex scenes worth a hoot!! I'm really sorry to be so blunt, but after reading so many books in my lifetime, I can't remember ever reading a book of this caliber before!! I'm thankful this was a gift from Goodreads, and not something I had to purchase.

Craig Allen says

I'll go between 3.5 and 4 stars. Really good read about a man named Chase, who has recently lost his distant father and returns home to his brother and mentally ill sister. Chase must address his womanizing, self destructive ways while dealing with loss. The thing I liked the most about this book was the dialogue. It was well written and quick witted. Chase was a very well developed character that I was very invested in by the end.

Debbie says

Very clever book about a man returning home to a dysfunctional family and dying father. Chase's (the protagonist) problem is not simply the chaos of family, but also the chaos of Chase, who struggles with alcohol, sex addiction and obsessive sarcasm and obnoxiousness. People aren't necessarily attracted to him, but eventually the reader finds themselves drawn to him, because the writer allows us to understand more than the world sees.

Grant has a very keen sense of humor and handles the complex struggles with finesse. The chaos of the past meets chaos of the present, allowing the reader to see more, understand more, than Chase.

Very good writing. An entertaining story that has very funny moments.

Excellent read.
