

## The Beach at Painter's Cove

*Shelley Noble*

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## **The Beach at Painter's Cove** Shelley Noble

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Whisper Beach* comes another heartwarming story of four generations of women who reunite in their crumbling family mansion by the sea for a dramatic summer filled with love, family, secrets and sisterhood.

The Whitaker family's Connecticut mansion, Muses by the Sea, has always been a haven for artists, a hotbed of creativity, extravagances, and the occasional scandal. Art patrons for generations, the Whitakers supported strangers but drained the life out of each other. Now, after being estranged for years, four generations of Whitaker women find themselves once again at The Muses.

**Leo**, the Whitaker matriarch, lives in the rambling mansion crammed with artwork and junk. She plans to stay there until she joins her husband Wes on the knoll overlooking the cove and meadow where they first met. Her sister-in-law Fae, the town eccentric, is desperate to keep a secret she has been hiding for years.

**Jillian**, is a jet setting actress, down on her luck, and has run out of men to support her. She thinks selling The Muses will make life easier for her mother, Leo, and Fae by moving them into assisted living. The sale will also bring her the funds to get herself back on top.

**Issy**, Jillian's daughter, has a successful life as a museum exhibit designer that takes her around the world. But the Muses and her grandmother are the only family she's known and when her sister leaves her own children with Leo, Issy knows she has to step in to help.

**Steph**, is only twelve-years-old and desperately needs someone to fire her imagination and bring her out of her shell. What she begins to discover at the Muses could change the course of her future.

As Issy marshals the family together to restore the mansion and catalogue the massive art collection, a surprising thing happens. Despite storms and moonlight dancing, diva attacks and cat fights, trips to the beach and flights of fancy, these four generations of erratic, dramatic women may just find a way to save the Muses and reunite their family.

## **The Beach at Painter's Cove Details**

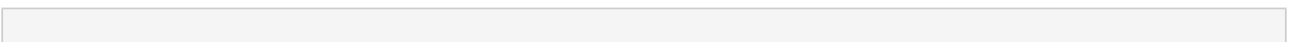
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# **From Reader Review The Beach at Painter's Cove for online ebook**

## **Margitte says**

A chicken-soup-for-the-soul-read. And yes, another template-read.

Muses By The Sea, the dilapidated once graceful old neo-Gothic family mansions accommodated the four generations of the lacrymose Whitaker women one summer to face their history and crisis. For the rest you can read the blurb.

Why I loved this book: it had substance...depth...soul...atmosphere...memories to behold. The Whitakers were crazy and wild, they were lost and found. But most of all, the Whitaker women had heart.

The nonconformist and ageless fairy child, Fay, and Leo the doyenne of art nurtured the old mansions and all the children who landed up there stranded. They were perfectly happy in their bizarrely constructed existence. Yet, Leo could not keep her children there: Max passed away, George absconded, and Jillian scrambled off to Hollywood. Leo had to endure perfidy from her own children. Through the years, the crumbling old house who's petticoats were starting to show, her dignity slowly ebbing away, became a home for the children who were shoved aside.

Well, Jillian (now Bannister) dumped her two daughters Isabelle and Vivienne there for the two old friends to raise, while she chose the bright lights and lure of Hollywood.

Then Vivienne (now Bannister) followed in her mom's footsteps, did a bunk, but first unceremoniously dumped her three children, Stephanie, Amanda and Griffin on Leo's doorsteps, leaving childless Isabelle and Leo to face the music. The kids would have been homeless and hapless if Isabelle, who was called in New York, could not do something. Leo was too elderly and confused. She was constantly talking to her beloved deceased husband, the patriarch Wes Whitaker, who laid buried on the knoll at Max's side. It's where Leo wanted to be buried too one day, if she was allowed. Therein lied the crisis.

I loved the tone of this book. The good ole man-bashing, single-women rhetoric is there. All villains are male, and all heroine are female. In between two good looking young man sneak around in the periphery of the narrative. There's gin and tonics, and all nine yards of a feel-good chick-lit tale. The difference is that this book focused on the family bonding and does not include voyeuristic romps in the sand at Painter's Cove. The reader is allowed to fly away on the clouds of the imagination. For that alone it is rated 5 stars. Tasteful.

Overall, it's an enjoyable excellent choice as a light summer read.

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## **Kathryn says**

The Beach at Painter's Cove by Shelley Noble brings us into the lives of the Whitaker family in an old family mansion. It is a multi-generational family, a little unusual and certainly dysfunctional, and very certainly not ordinary.

Issy is called home from her work in a museum by her young niece Mandy. She and her brother and sister Stephanie have been dropped off at their great - grandmother's house by their mother who has then

disappeared. Arriving home Issy finds bills unpaid and her grandmother Leo in hospital and her aunt Fae trying to hold things together.

Fortunately for Issy she has good friends in Chloe and Ben, who are there at every turn as Issy tries to deal with the situation she finds at the house. Worse is yet to come, its possible the house will need to be sold and her rather selfish mother, sister and uncle are yet to descend on her.

I liked Issy, she is responsible and ultimately caring, she loves her grandmother and aunt and wants to do right by them. She has reservations and anxieties about being sent from the house and the memories she has of her own childhood. Yet she seems to be the most rounded human being in her family.

Another character that I felt sympathy for was Fae, she appears to be well a little fay, she is arty and a little out of the ordinary, but her heart too was in the right place and she has made sacrifices for the good of others. I liked especially how she could see where twelve year old Stephanie was coming from and was able to connect with her in a special way. I totally agreed with Fae's final choice.

There is plenty of family drama, some mystery, a tiny amount of romance and some growth for most of the characters. Living in the Whitaker family would never be dull.

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## **Patty says**

The Beach At Painters Cove

By

Shelley Noble

What it's all about...

The Whittakers and various descendants have lived in this massive mansion by the sea that has always...or rather in its golden years...always...been filled with artists, actors, famous people and sometimes even tragedy. The problem now is that someone has stolen the millions of dollars that were put into a trust. This family owes everyone. Leo...the matriarch...lives in another world and her sister in law and granddaughter Issy are trying to save her and her stuff. Everything is a mess.

Why I wanted to read it...

I was in the mood for a big family saga with tons of dysfunction and this book was perfect!

What made me truly enjoy this book...

The abandoned children, the fantasy, the Elf King, potential romances...all of these enhanced my enjoyment of this book.

Why you should read it, too...

Readers who love big family books with tons of unique situations will really enjoy this book...

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## Mel says

"The Beach at Painter's Cove" interested me because I love "big old house books on the shore with multi generations of women". Throw in a little mystery, money problems and art and I'm in!

Well....

I have to say this was pretty lousy, the house really was just a minor character when it should've been the star and the two matriarchs went way beyond eccentric to just plain bat-shit crazy. The author failed miserably with these two old ladies who are selfish, entitled and really just a couple of tired old cliches. Leonora, Leo spends all her waking moments running off to "visit" her beloved husband, he's dead, who in my opinion is the idiot who got her into the financial mess she's in, so I didn't understand her devotion. It seemed to me the author couldn't decide whether Leo was suffering from self imposed denial from grief or full on dementia. She seems very out of it until "she" decides to leave off with her "beloved Wes" for now because her family needs her towards the end of the book. Fae, (yes her name is Fae if you can believe it) Leo's younger sister is supposedly portrayed as "new age", but comes off vague and creepy-scary. She lives in a secretly located cottage and has a SECRET!!!

Oy vey.

The book starts out with Vivienne, Leo's eldest granddaughter bundling her children up and dumping them with Leo with no explanation whatsoever to anyone. Isabelle, Leo's other granddaughter get's a call from an eight year niece whom she barely knows, about Leo being hospitalized after a fall and heart seizure. Isabelle aka Issy (DAMN I hate that nickname) is a NYC museum curator in the middle of a big exhibition when she gets Amanda's call. Blah blah blah, police, missing mother, threats of social services and Isabelle drives to Connecticut that night. Isabelle and Vivienne are not friendly and their mother Jillian is an aging once famous Hollywood star who is dead broke and living off a rich guy in France. SPOILER ALERT.....

Everyone is dead broke in this book, well pretty much everyone. Vivienne's husband Dan is the villain in this piece and has wiped out all of Leo's accounts that had millions of dollars and hasn't paid the bills on the house, The Muses in months. I found all of this hard to believe. Dan is off the page for the entire book, Vivienne is for three quarters of the book and her return is totally anticlimactic plus her "story" is so far fetched even her twelve year daughter Stephanie sees her for the liar she is. It was badly done and of course after much crying and blah blah blah she is believed and forgiven. Sheesh! There is also this whole airy fairy side story with Fae and Stephanie which is just a ridiculous plot device. There are SO many pretentious or convenient characters that are just plot devices in this tale. There's hunky nerd Ben, a love interest, his sister Chloe, well, someone has to cook for all these people since the long time housekeeper has been fired for stealing by the missing Vivienne. There's Paolo Isabelle's colleague who up and leaves his job because he's needed as plot device and love interest for Chloe, which was nice of the author to give her such a boon! There's Uncle George, who's bitter about his dad leaving Dan in control of the money and is a threat to Leo and Fae continued residency at The Muses. George and his sister Jillian are the shallowest portrayals of the bunch, besides little Griffen, Vivienne's five year old son. Jillian thinks to use George in order to sell the estate and get some money, but when it backfires she has a change of heart. She's really only a device to clear up a childhood misunderstanding between the sisters whom she dumped on Leo and Wes to raise cuz she "just wasn't mother material". Oy vey cliché, cliché, cliché.

There's lots of melodrama and chaos and even a STORM, but then they are saved!! Saved by Isabelle and Fae's big SECRET! I was very surprised by the four and five star reviews here, because I could go on and on about the holes in this very bad book.

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## **Yvonne says**

Issy's world turns upside down when she receives a frantic call from her eight year old niece. Her mother left her and her two siblings with their grandmother at the family estate. Their grandmother had to be hospitalized and now the children had no one to care for them. The only one they could call is Issy.

She immediately leaves her NYC job as a museum designer and rushes to the mansion in Connecticut to get the whole story. She got way more than she bargained for. It seems her sister and her husband have disappeared leaving the children behind. Not to mention that the estate is falling on hard times and may have to be sold. It's up to Issy to deal with all the family drama, even though she's been estranged from her family for years.

I don't want to give away too much of the storyline. For those readers who love a family saga, this is quite an intriguing one. There are four generations of women under one roof. Each one has their own story and their own set of secrets.

Issy is the main star of this stand alone book. She's a strong character who is doing her best to hold the family together. At the same time, she is coming to terms with resentments from her own past. She has her work cut out for her but she's more than up to the task.

This is the first book I've read by this author, but it won't be my last. It's a good beach read. The cover alone made me want to go to the beach. It's fast-paced and well-written. Another author whose backlist I need to check out.

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## **Pamela Barrett says**

This novel has so much that I love: a private beach cove, an old rambling mansion full of art that once was the hub for a community of funky artists and flamboyant characters, add in good friends, a dysfunctional family, and a mystery wrapped around an epic love story.

The hub of the story is the 2 eldest surviving members of the Whitaker family, they own Muses by the Sea, a former renowned artists colony which in present day is falling into disrepair. Leo is the grandmother and her sister-in-law Fae are struggling to keep up with all the maintenance when Leo's granddaughter Vivienne drops off her 3 children without telling anyone where she's going and if she'll be back. Leo's daughter Jillian is a world famous actress, who is always traveling and not reliable, so when an accident happens the only one left to help is Leo's other granddaughter Issy. Issy, Isabelle Whitaker is a curator, who with her team installs exhibits for Museums and Galleries around the world. She is installing one exhibit, getting another ready to move when, right before the reception, she gets a call from Vivienne's children begging her to come help them. The future of the children, her grandmother, and Muses by the Sea depends on the choices she'll have to make.

I'm giving Shelley Noble's novel 5 stars and putting it on my favorite list, of course I might be a tiny bit bias because I'm married to an artist, but this book has so much going for it that it will appeal to a wide audience. It was the perfect way to start my summer reading.

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## **Linda says**

This is a wonderful story of four generations of women coming together to remember the past, celebrate the present, and look to the future. The author paints a vivid story in a beautiful setting. It's so engrossing I didn't want to put it down and I loved, loved it!

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## **Mary says**

The Beach at Painter's Cove is the story of the Whitakers – a wealthy and eccentric New England family who are on the brink of losing the fabled Muses by the Sea mansion. Through the decades Muses hosted the most notable stars of the art world – a place where artists could practice their craft or just get away and be themselves.

Granddaughter Issy will go down fighting in order to keep her grandmother's home in the family. That's not the only issue she'll face. There are also frustrating family dynamics, intrigue, and general misunderstandings that work into the plot of this multi-generational story. Despite all that, she reconnects with old friends, her grandmother and great-aunt, and a delightful niece who seems to share a lot in common with Issy.

The novel is filled with interesting characters, a lovely setting, and the lesson that change is not always a bad thing. I enjoy a good family drama and that's exactly what I got with Shelley Noble's The Beach at Painter's Cove. A book club guide is included. \*I received a copy from the publisher in exchange for my unbiased review.

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## **Chanel Cleeton says**

A beautiful and moving story of love and family set on a magical stretch of beach in Connecticut. The perfect summer read!

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## **Stephanie Tracy says**

For me, this book warrants somewhere between a 2.5 and 3 star review. I'm opting for 3 stars because I actually enjoyed the ending, but the rest of the story was really just okay for me. This is my first time reading this author, and while I was looking for a light-hearted, easy summer read about family, friendships, and love... this fell pretty flat. Still, a sweet ending often makes up for the rest, at least in part.

The novel starts with our main character, Issy (horrible name) receiving a phone call from her nieces and nephew, who have been "abandoned" by their mother, Vivian, at their grandmother's house. No one knows where Vivian, Issy's sister, has disappeared to, but Issy knows she needs to leave her art museum curator job in New York City, and high-tail it to Painter's Cove (wherever that is) to help out. Upon arrival, she finds that her family is in an awful state - no one's heard from Vivian, grandmother Leo is in the hospital, crazy Aunt Faye is... crazy..., and the family bank accounts have been drained. On top of that, an evil cousin wants to put Leo and Faye in an "old folk's home" and sell Leo's beloved home at the cove, called "The Muses".



Issy springs into action - or at least, I think the reader is supposed to think she does. In reality, very little HAPPENS during the middle portion of the story. Issy's trying to figure out how to help her family and deal with what's going on, while taking some extended PTO from work. She's keeping up with an art exhibit installation via telephone, and she's kind of developing feelings for long-time friend, Ben. But other than those side-details, there's really not a whole lot of plot. It's pretty boring, to be honest.

There are too many characters to describe here, and therefore this review is a little complicated to write, because I don't want to give anything away. Suffice it to say that there's a lot of family tension and strife, old wounds that have never healed, relationships that need mending (if possible), romance to be developed, career decisions to be made, and elf kings in the woods to discover (yes, you read that last part right - and that is the point in the story where I mentally checked out a little bit).

Overall, there's a lot going on in the story, but you don't really realize it until it all comes to a head near the end. It wraps up nicely (maybe a little too neatly, but hey, everyone loves happy endings). I liked the end, but struggled through most of the rest. All in all, it's not something I'd necessarily recommend, but it was an okay Audible listen while it lasted.

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## **BJ says**

I have read several of this author's books, but this one was by far my favorite. Dysfunctional family, one of my favorite genres. An artist haven called Muses by the Sea set seaside in Connecticut owned and operated by the terribly dysfunctional Whitaker family. Engrossing and enjoyable read. Perfect beach read, or if you can't physically be at the beach, a nice way to visit anyway!

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## **LORI CASWELL says**

### **Dollycas's Thoughts**

Muses by the Sea is a special place, a mansion and grounds open to artists for years. But the family has all gone their separate ways leaving Leo (Grammy) and her sister-in-law Fae all on their own. Until a phone call from the police brings 4 generations of women home.

This was the summer beach read I have been waiting for. Family drama with mystery and romance too.

Issy had not been back home in years, she even missed her grandfather's funeral, which was not her fault. But when she gets a call that her Grammy has fallen and there are 3 children without anyone to watch them, she quickly hurries back to the Muses by the Sea. When she gets there she finds things are even worse than she imagined. But she connects with an old friend and her brother who rush right in to try to bring a little order to the chaos.

Shelley Noble has created such a wonderful cast of characters and through the course of the book the vast difference in personalities emerge and collide. A very dysfunctional family, everyone is coming from a different place in their lives. Most only concerned about themselves. As the story continues they grow and evolve in a delightful way.

Grammy was a character I was so drawn to. The love of her life, Wes, has passed away as has one of her

sons. She is at the age where she can remember the past vividly but current time is not always so easy. She finds comfort sitting on a bench near her loved ones graves, talking things over with them. Alzheimer's may just be starting but she is a strong woman and she will fight to stay in her home until it is time to join her husband. I have known several woman like Grammy in my lifetime.

The location at Muses by the Sea is a character in itself. In addition to the mansion that just needs a little work and deep cleaning sounds like such a wonderful place. So many rooms and even a hidden elevator. If you would like to stay somewhere a little more rustic like Fae, there are several cabins on the property. Many haven't been used in years but again a little TLC would go a long way. Surrounding the buildings are woods, meadows and coves.

The author also gives us a couple of mysteries to solve. Secrets, lies, a couple of missing persons, and theft are all found in this family saga.

I don't want to give anything away but what I need in a summer beach read is a happy ending and this story did not disappoint. Love blooms, sacrifices are made, and those that need to pay do. You are going to want to pick this book up for your next summer getaway.

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## **Jessica says**

Shelley Noble's new book, *THE BEACH AT PAINTER'S COVE* is about four generations of the Whitaker women coming together again for a summer of dysfunction, secrets, drama, and love. This was my introduction to Shelley Noble and I really enjoyed it!

The Whitaker family's Connecticut mansion, Muses by the Sea, was one a haven for artists. It was never short on creativity, extravagance, or the occasional scandal. Now, after being estranged for years, four generations of Whitaker women find themselves once again at The Muses.

The eldest, Leo and Aunt Fae, are currently living in The Muses - even as it falls apart. Fae has no children, but Leo had three children - Max (who passed away), George (estranged), and only daughter Jillian.

Jillian has two daughters, Issy and Vivian. She dumped them with her mother when they were children, so she could pursue her dreams of becoming an actress. So, Leo and Fae raised the girls at The Muses.

Issy is now a successful art curator, living in New York City, when she gets an emergency call informing her that Vivian has dumped her kids at The Muses and taken off. Leo is in the hospital, and the police are considering taking the kids into protective care. Not having much of a relationship with her sister or her nieces and nephew, Issy makes her way to Connecticut to help out.

There were a lot of characters and personalities to keep track of in this story. Noble did a great job weaving together the story lines of each of the generations. We learned what made them tick, why they were estranged, secrets are brought to light, and then ultimately, we see how the love between them can truly bring the most dysfunctional family together. I don't want to give away too much more of the plot, but it's a great beach/summer read!

If you want a well-written, generational story with a touch of drama and dysfunction, then I'd highly recommend this book!

I give this 4/5 stars!

A big thanks to William Morrow for the copy in exchange for my honest review!

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### **Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says**

THE BEACH AT PAINTER'S COVE by Shelley Noble is a tale about the Whitaker family, of a summer when truths are revealed and feuds are addressed. It all starts with Issy's sister, Vivianne, leaving her children at the Muses by the Sea, the Whitaker family's Connecticut mansion and letting Issy and Vivianne's grandmother, Leo, take care of them. Just as Jillian left Vivianne and Issy with Leo when they were little. But, then Leo is taken ill and is taken to the hospital and Vivianne's children frantically contact their aunt that they hardly know to come because there is no one else to take care of them. And, Issy has to leave work to go home, the first time in a long while and not only deal with her three nieces, but with some troubling news about the Muse.

**READ THE REST OF THE REVIEW OVER AT FRESH FICTION!**

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### **Renee Rosen says**

Review coming soon! In the meantime, please add to your shelves--it's wonderful!

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