Clarion Review

Romance

Destiny Skye
Nancy Thorne Hinkel
CreateSpace
978-1-4681-8361-0
Four Stars (out of Five)

Nancy Thorne Hinkel's new novel, Destiny Skye, is perfect for the beach, or anytime feel-good entertainment would fit the bill. Set in a small town in North Carolina, Hinkel presents a diverse cast of characters, some small-town antics, and a whole lot of love and togetherness. The book is very well written and its characters are fully developed, if a tad stereotypical at times. Right from the first paragraph, "Mama radiates God's love, sharing it with all," readers will know exactly what kind of story to expect and they will not be disappointed.

Hinkel's "picayune little" town is populated with salt-of-the-earth folks who look out for one another and pitch in to help at every turn. Their ages range from very young to the elderly, and they are all friends. Some are especially feisty, others long suffering and forever patient, but they all want to know everything that's going on in their town, and they all love to laugh.

The men are good looking, the women flirtatious and fun. Someone always seems to be cooking something, often an all-hands-on-deck barbecue, and impromptu parties abound—sometimes with help from an "emergency phone tree" for an urgent message: "Bring a dish to spare." The women love their white wine with ice, even though some prefer to keep this preference to themselves. "Don't put ice in it, or else she'll think you're a lowlife," one local advises another when a visitor is in their midst. In typical spirited fashion, her friend replies, "Dearie, I'm too old to worry what anyone thinks of me." In their own small town, they're always among friends and people simply understand.

Sprinkled with quaint expressions like "Oh squat" and "Oh shucky darn," Destiny Skye could easily overplay its syrupy hand, but Hinkel keeps things on track by introducing outsiders into the mix and allowing for a little sex ("rumpy pumpy"), a bit of intrigue, and even a murder. There is a local clairvoyant whose talents are occasionally ridiculed but who is often consulted for advice in trying times. Oddities are embraced with good humor and the most eccentric are

simply accepted for who they are. Some folks actually say the word “damn” and a couple of other expletives.

The tale itself and some of the characters may feel contrived at times, but readers are advised to simply let go and enjoy. There are many times in life when a solid, upbeat read is just what the doctor ordered.

Cheryl M. Hibbard