



## Clarion Review

Romance

### **Forgotten Dreams**

Georgia Wright

Intimate Press

978-0-9825279-1-7

Three Stars (out of Five)

Middle-aged divorcee Susan Taggart is resigned to a rather lonely life until the day she meets Charles Parker and her long-forgotten romantic dreams begin to come true. Susan initially views Charles' attraction to her with disbelief, but he quickly convinces her of his sincerity. The couple finds common ground, most notably in their mutual Christian beliefs. Their path to love is not easy, but they rely on faith and each other to face obstacles that come their way, including difficult family relationships, a close relative's struggle with alcohol dependency, and even threats to their lives.

*Forgotten Dreams* is both credible and compelling. The novel is well-structured and meticulously edited, and the main characters will draw readers into the story, even if the romance is a bit of a whirlwind and some conflicts too easily resolved.

What makes Georgia Wright's novel unique is her attempt to convey a sexual relationship in an explicit but non-offensive manner, while maintaining a spiritual, Christian emphasis. Whether or not she achieved that goal effectively will be subjective to each reader's expectations and personal beliefs. Many may appreciate the candid portrayal of marital sex, while others may find that the author dwells too much on the heroine's sexual awakening, as the emphasis on the physical relationship in *Forgotten Dreams* quite possibly rivals that of more mainstream romance novels.

Readers may also struggle with other aspects of the author's writing style. For instance, nearly every thought that crosses Susan's mind is included within the narrative in italics. These make up a large portion of the book, leaving none of Susan's feelings a mystery:

*He smiled. What kind of a smile is that? A half-smirk? 'How did it go?' I can't tell what he's thinking! 'Well, uh....'*

Another disconcerting device the author employs is the replacement of obscenities with “xx-xx-xx.” This particular choice is curious in light of the blatantly descriptive sex scenes, and it has the unfortunate result of pulling the reader out of the story. The narrative would flow more naturally if the actual words were included, or even if they were simply excluded altogether.

Wright, who served as proofreader for the forthright and graphic *Grandma's Sex Handbook* and references it liberally within her story, has taken great care in trying to craft an interesting novel that treats sexuality honestly and respects Christian values. She is a capable writer and storyteller, and the story comes together naturally, maintaining reader interest throughout.

While Wright's debut efforts are commendable, her novel might be more appealing if readers learned about her characters without excessive and unnecessary explanation of their motivations. She might also have considered placing more emphasis on nonsexual aspects of the main relationship. Her heroine's focus on sex borders on obsessive, even if explanations for her insecurities are provided. Trusting the reader to fill in the blanks is often a necessary leap of faith for any new author.

*Jeannine Chartier Hanscom*