

Passionwalk: Don't Let Your Blessing Slip Away**S. L. Plummer**

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Plummer tastefully blends erotica with religious belief in this novel of love and open-minded Christianity.

The old saw says love comes when you least expect it. Emotionally bruised child-care worker Sandra and ex-basketball player Nehemiah have given up expecting the affection they crave in S. L. Plummer's erotic Christian romance, *Passionwalk: Don't Let Your Blessing Slip Away*. As both of them wrestle with their demons, they wonder if they will find the "sensuality that accompanies spirituality" with each other, or if past torments will push them apart. Tackling themes of godliness, sexual appetite, forgiveness, psychic abilities, and alcoholism with the right mix of the physical and spiritual, this novel will make devout romantics see their struggles mirrored in those of Sandra and Nehemiah.

Sandra and Nehemiah represent realistic love-shy individuals, feeling both self-assurance and self-doubt. This is a refreshing change from the romance fare in which the couple's antagonists come from outside them in the form of other people. Indeed, both Nehemiah and Sandra's friends root for them to be together, unlike love stories where a scheming ally plots to tear them asunder. In today's culture obsessed with thinness, Plummer does another brilliant thing by making Sandra "thick" and having her keep her curves throughout the whole book. Women in particular will relate to Sandra's belief that her weight renders her undesirable, although Nehemiah, refreshingly, adores her figure.

Plummer tastefully blends erotica and religion. Because the couple's faith dictates that they cannot have sex with each other until the very end of the book, they nonetheless find plenty of ways to make themselves aroused. The erotic scenes possess tasteful euphemisms in a welcome change from many romance novels. Furthermore, Nehemiah never forces himself on Sandra. Instead, he respects her pleas to go slower and to stop, unlike the forceful alpha males who often populate this genre.

Mentions of the Almighty are presented in new and unique ways. For example, Nehemiah refers to God as "Daddy." Even better, the book sends the affirming message that everyone's experience with God is different, and declares that one can be righteous even if one has had premarital sex, struggled with alcoholism, or even had an abortion. While this acceptance may be too much for more conservative Christians, liberal Christians and secular readers may find the notion of such a lenient Lord rather comforting.

Nehemiah's psychic abilities represent believable skills and are an important and fascinating plot device. Nehemiah and Sandra's paranormal ability to be in one another's minds, however, is not as well integrated into the story and sometimes renders the narrative confusing. Although this is a heteronormative romance, Nehemiah accepts Sandra's bisexuality and brings another woman into their foreplay in order to please her. The two speak nonchalantly of having gay friends and relatives. It is delightful to discover that the novel's Christianity accepts all sexual orientations instead of condemning them.

The major points of confusion in this superbly executed book arise from the difficulty of telling how much time has passed between chapters and even between paragraphs. These jumps in time, however, do not take away from the

book's overall pleasing romantic feel. One hopes that the sequel is as delicious as the first.

JILL ALLEN (August 7, 2014)

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