



Time Worketh Patience

Melody Kay Heart

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Time Worketh Patience is a faith-based romance in which an early crush reignites.

In Melody Kay Heart's novel *Time Worketh Patience*, a young woman struggles with faith and unrequited, troublesome love.

Michelle fell hard for her high school teacher, Jesse. She never acted upon her feelings, thinking hers to be an unrequited schoolgirl crush. Years after graduating, Jesse continues to linger in her mind, though. Michelle finds herself comparing potential partners to her memory of him.

A horse-riding accident leads her back into Jesse's life; the two find that Michelle's crush held embers of a passionate relationship. Trouble abounds, however. Both Jesse and Michelle struggle to balance their faith with their romance, hoping for a happy ending. Jesse's past, and Michelle's promising future as a writer, are both impediments.

Faith plays a large role in Michelle's story, both in how she processes difficult events and as a means of ascertaining her future. She turns to the Bible whenever she's lost or overwhelmed, including whenever Jesse makes a mistake. Jesse's lack of faith isn't as much an obstacle as it is a compelling aspect of who he is. His eventual conversion makes room for the couple's relationship to deepen in accordance with Michelle's long-standing moral center.

However, Michelle is still defined most in terms of her faith, and Jesse most in terms of his charm; they aren't fleshed out much beyond these qualities. Even Michelle's friend, Dawn, is known most in terms of her drive to set Michelle up. The dynamics between Michelle and Jesse, and Michelle and Dawn, are shallow as a result, and their stories progress without much emotion.

The disturbing revelation that Jesse followed Michelle, whom he met when she was a freshmen in high school, after her graduation is a further complication, as is the fact that Jesse is unfaithful to his romantic partners. His relationship with Michelle is made more unsettling because of such revelations, generating little desire to see the two wind up together. The book's ultimate resolution is rarely in doubt.

The prose is colloquial, and its informality is initially engaging. Still, the text loses its luster as its errors mount. Words are misspelled, conversations run together because of erratic formatting, and words are capitalized at random. Lengthy conversations between Michelle and Jesse are muddled, and such issues are exacerbated by how similar characters' voices are.

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JOHN M. MURRAY (May 28, 2020)

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