



Southern Comfort

Andrea Smith

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Welcome to Layton, Alabama.

Population: 11,000. Where the sweet tea runs through our veins, the air smells of cobbler, and the secrets run so deep that not even the confessionals are safe anymore.

Our community was tight-knit, friendly, and comprised of God-fearing Christians, many of whom attended Sunday services at Brier Ridge Baptist Church. That is, until Avery Dawson appeared.

My name is Sunny Gardner, born and raised in Layton. I loved our small, quiet town. And then, one day, a man came into town and upended everything that I held dear to me. Shattered my life, really.

This is *my* story. A story of struggle and triumph and, ultimately, how I saved myself and the community from the devil himself.

Get ready for the dark and twisted journey of one girl's fight against evil in a small, Southern town. Once Sunny unravels the truth, the shock of it will leave this Bible Belt community reeling for years to come . . .

YA Suspense Novel

18+

Southern Comfort Details

Date :

ISBN :

Author : Andrea Smith

Format : 292 pages

Genre : Dark

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From Reader Review Southern Comfort for online ebook

Susan Ward says

I never know what I'm going to get when I open a book by Andrea Smith and this was no exception. I always know it will be excellently written, rich with character development, and her signature moments of humor, but oh her story lines....they can be anything, and it's wonderful. Sunny is a spunky character full of fight and determination as Andrea writes types of heroines so well, and that Avery...what a villain. He shocks you and you despise him and yet you have to keep reading about him. The mark of a well written story. And in the end you get a shocking plot twist. For me there is nothing better than opening a book, not knowing where the author is going to take you, and just holding on because you know it will be one heck of a ride. Another fantastic Smith Read.

Chi Lepine says

Amazing! I'm probably bias. I love all of Andrea Smith's books. I was given this book as ARC. I'm so honored by that. Love Sunny. Such a normal teen dealing with normal issues. At first you think just a regular teen hating a step-parent, not so as we get into Sunny's story. Thank you Andrea for creating such a strong independent character. Sunny could have turned out to be a disaster, but she kept strong. Thank you for giving such a strong example for us all. This book made sad to think that there really are such weak and gullible women out there. I understand wanting to repair a marriage, but really? You'll just have to read this book to find out what I'm talking about. Thank Andrea for another fantastic read!

Catherine Wright (Cat's Guilty Pleasure) says

All I can say is WOW!! This book isn't any thing like any of Andrea's other books. Andrea has done it again, she will take you on a ride in this one with some suspense and mystery along the way. I really can't say much without giving away the whole story, so I will say this was one amazing story and the characters were great. Sunny had a lot of things to deal with and for most females they would have buckled under all the pressure. Sunny did not and has to be one of the strongest female characters I have read in a very long time. You will go along on the journey with Sunny as she finds out who she is and just how strong one can be. I would definitely recommend this one. It will release June 14th, 2016

Kelli C ~ Jack Sawyer's Heart says

When I first read the blurb for Andrea Smith's upcoming release I was very intrigued. Knowing this was going to be bit out of her ordinary I was excited to see her writing! **Southern Comfort** shows Smith's versatility very well but still keeps her signature tension and suspenseful tone to the story. It also puts a female character in the forefront of a story who will make you both cheer and jeer along her journey.

This book is set in the 70's when life for a teen should be all about "hanging" out and finding oneself. Sunshine/Sunny is your typical small town girl who is inherently of good morals with the occasional drop of her guard for the sake of friendship and a good time. The last year of high school should be one of discovery and memories, but with a mamma who made one too many mistakes, she finds herself facing an uphill battle when the Reverend Avery Dawson comes to town.

It is here Smith delivers a tale of hypocrisy...lies and deceit...abuse of power. In the town of Layton Alabama within the heart of the Bible belt, lies a man who uses preaching from the bible for his own gain. Reverend Dawson is not only a powerhouse in this community, but also in the Sunny's home as her mother's husband #3. With every scene the Reverend twists the taboo and exerts a force that makes the read tense and eerie. While trying to figure out his game and his true purpose, Sunny finds herself in the know of more than she bargained for. Lives will be shattered as one man's evil taints the town, but no more than one Sunshine.

I was totally caught up in this story as I love a good taboo theme. I definitely felt the edge of my seat suspense that was promised. I found the Reverend to be of the upmost of all evil beings. He made my skin crawl as he spoke and yet he was so integral to the story that I found myself waiting for him in the next scene. Even though he was so vile, it is crazy that he was not the worst character of the book. No that title belonged to Donna, Sunshine's mother! In a time of discovery, where guidance is needed, this woman was so long gone and wrong that it was amazing that Sunny was as smart and driven as she was. If I did had a rant, I would have to say that the actions of Sunny and her bestie Gina were so advanced. The amount of scheming that was occurring was a bit out there for two high school gals trying to find answers. That being said, that relationship of the two Gals also kept the story moving...kept a bit of humor in at times and kept the era of the read alive. Gina reminded me of a character from Grease, but only a bit harsher...she was the dark to Sunshine's light, an overall good partner in crime or more like in the pursuit of justice.

Be prepared for a bumpy ride with quite a few OMG moments and twists that I myself did not see coming! So while, Southern Comfort was not the norm I have come to love from Andrea Smith, it was still a good read! The heat of a romantic tale was replaced with the taboo erotic nature of "counseling" and the angst of finding one's way or falling in love was replaced by a girl's quest for vengeance or more like an opportunity for truth to come to light. I enjoyed the read and felt as if I was in the midst of a Lifetime Movie Drama! Oh the bad behavior...the turned cheek...the small town whispers...the broken friendships...all good stuff here!!!

Book Generously provided per author in exchange for honest review

Rachel Sherman says

Something about this book made it hard for me to get into it. I didn't like it, there was just too much lies for my liking. I also thought the book was way to long. I figured out what was going to happen half way through. But, then the book kept going on and on, instead of just saying what was going to happen.

Jennifer Kyle says

3.75 Stars

"What a tangled web...

This is a great mystery read that was exciting and keeps a reader on their toes. Sadly my excitement was a bit deflated as I guessed the big reveal too darn early.

Also, there isn't a love story here at all. Sunshine Gardner doesn't even have a love interest to get excited about.

There is however a well-crafted story taking place in the bible belt of America. Sunshine is teenage girl in the summer of 1979. Sunny's stepfather is the minister Avery Dawson. Avery is up to some shady things and her mother is holding some big secrets very tight as well.

Sunny returns home to right many wrongs in the town and clear her name. The story was well written and interesting. I just wished it had some sort of romance in it and of course the reveals harder to guess.

"Standing alone proved fruitless when fighting the righteous Southern Baptist of Layton Alabama."

KAT ? Kitty Kats Crazy About Books ? says

*****Complimentary Copy***** Provided by the author
"Andrea Smith" in exchange for an honest review..Thank you!!

TITLE: Southern Comfort

AUTHOR: Andrea Smith

GENRE: Dark | Suspense Novel

CHAPTERS: 65

RELEASE DATE: June 19th, 2016

MY RATING

A story filled with suspense, deception, lust and lies

Southern Comfort: is told in dual POV'S (seventeen-year-old Sunshine Gardner & her step father Avery

Dawson). This book is set in the late 1970's in a small unknown town set in Layton, Alabama consisting of eleven thousand people in total.

This book kicks us off in the prologue where it covers the most basics of the story and this families dynamics then jumps 'eighteen months earlier...Summer of 1979'

Summer aka Sunny (which she goes by) is your typical teenager, she works hard, saves money and dreams of the day when she reaches eighteen so that she can get out from under the thumb of her step daddy Avery.

Life for me had become about avoiding my home life since Avery became part of it. - Summer

Summer is the second child born to husband number two, her older brother (Jamie) whom she still keeps in touch with left home as soon as he was of age and joined the military.

Everyone in my life was supposed to have loved me had, in some way or another, failed or deserted me.

Avery is Donna's (Summer's mother) third husband who so happens to be a man of the cloth, the people within the community loved Preacher Dawson.

Avery Dawson, with his overwhelming presence and his gift of powerful persuasion, had succeeded in brainwashing Mama just as he had done with many of the people in Layton.

The whole town seems mesmerized by the powerful preacher, in particular, the women of his congregation. And it's not long before Avery's marital counseling draws some attention.

If people in this sleepy southern town knew the real man beneath his black garb and wide-brimmed preacher's hat, they most surely would lock their doors at night and changed their religious denomination. - Summer

The above for me is where the story starts picking up, at times it made for hard reading and I found myself cringing with the shit that would spew out of his pie hole during his counselling sessions. Evil hides under many masks.

Avery seems to have the whole town under some sort of spell, especially the woman in his congregation, everyone except Sunny can see through his lies and deception and thinks it's up to her to uncover the truth and open the towns eyes to the goings on under their noses. **BUT** things aren't so cut and dry.

***I have a bad feeling about Avery Dawson
And it just keeps getting worse.***

At the same time Sunny is trying to reveal the true Avery to the towns folk she's also trying to uncover the true identity of her father. This book has a true Nancy Drew feel to it. A journey of self discovery and a young girls quest to discover the truth.

***Avery Dawson will have to answer
to a much higher power than me some day.***

Carla says

*I received a copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

****Carla's Four Star Review****

It's the late 70's, and Sunshine aka "Sunny" is a seventeen year old girl growing up in the small town of Layton, Alabama. Sunny's mother, Donna, is married to a local Baptist minister named Avery Lawson and believe me there is no love lost between Sunny and Avery. Through his charismatic ways, Avery seems to have the entire town of Layton under his spell. Everyone except Sunny. From the start, she has always felt that something was "off" concerning her dear ole stepdad. When she comes across some damning evidence involving Avery, her plan is to expose him for his evil and disgusting ways. When Avery's secrets are exposed, the town of Layton, Alabama will never been the same. And poor Sunny? She uncovers a secret that might just destroy her.

I really enjoyed this book! Sunny was completely awesome! She didn't let people or experiences get her down. Despite everything she has gone through, she remained strong and steadfast. Then there is Avery. That man gave me the creeps!! Even though I hated him, I realized that he was a integral part of the story line. This is a great book that I would have no trouble recommending to a friend!

Donna ~ The Romance Cover says

Southern Comfort by Andrea Smith

5 stars!!

“Standing alone proved fruitless when fighting the righteous Southern Baptists of Layton, Alabama.”

So finally, Andrea Smith gets a well-earned five stars from me. This was one of those books I went into totally blind, I didn't even read the synopsis and actually I was glad I didn't. This book totally side swiped me. Having been a seasoned Andrea Smith reader for many many years, I just read because I know that I am more than likely to like/love it, no matter what she turns her hand to. However, this was not the Andrea Smith I know and love, she delivered so much more and way out her normal box and I applaud her for doing so. I can easily say that this is my favourite Andrea Smith book thus far.

“I had a bad feeling about Avery Dawson-and it just kept getting worse.”

Southern Comfort is set in the small town of Layton Alabama, in the seventies, where everyone knows everyone and the community is brought together predominantly through church, Layton is literally bible belt

country. Sunshine or Sunny as she is known is a teenage girl wanting to live a teenage life, she is sixteen going on seventeen and lives with her mum and step-father. Her mum, Donna is a bit of a doormat to be honest and after two failed marriages is determined to make sure this one survives. Being married to a minister, she has changed her whole personality befitting that of a minister's wife even if it means to the detriment of her relationship with her daughter. This was a mother that put her husband before her daughter and I could have honestly slapped her for it, but at least Sunny had her brother even though he did live thousands of miles away.

“Because you see, Mama, I’m a daughter worth having. At least that’s what he thinks.”

Avery Dawson is the Baptist minister. Reverend Dawson was as evil as they come. Hiding behind the bible and twisting passages for his own personal warped gain. He was a fantastic villain and Andrea Smith penned him perfectly. He was the man that you instantly hated with a passion yet I found myself frantically awaiting his next point of view. How sick am I? This book is taboo, it covers abuse of power under the ruse of “counselling” and has every small time mum eating out of Avery’s sick and twisted palms. Yet every scene of “counselling” contained Andrea Smith’s trademark hot, intense sex scenes that you should hate, you should feel sick, you shouldn’t feel anything...right?

Avery was a very complex character, he was charismatic, charming and totally beguiling in his own vile, seedy way. He could pull the wool over anybody’s eyes and had done so easily to a lot of the population in Layton. He was an expert at manipulation, Machiavellian, deceitful, unscrupulous, narcissistic yet for some reason he was totally addictive. Avery may have pulled the wool over everyone’s eyes, including his wife, but Sunny was a totally different kettle of fish.

Sunny was an adorable character and her relationship with her best friend added some much needed humour to this story. Sunny was resilient though, she had been let down by most people in her life yet she hadn’t let it define her. She was inherently strong, intelligent and perceptive and in the beginning was the only person that could see Avery for the man he was and not who he was perceived to be.

“...we hatched out a plan that would not only save her marriage with Eddie, but take Avery down in the community. Little did I know the ramifications would be farther reaching than that for me.”

Sunny was determined to “out” Avery for the vile human that he was, but at what cost? Andrea Smith penned a story that will have you frantically turning the pages, angst, tension, suspense is prevalent throughout and only adds to the addictiveness that is Southern Comfort. Where small minded folk pull together to save themselves rather than face the truth, where hypocrisy is rife and the life of a teenager is inconsequential. Will she see the light or will Sunny be forced to live in the dark? I cannot recommend this read highly enough, while religion for some may be off-putting this is so much more than that. Yes, it plays its part, but the suspenseful ride is what carries this story and one that I won’t be forgetting for a while.

“...I hope you remember this for a long time to come. You may preach chapter and verse of the Bible, but by God, I've not seen many of you living it!”

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♥?Melanie says

Wow...this book is a cluster fuck of lies, betrayal and evil. This book was very interesting and kept my attention that is for sure.

Kimberly says

This is something completely different from Andrea Smith, she really shows her versatility as an author while still offering her signature wit and humor.

"Standing alone proved fruitless when fighting the righteous Southern Baptist of Layton Alabama."

This story is set in the small bible belt town of Layton, Alabama in the late 70's. Sunny is a teenager like most teenagers of that era, just working and going to school hoping to go to college in a nearby town. Her mother, Donna, is married to the local pastor Avery, he is her 3rd husband and a thorn in Sunny's side. Between Avery's constant criticism and watchful eye and her mother's apathy, Sunny feels alone. Her mother always takes Avery's side, even when she knows he is wrong. Everyone in the town thinks so highly of Avery, if they only knew. And when Sunny finds out some incriminating information about Avery, she is determined to show everyone his true colors. Secrets and lies come to light and the town of Layton, Alabama is rocked to its core! But, what will the cost of going against the devil be for Sunny? Read and see!

Wow, this book is like nothing I have ever read, and it left me on the edge of my seat. Sunny is a great character, she is strong, intelligent and resilient. She is determined to make something of herself even after her life falls apart. Her mother leaves much to be desired, and I wanted to reach in my kindle and shake her! Avery, oh Avery, he is one of those characters you love to hate. He is a complete narcissus and has a creep factor that will give you the chills. The cast of supporting characters add so much to this story, you have the local hot to trot mom, the innocent farm wife, the busy body, the pleaser and so on! Small town closed minded hypocrites, this story is like Peyton Place on crack! I can't recommend it enough, great story, great characters and a plot twist that will leave you reeling!

Candi Gabbart says

Wow just Wow. I can't get over this book. This book is nothing like the rest of Andrea's book. What can I say about this book that won't give it away. Let's see. When you pick it up you won't want to put it down. All of the mystery and twist in this book will have you on the end of your sit.

Just loved this book. One of my favorite books.

Joanne Swinney says

I have absolutely no clue how to start this review and it's not because my mind is blank it's because it's full of what did I just read? and how did the Author even come up with this story? it was just mind blowing. I mean JESUS!! I thought about starting with a WOW! but nope that just doesn't cut it, then I thought okay, I'll say this was a phenomenal story which is pretty close to how I am feeling about it but again it's not expressing how powerful it truly was. This book really excited me, it was so fresh and different but yet it was kind of shocking. Certain events that took place gave me many feelings of horniness and I was left thinking OMG!! really get a grip that's so wrong but the description that is left in your mind you can't help but feel these emotions, if this was the Author's goal then she has one hundred percentage succeeded.

The story begins telling us about a good natured young girl called, Sunshine, Sunny for short. How she turned out to be a lovely person is beyond me because her mother is definitely not a good role model. Her stepfather, Avery is even worse. He's a man of the cloth, priest, whatever you want to call it. He only answers the the highest authority which is God. Yeah, right. He uses that excuse for his own personal gain. Sunny has one older brother who no longer lives in the family home but they still stay in contact. Her mother being married previously is now married to a man that Sunny absolutely hates, she senses all is not what it seems but her mother is blinded by love or is it lust?

Sunny is on a mission to find her father, he has had nothing to do with her since he spilt from her mother. She has no idea why he left and her mother speaks nothing of him. Avery tries to set ground rules believing that Sunny is out of control. At first I thought her mother was right in thinking he was being harsh in his punishments and sticking up for her daughter but then he talked her into doing his will and whatever he said had to be done. She wouldn't tolerate Sunny disobeying Avery, she had to show her husband her full support.

While I was reading I agreed with Sunny about Avery, I don't think I was quite prepared for how sick he actually was. The guy made my skin crawl, there was nothing likeable about him even when he was having sexual relations I still disliked him and yet it didn't stop the feelings of being aroused. Oh! so sue me, it's the Author's fault. You read this book and tell me you were not affected.

Sunny has a best friend, Gina, that girl is a hoot. She loves to have good time with her friends like most young girls do. Don't get me wrong Sunny is very much the same but she has a lot more to deal with than most girls her age. Especially when the truth comes out it is almost a living nightmare for her to deal with.

Sunny and Gina come up with a plan that will out Avery for the man he really is. This will stop the evil, sadistic weasel or will it?

When things become to much for Sunny, she contacts her brother. Gina has no clue that Sunny did that and although she is hurt she understands why and starts to feel guilty about not standing up for Sunny.

Sometimes the answers you find in life are not want you wanted. In Sunny's case the truth hurts more than she could have ever possibly imagined. It is a real shocker that's for sure.

I would recommend this book to anyone who loves a good mystery. It was as they say a page turner. Just be prepared for more than a few surprises.

Happy reading (wink icon inserted here)

Thank you Andrea Smith for yet another exceptional read. I have no clue how you come up with these story lines but you have one wicked imagination.

Andrea Smith says

READ FREE ON KINDLE UNLIMITED!

Ela says

Really enjoyed this dark-ish read.
