



Nicole

Candice Ransom

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The tragic sinking of the Titanic, and a new love, will change her life forever. Can the love in her heart give her the courage to face incredible danger?

World-traveling Nicole Sanders, a wealthy 16-year-old, has always lived in luxury. In 1912, she and her mother are returning to America on the Titanic - the first unsinkable ocean liner!

Aboard ship, two men fall in love with Nicole - Price, a rich Englishman and Karl, a handsome immigrant. Before she can choose between them, tragedy interrupts Nicole's happiness. The Titanic is sinking! Nicole can't find Karl or Price in the terrible confusion and she knows there aren't enough lifeboats for everyone. Even if she reaches safety, can she dare to hope the men she loves will, too?

Nicole Details

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From Reader Review Nicole for online ebook

Kirby Howell says

My friend, Connie, recently pointed out to me that we are currently reliving the 90s this spring: sequels to the movies "American Pie" and "Men in Black", a new album by the recently reunited Smashing Pumpkins, neon accessories, floral leggings (I've even seen some with stirrups)...but most of all, the rerelease of *Titanic* in 3D.

This makes me remember Nicole. This was one of my Sunfire favorites. In the 1980s, Scholastic put together an amazing series of young adult historical romance novels written by a group of several authors. They all had a very similar structure: a strong, spitfire gal torn between two guys that were hopelessly in love with her during a turbulent and exciting period in American history.

Nicole is about a (seemingly) wealthy heiress who is traveling home on the brand new, unsinkable *Titanic* after touring Europe with her mother. She meets two men on board: a wealthy Englishman, Price, and a poor immigrant, Karl. When Nicole's mother realizes that her daughter falling in love with Karl, she presses Nicole to reconsider Price because of their precarious financial situation - they're OUT of money and Nicole needs to marry a wealthy man, stat! But then the whole iceberg thing happens and her mother's plans get slightly derailed due to the unsinkable ship sinking.

I will definitely be going to see *Titanic* in 3D. And I believe I might pick up *Nicole* to read again as well, for nostalgia's sake. Or at least so I can judge JUST how much James Cameron borrowed for his blockbuster.

...I'll never let go!!

Nicole says

Before there was James Cameron's *Titanic* . . . there was Candice F. Ransom's *Nicole*.

Spoiler alert: The boat sinks!

I never read any Sunfire books before this. I'd never even heard of Sunfire (I guess it was about ten years before my time) and I only came across this book because of Karen's review of *Who Cares About Karen?*, which made me wonder what books were out there with my name in the title. A few minutes with the Goodreads search engine and I had amassed a list of four books. This is the least erotic one I found and *holy crap it's also about the Titanic!!!!* So I promptly ordered it off Amazon.

It's not a great book. I'm not going to rate it based on littry merits because it doesn't really have any. Even when I was twelve I probably wouldn't have been crazy about this book because the whole "torn between two lovers" bit is resolved very early on and at no point in my life would I ever have thought, *Well, they've had a two-minute conversation and they're wildly in love, that sounds pretty logical!* I liked Pierce better than Karl, purely because he seemed more interesting, but we Nicoles are a mysterious, flighty breed. Who can say why we make the choices we do?

Anyway, it gets three stars because it's about the *Titanic*, it's a cheesy '80s teen romance, and my name is on

the cover.

And yes, the description of the ship going down made me tear up. Don't judge me.

Tracy says

This is a YA series from the 80s, which I read in the early 90s. As a teenager, I LOVED this series of books, couldn't get enough of them. So, when I had my chance to reread, I took it.

Yes, this is cheesy. Yes, the love story runs a little thin. BUT. Still. They are good, clean YA romances, which are fairly well researched for the genre at the time.

And for what it's worth, this book is what really got me into reading fictionalized accounts of real-life events, and then reading more non-fiction to supplement what I took in.

No matter their flaws, these will always be some of my favorite books.

HeavyReader says

A-ha! I remember this one. Rich girl on the Titanic has to choose between rich guy and poor guy.

I've never seen the movie *Titanic* (and I may be the only person not in a religious cult in the late 90s who can say that), but I know the premise is rich gal and poor fellow fall in love while on the ship. I wonder if that movie is in any way a ripoff of this book. If it is, I hope Candice F. Ransom sued the pants off of the writers of that movie. But heck, for all I know, she *was* the author of the movie.

Abby says

Nostalgia Book- This book is part of a series of young adult historical fiction romances. These romances are completely clean and they do give a glimpse into history. Nicole is a young lady that has lost her fortune so her mother is trying to get her married to a rich passenger, Price. She is smitten with Karl though, a third class passenger. So far, this story line is exactly like the movie *Titanic* without the backseat car scenes. I think this book came first though! One of my complaints with these books is that the heroine is usually with one of the beaus more than the other so sometimes the romance is not developed in and you have to buy into love at first sight. I also think that this particular event in history is trivialized in this format. Since the book is written for a young reader, the gravity of the event is not really given its due. That being said, many times after reading these books as a youth, I was prompted to learn more about the event in history.

Reading with Cats says

The story isn't too bad if you can get over the tiresome and extremely ridiculous instalove. Nicole and Karl knew they were in luuuurve as soon as their eyes met. And if you don't believe it, Nicole will only repeat it,

oh, about a billionty times. Nicole spent way more time with the awesome Price but cardboard cutout Sunfire Hero Karl was our "winner." (This isn't a spoiler, they fall in "love" in chapter two. Chapter two. After not speaking a single word to each other...a bit ridiculous even for a Sunfire.) And then this made my brain goggle: Nicole FORGETS about Karl for hours and only remembers him when she encounters his sister Francesca in her lifeboat (why, hello there, plot contrivance fairy!). Sigh...poor Price.

2.5 stars because it **is** a Titanic story!

Lucy says

YES! This one was stellar.

Meghan says

I am obsessed with the Titanic, including the movie. Price reminded me more of Jack than Karl did. I'll admit that I rooted more for Price.

Jenifer says

When I saw the movie Titanic, I swore to everyone that the inspiration for that movie had to have come from this book: a young woman in first class, engaged to a rich gentleman, meets a brass American in steerage and falls for him, leaving her to choose (as all the Sunfire books girls must) between the the two men. Sound familiar? In the book, however, the rich guy is good guy and ends up giving his place on the lifeboat up to the steerage guy because he knows she loves him more.

I would never pick up a romance book now. I really hate them. However, the Sunfire Romance books were different, since they are geared for teens, and I truly did enjoy them. What can I say? LOL

Nicole says

This is the story of a titanic passenger named Nicole that fell in love with someone on the boat her mother did not approve of. With the help of a friend she defies her mother and tries to see him. When the boat hits the iceberg she worries for her love, but is forced to leave on a lifeboat along with her mother.

I really liked hearing about the titanic from the perspective of a new person. She just saw it as a luxurious cruise that they were pretending to afford. I really liked all the charachters and how they were developed. I feel however even for love at first sight the love in this story came on a little too fast and too dramatic.

Content warnings:

-Violence

-death

Karla says

This was a surprisingly weak Sunfire, mainly because the romance angle was resolved VERY early on and the only tension was if Nicole's chosen man survived the sinking of the Titanic. The character arc of Nicole's mother was too sudden to be believable, and Nicole's own behavior during the sinking was disjointed and almost absurd when the alpha and omega of her existence (Karl the immigrant) is suddenly remembered after hours have passed.

I think if the characters had been better drawn, the romance not so "love at first sight" & Karl's dialogue not so cliched and risible, it would have been a better book. Huge, sudden disasters have been done well in the shorter Sunfire format (i.e., Darcy, Jennie) so the Titanic could have been done as effectively. But for Candice Ransom's style, I think a longer book would have fared better.

Molly O'keefe says

THE ONE ON THE TITANIC!!!! I think these books are why I love historical romance and hate love triangles...

Edallia says

(See my review of *Amanda* for my general review of the series.)

And lo, the mighty Candice F. Ransom, her thoughts on the greener pastures of general YA fiction, picked up her last paycheck from the Sunfire people. "Hey," she said to herself, "I've got my money, so it doesn't matter *what* I turn in!"

And that is how the world was introduced to *Nicole*.

I've owned this for years, and I never re-read it and never stopped to wonder why before now. Memory Charms must have been involved. Clearly, I was trying to shield myself from the horror.

Nicole Sanders has been following her wretchedly awful mother, Evangeline, around Europe while Mom's busy blowing the family fortune. Evangeline comes up with the stunningly brilliant idea of returning to New York on the *Titanic*, posing as Nicole's "older sister," and trying to snare a rich husband, since she has apparently still got it goin' on. Nicole goes passively along with this incredibly stupid plan.

While leaning over the rail at the launching of the *Titanic*, Nicole meets an adorable English nobleman named Price Armsley, and also glimpses an immigrant hottie in the crowd below. Hottie looks up. Their eyes lock. Birds bloom, and flowers sing.

And then, the ship sinks!! Sorry to ruin it for you, but that's what happens. But before we get to all of that, we're treated to nauseatingly precise descriptions of couture gowns, the explicit naming of the third deckhand from the left that Nicole passes on her way to the sauna, whose proprietor is so-and-so, and then she proceeds onward to the dining room, which is full of the first-class luminaries of the *Titanic*, all of whom are given a sentence or two in which to shine.

Yes, Ransom has pulled a Vivian Schurfranz and crammed entirely too much research into the text. I do have to give some credit where it's due and admit that Ransom's research is thorough, especially since this book was published in the 1980s, prior to the *Titanic* craze that made such historical information kind of commonplace. But if you can't integrate things a little more seamlessly into the story, *leave them out.* No one will care! It's entirely possible that they will become independently interested in the subject and seek out further information on their own! You are not the sole study guide for the life quiz that is *Titanic*!

Ahem. Sorry. The other egregious flaw in *Nicole* is the love story. Oh, sweet Georgia Brown, the *sapfest* that is the love story! Remember our handsome immigrant? He's Karl Terez, he speaks perfect English, he quotes poetry and quaint Hungarian legends and gazes deeply into Nicole's eyes and proclaims his undying love- *the first time that they actually meet and talk face to face.* Because they *fell in love at first sight.* SPARE me.

Karl is a cardboard cut-out of an idealized perfect romance novel man, and he is a useless, personality-free *non-character,* and Nicole rejects witty, fun-loving, attentive Price for *him*? Yes, it is to be. Price even gives up his own interest in Nicole to help the two of them meet in secret. If we're really going the "rich girl falls in love with poor immigrant" route, at least make me believe that they're a match. Also, Evangeline throws the most nastiest fit over the fact that Karl is Jewish... and then the issue is never raised or mentioned again. Why introduce this conflict if it isn't going to be developed?

And just how are a couple of young guys going to survive the sinking of the ship, anyway? Don't worry, the gods of plot contrivance will intervene to save perfect Karl! Price is shark food, but at least Karl will live to fervently declare that he will love Nicole forever. During their third conversation *ever.*

I have not one-starred it simply for the sake of the fun literary creation that is Price Armsley, and for the sake of the research, which is very thorough and well-integrated about fifty percent of the time. Ransom is not a bad writer, and the prose itself is far from painful. And since this book doesn't fill me with quite the mouth-

frothing rage that *Danielle* did, I'll two-star it. But that's IT.

Verdict: I could keep making fun of this book, but I think you know by now that I scorn it most severely, and recommend it only to the most die-hard of completist collectors.

♥Xeni♥ says

I discovered the Sunfire Classics back in middle school (working in the library) and with them discovered the joys of romance novels!

And yet, I only loved a select few of these books.

Nicole was one of them. I loved her spirit and her social status. Her story is very similar that of Jason Cameron's *Titanic*, to the degree that I feel Cameron had taken this book and made of a movie of it. But regardless of that, it's still a wonderful book, sadly one of the shorter ones from Sunfire, but still full of romance and great moments!

Kat says

I bought this book at a pawn shop, for a friend-of-a-friend who's a major *Titanic* buff. If I hadn't expected it to be laughable, I might be regretting that decision now -- but I'm not! It's as gloriously trashy as I hoped it would be!

However, I have a few dinosaur-sized bones to pick with whomever designed the cover and wrote the back cover summary.

"Aboard ship, two men fall in love with Nicole -- Price, a rich Englishman and Karl, a handsome immigrant. Before she can choose between them, tragedy interrupts Nicole's happiness." No. Nicole did choose, very clearly. Before the book was even halfway over, she chose handsome Hungarian (H)Karl. Stop trying to create romantic tension where there is none.

Then, to add injury to insult, Nicole is pictured locked in a passionate embrace with Price on the bottom corner of the cover illustration. No.

"Nicole can't find Karl or Price in the terrible confusion and she knows there aren't enough lifeboats for everyone."

For the love of sweet fluttering ladybug Jesus, no. She finds Price RIGHT AWAY. He's the one who explains to her why the SHIP IS SINKING. HE SHOVES HER INTO A LIFEBOAT, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD.

As for the book itself, it's fluffy, with a decided and refreshing lack of purple prose. Nicole and Handsome Hungarian Hunkburger fall in love at first sight, and are declaring their never-ending devotion by their

second meeting. It's pretty flighty for a girl whose principal characteristic seems to be "level-headed." Also, frankly, HHH is a pale shade of a character, especially when compared to the easy-going, funny, and kind Price Armsley she rejects.

Also, the ship sinks in the end.

Ane says

I read these WHOLE series of books! They are romance novels at a G & PG level! Great for tweens and teens alike! :) And not TERRIBLY mushy either :) That's why I'm adding them in case anyone is looking for a good tween book (besides Twilight) lol

Cindy says

I originally read this series back in the 80s, checking them out from my elementary school library. Having re-read them as an adult I think they stand the test of time and are still relevant as far as historical fiction is concerned.

Natasha says

Rereading my way through the Sunfire series, in publication order

Nicole and her mother Evangeline are traveling home from England with a big secret: though they're bringing trunks full of couture gowns and have booked one of the stupidly expensive three-bedroom suites on the Titanic, they've barely any money left from the extravagant years they've spent tooling around Europe after the sudden death of Nicole's father. But, never fear; Evangeline has a plan. By pretending to be Nicole's older sister (shaving a good decade or so off her real age), she can snag a rich guy on the ship and hopefully get him to propose before the ship docks in New York and he realizes how broke they are. In the meantime, she parties hard on the Titanic, eating meals they can't possibly afford and wearing a new dress pretty much every half hour. Good thing she has her level-headed daughter Nicole there, to keep her expensively-shod feet on the ground.

While leaning over the top rail and waiting for the ship to set sail, Nicole (like a good Sunfire heroine) meets two potential love interests. One is the witty and smart Price Armsley, a young aristocrat traveling somewhat incognito, hoping to make his way in the U.S. and never return to his drafty castle in England. The other, glimpsed over the rail, is a hot dark-haired man in shabby clothes. Any other details about him are irrelevant as, the moment he locks eyes with Nicole, she falls instantly and thoroughly (and ridiculously) in love. Of course.

Price, despite having a monster crush on her and doing just about everything he can to make her happy on the voyage, sweetly agrees to help her track down this mysterious hottie and arrange it so that they can be alone. His name is Karl Terez, a poor Hungarian immigrant who somehow speaks perfect English and quotes poetry. The fact that he is traveling in steerage does not deter Nicole, who is already mentally picking out china patterns, and they meet in secret exactly two times, gazing into each other's eyes and professing their

deep and forever love for one another. She's sure that Mom will love him and that they'll all live happily ever after in whatever tenement apartment Karl's family is able to afford. Because she's LEVEL-HEADED, remember?

Spoiler alert: the Titanic hits an iceberg. Though the summary on the jacket promises us that Nicole frantically searches for both men in the confusion, that's not the case. Price is by her side the moment the ship begins to founder and helps both her and her obnoxious mother (who can't quite decide what to wear to a ship-sinking) into lifeboats. Nicole does not search the ship for Karl and she does not have to search for Price, who loads them in the lifeboat and stoically stands at the rail as the ship slips under the water. Meanwhile, on the lifeboat, Nicole is conveniently sitting next to Karl's sister, who is grieving at the feared loss of her entire family. Nicole hugs her, tells her how wonderful Karl was (gleaned from their two dozen exchanged lines of dialogue), and how much she loves him. Karl's sister (probably wondering how soon she could recommend Nicole to an asylum) says that she's sure Karl's last thoughts before death are of the spoiled rich girl who snuck down to steerage and talked to him once.

Good thing that the undeveloped character of Karl survives the sinking, to clasp Nicole in his arms on the last page and declare his undying love. I mean, it's only the third time they've met face-to-face, but Karl reassures her that "It will be all right in America." It doesn't matter that he has no money, home, or prospects, or that her mother has lost all of those fancy dresses, or that Nicole could've married a baron, because "After all, nothing could happen to two people who loved as they did."

Despite the plotting and character flaws, I did enjoy how well researched NICOLE was. It was full of details about the Titanic, about the clothes, about the food. Even though the characters were paper dolls, the scenery behind them was rich and real.

Read for the history, not for the romance.

Reth says

summary settings and character
