



On Turpentine Lane

Elinor Lipman

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At thirty-two, Faith Frankel has returned to her claustro-suburban hometown, where she writes institutional thank-you notes for her alma mater. It's a peaceful life, really, and surely with her recent purchase of a sweet bungalow on Turpentine Lane her life is finally on track. Never mind that her fiancé is off on a crowdfunded cross-country walk, too busy to return her texts (but not too busy to post photos of himself with a different woman in every state.) And never mind her witless boss, or a mother who lives too close, or a philandering father who thinks he's Chagall. When she finds some mysterious artifacts in the attic of her new home, she wonders whether anything in her life is as it seems. What good fortune, then, that Faith has found a friend in affable, collegial Nick Franconi, officemate par excellence . . .

On Turpentine Lane Details

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From Reader Review On Turpentine Lane for online ebook

Liz Willard says

I felt like the author tried really hard to be "quirky," and it shows. The result is quite silly. Occasionally entertaining, but very little of it felt realistic.

Carolyn F. says

What a sweet, funny book! There were several times I would read a phrase and think, "I need to write that down and pretend I just made it up." I just loved this book. There's a murder mystery that's only a slight mystery. The love story was great. Even the fights with the ex's were written with humor and kindness. Fantastic book! I'd recommend it to anyone who loves contemporary romance written with humor. I'm planning on reading more by this author.

JanB says

I loved this fun and witty rom-com book and it's probably more of a 4.25 stars .

The plot involves a light mystery, some romance, and a somewhat dysfunctional family. There are a few twists and turns to keep things interesting, but let's be honest, an intricate plot was not what I was looking for. The characters are quirky and lovable (well, most of them anyway) and it's written in a funny, humorous way with snappy dialogue that never crossed over into sappy eye-rolling scenes. There were a few times I laughed out loud and I closed the last page with a smile on my face.

This book hit all the right notes for me and was the perfect antidote to a darker, grittier book I was also reading. It was my first Lipman book but it won't be my last.

** Thanks to Netgalley and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for a free copy of the book in exchange for an honest review

Suanne Laqueur says

Delightful. Absolutely delightful and delicious. If you're looking for a smart, feel-good read, give Elinor Lipman a try. This was terrific and I also highly recommend *The Inn at Lake Devine*.

Nancy says

This was a fun book. It is a romantic comedy where the heroine, Faith, has everything go wrong in her life. Her fiancé gives her a red string as an engagement ring and then goes off on a walk across America where he

blogs about his experiences. Unfortunately, he seems to have too many female fans which makes his fiancée wonder about many things but especially about his level of commitment.

Faith buys a fixer upper house without knowing the house's history. The price was right so she bought it and while fixing it up, she finds out the previous occupants had quite a bit of drama during their life there. Her quest to find out the truth of what happened there adds some spice to her life. Owning the house and working on it, gives Faith some much needed self esteem.

Faith works in alumni relations at a private school and the main part of her job is writing thank you notes for alumni contributions to the school. This is not an exciting job but she has a great coworker, Nick. When her coworker needs a place to stay, she rents him a room in her house. She enjoys life with Nick and decides that her fiancée is history and cuts off his access to her credit cards. Her ex-fiance comes roaring back to town and ends up moving in with Nick's ex-girlfriend for a place to stay which is very entertaining.

Nick and Faith become romantically involved as they solve the mystery of what happened in the house and find their happy ending as a couple along the way.

Elinor Lipman is a good writer and this book like her other books, was very humorous. Her characters are always quirky and fun.

I was gifted with a copy of this book by Net Galley in return for an objective review.

L.P. Logan says

2.7

Some stuff happened in this book, but, I don't know, I felt as though it were completely irrelevant to the book. How is that possible?! A book about stuff that has nothing to do with the way the book was going? Basically, I've come to the assumption a "serious" plotline was thrown in to try and add some luster to a pretty boring main character and love story. It was just -- blah.

Would I recommend this book to anyone I know? Naw. Can I say that if you are a reader without a desire to really commit to something or any real desire to read, this book would probably be a good fit? Sure. Knock yourself out and then go pick up something with more oomph to it.

Jill says

I like Eleanor Lipman. She always delivers with novels that are warm and perceptive, a tad bit kooky, and often whimsical. Best of all, she makes it all seem easy, although I know that writing is anything BUT effortless.

Her latest book is a great pick-me-upper for a cold, gray winter day. Faith Frankel, her 30-something protagonist, is...well, kind of at odds with life. Her fiancée Stuart, a loser if there ever was one, has taken off

on a new-age walking journey. Her father has just reinvented himself as a forger of Chagall artwork, her job as head of stewardship at her alma mater is suddenly in jeopardy, and then there's that house – 10 Turpentine Lane. This 5 ½ room “dollhouse” is Faith's first foray into homeownership and the house seems to have a salacious back history. Seems that the former owner's second and third husbands fell to their death. There is a bright spot in all this, though. His name is Nick Franconi and he's her office mate, in charge of major gifts.

So let's address the less than sterling things first. Stuart is so incredibly without redeeming qualities that it's hard to imagine why a woman like Faith would ever think of being involved with him. And the murder subplot gets goofier as the novel wears on.

And yet. As with Eleanor Lipman's previous novels, she creates such a witty and lovable cast of characters that it's not hard to cheer for them, even knowing how it will all likely end. There are laugh-out-loud moments and poignant moments and moments when you just want to hit your head and say, “Wow, can't believe THAT happened.” I finished the book with a big smile on my face. And when a book lets me escape from a gloomy Chicago winter, I can't help but applaud.

Tina says

What a fun little book! Loved Elinor Lipman's writing. Pure enjoyment with a dash of quirkiness!

The story is all about Faith Frankel who buys a house on Turpentine Lane with some unexplained history. Enter her well meaning but meddling family and her level-headed workmate/friend Nick. It's a great story told in a very different and amusing way.

Thank-you to NetGalley and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for allowing me the opportunity to read this Advanced Reader's Copy.

Lisa says

An entertaining romantic comedy that made a 5 hour plane trip fly by. Predictable in a good way.

Eilonwy says

3-1/2 stars, rounded up

Faith Frankel has just bought a house for which a suspiciously eager seller accepted well below the asking price. A house in the same town where she grew up and her parents and brother still reside, and where she is now working for the private school she attended as a day student. A house which she bought without any help from her penniless fiancé, who is walking across the US to find himself. Faith's excursion into homeownership opens new and unpredictable doors,

insightfully and entertainingly.

As anyone familiar with Elinor Lipman would expect, this is a charming romantic comedy of manners, lighthearted and humorous, but with some sharp social commentary.

I found Faith to be a wonderfully pragmatic narrator as she takes on the responsibilities of a house; figures out what the heck her relationship with Stuart, the wandering fiancé, really might be worth; deals with being so close to her family again; and juggles work and discoveries about her new house's ever-surprising history. The plot threads are many and all tie together satisfactorily at the end. The characters are all interesting, well-rounded, and diverse, and feel as if the book stumbled into their lives rather than vice versa. Awkward situations abound, but are played sensitively and empathetically, and almost everyone gets a happy-ish ending.

There's one thread about dead babies that made me think "uh-oh" about the story for a while, but this subplot ended up providing the biggest twists and surprises in this book. It was sneaky and well executed.

I really enjoyed this!

Myrna says

I really enjoyed this novel. There was just so much to like: mystery, humor and romance! Great cover and the ending was satisfying too. 4★stars!

♥ Sandi ♥ says

I am not a romance or chic lit reader normally. And this book did not change my mind. I had both the book and the audio. The narrator of the audio - Mia Barron - did a great job. She has a smooth voice and was easy to listen to. Her character definition was really good and you had no problem figuring out exactly who was speaking.

The story itself was only fair. It was about a woman buying her first home - a place where an earlier murder had occurred. She was involved with a real crud who only thought of himself, and when she dumped him she took up with her office mate. She had a dysfunctional family that also entered the picture.

Very light, basically humorless romantic comedy with a very small bit of a mystery thrown in. Not really to my liking.

?Karen says

So this is being described as romance/chick lit, which is not my favorite genre, but in this case was a real delight to listen to. The mystery kept me interested, and the dialogue was smart and witty. I enjoyed getting to know all of the characters, from the young woman who bought 10 Turpentine Lane as her first house, to the whacky family from whom she bought it, to her two love interests, and everyone in between.

A very enjoyable book! I haven't read this author before but am taking suggestions for some of her other

books.

Kasa Cotugno says

This is the perfect book to curl up with on a stormy day. It's got an appealing heroine, an enviable hero, features a cozy bungalow with a tainted history. Romcoms aren't usually this beguiling to me, but this was the escape I needed, a low intensity joyride without shifting gears. Here's a modern family with foibles but no bitterness, and at times hilarious, the plot unfolds with a few surprises, but nothing jarring.

Jaylia3 says

4.5 stars

I became so attached to the characters of *On Turpentine Lane*, and the sometimes wild ride we were all on, that I felt a real sense of loss when the book ended. It's usually that way when I'm reading novels by Elinor Lipman, which combine playful wit with non-sappy but heart-warming story lines.

While her fiancé is off finding himself in a cross-country walk he's hyping on social media, main character Faith Frankel works for her alma mater hand writing thank you notes to donors, but personally and professionally things quickly go askew and get interesting. Picture a modern comedy of manners with snappy repartee or a light-hearted but smart and engaging rom-com with a plot full of twists and turns and characters you root for and you'll have the idea. A fun and non-guilty pleasure.

I read an advanced review copy of this book supplied to me by the publisher with no cost or obligation. Review opinions are mine.
