



Queen Bee of Mimosa Branch

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Linwood Breedlove Scott's life has officially hit rock bottom. Her husband of thirty years has run off with a stripper. The IRS has taken everything but her coffee table. And her hot flashes are four-alarmers. The only thing that could make being flat-broke and fifty any worse is having to crawl home to her parents' house in Mimosa Branch, Georgia...which is exactly where she's headed.

Lin's barely prepared for the loony bin that greets her, from her controlling, eighty-year-old mother and shockingly blunt father to her long-suffering Aunt Glory and her deranged Uncle Bedford who is convinced a cannibal lives under the furniture. Nor is she ready for the instant love-hate attraction she feels for her handsome new next-door neighbor. Trying to navigate her way through the second act of her life with nothing more than a prepaid calling card, a broken heart, and plenty of Prozac, Lin's about to discover that it's never too late for old friends, new romance, the ties of family, and a second chance to survive it all on the road to becoming the person you were always meant to be...

Queen Bee of Mimosa Branch Details

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From Reader Review Queen Bee of Mimosa Branch for online ebook

Lauren says

I read this in 2007 and all I remember is that the woman was incredibly immature for her age....one part that sticks out was how she broke into a fit of laughter when she was about to have sex, like she was 15 or something. The woman was middle-aged, and acting like a school girl. Dumb book.

Lynn says

Oh, gosh! I read this so long ago! I really enjoyed it! What I remember is that the characterization was superb, as Smith's usually is and I could relate to many aspects of Linwood's adjustments in the aftermath of her 'failed' marriage of 30 years. Definitely not a book to read if you demand action, but the depiction of relationships was so well done!

Cathie says

This book started out with so much potential and then fell flat. I loved the premise but there just wasn't much done with it. It ended up taking much longer to read than I thought.

Smith overwrites. She takes everything a step or two further than necessary and zaps the power out of the message.

A fine example was that the ending of the book was two pages before the ending. She made a beautiful, well written inspiring point. But then she goes on for another page and washes over the point with some new age mumbo jumbo that was overdone and did not fit with the book.

Rachel says

Georgia--this book was okay. More self-talk and thinking than necessary. Should have built the relationships with friends in the story rather than having preexisting friends who support her from a distance until the last chapter. Relationship with family (esp. brother and mother) is healed but then she doesn't DO anything for them. Maybe the main characters relationships would not have deteriorated if she had spend less time thinking about her misery and more time doing things to help her family.

Syndy says

If there was a negative rating I would choose it. This book was really pointless. The woman was bitter and witchy. My friend told me it was bad but I read it anyway, dumb. That's several hours of my life I will never

get back.

Paulette says

Recommendation from MG book club. I was ready for a light, fun to read book. This is it. 50 year old woman returns to home in Georgia. Crazy family, handsome next door neighbor, "trying to navigate her way through the second act of her life with nothing more than a prepaid calling card, a broken heart, and plenty of Prozac"

Finished the book. Hmm....the first 3/4ths was enjoyable and then I thought it got woobly--inconsistent, illegal vote tampering, handsome guy not well defined. I still enjoyed the read but disappointed with the resolution. I think the author made the same mistake I see in men's literature--not developing the opposite sex characters.

Laurel-Rain says

Thirty years after Lin Breedlove escaped her hometown of Mimosa Branch, Georgia, she is back. With her tail between her legs, and now as Lin Breedlove Scott, divorced and broke.

She is not looking forward to staying at her parents' home, despite how huge it is; what keeps her going is her plan to refurbish the garage apartment. The bliss of privacy beckons.

But almost as soon as she arrives, old friends and enemies appear and threaten the serenity she seeks. And a next door hunk of a man tempts her, even as a part of her sounds a warning bell.

In the midst of reconnecting, and while maintaining her regular phone contact with best friend Tricia, a cauldron brews, hinting at high drama and hijinks.

What political corruption will bring Lin into the midst of the town? What new connections will form, even as those old ones realign? And how will Lin stave off the desires that clamor, threatening to derail her new life?

Guilty pleasures reign in this dramatic Southern tale, even as the girlfriend connections and getaways promise fun and more adventure. An excerpt sets one of the scenes:

"With guilty pleasure, I snagged the biggest brownie and bit into it. Whoever had made them must have used bran, because it had a strangely coarse consistency, but the taste was sinful and chocolaty, with just a hint of coffee and a spice I couldn't identify."

"Queen Bee of Mimosa Branch: A Novel" was a delightful, if somewhat predictable, tale. Four stars.

Terri says

I didn't care much for this book. Didn't like the main character. Newly divorced at age 50, she moves back home with her parents because she has no skills to support herself after 30 years of marriage. She came from,

and her parents still live in a small southern town, where most of the people, including her family (aunt, uncle, brother, and friends are all eccentric...to much so. She wants nothing more than to fix up a garage apartment which she does in short time, even though she works at a pharmacy pouring coffee. She falls for the pharmacist, fanaticizes about him, finally makes plans to sleep with him, and she gets the giggles, he gets upset, she decides he is not her 'type'. Meanwhile she and others are trying to rid the town of a corrupt, long-time 'big boss' mayor and his cronies....just not an interesting tale.

Book Concierge says

Only okay Southern chick lit. Lin Breedlove Scott is a confused 50-something newly divorced woman forced to move back home. It would be better if the Grant relationship had just stayed friendly, but I think the author threw in the "hot romance" aspect as a way to entice readers. It doesn't. If she's supposed to be on a journey to growth as an adult, she shouldn't do half the things she does. Her moral compass is off.

Beth says

I strongly disliked this book. The main character was annoying, self centered, and not funny. She became more annoying as the book went on. The ending was bad.

Kristi Bumpus says

Plenty of "Southern color," but an awful lot of dated stereotypes, and the plot lines required some willful suspension of disbelief. But what really kept me from enjoying this book was that so much of the dialogue just made me so darned ... uncomfortable. I was embarrassed for the characters. CRINGE.

Sidna says

If this is not THE worst book I have ever read, it is certainly in contention. When I picked it up at the library used bookstore, I was expecting a humorous love story. A quote on the cover states "When it comes to crazy, everything is relative" so you expect a lot of crazy antics with the family in the vein of "You Can't Take It With You."

Linwood Breedlove Scott divorces her husband of 30 years after he runs off with a stripper. Unfortunately, the IRS has taken everything so she is forced to move back home to the small town in Georgia, which she left when she married and moved to Atlanta. In Atlanta she and her husband hobnobbed in the higher social circles.

We see the "crazy" relatives briefly when Lin drives in the driveway of her parents' house. We catch a couple of glimpses of them in one or two other scenes, but that is about it for the crazy relatives.

The person who seems crazy to me is Lin. During her high school years she had worked in the local drugstore. Shortly after she returns home, she's in the drugstore when one of the clerks becomes ill and Lin

takes her job temporarily while getting her real estate license. Why is that divorced or widowed women who have never worked all become realtors in novels?

As luck would have it, the drugstore is now owned by the single, handsome (of course!) son of the man who owned it when Lin was a teen-ager. He also happens to live next door to her parents' house. Naturally, a romance ensues. According to Lin's own account of herself during her marriage she enjoyed wild sex and she misses it now that she is single. She and the pharmacist share a mutual attraction and have deep kisses several times, but she manages to stop just in time before losing her what--virginity? She finally tells him that she wants to have wild sex with him but he has to romance her first. The poor guy goes to a lot of trouble to meet her demands only to have her change her mind at a crucial moment. No wonder he gets mad, but the reader is supposed to agree with Lin that he is a jerk. How about the woman who keeps leading him on, then pulling away? She is either a sex-crazed woman or a born-again virgin. She can't be both.

There is another plot in the book about unseating a crooked mayor that is sort of interesting, but the main character is so self-centered that I couldn't really like her. I'm surprised that it took her husband 30 years to leave her. I wonder if the author really doesn't like men because she seems to assume that all men cheat on their wives. Lin's best friend has a solid marriage, but Lin is sure that her friend is closing her eyes to what her husband is really doing. Trust me, there are some good men out there.

I'm leaving on a trip tomorrow and had already bought this author's "Red Hat Society" to read on the plane. I hope it is better than this book.

🌀Amy🌛🌝🌜 says

So I'm giving this book 2.5 ?s. The story line had tons of promise and for the most part was cute and touching but it dropped in so many place that it continued to leave you wanting and confused! The editing was fraking awful!!!!

Cyndy Aleo says

I am physically unable to enter a bookstore and not buy something for myself. During a recent trip to Barnes & Noble, I headed into the bargain section after selecting the gift I went for in the first place. Of course, trying to find a winner in the piles of bargain books is tough when you have an impatient four-year-old in tow, and I selected Queen Bee of Mimosa Branch mainly by its cheerful cover art.

::: The Basics :::

Linwood Breedlove was in a hurry to get out of Mimosa Branch, and married at 19, thinking she'd never go back other than the occasional visit. Of course, when your husband takes up with a 20-something stripper, spends all your money, and racks up a world of debt, things change in a hurry, and Lin (as she is known) is forced to move back into the family house with her parents Mamie, a stereotypical Southern woman with her Garden Club and set-in-stone ideas about society; and The General, a racist, sexist bigot who appears to be in the beginning stages of Alzheimer's. Add in his younger brother, who has more advanced Alzheimer's (or as Lin puts it, the permanent DTs from years of alcoholism) and his wife Aunt Glory, as well as Lin's hard-drinking, always-failing brother Tommy and you can see why she'd flee.

Of course, no book about middle aged dumping (think First Wives Club) would be complete without friends, and Lin's include old school buddy Tricia, who she mainly talks to long-distance, and Cassie, who has recently come back to Mimosa Branch and come out as a lesbian (because, of course, the first place you want to go when coming out in your fifties is home to your very small, very prejudiced town).

Add in the love interest (a pharmacist from the radical state of California who has all SORTS of non-Southern ideas), and a former drug-addict who is now a biker, preacher, and political candidate running against the corrupt mayor (another stereotype... I kept picturing him as Boss Hogg from Dukes of Hazzard), and, well, you have yourself a cast.

::: The Good :::

The book starts out with promise. The idea of starting out in the world for the first time at the age of fifty-something and having to do so with such an eccentric cast of characters while dealing with your father's encroaching Alzheimer's could have been a great book. The first third or so I was sure it could have been an Oprah book. You know, that whole "woman taking control of her life" bit. The character development was good. You saw not only Lin's interactions with her family, but also with her friend Tricia, and could see how hard she was trying to fit both worlds together.

Lin's strained relations with her parents and brother had real potential, and I really wanted to keep reading to see what happened with them all, and how Lin would do with a new career (she took a job in the pharmacy while taking a real estate course), new place to live (fixing up the apartment over the garage at her parents'), and possible new love (the pharmacist).

::: The Bad :::

At some point, it seems like Haywood Smith lost track of the book she started writing, almost as if she lost her perspective on making the character somewhat autobiographical and threw her whole self in. The character development she spent on the beginning of the book was tossed aside, as her relationship with her parents, aunt, and uncle become sidelines. Her relationship with her brother has a pat ending somewhere halfway through the book where she finds out he is in AA and has been sober. Oh, she's proud and "The End."

The rest of the book is devoted to the all-too-pat political campaign, with machinations by the corrupt mayor from forging official documents to voter fraud, as well as the story about the love interest, which is what finally pushed me over the edge with this book.

Here's a quick plot summary of the love interest: jerk pharmacist neighbor fails to notice that Lin and her mother are trying to get an elderly man wearing nothing but an adult diaper into the house while he berates them for their treatment of a kitten (I'm not kidding... that's his opening scene). Of course, Lin takes a job in the pharmacist that she conveniently falls into, as well as talking to Grant (the pharmacist) about men. The sexual attraction is apparent, and they finally decide to consummate it, only to have Lin back out and Grant basically say that she owed him after the amount he spent on dinner (again, NOT KIDDING).

The most confusing part of this entire plot line is that they keep showing him doing things for the community, and to right the injustices, from turning in a doctor prescribing drugs illegally to helping out the crooked doctor's wife, who is in the process of divorcing him. The brief conversation Grant has with Lin about his string of ex-wives does little to set up the man with horns Ms. Smith portrays him as later.

::: The End :::

Of course, a book with plot lines that go so very awry ends up with such a pat, saccharin ending that you'll gag; I promise. Characters get lost in the writing and are suddenly prominent in the end, and of course, a covert mission to combat voter fraud and a *Thelma and Louise* road trip are expected, aren't they?

The book is a quick, easy read, and would be perfect for beach reading if only there weren't so many "if onlies." Then again, if you really hate men right now, this might be your book.

This review originally published on Epinions: http://www.epinions.com/review/Queen_...

Somjai says

Dang. I've only read one chapter and this is some dog whistle homophobic, racist, classist nonsense. I'm a big fan of Mary Kay Andrews and Dorothea Benton Frank, and I was hoping this author would help satiate my strange penchant for Southern humor and romance. Major disappointment.
