



Too Long a Stranger

Janette Oke

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She made the difficult decision with only her daughter's best interest in mind . . . but did she sacrifice too much?

When her husband dies, Sarah Perry is left with no way to support herself and her daughter, Rebecca. Reluctantly, she takes over operation of her husband's freight-hauling business, managing to save enough money to send Rebecca east to a boarding school-- to an easier life and a future Sarah could not provide.

With the boarding-school fees consuming Sarah's savings, there is no money left for trips home. Over the years, the chasm between mother and daughter becomes much more than geographical distance, and when Rebecca finally returns home, it seems that she and her mother are from different worlds. What hope is there of breaking down the enormous barriers between them?

Too Long a Stranger Details

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Elaine says

A story that is probably repeated too often, but these stories always remind me that I need to rely on my Savior and that the blessings I enjoy are because of His grace.

Leesa Sterner says

I enjoyed other books by Janette Oke but this one had me irritated. Sarah was too proud and Rebecca was selfish and entitled. It was annoying! I'm glad it turned out but it was hard to relate to the characters because of how annoying they were

Shana says

A Difficult Read

The whole book I was hoping for happiness for the two women. They never made choices to make their life better or happy until at the last page. I usually love this author, but this book was my least favorite.

Nan Dixon says

Excellent Read

I really liked the rich content of each character. The suspense surrounding Sarah and her choice kept me interested until the end of the story.

Donna says

I love books with a very strong woman as protagonist and in this one Sarah Perry is definitely a strong woman. After the sudden death of her husband, Sarah is left alone to figure out how to afford to care for her baby, Rebecca. She decides to take over her husband's business hauling freight. She sacrifices nearly everything she has, except perhaps her own self-respect, to be able to afford to send Rebecca to a school out east. When her education is finally finished, Sarah buys a ticket for Rebecca to return home. But now that she has been accustomed to having the finer things in life, including servants, will she fit in to their frontier life of hard work? Sarah says, "It's the person-they are-we are responsible-we are each responsible-for how we turn out-what we do with our life-not our circumstances." This is a good reminder for all of us. So will Rebecca ever be able to understand that her mom has become who she has so that she could give Rebecca the best of everything? or has Rebecca simply been too long a stranger to return to frontier life?

Jomariem says

I usually enjoy most of Jeanette Oke's books, but I was disappointed in this one. At first, the storyline sounds great. An independent widowed woman decides to make some major sacrifices so that her daughter can have a good education, but the ending made me wish that she had just kept her daughter home for all those years. Sarah came across as WAY too independent for me, and then she sent her daughter off to a fancy school where she learned how to become accustomed to ways of wealthy people, and then Sarah was disappointed because her daughter wanted to return to the people she had grown up with instead of staying in a sleepy western town. True, Rebecca was a brat at times and I'm not excusing her behavior, but I feel like that was partially Sarah's fault because she set her daughter up to want the finer things in life, and because of the long separation, there was no real mother/daughter bonding. She could have easily kept her daughter with her and Rebecca would have still turned out fine, especially since they seemed to be living in a nice town and they weren't exactly in dire financial straits at the time Rebecca went away. I have a hard time being sympathetic to either character in this story, really. Even the ending didn't really come across as satisfying for me, and seemed a bit rushed and unrealistic. IMO, this is not one of Jeanette Oke's best books. For a better read, pick up the Love Comes Softly series, Roses For Mama, or Heart Of The Wilderness.

Nadine Keels says

Thoughts on the entire series.

Overall, *Women of the West* is my favorite series (that I've read so far) by Oke, where I really reveled in what the author had to bring in all of her sweet, warm, and simplistic glory. However, the books aren't only warm fuzzies, as Oke does deal with some tough, and even some potentially controversial, issues, giving the reader some points to chew on but doing it in her warm style.

I've read most of the books in the series more than once (maybe even three times, with *The Measure of a Heart*), and while not each of them are individual favorites of mine, the series as a whole took me places I'm so grateful to have gone.

Becca Weston says

When her husband dies, Sarah Perry is left with no way to support herself and her daughter, Rebecca. Reluctantly, she takes over operation of her husband's freight-hauling business, managing to save enough money to send Rebecca east to a boarding school- to an easier life and a future Sarah could not provide. With the boarding-school fees consuming Sarah's savings, there is no money left for trips home. Over the years, the chasm between mother and daughter becomes much more than geographical distance, and when Rebecca finally returns home, it seems that she and her mother are from different worlds. what hope is there of breaking down the enormous barriers between them.

This was an emotional story of a woman trying to survive in a world where women had almost no options. As with most of her other books, Ms. Oke didn't clearly mark the passage of time, and years passed suddenly, surprising you with the fact that Rebecca is now ten instead of six, and then suddenly graduating.

However, the story was well developed, interesting, and attention-grabbing. I enjoyed it a lot, because it wasn't just a love story, (in fact, that had little to do with the story-line at all!). It was about relationships, and real life. (I don't mean that love isn't real life, it just isn't all there is, which is the way it is portrayed in a *lot* of books.)

I would recommend this book to those who enjoy stories of the West, and are in search of a sweet story about a mother's love and sacrifice.

Cheryl says

This one was better than some of the other Women of the West books but it still had some problems. The ending felt very rushed and neither Sarah nor Rebecca were sympathetic characters. I can't imagine shipping my child across the country to be without me for years.

I wanted to admire Sarah for her strength and determination to be independent and take care of herself and her child by working a man's job. But instead she came off rather cold and pathetic and too indulgent of her child. When she returned home, Rebecca should have still been young enough to need parenting and instead Sarah apologized for giving her the rebuke she needed and deserved. And then she was just going to let her leave after only being home for a few months and not only not try to convince her to stay but to take out a loan to pay for her ticket. What utter nonsense and terrible parenting.

I also wanted to see Sarah warm up to one of the two men who cared for her and have some sort of romance with them, but nothing. Rebecca's romance was just glossed over at the end of the book and Seth came off as a bit of a know-it-all goody-goody.

I did enjoy the struggles, hardships, and sense of community, especially in the first part of the book before Rebecca gets shipped off to school. It was worth reading, I just couldn't put myself into the story or its characters' shoes.

Bonnie Codrey says

Enjoyable reading!

I just love Janette Oke's writing. I would rate every book of hers that I have read with a 5.

R.A. says

This book has always been one of my favourites, even *if* it's rather bittersweet! But more about that later!

The Characters:

Sarah - quite an independent woman, but one can't help but feel sorry for her! She worked so hard for her daughter! <3 I wish she had asked for Boyd's help more often though!

Boyd - *squeals* I love him! He was so thoughtful and kind to poor Sarah! He's so sweet to Rebecca as well!!

Rebecca - I loved her more as a child than a grown up, but that's understandable! :) Her and her proper ways got on my nerves, but she couldn't *really* help it! I'm so glad she understands later on! (I won't mention the couple times she was trying to get a guys attention! :D)

Mrs. Galvan - aww! She was so sweet!

Seth - :) He was amazing! His spiritual life was incredible! He was such a help to those who really needed it! <3

Can I also mention that the men in this book worked so hard? It was so amazing!

The Story-line:

It wasn't boring, that's for sure! The main lady worked as a freight hauler to get enough money to care for her daughter! It was so touching! The story-line also had the salvation message throughout which was wonderful! And in the end, the prodigal son story was definitely an aspect!

Content:

Every once in a while, girls would mention guys noticing them or their other friends. One "romantic" walk. A young man kisses a girl's hand. An unmarried man and lady hug, but it wasn't for love - rather for comfort. Nothing inappropriate.

All-in-all:

This book is amazing, folks! If you haven't read it, I'd advise you do! I can't exactly spill out the major bittersweet part because it *is* rather a spoiler! You'd have to read it to find out! :) I've lost count on how many time I've read this beauty!

Also, I shouldn't have been reading this since I was already reading a couple other books. But since this one was in book-form and the others aren't, it was rather easy to pick up, sit on my bed, and read it! :D

<3 Five Stars! <3

Allan67 says

Another book that I read to Diana. We can't do much anymore after her stroke, so I read to her to spend time together. Diana has always loved to have someone to read to her - and I like to do just that.

An interesting story of a widowed mother who pretty well sacrifices her life to provide an education for her only daughter at a boarding school "back east". Once the education is complete, the educated, spoiled daughter returns home to find what her home life really would have been if not for her mother's sacrifices. We almost expected daughter's reaction. The ending was not a surprise as well since we knew that it would something as it did.

Faith says

Ginny Reed says

I did enjoy reading this book but found it a little hard to understand how this mother could send her 6-year old away to boarding school and not see her again until she was a grown woman! I did enjoy the characters in this book.

Chrystal Hogan Hood says

this book was beautifully written. It has made me appreciate my parents even more.
