



A Certain Smile

Judith Michael

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Bestselling author Judith Michael brings together the magic of East and West in a tale of heartwrenching love as vivid and breathless as the pounding energy of exotic Beijing. In a story replete with passion and enduring desire, A CERTAIN SMILE affirms that love has no borders. . . .

An American clothing designer and widowed mother of two teenagers, Miranda Graham arrives in China and is immediately overwhelmed by life in this faraway place. Then she meets Yuan Li, son of an American soldier and Chinese mother--and suddenly two worlds, two cultures, and two hearts collide. As Miranda bravely explores vistas beyond the safe, ordered limits of her own life, she is inexorably drawn to Yuan, a man who embodies all the hardship, dignity, and mystery of China. Their love is an unexpected awakening of body, mind, and spirit--even as the intrusive government and Yuan's ambitious son threaten their newfound joy, propelling them toward the most shattering choice two lovers can make.

A Certain Smile Details

Date : Published February 29th 2000 by Ballantine Books (first published April 1st 1999)

ISBN : 9780449224267

Author : Judith Michael

Format : Paperback 339 pages

Genre : Romance, Fiction, Contemporary

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From Reader Review A Certain Smile for online ebook

Bj Hoover says

This is an intense love-story with an unsatisfying ending. I like the authors' style of writing, and learned a lot about Chinese culture, but couldn't completely get into the characters.

Debra Hale-Shelton says

I interviewed the couple Judith and Michael in their Chicago apartment. I am a lover of food writing, and I still remember that Judith had a copy of Amanda Hesser's *The Cook and the Gardener* on a living room table. She loved cookbooks, though Hesser's book is more than a cookbook.

A Certain Smile is a fun book one can enjoy without having to dig too deep. Literary snobs might differ, but i believe there's a place for light reading as well as the so-called literary and all that in between.

Diane says

Ok read! very predictable,uncertain and questionable storyline (paperback!)

Manuela says

Banale per larghi tratti, oltre che noioso.

Shari says

I really enjoy books by Judith Michael, a married couple that write together. This story takes place in China and deals a lot with the cultural issues and differences between a man and a woman. A good read.

Monica M says

Judith Michael has such a passion for creating two worlds that connect so closely with each-other, but yet are totally separate and revolve in such different ways. For example in his novel *A Certain Smile*, he creates two very diverse characters. Yaun Li, an extremely wealthy businessman and influential idol within politics finds himself falling into a romantic relationship with Miranda Graham, a clothing designer and a middle class widowed mother from America. Miranda travels to China to set up a business deal with a major cloths company based in Beijing, but instead of basing her trip on strictly work she meets Li, and her plans change.

Michael uses an everyday character such as Miranda to connect to readers and pull them into the story, while on the other hand he creates a character such as Li, who is used to show the foreignness of the setting. In my opinion the way that he used the characters to reflect on certain aspects of his story was clever and original. I enjoyed hearing of Li's heritage and how distant Miranda felt from him in the beginning, but shortly began to feel more confident being with him. The only thing that I disliked about the characters make-up was how interested they both were in arguing about differences in politics. I understand that the author wanted to give background information on how China's judicial system worked, but I feel as though it was unrealistic how much they talked about eachother's law systems. If they were real people, after a while they would both loose interest, just as I did when they talked about the subject.

As much as I enjoyed the characters, my enthusiasm doubled when it came to the plot. Michael used a twisting turning conflict to lead readers to the highest point of the story, and then left us with a jaw dropping ending. He built up the plot with the mystery of who was following Miranda, and once he uncovered who and why they were, readers including myself were left satisfied with the hope that nothing bad would come to Miranda and Li. Then Michael leads readers into a different path, a path of guessing and wonder. Without giving anything away, I can say that I truly enjoyed how he built the story all the way until it's climax then revealed the true meaning of Li's character.

Other romance novels such as Lucky Ones by Nicholas Sparks had a very clean ending, but that wasn't the case in Michael's book. Most Romance novels end in a tragedy that bring two people together, but within this book, there was far more than just a tragedy. In addition to the difference in endings, the characters had a questionable relationship until last minute. Normally characters in romance novels get to know eachother and quickly fall in love, but that was again not the case in this book.

Overall I found that the theme of love perseveres was very viable throughout the buildup of his characters, plot and setting. I rated my book a 4 out of 5 because of how the author used his talent of bringing two separate lives so close together, so purely. I recomend this book to anyone in search of a good book to read and learn a lot from.

Kathy says

A paperback I had sitting on my shelf for awhile, I decided to pick up and put the kindle down and I'm glad I did. This novel takes place in Beijing and begins when an American clothing designer, Miranda Graham, goes to China for her company to meet with the Chinese manufacturers. She meets Yuan Li, who had an American soldier as a father and Chinese mother. They meet, by chance, in the airport upon her arrival and spend each day of her trip together. Two cultures colliding and seeing Beijing through her eyes makes for a nice love story, if you are in the mood for some light summer reading.

Kathi says

When I was younger, Judith Michael was one of my favorite authors, but it has been years since I've read anything of theirs. This book did nothing for me, left me flat. I can't define why. Maybe I've grown up, or maybe this one wasn't as good as I remember the others as being.

Virginia Markhart says

I was disappointed in this book. I don't think I am prejudiced. Maybe I am. I could not get behind the love affair on the American woman on a business trip to China. Ten days in China. I did like the information about the government background. That was interesting. I just could not believe in the love affair. Figured it would end when she flew back to Boulder Colorado, and it did. Predictably.

Diana says

Miranda Graham is a widowed clothing designer (who doesn't travel much) who is sent to China to work with factories there. She meets a man in the airport, who rather takes over her life there. Miranda does, of course, fall in love with him. they end up being followed by the secret police etc. etc. It is okay, but a predictable love story.

Mavis says

I think this book is great, the only reason why I left one star out is because I hate the fact the they have to be separated in the end due to the fact that they have different living standard and lifestyle. Well, of course. Life can't be perfect. Still a good read anyway.

Tyra says

Its been a long time since I've read a Judith Michael story and while I enjoyed it, the story line drove me nuts, hence the low rating. The whole thing just seemed implausible and far-fetched, from the random meeting at the airport to the declaration of love and possible marriage after less than a week of knowing someone.

But, if you want an escapist book...go for it.

Gillian says

Non-compelling characters meet "unrealistically" when he (Chinese Li) helps 'her (American Miranda) get through the crowds at Beijing airport to find a taxi to her hotel. Somehow (?) they fall in love and then avoid having the where-is-this-going conversation. Meanwhile Li's son is mixed up with pirates and government/police corruption.

Not sure why I finished this book, really. The incorrect Mandarin in places was off-putting, as well as the fact that in a 10-day trip she phones her kids once, and that the initial threat felt from being followed by the "spy police" is not itself followed through. It's as if some parts of the story were "chickened out on". She gets into trouble after passing on a letter, so we expect something to happen with the postcards she writes, but then she just mentions that she never sent them.

Some missed opportunities for a much better yarn. The second star is for the (unfulfilled) potential.

Macawley Brown says

I thought this book was completely unrealistic. Miranda, a mousy American fashion designer, travels to China for business. Upon arrival at the airport, she meets Li, a successful Chinese engineer who wishes to help her and show her the city. The two fall in love, and tell each other that, within about 5 days. At the end, they are contemplating moving together, either to the States or to China. Really, really cheesy. Would not recommend.

Some of the writing was nice, though. I was enjoying the book at first and then it just took a turn for the worse.

Melissa says

Book #14 read in 2006

A slow-moving tale about two lovers from different worlds: her from America, him from China. There is much interesting information about the Chinese culture, but I was a little disappointed in the ending. However, someone else might really enjoy this book. I liked others by this author much better.

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