



Where There's Smoke

Jodi Picoult

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Bestselling author Jodi Picoult is a masterful storyteller, who “writes with a fine touch, a sharp eye for detail, and a firm grasp of the delicacy and complexity of human relationships” (*The Boston Globe*). Now, in this original short story, available exclusively as an eBook, Picoult introduces Serenity Jones, one of the fascinating characters from her eagerly awaited new novel, *Leaving Time*.

Even as a child, Serenity Jones knew she possessed unusual psychic gifts. Now, decades later, she’s an acclaimed medium and host of her own widely viewed TV show, where she delivers messages to the living from loved ones who have passed. Lately, though, her efforts to boost ratings and garner fame have compromised her clairvoyant instincts. When Serenity books a young war widow to appear as a guest, the episode quickly unravels, stirring up a troubling controversy. And as she tries to undo the damage—to both her reputation and her show—Serenity finds that pride comes at a high price.

Where There's Smoke Details

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Author : Jodi Picoult

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From Reader Review Where There's Smoke for online ebook

Melissa Lee says

At only 40 pages the author was able to fit not only a current storyline but enough backstory to understand the main character. The paranormal aspect isn't really a genre I normally pick up, but I couldn't put this down. Serenity Jones was an interesting character and I found learning about her special gift to be as well. I won't say that I am a believer of mediums, but the way Picoult described the process of connecting with the spirits seem to be well.. believable.

Although the ending was quite abrupt, I was pleased to learn that Serenity is featured in the full length novel Leaving Time by the same author. I am looking forward to reading not only that story but several other of Picoult's works as well.

I would recommend Where There's Smoke to fans of this author and those who are interested in contemporary fiction with a spiritual or paranormal angle. This would also be ideal for readers who are curious to find out if Jodi Picoult's writing style is right for them.

To read more of my reviews check out my blog:
<http://mlsmanyreads.blogspot.ca/>

Jessica says

All my reviews can be found out: <http://jessicasreadingroom.com>

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Where There's Smoke is the short story introduction to Serenity Jones, a psychic. I found the premise interesting and saw it was just .99 on the Google Play Store, which is free money for me since I participate in the Google Rewards surveys. I always get books with the money I earn from the surveys.

Serenity also has two spirit guides who are entertaining to say the least. And temperamental too! Serenity has a war widow on her show who is hoping to speak to her husband. Things go wrong and Serenity doesn't know what to do. Then she sees a politician on television whose child has gone missing, and she decides what to do next.

Serenity is also a character in the novel Leaving Time. I would be interested in reading that novel now, which is the point to a short story. Jodi did what she was intending in this case by writing this short story. This is the first I have read by Jodi Picoult although I have several of her novels. I own Mercy, My Sisters' Keeper, Plain Truth, and will very soon own Small Great Things. I now plan to buy Leaving Time.

Have you read any of these? Which should I read first? Are there any others of hers you recommend? I have heard Nineteen Minutes is one to read.

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### Joan says

I don't often read short stories but this was free and although I have not read anything previously by this author, I knew of her work.

A good read, with an MC who is both likeable and yet dislikable. Crisp writing and a tight storyline. Suffice it to say that after reading this 'prequel', I will probably buy the full length novel *Leaving Time* when it is published.

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### **Claire (Book Blog Bird) says**

This popped up on Amazon one day as a free ebook so I decided to give it a shot.

*Where There's Smoke* is a short story about a psychic medium who has her own TV show where she contacts loved ones who have passed away and in a world full of fakes she is the real deal, a genuine psychic. When she brings on a bereaved war widow in an attempt to boost ratings, though, things start to go wrong.

I really enjoyed this short story. I've never really picked up anything by this author before as she's not my go-to genre, but I'd be tempted read more by her on the back of this. Her writing has a nice flow and her characters were very well pictured. Recommended.

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### **Tracy Kellies says**

This was actually a good short story until there end, where I was a bit disappointed. The story line was very captivating and I could not stop reading until I was forced to stop because the book ended so abruptly. I was left wanting more.

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### **Alaina Meserole says**

Again, I read books out of order! So this is another prequel to *Leaving Time* but it was supposed to be read before *Larger than Life*. Well, I did the complete opposite and I still ended up loving all of the books.

Now I love novellas, I really truly do but sometimes they are just WAY too short. I sometimes really want more from them and other times I'm completely satisfied that it was short because maybe I didn't like who it was about or just something was off to me the entire time.

Yeah, no, that didn't happen this time guys. NOPE, I loved everything about this one.

Serenity Jones could see dead people. Yeah, I just went sixth sense on you guys. Now again, I don't really believe in this kind of stuff - but I have to give the girl mad props. Especially since no one believe her when she was younger and they all probably talked shit about her behind her back saying she was crazy af or that she talks to invisible people all the time. Well, those people are wrong and I loved everything about Serenity.

*Where There's Smoke* was such a good story. Short but amazing. It will definitely leave you wanting more. I suggest that if you want to read these three books that you actually read them in order (unlike me) but I still enjoyed them out of order.

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## Tania says

A very short introduction to Serenity, the main character, in Jodi's newest book releasing in October. Although I didn't find her a very likable character (which I think was intended), I thought the fact that she was a psychic with her own cable show was an interesting angle for a story. I liked the explanations of spirit guides and how the "reading" process is experienced by her. I can't wait for *Leaving Time* to be released. Oh, and best of all, this novella is free on amazon.

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## Jessica says

I dont know wtf I just read but it was awful. This was my first Picoult book and may very well be my last for all the hot mess 35 pages managed to be. The story could have been interesting but the writing was poorly done. Loose ends all over the place. Didn't explain the things that were somewhat wrapped up. The main character wasn't terribly likable. And the ending was so abrupt I literally didn't even realize it had ended until i ended up in an excerpt for another book. Also I don't know who she talked to when doing research on this book but the parts about the con artists were more on point than anything else... Hot mess...I definitely wouldnt recommend.

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## Brenda says

Serenity Jones remembered how life had been when she was a child – living on Campbell’s soups as her mother couldn’t afford anything else. Serenity’s mother didn’t have to live like that anymore – since Serenity began her live television shows where she put people in touch with their dead loved ones, she was famous. Her great-great-grandma was an Iroquois healer and she also had the gift.

The day she had a war widow wanting to be in touch with her husband began as any other – accompanied by her two spirit guides, Lucinda and Desmond, Serenity was not expecting the fireworks which followed. In the ensuing chaos she suddenly found herself at odds with her guides – where were they when she needed them?

What a wonderfully light and entertaining short story! This is the prequel to Jodi Picoult’s eagerly awaited new novel, *Leaving Time*, which will be released in October 2014. This one also contains a taster for the new book – Serenity Jones is one of the fascinating characters who will be entertaining us in *Leaving Time*. *Where There’s Smoke* is one I have no hesitation in recommending.

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## Dani says

*"(...) Maybe holding something precious at a distance is the only way to measure its value..."*

This is the first Jodi Picoult book that I've ever read. It was extremely satisfying.

This short story presents one of the characters of *Leaving Time*, Jodi's next novel. The character is Serenity Jones, a medium that hosts her own TV show. In this TV show, she does readings to people with interesting life stories. But everything goes wrong when she invites the widow of an American soldier at Iraq.

I liked how the book was honest about the war at Iraq, that it didn't picture the Americans as heroes. As stated in the book: "(...) *The government's invading a country...*" (view spoiler)

I think the start of the story was a little bit rushed. Not all of us believe in mediums and ghosts, so I think the beginning of it should have been more gradual to gain a credibility.

Although short in extension, it was extremely rich in content. At the end, everything fits in place and gives us a sense of closure. So, it can be read separately from the main story, *Leaving Time*.

The prose is simply but impeccable. I really liked Jodi Picoult's style and I'm looking forward to read another one of her books soon.

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### **Sharon says**

From as young as four years old, Serenity Jones could see people that no one else could see. Of course Serenity's mother never believed her the day she told her that she could see a little boy in their house. Her mother told Serenity that the boy wasn't real, but to Serenity he was.

Having lived with her gift most of her life, Serenity now has her own very successful television show where she has the ability and the gift to communicate with the dead. It is here that she is able to help people get messages to their loved ones that are no longer here.

Serenity is approached by a war widow, Betsey Rycroft who's husband died in Iraq and she wants to get in touch with him. At first things start out as they normally do, where Serenity has her two spirit guides, Lucinda and Desmond by her side, but it's what happens next that is unexpected.

A very enjoyable short story that leaves you wanting more. Where There's Smoke is a prequel to Jodi Picoult's next novel, *Leaving Time*. Recommended.

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### **Obsidian says**

Please note that I gave this book 2.5 stars, but rounded it up to 3 stars on Goodreads.

I recall getting a Picoult novel a few years ago from a friend and returning it back to her un-read after three weeks. This short story did not make me want to run out and get more of her books. This book was pretty weird I would say. I think because it was a short story we are not given anytime as readers to absorb what we are reading about. Everything was very rushed and put together and with the rather abrupt ending which doesn't let you know how things play out one way or the other, this book didn't do it for me at all.

This short story focuses on psychic Serenity Jones. We find out that Serenity (unlike most psychics) is a household name and is a more popular t.v. host than this book's version of Oprah is. She has used her powers to find missing children and can talk to loved one's deceased friends and families.

I don't know what to say about Serenity. If I had a gift that could find missing children and capture killer's, I don't know if I would be sitting around obsessing about the ratings of my tv show and how much money I had (like she does) all of the time. She was not that very interesting of a character.

Jodi Picoult mashes some truly odd things about this character and the overall plot (a reading gone wrong) gets kind of lost in this story as Serenity's character does what is necessary in order to get back on top. The author gives her pink hair (for some reason, I still don't get that one) and we have her throw up an aside that she gets her hair done at a black hair salon and is proud to be the only white woman there (super odd). There's just little things thrown in here and there you kind of go huh about. Another example, Serenity's mother apparently has a great grandmother who was an Iroquois healer that was also psychic. I recall reading that line like four times going huh?

The dialogue really isn't that great. There is a lot of explanation about her powers and the other side and heaven and God and man oh man I just rolled my eyes. Especially when Serenity does this whole some things you just need to experience for yourself.

The flow is really weird too. We have a bad reading that all of a sudden means danger to Serenity's show. So she goes off and does something else even when she knows she has no support so to speak. I think I was supposed to be shocked by the outcome, but once again I scratched my head wondering what she was going for here.

I think there was supposed to be an overall point about misusing your gifts, I don't know. I thought this entire story was extremely ham-fisted and hard to believe.

The ending just happens. I thought maybe I missed a page or something, but nope. It just kind of ends. This short story is a set-up to showcase this character's appearance in Picoult's full length novel, "Leaving Time". I am not going to go seek that book out. Nothing about Serenity has me interested enough to read about her further.

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## **Brooke says**

*I have such a love-hate relationship with Jodi Picoult.*

**2.5 stars;**

This definitely held my interest - I want to know what happens!! I'm not a huge fan of how Picoult switches POVs every chapter in her novels so I liked how this (short) story stuck to just one POV. I think I would be more inclined to read more of her if she just stuck to one (or two) POVs for a considerable amount of pages.

Also, not sure if this is just me since I haven't read many short stories but the ending was very abrupt. Like really, really abrupt. I didn't even realize the story was over until I kept scrolling and there was nothing more...

2.5 stars just because of it's ending and I wasn't too crazy about the main character, Serenity - she was very cocky and annoying - but the story was building up nicely, got me hooked, and left me curious and wanting more.

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### **Lisa says**

Sometimes I don't know why I read short stores because I always find them erm... well... too short!

I nearly always end up frustrated shouting well you can't end it there ffs!

This story was good but frustrating for me personally.

I didn't like the main character much but felt that she would grow on me in time - she has potential.

I would have liked less time spent discussing psychics in general and a bit more depth to the actual story...and a conclusion please!

I guess I'll just have to read the full-length book when it comes out :)

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### **Marianne says**

Where There's Smoke is a short story by popular American author, Jodi Picoult. Serenity Jones is a genuine psychic with her own TV show. She's been psychic all her life, something her mother recognised from her own great-grandma, an Iroquois healer. Serenity has two spirit guides: Lucinda, a reformed, elderly African-American woman; and Desmond, a fierce, feisty gay man. When a war widow whose husband died in Iraq comes on the show wanting to contact him, his message for his wife is not what she was hoping for. And when the reaction this elicits is not to his satisfaction, Serenity becomes the subject of his ire. Serenity Jones is a fascinating and rather fiery woman who is a pivotal character in Picoult's twenty-first novel, Leaving Time, and Picoult offered this short story as a free gift to fans eagerly awaiting her latest novel. The short story also includes an excerpt from Leaving Time. An excellent taster.

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