



A Sensible Arrangement

Tracie Peterson

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Marty Dandridge Olson is a widow looking for a way out of Texas. Widower Jake Wythe has secured a job as a bank manager in Denver, only to discover that the bank board wants him to be a married man. With Texas in his roots, he advertises for a Lone Star bride, and Marty answers the call. They both agree they are done with romance and love and will make this nothing more than a marriage of convenience.

Marty works to carve out a new life in high-society Denver as Jake works to guide the bank through a collapsing economy. But when money goes missing at the bank and accounting discrepancies point to Jake, he must find a way to prove his innocence. Yet all he wants to do is go back to Texas and own his own ranch. Marty, on the other hand, owns a ranch--one she's never told her husband about. She hates Texas because it represents the losses in her life. But as the couple grows closer and love begins to bloom, Marty realizes she needs to tell Jake the truth. Can she come to terms with the past and her anger toward God in order to make room for love?

A Sensible Arrangement Details

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From Reader Review A Sensible Arrangement for online ebook

Reet Champion says

Marty Olson is about to do the absurd. When bank manager Jake Wythe advertises for a bride Marty decides she has had enough of her aad life in Texas; and so she leaves for the greener pastures of Colorado to become Mrs. Jake Wythe. Without telling her sister of her plans plus hiding from Jake the fact that she owns a coveted ranch in Texas Marty's deception grows rather large. Yet it is a marriage of convenience as both agreed on beforehand. And as far as either is concerned it will stay that way. It will be a tough road ahead of the pair and it would seem Providence has other things in store for them.

Tracie Peterson is normally an author whose books I devour from page one to the end. Normally. This is her second latest series(I dunno; her less recent books are by far my favorites) I've attempted and have found it very wanting. For one thing it seemed like zilch was happening and it just continued to drag. None of the characters really tugged at this reader's heart strings and I soon lost interest in what happened in their lives. After determining so much that I would finish finally gave up half way through the book and, like Marty, moved on to greener pastures in the form of another book. As a side note I think *A Sensible Arrangement* would appeal to Janette Oke fans because it seemed to me that there were some of the qualities of Ms. Oke's writing to be found in this story.

DISCLAIMER: In accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising" we would like to note that we received an electronic copy of "A Sensible Arrangement" provided by the publishers Bethany House, through NetGalley.com in exchange for our honest review.

reetchampionbookreviews.wordpress.com

Brittany says

A Sensible Arrangement is the first book that I have read by Tracie Peterson. I found it to be an easy and smooth read, with interesting characters.

Jake and Marty agree to a marriage of convenience early on in the book and Marty travels from Texas to Colorado as a mail-order bride. There's a little bit of tension between the two as they get to know each other, but otherwise, they fall into a fairly easygoing friendship. We follow Marty as she learns her duties in high society and tries to find a way to be useful. We watch Jake as he works as a bank manager in very stressful financial times.

Marty was a complicated heroine. I liked her, but there things that really bothered me about her, too. She struggles with a very large personality flaw...she lies. She has a real problem understanding that lies and lies by omission are damaging to others. Marty also has big anger problems toward God. The dialogue between Marty and her ladies maid, Alice, is a wonderful explanation of why bad things happen and what role God plays in that. The author handled this so well. There is also some mystery and danger in this book, especially toward the end.

I have to admit that I expected the book to tie all of the loose ends up, but it didn't. I feel that this must be in

preparation for the next book in the series. I definitely plan to read the rest of the series and I still felt satisfied at the end of the story. Even though there are some questions left unanswered, it is not a cliff hanger ending and I appreciate that!

I received a complimentary copy of this book from Bethany House Publishers in exchange for an honest review, which I have given.

You can read this review on my blog at:
<http://brittreadsfiction.wordpress.co...>

Iola says

Widow Marty Olsen is leaving her Texas ranch to be a mail order bride for Jacob Wythe, a banker in Denver. He's a widower looking for a sensible wife for a marriage of convenience, because the board members of the bank feel a bank manager should be married. They need to keep up appearances, after all.

My real problem with *A Sensible Arrangement* was that I expect a marriage of convenience story to have a strong romantic element. While in real life these situations were undoubtedly the challenge of two complete strangers learning to build a life together, in Christian fiction (and general market fiction), a marriage of convenience is two strangers falling in love. This was a real weakness in *A Sensible Arrangement*—I never felt Mary and Jacob spent enough time together to develop a lasting relationship.

If you leave aside the fact that *A Sensible Arrangement* wasn't a romance, it did have several strengths. Marty was a particularly interesting character. She was a strong and independent woman who makes her own choices (as illustrated by the fact she left a steady existence for the uncertainty of being a mail-order bride in faraway Denver), yet she was a compulsive liar who constantly tried to reconcile her lack of truthfulness towards Jacob as being for the best. I did find her lying somewhat tiresome, as I didn't understand her reason for lying for most of the novel (and when it was finally revealed, it seemed a little illogical).

The Christian elements were strong, with a clear message of salvation, and a sobering comparison of Christians as opposed to people who go to church for social reasons (I suspect not a lot has changed in this regard since the 1890's). The background to the plot was the collapse of the banking industry in Colorado due to changes in national legislation, and I thought this was interesting. We've all heard of the 1929 crash which started the Great Depression of the 1930's, but I hadn't known there were others.

A Sensible Arrangement is the first in the start of the *Lone Star Brides* series, but I suspect it draws on characters introduced in previous novels as the backstory has that quality of delivering a lot of information in only a few words. It's Tracie Petersen's 100th published novel, and it shows in the strong writing and the way she seamlessly integrates the history into the plot.

Overall, while I enjoyed the historical aspects and the relationships between the minor characters, I wasn't convinced by the romance between Marty and Jacob. I'm sure Tracie Petersen fans will enjoy it.

Thanks to Litfuse Publicity for providing a free ebook for review.

Vikki Vaught says

Loved Jake, but I struggled to like Marty. Overall a well written book with good emotions. On to Alice's story. Happy reading/listening!

Gabrielle Meyer says

I've read many of Tracie's books and I'm a big fan of hers. She's a well-known, well-loved author in the Christian writing community, and for good reason. Tracie's books are engaging, thoughtful, and full of romance. She also has the ability to weave in spiritual truths that stay with the reader long after the last sentence has been read.

I wasn't disappointed in *A Sensible Arrangement*. The story has a feisty heroine who is independent, courageous, and compassionate. She's flawed, as we all are, but in a way that is redeemable and relatable. The hero is brave, strong, and honorable. He's also flawed, but in a way that leaves us cheering for him until the final page.

Marty Olson leaves her past behind in Texas to marry a stranger from a newspaper advertisement. She was widowed four years before, and no longer desires to live the life of a rancher. She will marry in name only, as both she and the groom are eager to keep the marriage as more of a business venture.

Jake Wythe is managing a bank in Denver, but longs to return to his ranching roots in Texas. His boss insists a man in his position should be married, so Jake advertises for a Lone Star Bride to come fill the part. He is disillusioned with marriage, and only wants a wife to be a companion and to attend the necessary social obligations of her position until he's saved enough money to return to Texas.

But when Marty arrives in Denver, their sensible marriage arrangement might not work the way they had hoped.

This book has a strong plot, is easy to read, has enjoyable characters, and has a thread of suspense that kept me turning the pages. The story is set in the opulent neighborhoods of Denver in the 1890s, with a hint of Texas woven in. I thought the book would end in a predictable way, but it didn't turn out like I had imagined at all!

My only complaint is that I didn't feel the hero or heroine had very strong goals. They responded to the circumstances around them, but neither one had a significant noble quest. Marty becomes involved with the orphans, and tries to help find them a home, but that isn't a very important thread in the story, and only feels like a secondary goal. Other than that, I felt that the characters were well developed, and the story was believable.

It's the first in the Lone Star Bride series, so I didn't feel like it had a clean ending, though most of the main story threads were tied nicely by the last page. I was left with a few unanswered questions, so I'm eager to read the next book in this series.

Overall, the book was a good read and I would recommend it to anyone.

I received a free copy of this book from the publisher for my honest review.

SheLove2Read says

I can only speculate at what would make a woman enter a marriage of convenience, especially one that from the forefront was to be an "in name only" marriage. I'm sure many a woman (and some men) found these "sensible arrangements" when they found themselves near homeless or in dire straits, but in the case of this heroine, she had choices, and other than just wanting a change of scenery, it seemed a silly decision. I never really warmed up to her, mainly because she found it much easier to lie about virtually everything than to tell the truth, even when it was inconsequential.

The book was also on the dry side. There was quite a bit of dialog and conversation that didn't do anything to further the story. By about halfway, I found myself skimming.

2.5 stars

Hannah says

3.5 stars.

This was an odd type of book. It starts with a bang and then goes into a society where Marty has to adjust to life as a rich banker's wife. Except he's not so rich in his own right, but because of his work in the bank. And there are hinky things going on with the bank, which may easily have been the reason the Alice, Marty's maid, ended up scarred, orphaned, and destitute.

I lost stars because, while the characters were well sketched and realistic, they didn't jump off the page and grab me. And I personally like it when the suspense element is played up a trifle more in a novel/series that has a recurring villain. But Marty and Jake's relationship is satisfying to watch grow, and I definitely felt like Marty grew on me in the story as she tried to do the right thing despite her own wishes. Even though she fought it, she knew what she ought to do. There is only one holdout of her willfulness...left to be dealt with in the next book...

Sarah says

Didn't care for it. (2 ½ stars)

This is the first book I've read by Tracie Peterson and I'm sorry to say that I was quite disappointed. I have often heard how wonderful her books are, but I didn't enjoy this one very much.

The story begins with Marty planning to leave for Colorado to be a mail-order bride. It started out slow and there wasn't much to hold my interest. Thankfully it picked up about half way through and I was able to finish it. There seemed to be a lot of wasted detail and pages. This story could have been told as a novella and been excellent.

I found Marty very annoying, with her constant lying and commenting about how easy her new life was. She didn't seem very likeable to me. The only thing I remotely identified with was her opinion of the upper crust

society she was thrust into. My favorite part of the whole book was when she finally stood up to them. I didn't much care for Jake, either. We don't see much from his point of view and he seemed to be a very flat character. I knew more about the servants than him. There wasn't much to endear him to me. Yes, he was kind to Marty, but shortly into the book, he starts talking about his hopes and dreams, and doesn't even notice that Marty wasn't happy with them. This happens several times and he just ignores her comments and concerns.

This book is filled with descriptions and is well written, I must give Ms. Peterson that, but that seems to be all it is. There is very little dialogue between Marty and Jake, though they marry very early in the book. Of course, they come to love each other, but I have no idea how! How do you love someone that you never talk to or spend time with? It seems to be a mostly physical attraction on both sides, since all the comments are about their appearance and how attractive they are, or some other such thing.

I must say, that Ms. Peterson really drove home how lies can affect your life. I did appreciate that and there are several discussions about God, which were well done and didn't seem the least bit stilted. Though, I did find their faith rather shallow.

I would recommend this book if you are a huge fan of the author, otherwise I would suggest skipping it. I received this book from Bethany House Publishing for my honest review, which I have given. I was not required to write a positive review and all opinions expressed are my own.

Beth Wolf says

This is such a nice easy read. The story line kept me interested and moved along nicely, but didn't expect anything less from Tracie Peterson!!

Jessica Wolf says

Oh boy. Is it possible to give a book zero stars?

The Good:

Honestly, there wasn't much good about this book. Marriages of convenience and arranged marriages are some of my favorite tropes, but this was just...awful. It *was* written well, though.

The Bad:

All of the characters were flat and lacking any sort of depth. Everything happened too easily, and the last two chapters were a whirlwind of wrapping the story up so it wouldn't be too long. There was nothing gripping me to the story because there was barely any story. It was "this happened and then this happened and this and yada yada."

Also, ZERO chemistry between Jake and Marty. Just nothin'.

The Ugly:

Marty has to be one of the worst heroines I have ever read in this genre. I like characters with flaws; it's human nature to have issues. Normally, a good character has good qualities and then a couple bad. Marty, on the other hand, was all bad qualities. She lied constantly. She was selfish. She was stuck up. And, after her "miracle faith transformation" (which was handled horribly because it happened without letting the reader experience it), she had the audacity to judge and ridicule others because they weren't being "Christian

enough." No one else saw any of this, though. They loved her and everything about her. Seriously, every time Jake opened his mouth all he did was praise her. It was sickening.

Save yourself the pain and don't read this book.

Robin Witt says

I was interested in reading this book because the setting was so striking to me - Denver on the eve of the 1890s silver crash. And I loved how the author made this historic financial crises a real plot issue, instead of just a background proof she'd done some research. I was interested in seeing how mail order brides, a marriage of convenience, and the setting of Denver worked together in this historical novel, and I was pleased with what I found.

When I opened the book, I read the dedication and the about the author and realized it was Christian fiction (not something I would have gone out looking for, but not a problem for me, either).

I suspect that the religious plot/subplot will be acceptable for those who are looking for that in a romance novel - it was just a little heavy handed (from my perspective), but I think that for Christian fiction, it was probably about right.

As other readers said, more dialogue between the two of them to see the relationship growing would have been nice. I very much enjoyed most of the other plot threads in the novel. My only complaint would be that the matter with Alice was not resolved to my satisfaction, which is ok if Alice is going to be the focus of the next book.

My other complaint is the un-fired gun. In act 1, Marty arrived in Denver with a pistol, and we got to see her using that pistol to excellent effect. In act 2 she is given a shotgun by her husband, but we never get to see Marty really using the shotgun (carrying it casually into a room does not cut it for that one).

Jerry says

Pretty good...but the ending was too abrupt.

Wanda says

Denver, Colorado 1892

_____ Book Quote _____

"Texas-born man now living in Colorado, working as a banker, wishes to correspond with a Lone Star lady. Seeking potential wife who would display the virtues, sensibilities, and wisdom of a strong Texas woman. Must be willing to leave Texas for Colorado."

_____ End Quote _____

Martha "Marty" Olsen answered the classified ad in the Dallas Daily Times Herald because she was desperate to leave Texas. After her husband of ten years was gored by a bull on their ranch she wanted nothing to do with Texas or ranching. Marrying a total stranger and moving to Colorado seemed to be the best solution. Now if she could only absolve her anger at God. Will she ever be able to forgive Him for the death of her husband? And will she be able to live with the arrangement she made with her new husband, or does she want more?

Book Quote

"You mean do they know about our sensible arrangement? This marriage of convenience?"

End Quote

Jacob "Jake" Wythe needed a wife for appearances sake as required by his job at the Denver Bank but, after two failed relationships, he didn't want to risk his heart. The only way to avoid the entanglement of his heart was to find a wife that agreed to a marriage of convenience, a sensible arrangement. The only requirement was that she be a lady of Texas because as soon as he set aside enough funds he intended to return to Texas and do what was in his heart--buy a ranch. When the threat of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act being repealed is brought to light and the very livelihood of the people is threatened, it begins to weigh heavily on Jake's heart. What hurts even more is the betrayal of the wife he has come to love. Will they survive the oncoming depression. And will God heal the very relationship he brought together?

This is my first book by Tracie Peterson and I must say there are many things I love about it. It starts out in Texas in 1892 and very soon moves to Denver, Colorado. The story flows in such a way that usually only comes from a seasoned writer and she is a very seasoned writer (This is her one hundredth book!). The attention to detail and the research that obviously went into writing this book, really draws you in and holds your attention. It's like you're there and you can see the entire scenes played out in your mind. I love the entire plot and feel that If one aspect were left out the story wouldn't have held together as well. Something I believe Tracie Peterson is very good at is holding a story together from beginning to end.

I also loved the characters. Marty was a strong woman that could take care of herself and anyone else for that matter. She could shoot with the best of them and drive a team of horses without batting an eye. I love strong heroines in stories so it's safe to say I loved Marty. She also had a lot of anger at God because of her husband's death and it was interesting to see her wrestle with her own mind and heart when it came to working through her anger.

Jake had his own form of demons chasing him. He had been hurt badly by his wife and because of this he worked harder to guard his heart. His job at the bank was a huge burden, too, and the heartlessness of his employers weighed heavily on him. He had also turned from God, not as severely as Marty but enough that he had to find his way back.

My favorite character was Alice Chesterfield, a seventeen year-old girl hire by Marty to be her ladies' maid. She is the very one that helped Marty work through her anger the most. The faith and wisdom she displayed at such a young age was remarkable and I loved the personal talks she had with Marty. She was an inspiring character and I hope to see more of her.

Mrs. Landry the housekeeper and Mr. Brighton the butler were a highlight of the book for me. Their sparring made me laugh and I looked forward to each time their paths crossed because I knew it was going to be interesting. They were the one spot of humor in the book and, I think, the perfect element to keep a reader entertained on a less serious level. The spiritual content is perfectly balanced. It deals with forgiveness and the characters' condition of the heart. Alice's conversations with Marty are so amazing and so well written it will inspire you to deepen your relationship with God, too. You can't ask for more in a book. *A Sensible Arrangement* is a total package. Everything you need to be thoroughly entertained all wrapped up in one neat little package. It's the first book in the Lone Star Brides series and it can be read alone, but you will definitely want to read the next book in the series to learn even more about the characters in this book. I'm a huge historical fiction fan and this book more than satisfies my craving for an historical romance I can sink my teeth into. I couldn't put it down and I am not-so-patiently waiting for book two. This book could rival any book by Janet Oke, only with a stronger emphasis on the romantic aspect, and that's saying a lot. Tracie Peterson is now one of my go-to authors. If you like historical romance and you want a story that will pull you in and hold you until the end, you'll love *A Sensible Arrangement*!

Disclaimer: I received a copy of this book from the publisher for my honest review. The opinions expressed are mine alone. I received no monetary compensation for this review.

Ruth Hill says

It seems that every time I pick up a book written by Tracie Peterson, I am thoroughly enchanted. While this is only the second book I have read by this author, it is quite simple to discover why she is a best-selling Christian author. Her stories are definitely a cut above the typical historical romances, and the Christian message is expertly woven into the fabric of the story. This guarantees that a superb story that will bring great joy and delight to the reader is found within the pages of her novels.

I sincerely have no complaints with this book. There is nothing inappropriate, and I can scarcely wait to read more about this marvelous couple! Their spiritual journey was genuine, full of grit, and relatable. In addition to this, Tracie had added humor (so sorely lacking in far too many books) as well as every emotion imaginable. Rarely do I find myself nearly crying over a typical historical romance, but indeed, I experienced the emotions simultaneously with Marty. And after all, this book holds a significant place in my heart since the main character's name is Martha (my daughter's name)!

I was sent a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review. I was not financially compensated, and all opinions are 100 percent mine.

Paula-O says

A Sensible Arrangement by Tracie Peterson

I picked this one up at a thrift shop, because I like reading this author.

Marty Dandridge Olson is a widow and lives on a Texas ranch...she was devastated when her husband was killed by a bull. Now 4 years later she wants to move thinking the ranch is a dangerous place. One day she sees an ad in the paper from a man in Colorado looking for a Texas woman who would like to

come and have a sensible arrangement by marrying and living with him.

Its a way out that she is considering.

Jacob Wythe was a texan now living in Colorado and working as a banker. His heart is in Texas and hopes to return there one day and have his own ranch. This is one think he neglects to tell Marty when they write one another.

As the wife of a banker Marty must change the way she has lived and become a socialite. The president of the bank's wife wants to help her adapt and so much of it just seems trivial and Marty is soon bored. She had always been busy working on the ranch and now she had servants to do all the work in the home. She was to become like a social butterfly going from tea to tea.

Their marriage was to be ,just an arrangement, but both of them soon find they are so comfortable with one another and beginning to have feelings that are nothing like arrangements. Can they change -who must speak first? They are married after all.

I enjoyed reading this story and know you will too,from beginning to end this couple were respectful and each learning from the other that sensible arrangements could change if they had the courage to move forward.
