



The Pearl

Angela Elwell Hunt

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She had the perfect life until the accident. Now science offers an opportunity to replace what she has lost--but at what cost?

Diana and Steve Sheldon had it all--successful careers, nice home, a lovely teenage daughter, an adorable five-year-old son. But when a freak accident ravages their happy family, Diana, a professional radio counselor, finds herself viewing the world through new eyes of grief--and accepting ideas and situations she would have considered unacceptable only a few weeks before.

When a research foundation offers to restore her loss through a medical marvel, Diana is convinced she has found the answer to her family's anguish. Determined to sacrifice anything that stands between her and healing for her broken heart, she proceeds along a dangerous course, never dreaming that healing might prove more destructive than hurt...

As timely as today's newspaper, *The Pearl* is an honest, heart-rending look at life and faith through a contemporary mother's eyes.

The Pearl Details

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Author : Angela Elwell Hunt

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From Reader Review The Pearl for online ebook

Valerie (Val's Vicinity) says

Tragedy strikes....five year old Scott dies in an accident, and his shocked family is left grief-stricken. Steve Sheldon knows that his son is now in heaven, and although Steve is heart-broken and often breaks down, he holds to the belief that this was God's will. His wife Diana, host of the Dr. Diana Sheldon radio show, can't accept Scott's death or believe that God had anything to do with it. She and her husband Steve were supposed to be unable to have children of their own, but God gave them a miracle in Scott, and now Diana absolutely cannot accept that God would take their miracle-child who He gave to them only 5 years before.

Several weeks after Scott's death, Diana receives a strange phone call. The caller is with a medical organization in France, and he tells her that new medical technology can allow Diana to bare another baby -- a baby exactly like Scott. A clone. This baby wouldn't actually be Scott, but would be more like "Scott's identical twin separated by time". At first Diana thinks it's absurd, but the more she thinks about it, the more it makes complete sense to her. She latches onto the idea, and even though her husband Steve doesn't support it at all, she can't let it go. Just how far will she go in pursuing this baby??

At 320 pages, The Pearl might be a bit on the long side, but overall this was a fairly entertaining book, and the cloning issue was presented in a realistic and believable way. Once or twice the medical terms for the development stages of a baby seemed a bit much, but not in a gross way. (More like it briefly seemed like a medical book instead of a fiction book. This might've just been me, though.) While I couldn't identify at all with Diana's "need" to clone her son, it was still interesting to see the lengths she was willing to go to.

If the storyline sounds interesting and appeals to you, then I definitely recommend that you read it. It really gives you some things to think about that stick with you even after you've finished the book.

April says

This book was really interesting in that it explores both moral and spiritual issues, as well as how far is too far to go for something you desperately want. The story centers around the Diana and her family. Diana is a successful radio psychologist. She is married to Steve, a successful dentist, and together they have a teenage daughter, Brittany, and a five-year-old son, Scott. That is until the day that everything changes. Scott is chasing the balloon of another student and accidentally walks out in front of a car. The car hits and kills him. What Diana chooses to do next costs her dearly and the book centers around her journey to put her life back together. Highly interesting,in my opinion.

Nora St Laurent says

She had the perfect life until the accident.

Diana and Steve Sheldon had it all - successful careers, nice home, a lovely teenage daughter, an adorable five-year old son. But when a freak accident ravages their happy family. Diana a professional radio counselor, finds herself viewing the world through new eyes of grief - and accepting ideas and situations she would have considered unacceptable only a few weeks ago.

This story is very powerful and thought provoking. With the ever evolving changes the Science and medical procedures bring to our lives things we never thought possible are now possible. With these improvements bring moral and judgments problems we never dreamed would occur. Angela Hunt once again pens an story that could be ripped from today's headlines. This author is an amazing story teller and makes me think about our world a little differently. This is a must read!! It's also a great book club pick. You'll have so much to talk about with this rich and moving story!

Disclosure of Material Connection:

I received a complimentary copy of this book from the publisher. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising"

Nora St Laurent

TBCN Where Book Fun Begins www.bookfun.org

The Book Club Network blog www.psalms16.blogspot.com

Book Fun Magazine www.bookfunmagazine.com

C. says

I think maybe it's because of the subject matter, I didn't care a lot for the story. This is a well written book and I typically love this author's work, so I'm sure it's because I couldn't relate, that the book was just "all right" to me. Cloning is too far out there for my thought-process to enjoy.

I definitely plan to continue to read more novels by this author.

Lyndi says

I really enjoyed. It brought up some real ethical questions like would you really consider cloning if you lost a child? It brought it more into prospective for me that you would be in that much grief that you would even consider it.

I had also never really thought of having a clone just for body parts till the movie with Ewan McGregor and Scarlett Johansson called The Island. They are real people, not just some blobs that you can salvage like a junk car! There is a lady in this book that wants to do just that, and it is sickening, the way it is described what they do to the baby just for the body parts. Gross, factual and unbelievable that someone would think this to be ok.

I am trying to read all of Angela Hunt's books and I have to say that this ended up being one of my favorites. The main character will stop at NOTHING to get this. She loses her son, her husband, her job and almost her daughter through a driven desire. Sad.

elliereads says

I was pulled into the story of a woman who suddenly loses her son until she decides to pursue cloning him. What crap. It was published in 2003, and I can't remember cloning being a deeply controversial topic nine years ago.

Sorely disappointed since I did enjoy another of this author's books earlier this summer. Don't know if I'll give any more of hers a try though, this one was that bad.

Ruth says

unputdownable and thought provoking. also has insights into grief

Laura B says

I am glad I didn't come across this book until now, and am also thankful I didn't read it before now having had lost a baby of my own 12 years ago. I don't think I could have handled it before. AEH did an amazing job of expressing how it feels to have lost a child, the overwhelming pain and despair and most importantly asking God "Why?" and never receiving an answer. Also, the way AEH wrote the grieving process for the other family members, each in their own way, was handled very well. AEH wrote with sensitivity and empathy about the loss of a child, and it made me wonder if she lost one herself.

I also appreciated how AEH shifted viewpoints from the other family members, and having the mother's POV in first person was especially fitting for completely understanding her mindset on processing the grief and all that encompasses, and her fall into an illogical and irrational decisions. I do not want to give away what happens throughout the story, but everything that did happen was "natural" in that nothing was forced, or far-fetched.

Even saying all that, I do think the ending was a little too neat and tidy because of the subject matter of this novel, but it was satisfying.

I highly recommend this book, but be prepared for the heart-wrenching grieving.

Ingrid says

I applaud this author for consistently writing "higher concept" books for christian readers. There's so much more to life than romance!

booklady says

‘The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he

goes and sells all that he has and buys it.' (Mt 13:45-46)

The title of Angela Hunt's provocative book, *The Pearl*, refers to the above parable as well as the oyster's ability to turn invasive irritation into exquisite creation. Dr. Diana Sheldon is a popular radio psychologist, who seems to have everything and be 'on top of her game' as the expression goes; she loves God, her husband, children, beautiful home, etc. Then an unfortunate accident turns her world upside down and Diana finds herself viewing everything differently—including and especially her relationship to God. Although we can see the doctor unable to take her own medicine, Diana cannot make sense of her own suffering and jumps at the opportunity to replace what she's lost through cutting edge technologies. This of course reveals the weak places and ragged edges in the existing fabric of her life; the rest unravels at an increasingly rapid rate.

The Pearl deals with many current family issues including: parent/teenage relations, divorce and its effects, and the ethics of cloning and other new reproductive innovations. Includes a reading guide.

Thanks Patti for the recommendation! ?

Hazel McHaffie says

I was intrigued by Anne's review of this book which made me order the book and read it as soon as it arrived. It's trying to do what I try to do - weave ethical challenges into fictional lives.

I liked the way Hunt dealt with the ethical challenge, and she shows a lot of understanding of how human parents react. I was also intrigued by her Christian angle - though I often wanted to disagree with her! But I confess the style of writing irritated me at times. I wanted to edit it! Partly it's an American thing, but I think it was a literary issue as well for me (and I don't mean to be superior here). Maybe it's a question of personal preference.

However any book that leaves you thinking about the big issues of life has to be commended.

Anne says

I applaud the author for tackling a difficult subject such as this, but it came across a little dry and far-fetched for me. The issue of cloning itself, as well as the side issue of divorce, was well-handled in its theological and philosophical aspect, but the story part was not as compelling to me.

Patsy says

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Libby says

This book deals with the death of the long-awaited child, and the lengths that we will go to to not grieve. To not go through the loss and feel the pain. Period it also deals with the subject of human cloning from a strong Christian worldview. I do think it gets a little preachy in parts, by that I mean it comes on a little too strong whereas I think she could've got her point across in a different way. By letting the character speak versus coming across like a lecture in places. This is only the second book that I have read by this author and I thought the first book was much better written than this one. Though there are some really good quotes in this book especially about grieving

My favorite quote "You know much about oysters, Tom?"

"I know I don't like to eat 'em."

"Me, either. But you should also know that oysters are one of God's most wonderful creations. When a grain of sand enters their shell, they don't even try to eject the irritation. Instead they embrace it, pull it close, and surround it with their very essence. In time, their ability to wrap beauty around trouble results in a pearl."

I clicked the next button, which sent a stream of soft music over the airwaves. "That's what you need to do with your son, Tom. When he irritates you, embrace him, pull him close, and tell him you love him more than anything. In time, my friend, you'll have a pearl."

[...]

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Jerry Hunt says

Life is Precious!!!

We should never take our days or our families for granted, as life can change in an instant!!! Only God knows the number of our days. I had just finished reading The Truth teller, and loved the story of Hunter and was ready to hear about Scott Daniel when all of a sudden his life is in God's hands. I cried, I was heart broken, angry frustrated and relieved when finally trusting in God's will took hold.

Always trust in God's will not our will!!!
