

LYNETTE SOFRAS



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Escaping from your past is never easy, as young hospital doctor Juliet discovers when she tries to start afresh, leaving both her marriage and her career behind. Love blossoms rapidly when she meets the mysterious and forthright 'gardener', Nicholas, who seems to herald the new beginning she craves.

The past quickly dissolves into insignificance as their all-consuming romance propels them forward but Juliet has to learn the price of happiness in the cruelest way possible. Will she be able face the painful roots of her past in order for her future to grow strong and healthy?

The Apple Tree Details

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Author : Lynette Sofras

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From Reader Review The Apple Tree for online ebook

Iris Blobel says

This is a beautiful story - don't get me wrong! But compared to other books I've read I just couldn't give it more than three stars.

The main character is Julie, Dr Julie Somerville, who's just come back from Saudi where she's lived with her husband. But she couldn't settle and returned to the UK. Julie literally bumps into Robert, a friend from years back, and through him meets Nicholas. They both spend a wonderful summer together.

I honestly couldn't warm up to Julie. The constant whining and self-doubt made me put the book aside quite often, unfortunately too often so that I had lost the "train-of-thought" here and there. I liked Nicholas and even more so for his views. It gave his character a certain 'oompf'.

All and all a really nice read, and I really should mention that the story was the 2011 Inspired Romance Novels' Writing Contest GRAND PRIZE WINNER - so please don't let my opinion deter you from giving it a try!

Emily says

I bought this book by accident as I was actually looking for something else and didn't check it properly, but I am so pleased that I did get it. Serendipity, a happy accident. 'There are no coincidences' as Lyn reminded me several times and I think she is quite right.

It didn't take me long to get wrapped up in the romance. The scenes were so perfectly set, the characters seemed so real and the emotions spilled out of it. I laughed with Julie and I cried with her, I felt her anger and also her guilt. Most of all I felt her love, and I want to find my own Nicholas. If I ever find anyone half as decent and loving as that man then I will be a happy woman.

Tori Ridgewood says

Any time that an author can transport me, give me characters who are real and complex, and move me to laugh or cry aloud, I am struck once again with the utmost admiration and gratitude. Lynette Sofras writes so beautifully of the human condition. Stories of miscommunication and the resulting turmoil always attract and enthrall me, and *The Apple Tree* is no exception. I will be putting this book on the list of gifts to buy for my mother at Christmas this year.

Jenny Twist says

So Much More Than Just a Love Story

The Apple Tree

Julie has spent her life up to now trying to please other people. Her father, her sister and her husband have all manipulated her and she feels obliged to follow in their footsteps and become a doctor, even though she hates it.

After a very unhappy time in Saudi Arabia she uncharacteristically abandons her husband and returns to England. But her rebellion does not ensure her escape. She moves in with her powerful sister who does not allow her to veer from the plans she and their father have laid out for her.

Then she meets Nicholas. Nicholas is every girl's dream, but incredibly has never married. It is love at first sight.

In the delirium of first love, Julie fails to tell Nicholas about her failed marriage and the longer she leaves it, the more difficult it becomes to tell him. And Nicholas has very strong opinions on the sanctity of marriage.

At first sight this looks like just another version of the hackneyed plot – girl meets boy, they fall in love, there is a misunderstanding and the relationship fails, but all is well once the misunderstanding is cleared up and they all live happily ever after.

But the plot is far more complex than that. Julie, who has allowed other people to manage her all her life, is struggling against almost insurmountable odds to win the right to make her own decisions. Her sister, also trapped in family expectations cannot herself lead a normal life as she tries to fulfil the wishes of her dead father. Nicholas risks losing his chance of happiness through his stubborn refusal to relinquish his Victorian values.

There are some powerful moments in this story. When Julie discovers that her husband has returned to England suffering from a life-threatening disease, she puts aside all her other feelings to be with him. The little girl lost with no mind of her own emerges as a heroic figure.

I was captivated from the first. Lynette Sofras is a great storyteller. Her language flows easily. The plot is complex but utterly believable and her characters live and breathe. I found the whole deeply satisfying. A very mature work for a first novel.

I look forward to reading many more.

Jenny Twist, author

Diana Hockley says

I feel ambivalent about this story. Sometimes it was okay, other times I just wanted to hit Julie over the head and couldn't understand why Nicholas would want to be bothered with such a spineless, whining coward.

The fact that Julie had become a doctor when she hated medicine and didn't appear to understand some of the terminology when Simon became ill was strange, as was the notion that she could hide her marriage from the man she takes as a lover and after several weeks, still not know what he does for a living.

The breakdown of her marriage to Simon was never really gone into and his illness never fully explained. I

wondered about all his men friends crying when he was ill, however a random sentence appeared to indicate that Simon had made a "mistake" which was presumably a needle stick injury. The sex in the book was well done - not explicit - and I particularly liked that Simon's friends called Julie on her behaviour.

All in all, a disappointing novel, not the least because it should have been a good read.

Tara Hall says

From the first few pages, I was captivated with the romance between Nicholas and Julie. Nicholas was a wonderful leading man, a cross between Clark Gable in *Gone with the Wind* and Richard Gere in *Pretty Woman*. I could imagine their first meeting as if I were watching a movie, and could not stop reading until I reached the last page.

This is an exceedingly well-written romance. But the reason I give *The Apple Tree* such a high ranking was the humor which punctuated most pages, giving the action and dialogue a reality that made me not only enjoy reading about these characters, but really see them as people with thoughts and feelings of their own. I could love this book just for this paragraph:

She sometimes felt as if she were trying to nurse back to life something half dead, something precious and almost forgotten. When she caught herself at it she laughed and shook her head at Sonya and her silly ideas. But when she looked in the mirror, she could see herself as if for the first time, and soon she began to appreciate what she saw.

I do admit I am a big fan of the consummation scene, and that I expect at least one in the romance books I read. For *The Apple Tree* I was happy to make an exception, as this book was so good, I didn't miss it. The only thing I didn't like was the chunk of the latter part of the book being devoted to a minor character, Giles, when I wanted to see more of Nicholas and Julie.

Overall Opinion: A Romance not to be Missed :)

Anne Ashby says

A BEAUTIFUL STORY

Divorced doctor Julie Somerville is one mixed up lady. Facing yet another huge exam, she is questioning her desire to be a doctor at all. Expectations from her now deceased father and workaholic sister (both dedicated doctors) forced her into a career she has little empathy for. What she is searching for, she has no real idea, but she knows it has to be more than she has right now. Meeting Nicholas, who she mistakes for a gardener, might be the answer. But Nicholas has very firm ideas about the sanctity of marriage and during a lively discussion between friends; Julie omits to mention her previous marriage. As the electricity between them sparks, Julie frets over the omission but doesn't find an opportune moment to confess. They spend idyllic time together over the next few weeks before Nicholas discovers she has a husband (not an ex-husband) from someone else. Infuriated, he refuses to listen to any explanation. Her previous angst is nothing to what she now suffers.

This is quite an intricate story of Julie's search for the happiness which has always evaded her. I would have liked some of the story to have come from Nicholas' POV so I could have got to know him better but that's

just my personal taste.

Lynette Sofras showed how the written word should be used. Her ability to weave her story with such beautiful use of the English language is second to none. I was in awe of how the words leapt off the page in such splendour. What an amazing voice for a romance writer to have. I would recommend this story as a must read to everyone, not so much for the story itself but for the amazing use of language. We could all learn something from Lynette Sofras' writing skills.

Deborah Court says

Lynette Sofras's 'The Apple Tree' was one of the best books I read in 2011. Well-crafted and beautifully written, using an elegant, witty style that reminded me of a modern Jane Austen, it's a story about love at first sight, friendship, heartbreak and loss, but also about the inner journey towards the ability to truly accept love. This tender, heartwarming story is just the right book to read while you cuddle in your favorite chair by the fireplace. Ms Sofras is definitely one of the new voices of contemporary romance, and I'm looking forward to reading more of this very talented writer.

elaine m. suda says

Garden of Love

I had a lot of teary moments in this story. I guess it pays to tell the truth if you expect the one you love to put their trust in you. I really felt sorry for Julie when Simon became ill, but I think she had a lot of guilt where he was concerned. I was very happy that Nicholas and Julie finally worked out. I really enjoyed reading this story.

Rae says

I could not finish it. I tried, I really did. Part might be that I don't care for books that take place in other countries that have different languages. This was British but it just wasn't working for me AT ALL.

Krissys says

The Apple Tree wasn't a bad or a great read but I was still able to relate to it in way from both perspectives

that I've been in a relationship with someone that wanted to get away from their past and I know what its like to want to get away from your own past. Remaking ones self is never easy especially once you learn that the past always catches up with you. One lesson to be learned from it though is that despite that complication it doesn't mean that it has to take over your life and that you can't have a happy ending.

Tifferz says

I consumed The Apple Tree by Ms. Sofras in one evening. Once I started on this delicious story. I simply couldn't help myself I had to finish it. The flow of the story was fantastic and Jules character was well developed. I would have liked a little more information on Nicholas. This story felt as if it was real to me. Like Jules was my friend. I found the conflict impressive and the resolution splendid as people have to humble themselves and take some risks. I really did not want this story to end and would have liked more. This is a clean read no sex (just reference to) and no swearing! I will be on the lookout for more from Ms. Sofras.

Highland-dreamer says

I kept waiting for Julie to stand up for herself, take charge of her future and her life.. but she never did. She never told Nicholas the truth, which is just a little unforgivable in my book. Technically she was still married, even though she had left the marriage. For Nicholas, he unknowingly is helping her commit adultery. He may or may not have been ok with that, but he wasn't given the choice. And for a tree that was in the title, I didn't think it was given enough significance in the book. They talked about it, but I didn't feel like it was a part of the story at all. So Julie tells no one she is divorcing her husband, and then her husband is ill, so she conveniently becomes his wife again, and eventually gets all the benefits as his widow, when she LEFT HIM. I didn't agree with how that was done.

Sheri says

The Apple Tree by Lynette Sofras

Doctor Juliet is trying to start a new life. She left her career and husband. Then she meets the mysterious "gardener", Nicholas. Things seem to go well with them, rather quickly. But Will she be able face her painful past in order for her to find true happiness.

Juliet has everyday problems, that she has to face. She is very likable, and at times questions herself. I liked that in her, it made her 'real'. Nicholas is a bit flawed and he has issues he is coping with as well. Life is not easy for Juliet. she just wants to find her place and true happiness.

Overall I enjoyed this clean romance. The plot is original, the characters likable, the story moved swiftly. I recommend The Apple Treeto those who like a nice clean romance.

Madelynhealey says

Very good book written by a British author. I enjoyed it very much.
