



Thirty Something: Nothing's How We Dreamed It Would Be

Filipa Fonseca Silva

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Joana is a conservative, controlling woman who expected much more from marriage; Maria is trying to get back on her feet after being dumped just before her wedding; Filipe hides his broken heart in failed relationships. Is this as good as it gets when you're thirty something? That's what these three friends from college times will find out at a dysfunctional dinner party. Because life is not always how we dreamed it would be.

Considered by some The Big Chill of the 21st century, this debut novel is all about the end of innocence. Funny, clever and real.

Thirty Something: Nothing's How We Dreamed It Would Be Details

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Dora Santos Marques says

Um livro que foi uma surpresa agradável. Foi-me emprestado por uma amiga que conheceu a autora e gostei. Toda a acção passa-se num jantar e a história é relatada pelos intervenientes, sendo cada capítulo atribuído a cada um deles. Facilmente nos identificamos com algumas das personagens pois exemplificam o que é a vida aos 30 anos.

Szilvia says

Very nice concept to follow a dinner party (happenings & thoughts) through the eyes of 3 characters. Everything & everybody is such real life -like, that I couldn't put down this short book, and had to read it till dawn...
(If you are thirty something, you will recognise yourself in one or more characters :))

1 star minus though just because the ending is soooo not possible!

Come on!!!

Carolina Guimarães says

Comprei este livro pela capa bonita e apelativa e por ter curiosidade em ler esta autora portuguesa, que lançou há pouco um novo livro que anda na montra de todas as livrarias. Importa dizer que, dado o título desta sua primeira obra, não sei se esta se destina a pessoas nos seus 30 anos - talvez sim, porque qualquer que seja a mensagem que Filipa Fonseca quis passar, não chegou com sucesso até mim.
Este é um livro de escrita fácil e super fluída, que li em dois dias apenas - também não é grande, o que ajuda. É uma leitura leve, às vezes caricata, mas que não me deu particular prazer. A história não me cativou, detestei uma das três personagens principais e achei tudo um bocadinho irreal (e espero mesmo que seja, porque não se for não quero mesmo chegar aos 30). Neste livro, que se resume a um jantar de amigos de longa data que não se juntavam há uns tempos, fala-se em responsabilidade, em construir família, mas ao mesmo tempo consome-se droga como nos tempos de adolescente; personagens, para mim, pouco coerentes e todas elas um tanto ao quanto disfuncionais.
Fiquei fã da escrita, mas tudo o resto foi uma desilusão. Talvez pela falta de identificação com as personagens, ou a história, ou pelos pensamentos relatados.

Jane says

Thirty Something starts out rather slow with a chapter on each of the friends that will be going to a dinner party. They all went to University together ten years ago and the changes in each are very revealing and so like real life. Some parts are funny and some are sad but always entertaining once you get all the characters

straight.

The story covers a lot of different types of people and how each does or does not accept the changes in the others. In the end, most of them come away from a very strange dinner party with new insights into what they have become and where they are going...

The translation to English is good but it still has a few errors that would make it a much better book when corrected. None of them take away from the story line or character development. Over all the book was an interesting look into the life of a specific age group but could have been any age group making it highly appealing and I recommend this as a good book to read if you are looking for an in depth look at group dynamics and relationship development in adults.

Carole P. Roman says

I would never want to be thirty again! This is a wonderfully written book, refreshingly honest and disarming about a dinner party where a group of friends come to wonder about what they did and what they could have done with their lives. Each character is suffering in some way about decisions that were made by them and others about the decisions made without them and how they affected their dreams. Hope dies for each character and they search to find fault with everyone else, rather than address their own failures. Each person is dissatisfied and unfulfilled, searching for happiness that eludes them. Silva has a terrific gossipy voice, the book reads as though you are at lunch with a friend who is relating all manner of juicy tidbits about your crowd. Their angst is so real and universal, this book could be about thirty somethings anywhere, in any country. So whether they are single, married or in a relationship, it seems that the 30 somethings in this book are profoundly unhappy and searching for something they thought they wanted.

Maria says

It's a nice, light read with surprising insights into the pitfalls of thirtysomethinghood. A must read if you're there, you'll identify with at least one character.

Well done Filipa! Keep writing, when can we expect the next?

Beatriz says

What a nice surprise this book was. Although it is from an author that is writing her first book it is very good. It is impressive that when you start reading you can stop it. You Want to know more and more. But for me the most wonderful thing is that the characters are built. You can identify every one with someone you know.

Sofia says

Este é um livro simples e fluído que se lê com bastante facilidade. Uma leitura leve. Lembrando filmes como "Os amigos de Alex" e "Um jantar de aparências".

Apesar de o ter lido com rapidez, deixou-me um tanto o quanto indiferente. Não me identifiquei com nenhuma personagem e o final consegue ser bastante previsível.

Os capítulos variam entre 3 personagens que se encontram em fases diferentes da vida com "desgostos amorosos" diferentes.

Numa idade em que já não se tem 20 anos e sente-se a realidade da vida a cair sobre os ombros que nos leva a questionar sobre a nossa situação.

Senti algum cinismo por parte da autora em relação às relações amorosas e algum conformismo assumidos pelas personagens que me revoltou. Não é um livro que me tenha seduzido e senti prazer a ler porque na realidade não me identifiquei com nada e não gostei muito da história.

Hugo says

This book is one of those fortunate examples of instant adiction! The first chapter alone is enough to get you going almost non stop until the end.

My advice to you is: download the free sample and see for yourself!

Great first novel, can't wait for the next.

It would (will?) make a great movie. Woody Allen style:)

Crystal Burns says

First Thoughts

The author approached me to read their book and it just happened to be around the time I wasn't accepting review request due to school (ugh) but I really wanted to read this one so I accepted. The blurb intrigued me because I feel turning 30 is a big thing and being thirty something you figure you will have your life together, but apparently that's not the case. It's around the time people start to reflect on their life and I wanted to see how the author approached this subject.

My Thoughts

Thirty Something (Nothing's How We Dreamed It Would Be) is about exactly what the title suggest. It is about a group of 30 something friends who discover that their life is not at all how they imagined it would be so many years ago. Joana & Andre (married couple) are having a dinner party and it is there were everyone reflects on their life.

The story is written in different points of view, which I love! I feel like that's the only way to get all of the information and the most out of the story. First we have Joana, who is married to Andre' and is really not happy with how her life as turned out. She wants to be more than a housewife and she wants to experience passion. Then there is Maria, who is still struggling with life after her recent breakup and is trying to figure out both how to move on and where life is going to take her! Lastly is Filipe, he is the "playboy" that is just misunderstood, and it going through an identity crisis.

The other characters were Andre, who is married to Maria, and is content in life until life throws him a curve ball. Also there is Pedro, who has a new friend and Nuno who recently went through a lifestyle change.

Thirty Something is basically a story of reflection. We see how a group of friends, that are so different and have taken diverse paths in life, come together over dinner and how each one reflects on how different their lives are now. I really related to this story because I'm in my last semester in school and I basically have the next ten years planned out in my head, and this story just makes me think about how dissimilar my life probably will be in ten years from what I'm dreaming of now.

The only problem I have with this story is that I wish it was longer. I think the message came across well but, the story would have been better if it was spread over a larger time frame and we could see the story-lines change based on the outcome of things that happened at this diner.

Overall, I really enjoyed this story. I was able to read it in one sitting, and that's a plus. The transition from one point of view to the next was easy and effortlessly done, and the story was relatable for people of all ages.

Romancing the Book says

Thirty Something was reviewed by Amy P. at Romancing the Book after receiving a review copy from the author.

This is a good example of a book that you find yourself reading and enjoying despite not liking any of the characters.

First, there is Joana. Icy, remote, snobby, rigid. Bitchy. She throws a dinner party and gets pissy when people drink all of her wine or don't appreciate the fine china she uses. She barely gives her husband any attention, and what little she doles out is grudgingly. Sure, he makes her shop discount, but she exacts her pound of flesh in return. Boy, does she. When she finally lashes out, though, you might find yourself even less enchanted with her than you already were. Joana, you see, thinks she deserves whatever she decides to take.

We also meet Felipe, who can best be described as a man whore. He appears to have a good job, but his relationship track record makes George Clooney envious. Poor Felipe, though. He did love at one time, but the object of his affection begged him not to love her. When it appeared that he did, she virtually vanished from his life. Ever since then, he's made do with one woman after another, allowing them to warm his bed but not his heart.

And lastly, there is Maria. The one relationship she had featured a busted engagement when her fiance left her for a man. Yep. A man. Maria just wants a romantic connection, even if it means getting drunk and cozying up to Felipe. Sometimes you want to smack the mess right out of her. You'll want to smack Joana and Felipe, too.

The three converge at Joana's house for her dinner party, complete with Joana's husband and a few other guests. The wine, beer and pot begin to flow, and of course Things Happen. Some of it you see coming, but there are a few pleasant surprises. This is a well written book in that you keep reading. You feel as if you know the characters and understand them (if not like them), and you become invested in them. Can Joana stop just for one second thinking that she is all kind of fabulous? Can Felipe stop his womanizing? And can

Maria stop thinking that she needs a man to be happy?

After you turn thirty, you're expected to grow up a little. You're expected to have life somewhat figured out and to know where you want to be and who you want to be. The characters in this book don't appear to have that quite yet, but the good news is, there might be some hope.

Sara Jesus says

Um romance semelhante ao " Sei lá" pois aborda o tema da amizade. Quatro historias que se cruzam. Um amor de infância, um casamento falhado e uma mulher infeliz no amor. O final é previsível mas um livro agradável de se ler e nos demonstra a importância de aproveitarmos os melhores momentos da nossa juventude.

Maria Carmo says

This Author is quite a surprise.

The first book I read of her is a humorist version of mother's daily life: all the things one discovers only from experience and for which no one ever prepared us!

But this is a different kind of book. Although it also shows a subtle sense of humour, it is more of a psychological analysis of the 30's and how totally different they are from what each one of the characters had imagined in their youth. It shows how terribly empty life can be, when living only for social appearances, but it also ends with a lot of soul searching self discoveries that change, for the better, all of these friends lives!

Maria Carmo,

Lisbon, 14 April 2015.

April says

Loved this book, there was at least one character in there for everyone to relate to. Once I really got started I could not set it down till I was finished, and even then I was wanting more.

S.E. Nelson says

It took me a while to get into this book but once the dinner began and everyone started to interact, it became very enjoyable. I especially like the fact that Joana, the judgmental prude surprised us. Well done.
