



Farewell, I'm Bound to Leave You: Stories

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Farewell, I'm Bound to Leave You is rich with the music of the Southern mountains and the stories of their people. Jess Kirkman's grandmother is dying, and Jess remembers the tales she and his mother have passed down to him--a chorus of women's voices that sing and share and celebrate the common song of life.

Farewell, I'm Bound to Leave You: Stories Details

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Author : Fred Chappell

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From Reader Review Farewell, I'm Bound to Leave You: Stories for online ebook

Gena says

I really enjoyed this book. Each chapter is like it's own short story all related by place and time and narration by one of the two main characters. Chappell uses poetic language beautifully and the characters and setting really came alive for me.

Kate says

More women's voices, written by a man. I liked these women, and I liked the magic that is a part of their day and world. Growing up in a rural area, I recognized so many of these "types" - and there is an interesting frame of waiting for death.

Noel says

I think my favorite book I've ever read - and Fred Chappell has leapt over Alice Munro and William Trevor as my favorite authors. Maybe 4 or 5 times in my life have I read a book that I just felt plain lucky to have read, this is one of those books. I now have checked out every Fred Chappell novel/short story collection available in the state of Massachusetts and they are scattered about my house. Please, please, please read this book!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Sara Paris says

This is a book so beautifully written you want to read it out loud - preferably to someone.

If you have favorite books that you read and read again throughout your lifetime, this is a likely candidate, especially if you value southern writers and characters.

This book along with Chappell's Look Back All the Green Valley, I Am One of You Forever, and Brighten the Corner Where You Are, is a book I read and re-read.

Dana says

I had to work hard to find my way into this book, but it was well worth the initial effort. Once I got through the first couple of sections, I was fully immersed in this book's world. The voices are lovely and authentic, and the language is so gorgeous that I underlined like crazy before finally giving up and deciding to just reread the whole thing. If you love language and appreciate vivid description and attention to detail, give this book a try. It isn't a "page-turner," but a rich, sweet thing to be savored.

Becky says

Magical collection of stories a mother and grandmother tell to a boy and he remembers as the grandmother is dying. Southern story telling at its best with the phrasing of a poet.

"Scarlet as beets on white dinner plate."

"The smell of apples rose about us like the strains of ancient music."

carrietracy says

This book is definitely worth more than three stars. It is a beautifully written collection of stories. It takes you away completely to another time and place. Each chapter being its own story, it's an excellent choice for a book to stick in your bag for reading while you wait. The reason I gave it only three stars is because pure and simple, it's not my favorite subject to read about. But if you enjoy stories about Appalachia, or are in the mood for some lovely writing, it's worth checking out.

Beth Withers says

This novel is actually a series of short stories tied together by a grandmother's death and a grandson's and daughter's memories. The stories are about simple people who are much more complex than they seem. This is an enjoyable read, one that brought back fond memories for me.

AdultFiction Teton County Library says

TCL Call Number: F Chappell

Mary's rating: 4 stars

This character-driven novel takes place in the early 20th century in Appalachia. It has an interesting perspective twist, with a young man's take on local women's stories he learns through the gossip of his mother and grandmother. Each chapter represents a different kind of woman based on their skillsets or attributes.

Alicia Farmer says

Hm. Fred Chappell is a good storyteller. I liked some of the stories. I think they could have stood alone in a short story collection. I'm not sure that much was gained by bookending them with a death scene meant to link them all. That part felt contrived, even though I also liked the more lyrical writing it used.

I didn't hear a difference between the characters' voices as they narrated. A mother told half the stories and her daughter the rest. But they all were one voice. And odd that a man would write a whole book purporting to tell women's ways. I guess that's why he used the construction of having women tell these stories to their son.

Lastly, some of the stories were a TOO folksy. I didn't like the one about how the narrator's mother supposedly won the heart of her husband. It was too cliched.

Still, overall this was a fast and easy read. Many of the stories were gentle page-turners that made for the perfect book to read on the bus.

Nancy says

At first I thought this book was too simplistic, but I started to enjoy the colloquial speech and the interesting characters. I also liked the moral theme of how families are important and doing good is important.

Stephanie Ricker says

I fell in love with Fred Chappell during Southern American Lit class at college, and I was reassured to discover I'm still in love. I ambled through *Farewell, I'm Bound to Leave You* (another library sale find) and savored every word. The book is a collection of shorter stories, all told by the family members of the narrator, and each one is captivating. Some people classify Chappell's works as magical realism. I don't completely agree with that (and for the record, neither does Chappell)—I despise magical realism as a rule—but I do appreciate the taste of whatever it is people are trying to name when they call his work magical realism. There is something entralling, unearthly, and completely familiar all at the same time in his work. Check him out and be enchanted.

Peaches says

Keep in mind that I've read several Appalachian-influenced texts in the past two months and this is the last on my list (I like to go from longest to shortest); consequently, after reading some pretty tedious books, me finding this one sub-par could be because I'm finished with this odyssey tired and in serious need of the ability to read multiple genres of my choosing when I feel like it.

Anyway, I thought I'd like this one the best because it focused on strong women and involved oral storytelling in text. Unfortunately, a significant amount of storytelling relies on the storyteller, and I just couldn't appreciate the mother and grandmother. You know when you're talking to an older person (I think men are guilty of this too, but it is most likely a woman) (colleague, mother, someone in a position of authority who apparently has no one to talk to at home) and whatever your question in could be answered in three sentences or less, but you get a monologue and wish you never asked it? That's how I felt reading this book. Yes, I wanted to know about strong Appalachian women, but each story was so cookie cutter: Jess encourages the story, the speaker gives some background of the family, describes the girl in vivid detail, chastises Jess or men for something, refuses to give her "own" opinion, then concludes. Sure, a few of these could be ok (especially while intoxicated), but the repetitive nature was obnoxious. Yes, older people can be especially repetitive. No, I don't want a whole book with them narrating the story.

I did like how women could out-wit the men, were educated, and could manifest their own destinies (like the ghost girl coming back as pretty and blonde), but I wish it had been delivered better. Plus, since the narrators were all so removed and refused to give their judgments in the stories, I found them impossible to connect with as a woman. I think the reader is supposed to connect to how the matriarchs in the family have such strengths and carry the memories, but those concepts were foreign to my upbringing. Plus, if I were Jess, I would just get annoyed of them relentlessly teasing me over my crush and go away. Maybe Jess is dead and his hell is to listen to the stories all day, or maybe it's just purgatory since he asks for them, but I want to view it as a horrific tale of a boy who desperately needed a TV (sounds like a great *Are You Afraid of the Dark?* episode to me).

Zev Good says

It started out enjoyable and the author had a very unique voice, but by the time I was halfway through, the stories were so redundant and I couldn't handle another manufactured Southernism that was meant to be witty but just fell flat because it isn't something anyone actually says.

Final verdict: not horrible, but I just didn't feel like finishing it.

Susan says

I loved the writing style of the author. Very inspiring use of words to describe various settings and feelings. The stories, as told to a boy entering adolescence, by his mother, were about people and places that she remembered from her youth. I enjoyed the reading for the first half or so of the book, but started to lose interest by the time I was hit the last few chapters.

I will keep this book as a solid reference for good writing that flows beautifully :)
