



Salting Roses

By Lorelle Marinello
ISBN: 9780061443749

Introduction

Gracie Lynne Calloway once left on a coal bucket on a front porch in a small southern Alabama town and discovers on her twenty-fifth birthday that she is the kidnapped daughter of a late New England financier and heiress to a fortune. When the tabloid press and her unwanted greedy relatives descend on her, she has to admit the quiet secure life she's known and loved is gone for good. As Gracie struggles to stabilize her world and come to terms with her new identity, she learns that belonging is not about where you came from but who you are.

Questions for Discussion

1. Gracie's biggest fear is that the money will destroy her quiet life in Shady Grove and that the relationships with the people she cares for will be changed forever. What would you do if you suddenly inherited a large fortune or won the lottery? How would money change your life path? How would it affect your relationships with members of your family and your friends?
2. Gracie discovers once the news of her inheritance is out, that folks in Shady Grove treat her differently. Does money, or the lack of money, influence your perception of people's character? Celebrities, neighbors, coworkers, and family members.
3. One of Gracie's greatest fears is that her inheritance will eventually lead her down the path of greed and selfishness. Do you think it is possible to have great personal wealth without your economic status influencing your attitude about your place in society?
4. Do you think Conrad had good reason for not revealing his true identity to Gracie? Would you consider his actions self-serving? Or admirable? How do you think Gracie would have responded to the news of her inheritance if Conrad had introduced himself into her life sooner?
5. Should Ben have told Gracie the truth from the outset? How do you think Gracie's life would have been changed if she had known her true identity at age seventeen?
6. We have the saying "money talks and people listen." How would our society be changed if more decisions were based on character and need instead of the bottom line?
7. Lillian's actions were not solely motivated by greed, but also by fear. In the end, Gracie realizes her attachment to Shady Grove is no different than Lillian's attachment to her lifestyle. Should Gracie have forgiven Lillian for her indiscretions? Can you find parallels in Lillian and Gracie's characters?
8. The novel shows us how culture and social standing influence our decisions. What values and beliefs have shaped your decisions regarding wealth?
9. Which of Gracie's characteristics is a result of the Southern culture she has been raised in? Had she been raised in another cultural setting, do you think her decisions would have been different? How so?
10. Forgiveness is a strong theme in the novel. Name three incidents in which Gracie had to overcome her strong ideals and demonstrate forgiveness. How did these actions change her?
11. Alice felt the only way to force Gracie to shed her old life was to burn her clothes. Was this too drastic a measure? Was Alice fulfilling her own desire, or thinking of Gracie?
12. Artie, Alice, and Ben considered Gracie their saving grace why?
12. Which aspects of Gracie's character do you admire, and why?
13. Artie realizes Gracie has set aside her own needs in order to take care of other people for so long that she has lost touch with her own dreams. In order for her to know what to do with the money, she needs to know her own heart and her own desires. What are your dreams? What steps can you take today to make them a reality?

About the Author

Lorelle Marinello has lived her entire life in Southern California, but she always felt like a daughter of Decatur, Alabama where her grandfather was raised. His stories brought the South to life for her, and his world became her own, inspiring her passion for researching her Southern genealogy and for writing heartfelt stories of the South. Lorelle received a BA of fine arts from San Diego State University, and she lives with her husband and three children in an avocado grove in the mountains of San Diego.

