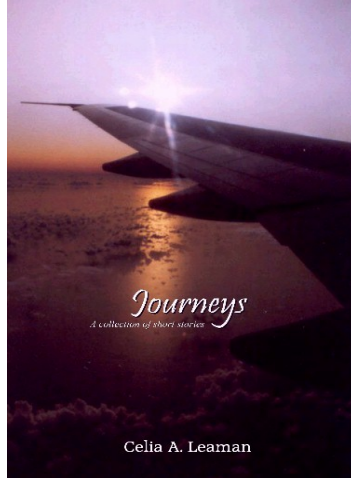


Book Review



JOURNEYS

By Celia A. Leaman

Reviewed by Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopes

In her latest book, "***Journeys***," author Celia A. Leaman takes us on an odyssey of emotions while she shares with us seven well-crafted, profound, and intimate stories based on real life events with a touch of fantasy. Contrary to her other two fiction books "***Who is Margaret, What is she?***" and "***Island Stories***," this book is not written to entertain, but rather to make the reader meditate on concepts such as true love, happiness, personal rebirth, and the pros and cons of a provocative, young-old relationship. Each story dares you to identify yourself with the events before pointing your finger and casting your judgement.

The first story, "***It's Friday, but Sunday's Coming***," is the love story of Leith and Ryan; two wounded souls coming from long-term failed relationship and in their path to recovery. Leith finds herself single again after her husband decides, out of the blue, that he wants to divorce Leith and to forget their 14 years of marriage. Ryan, on the other hand, gets dumped by his girlfriend because their relationship has become boring. Leith decides to start fresh and buys a small

house on the east coast of Vancouver Island. One day while at Wickaninnish Beach, she finds Ryan, the son of her new friend, Josie. They walked and talked for several hours and agreed to have a date the following week. Leith, however, has some doubts about her feelings for Ryan and phones her best friend, Sara, to talk about it. Leith is well aware of their age differences and wants to stop any potential involvement with Ryan, who is a real gentleman and truly cares for her. The story takes us inside Leith's mind and her doubts; Ryan's young age but maturity dilemma; and Josie and Sara's words of encouragement and counsel for Leith. This story is charming, inspiring, and gives us an inside look at the dynamics of an old-young love relationship.

The second story, "**No More Regrets**," is a story of repentance, reconciliation, and acceptance. Lindsay's parents are getting a divorce and she is rebellious about it. Her mom is an alcoholic and her dad got his secretary, Charlotte, pregnant and now wants to marry her. Lindsay feels betrayed by her father and at lost with her mother's drinking problems. Lindsay's world is turned upside down after one heart to heart conversation with her father and a change of attitude from her mother. However, at the end, love conquers all and on Christmas Day, Lindsay receives the best gift of all!

The third story, "**Ophelia's Love**," is a tender short story about Ophelia, a woman who loved a lot but didn't know her self-worth. However, after the death of her dog, Ben, she finds comfort in the words of encouragement and the arms of a stranger who gives her strength in her weakest moments. This story teaches us a lesson about self-worth and trust.

The fourth story, "**Angels Along the Way**," is about an earthly angel named Aunty Joan who taught the author how to value her life's achievements based on the ways she genuinely gave her time and attention to others. We all have angels in our life journey and it is not until they leave us that we can see their wings!

The fifth story, "**Second Chances**," is about Susan, Bernie, and Robbie. Susan is getting ready to marry Bernie when she starts having second thoughts about it. She tries to rationalize her decision but none of reasons she could think satisfies her. In order to clear her mind, she goes walking through town and ends in front of the church door. She decides to go inside and notices the light is on and the organ is open. Her mind wonders and she remembers those years when she played the organ... Then from the darkness, appears Robbie, Susan's true love! The story builds up to Susan's decision, "should she marry Bernie or should she say forever good-bye to her true love, Robbie."

The sixth story, "**Lucky Duck**," takes us to a world of deception, greed, truth, and conviction. Karly's son, Winston, saves "Lucky Duck" from dying and they become best friends after that. Then one day a double tragedy occurred which changed the life of Karly, Winston, Lucky Duck, Graham, the Royston, as well as

it changed the future of an entire country side community. Lucky Duck teaches us a lesson of true love, friendship, and loyalty. This story challenges us to trust and believe in the power of truth and good over evil!

The last story, "***Endings are Just Beginnings***," is about Sylvia and her family, Cathy and Joe. Sylvia and Joe are siblings and they have always had a close relationship. Then Joe meets Cathy and things change. Sylvia is very jealous of Cathy and during one family gathering, after too much alcohol consumption, Sylvia lets her tongue go wild and this caused a breakup in her relationship with Joe. One day during a family trip, Sylvia finds her way back to heal the wound of her words and be close again to her brother, Joe. The end of this story gives a new meaning to the phrase "Born again."



Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopés, author of *The Window to My soul; My Walk With Jesus* (ISBN 0975393359; 2004 Tate Publishing; www.tatepublishing.com).

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The author also has a blog at www.amazon.com

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Author's Comment:

"Tannia Ortiz-Lopes was very thorough and sensitive in reviewing my books. She is a flexible reviewer and pays attention to detail. Everyone's time is precious, and I appreciate the time she has given to my work."

Celia A. Leaman (<http://www.devonshirebabe.com/>)