

June Rain

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BellaOnline: The Voice of Women

June Rain is a love story set in the 1960s. Dante is considered a “nerd” because of his love of mathematics and science. He is one of those students who simply absorbs knowledge and begins to apply it. I was fascinated by his hidden thoughts that other high school students did not even know about or care about. Helen is not your typical high school student. She is open to considering the deeper things of life.

Knightley’s writing style keeps you reading. It is told mostly from Dante’s point of view. It is a poignant story of man finding the right woman for him. I loved his expressions and thoughts as he falls in love with Helen. He slowly introduces her to the places that are so important to him. Dante and Helen’s share their thoughts about church and God throughout the story. I suspect that the issues raised are thought about by many teens attending church because their family chooses too.

I particularly enjoyed reading this story because of the vivid descriptions of what Dante and Helen were doing or experiencing. Here is just one sample where Knightley is describing both an event in their lives and the scene it takes place in.

He took her hand and walked her southeast through some low soft bushes. The foliage was fully mature from the heat. They came to some open grass, and Dante pointed. Spread before them was a meadow, roughly rectangular, forty yards across and seventy-five yards in length, made unusual by two aspects. First, the entire rectangle was set in a six-foot-depression, as if it had been designed by an enormous pool with slanting sides. Second, the north-and eastside boundaries were overgrown with thousands of tiger lilies. Dante and Helen looked over the expanse of long, soft, waving grass, still highlighted with orange-gold threads from the setting sun. [Page 146.]

I won’t give you the story’s ending. You’ll have to read this book to find out how it ends. Dante and Helen’s thoughts about church and God are skillfully woven through the story in natural places. Sometimes, looking at today’s high school youth, I wonder if they think about the deeper things of life. It seems all they care about is who America’s new idol is or what their friends are up to.

Recommendation

This story brought back memories of my own high school experience from 1963-1966. I even remember the name of the one student that could get up in the middle of a class and walk out. He was our “nerd” and as I look back, I can’t help but wonder if he and Dante would have been good friends.

If my son were a reader, I’d pass this book on to him so he could better understand the high school experience of people his Mom’s age. It is so different from High School today. Perhaps you would like to give this book to your high school aged child.

Brandon Knightley. June Rain. Inkwater Press. 2005.