



Pinch Me

Adena Halpern

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LILY MARRIED THE MAN OF HER DREAMS. THEN SHE WOKE UP.

“Never marry a man unless he’s short, bald, fat, stupid, and treats you badly.” That is the advice that twenty-nine-year-old Lily Burns has heard her entire life from her grandmother Dolly and her mother, Selma. Despite this, when she meets Gogo, the handsome, successful pediatrician who treats her like a queen, she has no choice but to let her heart take over. When she agrees to marry him, Dolly and Selma are inconsolable. They decide it’s time to tell her the truth: their family is cursed. If she marries for love, there will be unimaginable consequences.

Nevertheless, Lily and Gogo elope. Unable to believe her good fortune, Lily asks Gogo to pinch her—to make sure all this isn’t just a dream. The moment he does, Lily finds herself transported back to the house she lived in when she was single. Gogo is gone. When Lily tracks him down, she finds that he’s married to someone else and has no memory of her. In this modern fairy tale, Lily must find a way to break the curse and turn her nightmare back into a dream come true.

Pinch Me Details

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Leah says

Earlier this year I read *The Ten Best Days of My Life* by Adena Halpern and I loved it. It was an absolutely brilliant novel. It was funny, it was witty and it was incredibly warm. I loved Alexandra and I loved the fact the novel was a bit different to most Chick Lit novels I read. I came close to fainting when I got June's GalleyGrab newsletter and saw *Pinch Me*, Adena's new novel was on there. I've been waiting to read it for ages. Generally I hate reading on the computer because it kills my already rubbish eyes, but for *Pinch Me* I happily sat and read it (if you're listening GalleyGrab owners, please make GalleyGrab Kindle friendly). I managed to finish *Pinch Me* the same night I started it and though I had dog-tired eyes, it was so worth it.

I absolutely loved *Pinch Me*. It was everything I wanted and more. Adena Halpern is a very similar author, it seems, to Cecelia Ahern. They both insert magical elements into their novels and they both do it in a brilliant way. I found *Pinch Me* to be an enchanting novel. It's not a heavy novel, and it's under 300 pages, but I thoroughly enjoyed every single page. A lot of people will undoubtedly complain the plot is stupid, or ridiculous, but honestly those people shouldn't be reading the novel if they've read the synopsis which easily explains what the novel's about so it's their silly fault for purchasing it. To read this – or any – of Adena's novels you do need to suspend your belief, because this isn't a run of the mill Chick Lit novel, it's different. I adored the plot, it's quirky and it's different and Halpern has the skill to pull it off with ease.

I found the back-story as to why Lily finds herself without Gogo after he pinches her after they marry. I won't spoil it and tell you what the curse is that made Lily go back to being a single girl with no Gogo in her life, because it's a wonderful story you need to read about while you read the novel. Honestly, it's worth it, I promise. A lot of authors wouldn't be able to pull off this novel, and I was initially sceptical about this so-called curse, but it was fascinating once we learn all about it. I found the alternate universe Lily finds herself in with a substandard Gogo, who's married to someone else, to be both emotional and intriguing as Lily tries to figure out a way to get her life back. The love between Lily and Gogo before the curse kicks in was beautiful to read, so much so that I was so sad for Lily when she learns in the new/alternate universe that Gogo is married to his college sweetheart.

I absolutely adored the characters in the novel. It's fairly tight-knit with Lily, Gogo, Lily's mother Selma and her mother (and Lily's grandmother) Dolly. The rest of the characters are more minor, like Gogo's wife in the alternate universe and the men Selma and Dolly have loved in their lives. I loved Lily, she was so easy to warm to, so easy to like. I just wanted her to find a way to get Gogo back, I was desperate for her to find a way to be with him again. I was a bit taken aback with Gogo's name at first; I know, judging a person by their name, it's terrible but I'm a fan of normal names, don't ask. Gogo is wonderful though, even I wanted to marry him – even the substandard version in the new/alternate universe. Dolly and Selma are the best double act I've ever met. I absolutely loved those two, they made quite a pair. Their love for Lily is... there are no words for how much they love her and try to help her, it's unconditional and it shines through. I also thought they were both hilarious, as Selma breaks her leg on a log and Dolly makes a chicken spit in the backyard.

I love Adena Halpern's writing, honestly. It reminds me a lot of Sophie Kinsella with its warmth and humour. Having it told from Lily's point of view is perfect and I just lapped it up. I'll definitely be buying 29 – the only other Adena Halpern novel available and I sincerely hope she's working on a fourth novel, she's too talented to be allowed to not write another novel. Her novels are so unique but they also retain all the aspects you expect in Chick Lit – the fun, the laughter, the warmth, the great characters. I really love the fact

that Adena comes up with these brilliant twists to add to her novel, she's cornered the market there, along with Ms Ahern. Because so few authors put in magical aspects, it means there's a lot of scope and potential there and Halpern is well able to come up with plots people like me love and adore. There was nothing I disliked about the novel, although I would say that I'd love her books to be longer because I'm always so sad to reach the end. Pinch Me is a brilliant work of fiction, a brilliant Chick Lit novel and is easily one of my favourites of 2011. You won't regret trying Adena Halpern, that I can promise you.

Maida says

Disappointing.... The plotline was pretty thin, and in spite of a few shining parts, this novel was mostly cliché & not even remotely witty. *1.5/5 stars*

Kristin says

Pinch me is an easy, entertaining story about a woman who's family curse ruins her life. One minute she is a happy newly wed and the next minute she is single, back in her old house and her husband is married to someone else and has no idea who she is. The entire story follows Lily as she tries to break the curse and get her husband back.

In the beginning of the story Lily lists all the things that makes Gogo perfect but almost halfway through she lists all the things that drive her nuts about him. That... was something that I enjoyed, a lot. So many books create these characters that are perfect and flawless and at first I started to feel like that was the case with Gogo. However, Lily goes on a rant for a few pages on the little things that Gogo does that bother her, like the fact that he can never admit when he is wrong or that he is a hoarder and cannot seem to throw anything away because they might have a use for it later.

There were a couple of times in the book where, and I will admit it, I yelled at the computer screen. You need to give this woman credit, Lily is relentless on trying to get her man back, to the point of embarrassment. Very rarely do I react so strongly to a book but I just couldn't help myself. Here I am all quiet reading and then Lily does something so embarrassing that I smack my face with my hand and groan "Oh no, what are you doing?!?" -Yeah it was that bad. HaHa

However, this book does have flaws. Throughout the entire book I could not get the grandmother and mother straight. The two, in my mind, were more like twins than Lily's mother and grandmother. They were too active and all over the place (physically) that I just couldn't picture someone like my grandmother doing that stuff. Like for instance, creating a fire pit and rotisserie spit in the front yard and lugging huge heavy logs out there for it. I just don't see it happening, so I was always confused thinking "wait is Selma the grandmother?" Also, the other thing I didn't care for personally was the ending. I really wanted to be surprised or just... something. Instead I got the typical ending to a book (I'm trying to be vague here so bare with me). I felt let down because the book was so crazy and kooky that I thought that for sure the author was going to end the story with a bang. Oh well... what can one do?

Either way I found this story to be entertaining and polished it off pretty quickly. It is the perfect summer book for when you are out at the beach and just want something light and fun.

Meredith Schorr says

I wanted to give this book 4.5 stars but will go with 5 over 4. I just love Adena Halpern's writing style and this book, like "29" and "The Ten Best Days of My Life" had me laughing and crying all at once, although I think it was my least favorite of the three. But since I LOVED, LOVED, LOVED the other two and LOVED, LOVED this one, it's all good. Some of the characters felt similar to those in her other books, like Selma and Dolly seemed similar to the mom and grandma in 29 but it didn't make the story less enjoyable for me. The plot was far-fetched like the others, but, also like the others, had me believing while reading. I can't wait for the next one!

Suzanne says

I really enjoy Adena Halpern's writing style, and this was a cute story.

At the end of the book, there is a section called "A Conversation with Adena Halpern" where they ask her what message she hopes readers will take from the book. She answers, "Like I said earlier, I was single for a really long time. I never thought I would find him. Believe me, I looked everywhere. Now that I have found him, I don't even care that it took so long. It was worth every minute of waiting. I want people to know that if you are single, no matter how old you are, and you think all the good ones are taken, trust me, your soul mate is out there. You might even start to think that you've got a curse on you, but I'm telling you: you don't. He/She is out there for you. Plain and simple."

I really hope you are right, Adena Halpern.

Megan Schemenauer says

A modern-day fairy tale; unexpectedly fantastical to the point suspension of disbelief is injured (relative invented chocolate chip cookies??); effusive at times especially in scenes of gratitude; but happy ending (even if anticlimactic); the name Gogo irritates me.

Amy says

AMAZING! FANTASTIC! WONDERFUL! SPECTACULAR! LOVED IT! I'm smiling just sitting here writing this. I devoured this book like someone would the cake on the cover. Praise praise to Adena Halpern!

Courtney says

Good gosh this was terrible. Not even worth reviewing.

Rachel says

If I could, I'd rate this book 2.5 stars.

I picked up this novel in the used book clearance section of Barnes & Noble. I recognized the author because I had previously read her novel 29, and recalled enjoying it. Given the price, it seemed like a low-risk literary investment.

One thing I appreciate about the two novels of Halpern's that I've read is that she likes to add an element of magic and fantasy to her novels. In *Pinch Me*, Lily loses the love of her life due to a family curse. In the novel, she adjusts to life without her husband in a parallel universe, and tries to win him back a second time.

Pinch Me was the light-hearted novel I was looking for at the time I picked it up. Lily, her mother, and grandmother were an amusing trio that propelled the story forward (in fact, I breezed through this novel within a day). However, it's not necessarily a novel that will stick with me, and thus be one I'd strongly recommend to others looking for a book recommendation.

I think readers looking for a light-hearted, modern day fairy tale in the chick lit genre will enjoy this quick, whimsical novel.

Rachel says

Lily has been taught by her mother (Selma) and grandmother (Dolly) all her life: a good man is hiding something, so go for the pig: the unattractive, the rude, the borderline abusive, the unappealing and unacceptable - because then the warts are all out where you can see them.

And Lily obeyed this warped counsel until she met Gogo Goldblatt: a perfect (for her) man. They fall in love, he proposes, she hedges, she proposes, he accepts.

When Lily goes to tell Selma and Dolly about it, they finally tell her about the curse: misfortune abounds if they marry for love: a man disappears, becomes outrageously hairy, on and on - it just doesn't work.

Lily explains the curse to Gogo, weeping that they can't get married. He promises to be careful, they elope, they get married: Lily says "pinch me, this can't be real. . ." and then it isn't. She isn't married to Gogo, he's married to another woman. The man she knew he never became.

It was a mildly amusing concept, but there were parts I didn't like and it resolved too easily.

Georgina says

<http://chicklitaholic.blogspotcom>

After having my fair share of awful dates and men who have treated me badly, I was excited to read a novel

based on the premise that the main character has to date these types of men because she is cursed. I am sure we have all at one time or another thought that we were cursed with our dating lives, therefore I was intrigued to find out how Adena Halpern would take this and turn it into a magical novel, in *Pinch Me*.

“Never marry a man unless he is short, bald, fat, stupid and treats you badly”. Who well follow that sort of advice? Well this is what Lily has heard all her life from her mother and grandmother. Up until now Lily has followed this advice, that is until she meets Gogo. Gogo is Lily’s perfect man and when he proposes Lily just cannot say no. Everyone should be happy for Lily, right? Well not her mother and grandmother, who are devastated by Lily’s decision. After trying to talk her out of the marriage to no avail, they decide that they must tell Lily the truth that the women in their family are cursed. If she marries for love, there were be unimaginable consequences. Lily thinks that there must be some way to avoid the curse and she goes ahead and marries Gogo regardless. Lily is cannot believe her luck and asks Gogo to pinch her. This is where everything starts to go wrong as she is automatically transported back to her old home and Gogo is gone. Once Lily finds Gogo she discovers that he is married to someone else and cannot remember who she is. Lily realises she must find a way to break the curse and get Gogo back for good.

With this being my first taste of Adena Halpern’s writing I really enjoyed it. I loved the character of Lily, whom I found to be extremely likeable. I was routing for her to break the curse and find a way to be with Gogo again throughout the entire novel. I enjoyed the way the story is told from her point of view, giving us more insight into exactly how Lily is feeling. I particularly liked the characters of Selma and Dolly, Lilly’s mother and grandmother finding them to have moments of humour, especially the moment where Dolly builds a bonfire to roast chicken, and unconditional love. I usually don’t enjoy novels which feature magical elements and I was a little unsure that the curse would be pulled off. Adena Halpern proved me wrong. I found the entire storyline to be not only enjoyable but at times almost believable. If you read this with a pinch of suspension of disbelief the storyline becomes much more interesting and you will find yourself getting lost within the pages. The novel is also not as predictable as readers may think. Adena throws in lots of surprises that you will not seeing coming.

Some readers may find the storyline to be unbelievable and therefore not enjoyable. I have to say that I do not usually enjoy novels which focus on a magical element. If you prefer your novels to be believable then this may not be the novel for you as you do not to suspend your disbelief for this one. I also felt that the happy ending was perhaps a little predictable, however with this being a magical novel a happy ending is expected.

Overall I enjoyed my first experience of Adena Halpern’s writing. Adena’s novels are very similar to Cecelia Ahern, with the magical elements they bring to their storylines. I will defiantly be finding Adena’s previous novels to find out if I enjoy them just as much as I did *Pinch Me*. Two of her novels are going to be made into movies “29” and “The Ten Best Days Of My Life” so I will make sure I keep an eye out for these. *Pinch Me* is a beautiful fairytale which will take you on an enchanting journey from the first page to the last.

Crystal says

cute beach read.

Stephanie Pettus says

Cute little love story.

Lisa Keifer says

I couldn't seem to put this book down no matter how hard I tried! The advice from the mom and grandma seems silly and ridiculous until the reason becomes known, but even before then, the story is still enjoyable. The way Lily navigates through the odd, unexpected change in her life is as real and relatable as can be considering the circumstances. I've read this many times and love it as much after the fifth read as after the first.

Cheryl says

Lily Burns is twenty nine years old. She has yet to be married. This could be because both her mom and grandma have warned her that all men are evil and to never marry for love. If you are to marry, make sure it is to a ugly man. Lily has been dating Gogo for just a short period. Lily receives a surprise when Gogo proposes to at the top of the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Both Lily's mother and grandma warn Lily that marrying Gogo will only lead to heart break. There is a curse on the women. If they marry a man for love than something will happen to him. The only way to have a man stay is to marry a ugly man. Lily does not believe in the curse but she will witness how true it is when she tells Gogo to pinch her as she cannot believe her good fortune that she has married a good man. As soon as Gogo pinches Lily, she is transported back to her house and Gogo does not remember Lily. Lily must find a way to break the curse or lose Gogo forever.

This is a comedic book that will have you smiling the whole time. The only way you could get me to stop reading this book was to "Pinch Me". Lily's mom and grandma were hilarious. My favorite moment in the book was when Lily informed her mom and grandma that she was getting married. The conversation went like this: "Why didn't we force her into lesbianism?" Lily's mom states. "Look, I am sorry, I 'm not a lesbian. I tried for you, I did." Lily responses. "We shouldn't have named her Lily. It's too pretty. I told you to name her something less attractive. What was wrong with Ethel cries Dolly, Lilly's grandma. There were many more funny moments to be found in this book. Even the most wary readers of chick lit will fall in love with Pinch Me and author, Adena Halpern.
