



## Coral Glynn

*Peter Cameron*

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Coral Glynn arrives at Hart House, an isolated manse in the English countryside, early in the very wet spring of 1950, to nurse the elderly Mrs. Hart, who is dying of cancer.

Hart House is also inhabited by Mrs. Prence, the perpetually disgruntled housekeeper, and Major Clement Hart, Mrs. Hart's war-ravaged son, who is struggling to come to terms with his latent homosexuality.

When a child's game goes violently awry in the woods surrounding Hart House, a great shadow - love, perhaps - descends upon its inhabitants.

Like the misguided child's play, other seemingly random events - a torn dress, a missing ring, a lost letter - propel Coral and Clement into the dark thicket of marriage.

A period novel observed through a refreshingly gimlet eye, Coral Glynn explores how quickly need and desire can blossom into love, and just as quickly transform into something less categorical.

Borrowing from themes and characters prevalent in the work of mid-twentieth-century British women writers, Peter Cameron examines how we live and how we love - with his customary empathy and wit.

## **Coral Glynn Details**

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Author : Peter Cameron

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## From Reader Review Coral Glynn for online ebook

### Jorge Cienfuegos says

3,5.

Esperaba algo más de Cameron. No ha llegado a hacerme sentir tantas cosas como "Algún día este dolor te será útil". Aun así, la prosa desnuda pero poética de Cameron sigue ahí; igual que sus diálogos y la sutileza con que lo cuenta todo. No obstante, me ha sabido a poco. Creo que este autor encaja más con una novela contemporánea de la gran ciudad que con la postguerra en la Inglaterra rural. De todas maneras, una lectura muy ágil y disfrutable.

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### Renee says

This is a book I picked up based on an NPR review which compared it to gothic novels like Rebecca and Jane Eyre. Having recently read The Haunting of Hill House, another modern version of the gothic novel and enjoyed it, I thought why not continue on this theme.

While there were some similarities with the gothic novel, they were fairly circumstantial---big empty house, mysterious and seemingly hateful housekeeper, etc. In fact, Coral Glynn did not feel at all like a gothic novel to me. It felt more like The Remains of the Day or any of the other stories where English folks are unable to express their true feelings and therefore prevent themselves from finding true happiness in life. (I am something of an Anglophile in my reading and TV viewing habits, so I am more than familiar with this conundrum.)

In retrospect, I am wondering why I was not thrilled with this book, since it had so many of the elements I enjoy. I am just not sure. At points the motivation of the characters seemed inexplicable to me, and even that I tend to normally enjoy in a novel (case in point, one of my favorite books recently read is The Hand That First Held Mine where I almost never fully understood the motivations of the characters). I wonder if my lack of enthusiasm is simply a symptom of my disappointment in not reading a gothic novel. Something to ponder...perhaps I will update my review at some point. Some books are better with contemplation.

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### Guillermo Jiménez says

Si hay algo que sobresale en esta novela, es la elegancia magistral de su narración. Cameron se aleja de vanguardias y posmodernismos, formalmente hablando, y entrega una cátedra magistral del arte de la novela.

El narrador de Coral Glynn es capaz de una sutileza asombrosa, va echando luz y haciendo guiños muy tenues al lector; mientras que con un pincel muy fino va delineando el entorno espacial donde se desenvuelve la trama, con un grafito va iluminando y oscureciendo el papel para darnos la profundidad de cada personaje.

Tiene momentos sumamente divertidos que te provocan la risotada, y otros de una oscuridad abismal que te pueden inundar en un terror desolador.

Cada uno de los personajes va evolucionando, va creciendo, con brochazos muy gruesos, pero siempre procurando dar las razones últimas para cada una de sus palabras, de sus actos, y sobre todo: de sus silencios. Tal como en la vida, hay situaciones que creemos comprender del todo, y otras de las que no tenemos ni idea, ni podemos explicarnos. Ni requieren ser explicadas.

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Devoré en apenas unas horas esta grandiosa novela. Y sigo feliz y dichoso de haberla leído. En un momento en que temas como el amor, la pareja, las relaciones interpersonales son mi cotidaneidad, esta novela de Cameron me viene a caer como anillo al dedo.

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### **Thomas says**

A little gothic, a little sad, but I really enjoyed it. Much different than Cameron's *Andorra* but I think I liked it just as much.

I re-read this in 2016 and found it even more amazing, and definitely like it better than *Andorra*.

<https://hogglestock.com/2016/05/09/wh...>

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### **Stephanie says**

What a whopping disappointment. I thought this would be a delicious English manor period piece – perhaps a *Secret Garden* for grownups. Instead, I found myself enduring wooden characters having stilted conversations within banal relationships. The plot plods along, deftly side-stepping any hint of development, inserting and removing characters with mechanical disinterest. I'm still not sure why I took the time to finish it.

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### **Sub\_zero says**

4.5/5

La historia que nos cuenta Peter Cameron en esta novela transcurre en el Londres de los años 50 y tiene como protagonista a Coral Glynn, una enfermera itinerante que llega a casa de la anciana señora Hart, aquejada de una grave dolencia. Con ella vive su hijo el coronel Clement Hart, un militar retirado y un tanto retraído que aún convalece de sus heridas causadas durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Propiciado por el frío ambiente de la casa, entre ambos se producirá un progresivo acercamiento tan tierno como efímero, obstaculizado a veces por las extrañas circunstancias que los rodean, la soledad descarnada que tanto tiempo llevan arrastrando y las restrictivas convenciones sociales de la época.

Y así es como de repente te ves envuelto en una fascinante historia de amor, desamor, amistad, traición, tristeza y mucha melancolía que no sabes en qué preciso momento aprieta el acelerador para no volver a pisar nunca más el freno. La belleza de los gestos cotidianos, el vacío abismal que se cierne sobre unos personajes cuyo futuro se sabe incierto, la irreprimible fuerza de atracción que hace al ser humano orbitar entorno a lo desconocido. Todo un abanico de sentimientos abiertos en canal ante nuestros propios ojos. Y

muchos mazazos argumentales que resuenan con fuerza en el corazón del lector. Todo ello es solo una pequeña muestra de lo que encontrarás entre las páginas de Coral Glynn, una novela muy bien estructurada, exquisita, inteligente y brillante, cuya extensión se ajusta de forma milimétrica a las exigencias de la trama y no solo realza la hermosura implícita en cada pasaje, sino que provoca una avidez lectora bastante difícil de controlar.

Reseña completa: <http://generacionreader.blogspot.com....>

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### **Anne says**

At last my curiosity has been satisfied. This has been on a to-read list for a few years now, though I'm wondering now how it got there. Suggested because I liked "Rebecca" by Daphne du Maurier? Perhaps to the impatient extrovert, Coral Glynn and the second Mrs. de Winter are similar characters and marry alike aloof but secretly affectionate husbands. But "Coral Glynn" is no thriller; the plot is not a mystery, just a gradual reveal of random salacious secrets. Two subplots with real potential for suspense are resolved tidily, in a character's exposition after the fact. The only way this is a mystery is that the characters' motivations are so well hid from the reader that the ending seems tacked on by someone who skimmed the rest of the book. In the hands of a mystery writer, Dolly would have been the main character and the plot would have followed through on the violent crime rather than absconded to London, and one of Coral's antagonists would have taken center stage as a real villain and not \*just\* a jerk. And Coral would have gotten into real trouble for acting like such a helpless Bella Swan. Or maybe Coral should have turned out to be the villain; as duplicitous a turn that would be from the author, it's hardly third person omniscient so it could have worked. It's a strange turn of events, to start hoping that the protagonist is the villain and possibly a murderer. But when so little happens (past events and side plots mostly occurring offstage excepted) you grow desperate for anything and hope for the worst.

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### **Amy Warrick says**

What an odd little book. I don't know how to describe it, or explain what I liked about it. I'd have given it 3 1/2 stars if half-stars were available, but in the meantime it wasn't quite 4 star material, or maybe it was? That's how this book has left me - unable to figure out what I think of it.

The 'heroine', young Coral Glynn, seemed directionless - you know how sometimes you accept an invitation, or agree to do a favor, because of a momentary lapse in your brain during which you can't think of a good reason why not? And then you kick yourself and just not showing up seems the easiest way out? Well, our Coral lives her life this way, and the effect can be maddening.

And then suddenly we flash way way ahead and see that surprising things DO happen. All wrapped up in a neat package...kind of.

It's a well-written, mannered little book with some charm, some wit, and lots of reserve. This book is the equivalent of that really elegant person at the party who doesn't say much, but whom you wish you knew better so you could get him to talk.

(And for some reason it reminds me of Margery Sharp's 'Cluny Brown', which is much more hectic, and also out of print so if you know of it, that dates you as much as it dates me for referring to it.)

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### **Marcello S says**

La brughiera e il rumore dell'acqua, i vetri appannati e malinconia dappertutto.

La ricerca dell'amore, o l'amore che ti cade addosso e non hai il tempo di scansarti.

Le ville vittoriane con le giornate allineate e immobili.

Cameron mantiene fede alla sua scrittura elegante, classica, senza orpelli. Ha una levità assoluta, quasi fuori dal tempo.

Non tende a sorprendere. Non butta lì la frase che ti spacca il cuore, che ti lascia interdetto per qualche secondo.

Ha però una prosa da classico col vantaggio di non tirarla lunga in divagazioni a volte inutili. C'è pure un tocco di gotico.

Alta qualità condensata.

Le vite dei personaggi sono unite da fili fragilissimi. Da sentimenti vaghi e imprevedibili, adattabili al tempo e agli eventi.

Le situazioni sono accennate come immagini scolorite. I movimenti congelati.

Coral e il maggiore Hart sono una delle coppie letterarie più improbabili. E per questo sono bellissimi.

Sottile, amaro, struggente. [74/100]

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### **Chuck says**

Set in England during the 1950s, this leisurely-paced novel has a much older feel to it, by virtue of its style and the fact that mid-century technology is either nonexistent or well hidden. In addition, the principal characters are appropriately old-fashioned. Given this context, one jarring element -- a brief Gothic-style scene at the end of Part One, which drives much of the subsequent tale -- seems a bit out of place.

Peter Cameron writes some luminous prose, but it deserves a better plot line than the one he has devised here (the novel takes several abrupt twists and turns that are as unmotivated as they are unexpected). All of the principal characters' relationships get unpredictably reshuffled, sometimes along lines that seem more characteristic of the end than the middle of the twentieth century. Despite being interesting in a clinical sort of way, however, Cameron's characters remain distant, never managing to evoke much of an emotional response on the part of the reader. Since you won't be sitting on the edge of your seat over this, you might as well know that (except for the old woman who is terminally ill as the book opens) everybody ends up living happily ever after, at least once various bits of implausible dust have settled.

*Coral Glynn* is a quick read, and any pauses that it occasions will be due to admiration of its author's well-crafted sentences, not an encounter with deep or complex material that might require serious pondering.

Cameron's sometimes poetic descriptions certainly make the book worth a few hours of a reader's time, but for his next effort one can only hope that he comes up with a less hackneyed story on which to unleash his considerable talent.

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### **Michael says**

Peter Cameron has crafted an exquisite book about socially awkward people living in England in the 1950's. Reminiscent of the social examinations of the Bronte sisters, Coral Glynn reveals the solitary life of a shy, young woman working as a visiting nurse. When she suddenly finds herself married and suspected of a hideous crime, she flees to London and unwittingly finds the path to eventual happiness. Wonderfully written and drawn with insight and power.

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### **Isa-janis says**

3.5

No me ha disgustado, pero tampoco me ha llegado como hizo Algún día este dolor te será útil. Sé que las comparaciones son odiosas, pero no he podido evitar hacer el ejercicio comparativo. No es una mala novela, ni mucho menos, pero me esperaba más de Cameron.

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### **Larry H says**

What a captivating little old-fashioned soap opera of a book!

It's England in 1950. Young Coral Glynn, a nurse, arrives at Hart House, an isolated mansion in the countryside, to care for the terminally ill Mrs. Maud Hart. Other than Mrs. Hart, the house is populated only by the housekeeper, Mrs. Prence, who takes an almost-immediate dislike to Coral, and Mrs. Hart's somewhat-estranged son, Clement, who was injured in World War 2, and spends most of his days brooding over his injuries. Clement sees in Coral a solution to keeping his beloved childhood friend, Robin, and their latent homosexuality, at arm's length; Coral sees in Clement stability, especially after she encounters children playing a disturbing game in the woods. All at once, they are propelled into a relationship both are unsure of, and as secrets are revealed, it appears Coral is not quite what she seems. This novel has all of the makings of the novels of days gone by—death, suspicion, misunderstandings, unrequited love (in many forms), desparity between classes, secrets, and intriguing characters.

Peter Cameron is a fantastic writer—his novels *The Weekend* and *Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You* are among my all-time favorites. This is a very interesting departure from anything he's written before, and it really feels very old-fashioned, in an enjoyable way. If I have any criticism of this book, it's that I didn't feel that Cameron made a persuasive enough case for Coral's appeal to so many. To me, she seemed indecisive and flighty to a point that was somewhat annoying from time to time, but it didn't mar my enjoyment of the book overall. At slightly more than 200 pages, this is a very fast, enjoyable read, and the type of book you (or at least I) rarely see these days.

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## **Tim says**

Reviewed for PW; odd but excellent:

Set in the English countryside in the aftermath of World War II, this quietly compelling sixth novel from the author of *Andorra* (FSG, 1997) and *Someday This Pain Will Be Useful To You* (FSG, 2009; soon to be a major motion picture) focuses on the story of the eponymous heroine, a nurse, sent to Hart House in 1950 to tend the dying Mrs. Hart. With great efficiency, Cameron introduces the other players: Mrs. Hart's son, Major Clement Hart, a wounded, slightly embittered War veteran; his friend Robin Lofting; the brittle, disapproving housekeeper Mrs. Prentiss. But after Mrs. Hart dies, and Major Hart proposes to Coral, the novel, which seemed to be a brilliantly realized homage to the post-War British novel, turns into something almost gothic. Walking in a forest near Hart House, Coral comes across a young girl tied to a tree; she's being pelted with pinecones by a young boy in a game they call "Prisoner." Though she insists they stop, Coral takes no other action, and the young girl is later murdered in the same forest. The book is suffused with an aura of surrealism (as well as a lonely sadness); bizarrely, Coral is suspected of being the killer. It's a tribute to Cameron's skill as a storyteller that the reader can accept this notion, along with all the dramatic events in Coral's life and the other characters.

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## **William Reichard says**

I'm a big fan of Peter Cameron, and I started *Coral Glynn* with high expectations. Some of my expectations were met, while others were not. The title character is fascinating - somewhat of a cypher, she's an in-home nurse, taking care of the sick and dying, then moving on to her next assignment. The people around her seem to project their own sense of who she is, or who they want her to be, onto her, and for the most part, she allows this. She has an inner life, but Cameron doesn't take the time he needs in order to flesh out her own sense of self. The book is a period piece, set in the English countryside in 1950. There is a somewhat undercooked gay subplot, the murder of a child that acts only as a plot device to move Coral from the country back to the city, and an awkward, though potentially fascinating, romance between Coral and the son of the dying woman for whom she works. This relationship, between Coral and The Major, could have been the centerpiece of the book, but Cameron drops it, literally, on their wedding night. I don't want to say that this is a bad book. I'll say that Cameron has written much better books. Don't bother to buy this one - get it from the library.

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