



Pear Shaped

Stella Newman

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A novel about love, heartbreak and dessert.

Girl meets boy.

Girl loses boy.

Girl loses mind.

Sophie Klein walks into a bar one Friday night and her life changes. She meets James Stephens: charismatic, elusive, and with a hosiery model ex who casts a long, thin shadow over their burgeoning relationship. He's clever, funny and shares her greatest pleasure in life – to eat and drink slightly too much and then have a little lie down. Sophie's instinct tells her James is too good to be true – and he is.

An exploration of love, heartbreak, self-image, self-deception and lots of food. Pear-Shaped is in turns smart, laugh-out-loud funny and above all, recognizable to women everywhere.

Pear Shaped Details

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Author : Stella Newman

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From Reader Review Pear Shaped for online ebook

Nikki says

I loved *One Day* and I loved Amy Winehouse, so when I saw the blurb for a book that mentioned both, it was inevitable that I'd buy it.

But *Pear Shaped* was not what I expected. It's the story of 34-year-old Sophie Klein, who falls head over heels for a man – James – and then has to recover from her broken heart when it all goes wrong. Sounds like a story we've heard many times before, but this turned out to be one of the more depressing interpretations of a break-up plotline.

James is a horrible person; probably the most awful love interest I've ever read. The things he says to Sophie are shocking, to the extent that I just wanted to scream at the pages for her to DUMP HIM, but she seemed strangely oblivious to his emotional abuse. I have no idea what Sophie saw in him when he seemed to have no redeeming qualities – he's arrogant, chauvinistic, and the physical descriptions of him aren't particularly favourable either. We're regularly reminded that he's older than her, and he just sounds like an average-looking, middle-aged man with an inflated view of himself and a complete lack of respect for women.

Because of this, Sophie is a confusing character. She's funny in a self-deprecating sense; I enjoyed her dark sense of humour and sarcasm. But James makes her painfully insecure, and she's completely blind to how truly awful he is. If a man said any of those things to me I'd be slamming a door firmly in his face (or worse) but Sophie just continued to fall madly in love, blaming herself for all the problems and thinking she deserved all of his criticism. I felt like her lack of self respect almost didn't fit with the feistier aspects of her personality – I would have expected her to be far less dependent on a man, particularly one with such obvious issues.

Despite the fact James is The Worst Boyfriend Ever, they only actually split up because he calls Sophie fat (which annoyed me, considering the long list of other glaring issues in the relationship). And her heartbreak that follows is rather distressing. Chick lit break-ups usually consist of a crying, wine-drinking chapter before the heroine starts a brand new independent lifestyle. In *Pear Shaped*, Sophie spirals into an ongoing serious depression that requires medical attention. The synopsis says this book is "recognisable to women everywhere", but I really hope that's not true.

I feel like I'm being very critical, but it wasn't a bad book. Stella Newman is a great writer, and I loved all the descriptions of food (Sophie works in the development of new dessert recipes, and the story includes lots of very tasty-sounding treats). Unfortunately I just couldn't shake the feeling that the story reflects badly on women, and I was left feeling annoyed that so many still hopelessly cling on to men that don't deserve them.

This review was originally published at Judging Covers.

Rea Cobb says

I have struggled to write this review. I really wanted to enjoy this book but I think I got my hopes up a bit too much after reading the synopsis and the comments about how funny it was. I have to say there is not one moment in this book where I found my self smiling let alone laughing, I really don't think you can call this a

"funny" book.

The first half of the book started off ok but just under half way through the pace really started to take a dive and I had to struggle along to manage to finish the book.

I think the main problem for me in this book was that I really couldn't see what it was that Sophie sees in James. He has to be the most awful male character I have ever read as the love interest in a book, he constantly puts Sophie down and not in a tactful way, I just couldn't figure out why she would put up with so much negativity in a relationship when he clearly was holding her at arms length not wanting a serious relationship. He is such a vile character that my faults towards his character soon took over any enjoyment in the book.

The best parts in this book were when Sophie went to work, when Stella Newman talks about desserts in this book the story seemed to flow a lot easier as did the relationship between Sophie and Will. It was because of these parts of the book that I didn't give the book a 2 star.

This would not be the kind of book I would read again but at the special price on kindle at the moment (99p) it will be worth reading just don't expect to get a stitch from laughing too much!

Paula Sealey says

Girl meets boy, girl loses boy, girl loses mind. But, oh my, there is so much more in between! Sophie falls head over heels for James, a man she finds charming, funny and a real catch! Friends see something different, but Sophie by this time is besotted and slips any misgivings about the relationship to the back of her mind. That is, until James lands a bombshell on her lap, and no, it's not what you might be expecting having read this far, it's something more complex and, well, I can't spoil this bit for you!

Wonderfully believable characters and a strong storyline, with laughter and tears, had me reading in this one sitting! Plus all the cake and dessert references (Sophie is a pudding developer), had me drooling. A great read!

Christina says

I first chose this book on iBooks, not really having any expectations of what it would be about, but purely wanting something new to read.

Within a few pages, I was hooked! There's no massive drama or thrilling murder to intrigue you, just a down-to-earth character we can all relate to.

Although parts of the book (the man in her life) infuriated me, I could sadly imagine it happening in the real world, so it made for an interesting read.

Stella Newman is a witty, charming author and I will definitely be reading more of her books in future. The combination of food, romance and friendship made the book a perfect relaxing 'bath-time' read. I would definitely recommend the book to anybody looking for a girly book, sometimes light-hearted, sometimes a bit darker, but always written with humour behind it.

Dana says

This book warmed my heart. Clever, cute and hilarious...what more could you ask for in a story? I found Sophie to be pretty relatable for the most part (the good and the bad). I loved all the details about food, which were comprehensive without becoming boring. I believe that this book is filled with great moral lessons, and that any it will leave any woman with a smile on her face. Pear shaped, apple shaped, banana shaped, whatever fruit shape you are, you are sure to enjoy this terrific read! **4.5/5**

Note: I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review.

Rosie Review says

Taken from my blog www.rosiereview.wordpress.com

I don't think I've read anything like this. Which I think is a good thing! I have quite a busy lifestyle, I work full-time, read for fun and also juggle a fiance and dog at home with a horse in a field somewhere; so I like a book which has lots of chapters. Not too small and not too big so that I can read a chapter or few at a time and put the book down to be picked up again later on. Suppose that is the OCD in me, I don't like to leave anything unfinished, so can't put a book down mid chapter. This book only has Four chapters including the Epilogue. Luckily for me there were page breaks along the way so I compromised and used them as my mini chapters. I was twitchy in between, itching to go back and read some more, but I think it was more down to the fact that I was thoroughly enjoying this book. I love how the chapters were a perfect start to how Sophie was at that stage in the book. Especially the crumble one when she was falling apart!

I felt I could relate to Sophie; she has weight issues, and loves pudding! My book character soul mate! Although I did find myself disagreeing with her at some point – a UK size 12 is not fat! But I can see how this is just how the author, Stella is highlighting the pressure women are put under by the media, celebs, men to stay skinny. The obsessive relationship (which leads to) and Sophie's breakdown is very well written. I love the witty insides you get from Sophie whilst she's at work, or wherever; although at first and at points they were confusing. But they helped the storyline and to also build the character.

There wasn't one boring bit in the book, I liked how Stella has just briefly mentions things that Sophie's doing, I start to read it and just as I think it's getting slow we jump a few days ahead to a date with James or a meeting with Devron. Also I can't make up my mind who I hate more James or Devron – but in a good way – if you've read the book you'll know why! And the trip to Paris with Will was superb!

I really enjoyed this book, I haven't read One Day so I can't really compare it. I'm rating it a Must Read

Danielle says

Right I couldn't put this book down from the start, I had a serious crush on James, however the crushing stopped till what he was doing to poor Sophie.

It's a well-written piece of fiction - Stella Newman clearly knows what to do with a pen as well as a cake tin - Pear Shaped is totally absorbing about James and Sophie's relationship. But you can substitute for James all the powerful communicators who tell women what to look like and what to buy - and what to deny themselves - in order to look that way. And you can substitute for Sophie all the women who struggle daily

with how we're 'supposed' to be.

It's important for all of us that Sophie breaks free of James (read the book to find out if she does...!)

Because, despite the daft cover, there's a lot more than ice cream at stake.

Rachel Burton says

****SPOILERS****

The blurb says this book is recognizable to women everywhere.

At first I thought "what women?" I have never eaten more than one dessert at a time, never eaten pudding out of the bin + never stayed with a man who is ritually unkind...

But then...

The slow descent into nervous breakdown, the not knowing how you'll get out of bed tomorrow + the sudden eureka moment when you realise everything will be OK. Yes I recognise that.

And the scene where she buys 400 ciggies + smokes her way through them all...yeah :/

Stella Newman's writing is addictive + her portrayal of a breakdown so spot on I was uncomfortable reading it at times.

Rebecca says

I originally decided to read this book because my boyfriend said that it looked like one I'd read, and he was not wrong.

The book starts with 33 year old Sophie Klein, who works as a pudding developer, meeting older man James Stephens whilst on a night out with her best friend Laura. The pair soon go on a date, and continue seeing each other. James is a charmer. He's funny, clever, has done well for himself in life, him and Sophie have so much in common... but Sophie never knows when he will call. They develop a relationship but Sophie is constantly paranoid, with James checking out younger girls modelling for his legwear company and making comments about her weight and what she eats, even though she is far from fat. I personally did not see anything in James, he was just awful, and his constant sexist comments infuriated me. He didn't seem to know what he wanted, even at his age.

Through the book we see Sophie struggle with her confidence due to James' remarks, as well as a very messy breakup that leaves her devastated and in need of a psychiatrist. Despite this, Sophie does have a good, supportive group of friends. One thing I really loved about the book was Sophie's constant comments: what she was thinking in her head, but didn't actually say. The book had just the right balance, sometimes I was laughing, sometimes far from it.

Another great addition to the book was the pudding theme, with Sophie working as a pudding developer we see her visiting New York and Paris to try amazing foods, as well as testing out various desserts. The sweet theme is not only mentioned in her job, but throughout the whole book. I really love Sophie's love of food; she doesn't care to watch what she eats, she believes that eating is something you do to enjoy yourself, and that food is an art.

I didn't really know what to expect with this book, with it being the author's debut, but I was thoroughly impressed. The story had plenty of interesting twists, meaning that I didn't know which way the story was going to go. A really nice ending too, the last few pages made me smile.

An excellent debut novel which I highly recommend, and I am thoroughly looking forward to reading

Leftovers.

Poppy Dolan says

I LOVE LOVE LOVED this! So many sharp, absolutely on-the-money jokes and observations about relationships (bad ones) and break-ups (even worse ones). I can't wait to read this author's next book. I hope it's just as foodie! One of those books I wish I could read for the first time all over again.

Marcee Feddersen says

<http://bit.ly/1xqtXeU>

What They Say.....Girl meets boy. Girl loses boy. Girl loses mind.

Sophie Klein walks into a bar one Friday night and her life changes. She meets James Stephens: charismatic, elusive, and with a hosiery model ex who casts a long, thin shadow over their burgeoning relationship. He's clever, funny and shares her greatest pleasure in life – to eat and drink slightly too much and then have a little lie down. Sophie's instinct tells her James is too good to be true – and he is.

An exploration of love, heartbreak, self-image, self-deception and lots of food. Pear Shaped is in turns smart, laugh-out-loud funny and above all, recognizable to women everywhere.

What I Say....Freaking guys. They can be so stupid.

This started off as a lighthearted little romance, I was happy to see Sophie hitting it off with James and he seemed like he was really going to get it. And by it, I mean, looks aren't everything. One weirdness about this book was that Sophie wasn't even fat!!! Ever!! And then she got too skinny.

But James being a middle aged, financially well-off man, realizes that maybe he could do better than Sophie in the looks department.

So begins the half-in, half-out relationship with a man who doesn't really want her, but doesn't want to not have her either. Having been through this, and having watched the majority of the women I know go through it too, it's absolutely maddening.

Even watching a fictional character see all the red flags and the signs and still keep going back for more punishment is infuriating.

I won't spoil the ending for anyone, but it was a little more true to life than I would have preferred. It's always a catch-22, do I want the chick-lit happy ending or what happens to those of us not bound to 352 pages of a life?

Mostly, I prefer a happy ending, I've got enough reality, thankyouverymuch.

I liked the writing, I liked the characters, I liked the story. I would have preferred just a touch less of the food

description - it got too long sometimes.

All in all, a book worth reading. Thank you, NetGalley and Bookouture for the Advanced copy.

Lucrug says

E' la storia di Sophie, una ragazza di 34 anni che vive a Londra e crea e inventa nuove ricette di budini x una grande catena di supermercati. Conosce James un quarantacinquenne con un naso pronunciato, un po di pancia, tanti soldi ed eterno peter pan, immaturo e infantile che frequenta donne molto più giovani di lui, magre e belle. Così comincia l'autodistruzione di Sophie, xche lui non e gentile, la critica spesso sparisce x lavoro senza farsi sentire. Lei diventa sempre piu insicura e vive sulle spine....

Una storia che mi ha fatto innervosire parecchio e tutta incentrata sul percorso autodistruttivo di questa ragazza che non riesce a dirgliene quattro a questo bellimbusto che non chiede mai scusa.

Non lo mollato solo xche curiosa di sapere se alla fine lei riesce a svincolarsi da quel legame malsano....

Clo says

Bloody amazing.

Ok, I found the ending hard work, and I really hope I don't ever feel like that because of some guy, not a chance. To quote the back of the novel, "if you loved "One day" you will love this, yes deffo because alot of it was based on feelings rather than fact.

I loved the fact that Sophie was such a foodie and drinker and she was just so natural. I only started it last night, i've just finished it now and I can honestly say, it was BRILLIANT.

The ending I thought was a bit abrupt and I wish that it had left her and Will getting married. Maybe a sequel to this would be a fabulous idea because it did just end!

Great Character in Sophie; she really was your "typical girl next door" unlucky in love, worried about her eating/food habits, and I could relate to her truly which is why i think Stella did such a good job of building the character because you couldn't help but love her; even when she was buying weed.

I must admit though, I got bored of her obsession over James and her moping about, but, I can't deny that I wouldn't be like that!

Heather Dalgarno says

The only real love affair in this book is the authors relationship with food. The main character, a pudding developer for a supermarket, reads like a piece of wish-fulfillment for the author who would obviously rather be baking brownies than writing about a character that does. This is evident when you reach the end of this book and the epilogue is a list of recipe sources, restaurant reviews and other foodie ravings.

I liked the style of this book, it's obvious Newman is capable of writing witty well paced stories, but I just didn't understand the 'love' story in what is supposed to be a romance that's fairly essential. The heroine starts out as a feisty and loveable character who falls in love with a man that is obviously a total rat from the beginning. Even the character can see this, yet inexplicably becomes almost addicted to him. Almost the

entirety of this book is taken up by a depressing tale of one woman losing every scrap of her self esteem and pride, having a mental breakdown, and eating A LOT of cake. When she finally comes to her senses and runs off with a custard developer this takes up about one chapter of an otherwise long story. I have no sympathy for the main character, who against all good sense continues to do stupid things (like having copious unprotected sex with the guy even when she's fairly sure he's sleeping around) and then whining about it.

If you like lengthy descriptions of cake and puddings, then you may enjoy this book since that covers a lot of the content, although honestly you'd be better off (and less depressed) if you read a cookery book.

Alexandra says

I really tried to like this book. I thought I would too because it involves baking and bad relationships, two things I'm good at. But I had to force myself to read this book. It was a chore for me. I didn't like any of the characters. I think Sophie was annoying and she became even more annoying once she started seeing James. I think I was supposed to be rooting for her to do well, but since I didn't really like her, I didn't care what happened to her. I cared so little that I actually didn't finish reading this book. I feel bad when I don't finish reading a book, especially when I write a review about it. But I just couldn't do it. I was too bored with the story and the characters. It seems nothing ever happened to keep the book moving, it was the same thing throughout most of the book (the first half, at least).
