



Never Too Late (A Henlit Novel Book 1)

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Decades ago, a shotgun wedding locked Edith into a life with a husband she's not sure she ever loved. At sixty-five, she feels like a ghost in her own life, wondering where all this came from: the scornful husband, the mercenary brood of grandchildren, her well-meaning but controlling daughter-in-law. Then one Christmas morning Edith wakes to find her husband dead, and the role she played for so long crumbling. Gray-haired, but by no means done with life, Edith has a chance to discover the woman she could have been.

Soon questions arise about her husband's death, and papers discovered in his pockets send Edith unraveling secrets of the man she thought she knew. Edith's son Brian is the focus of her life, but he may not be as perfect as she thought. Revelations that he might be cheating shock her. As Edith investigates the mysteries of her family, she may just find who she truly is.

Never Too Late (A Henlit Novel Book 1) Details

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Nancy says

Thoughtful, nuanced story of a widow searching for the secrets in her husband's past to understand a marriage that became loveless. She also faces changes in her relationships with a daughter in law and grandchildren. About time a story is told with empathy from this time of life.

Deb Pizzimenti says

Great story but who edited this mess?

I was immediately drawn in by the characters and the way the book began. Almost as quickly, the sloppy editing began. I considered quitting as there are so many great story tellers who are more deserving. If you can make it past the glaringly sloppy mistakes with the language, it's truly a great story.

Linda Thompson says

There's always a price to pay for keeping secrets, and those we keep them from can usually accept the truth far better than untruths or silence. Such is the price paid by so many people in Jo Barney's Never Too Late. Barney's understanding of the human spirit and what drives us is remarkable, and once again I found I could not put this book down. I was drawn into this story long before I truly understood just what the story was. Every character serves a purpose and contributes to the story - Barney makes sure of that. She develops each one so the reader feels emotionally involved, we feel we have a vested interest in the well-being of each; always hoping for a positive (perhaps even happy) ending. The lesson in this book is that, no matter your age, the secrets we choose to keep will continue to haunt us until they are no longer secret. This is a fabulous book and a great life lesson for everyone.

Marlene says

A great read! A coming of age story, in a way. Highly recommend!

I loved this book. Complex characters, storyline was enthralling. A woman of a certain age finding herself and her family and beginning her next chapter.

Diane says

Never Too Late is the story of re-awakening, learning about oneself, family and moving forward.

Edith woke up Christmas morning to a dead husband. She was nearly 70 years old and had been in a loveless marriage since the beginning. She had a son, Brian, a daughter-in-law that she didn't really like, two grandchildren that she really didn't know and very few friends.

After the funeral she found an envelope that was her husband's. It had many mysterious receipts in it that she wanted to investigate. Kathleen, her daughter-in-law offered to help and for the first time Edith genuinely takes the time to get to know her. They become friends. All is not well with Kathleen and Brian either.

Secrets can be very destructive. Edith always felt her husband kept things from her and now finding this envelope proves that he did. Brian is keeping secrets from Kathleen.

Edith in trying to learn about her husband and make changes in her life and relationships discovers that he had a whole other life and that she didn't really know him at all. She encourages her son to reveal his secrets to his wife so that their marriage can be saved and not be a repeat of Edith's.

Edith is learning not only let go of the past and move forward but she is getting to know herself too. I found the story good but at times I felt it got a little slow in some places. The main characters were well developed and the reader can certainly see where they are coming from in relation to what is going on at the time.

I received this book free from the publisher for review purposes. If you want to learn more about Jo Barney check out <http://www.jobarneywrites.com/>

Vera mallard says

All I can say is wow! This was an emotional roller-coaster ride. For me it was a story of guilt, giving up, disillusionment, unhappiness, and settling for second best or maybe even fifth or sixth best. But the real story beneath all the emotion, is it is never too late to begin again.

Edith is in her sixties, she was born in the time period that demanded marriage if one committed the unpardonable and became pregnant; their lives became a study of settling, making do, just existing, staying together because you must and avoidance. But Edith will find after the sudden death of her husband on Christmas morning that she is indeed a major player in her life, by trying to piece together her husband's life from pieces of paper found in his many pockets, she will find second chances, secrets long-buried, a daughter-in-law she actually likes rather than hates, a husband that finally tried to step up, extended family, and a son that was far from the perfect man she thought she had raised. Edith searches her soul and her life and finds she really doesn't like what she has become. Who was her husband really and what secrets did he harbor? Between the secrets and mysteries her husband's life contained and her son presently has in his life, Edith and her daughter-in-law Kathleen are on an investigative trail as they discover the men behind their marriages.

Edith will become her own woman and begin to live life, broaden her horizons, and circumstances. I looked back on this story and felt, what a lot of life wasted, then I took a breath and it dawns on me, what a lot of life is left to live to the fullest! The author shows it is never too late to live and love to its fullest, and it is never too late to forgive.

I received this book from the Publisher and Netgalley in return for an honest review.

Peggy Bird says

It isn't often that older women are heroines in novels. Jo Barney is one writer who tries to fill that gap with her well written stories. In "Never Too Late," her heroine Edith awakens Christmas morning to find her husband dead in bed beside her. Tracking down the mysteries she unearths from clues she finds in the pockets of his clothes she uncovers secrets of her husband's past--of her family's past--as well as hints of what her future might hold. The characters are honestly portrayed and the story unfolds at a pace guaranteed to hold the reader's interest. And I love the term "Henlit."

Elizabeth says

I thought this was going to be a more saccharine predictable story than it turned out to be. And while the protagonist lived all her adult life in an unhappy marriage, in the end she takes responsibility for the choices she made. So it's not a "done her wrong" story either. I'd be interested in more by this author.

Andrew Hall says

I enjoyed this book mostly, though I think it got a little lost in the middle.

Karen Mace says

I received a copy of this via NetGalley in return for a fair and honest review

This book had such a powerful beginning that it proves extremely difficult not to be immediately drawn in, and the continued intelligent writing makes sure you are kept guessing and almost living Ediths' life until all the secrets are revealed by the end.

The start is when Edith reaches over to wake Art up on Christmas morning so they can get things ready for their normal family christmas with the grandchildren, but she finds him dead. Immediate panic sets in, soon to be overtaken with an almost robot like trance of thinking of getting through Christmas Day without telling the family and sorting it all out later and that is when we beginning to go on Ediths' journey of remembering life with Art and the misery it caused her. It's a heartbreaking story at times but as she remembers things, she then tries to move on and it's fascinating to see her gain strength as time passes. But then things begin to crumble again when she starts to learn through her daughter in law that history may be repeating itself and her son is seemingly living a secret life too. Edith has already begun to try and dicover the secrets Art kept from her, she finds receipts and clues in his old clothes, and now it seems she may soon learn what her son Brian is trying to keep too.

This is a fascinating book that deals with so many emotions of moving on, marriage, motherhood, feeling trapped, reliving past horrors and the pain that secrets can cause to a wide range of people. Really loved the touching, fun moments she has with her grandchildren too which lighten the mood and seems to jolt Edith

into remembering not to wallow in the past too much.

highly recommend for all drama fans

Allyson Abbott says

I won an Ecopy of this book through a Giveaway I entered because I was drawn to the tale about an elderly lady. I write stories about mature women or couples, so finding another author within the same genre was enlightening.

I really loved this story. It starts on a sad note when Edith wakes up on Christmas Day to find her husband dead in bed beside her. From the off set it is obvious that she is not that upset, as her marriage has been a struggle and their relationship, love and trust of each other has almost disappeared. From that point, I was expecting a story of a second chance romance, but even though Edith does meet someone nice, this story is more about the different emotions she goes through as she finds a trail of deceit and a secret life of her husband that she knew nothing about.

Following her emotions while she slowly unravels a story that involves her son and his wife, she slowly learns a new side to her deceased husband and her only son. She also develops a good friendship with her daughter-in-law, something that she wished she had done years ago. Edith is putting her life back together in a way that suits her as a widow, mother and grandmother (and now dog owner), without the need to tiptoe around her husbands shadow.

I enjoyed the way the author challenged Edith to explore her feelings and emotions, to question her guilt and even to admit that maybe the marriage failure was not all Art's fault, that she too had a few faults that need addressing. If you enjoy a literary read, this is a must. Once you start, you want to read it al the way through to find out how it all comes together. A lovely story.

Pamela Scott says

I was given a free copy by the author in exchange for an honest review.

Never Too Late is an emotional roller-coaster. Once I started to get into the novel I couldn't put it down. The characters are brilliant. I thought Edith was wonderfully real and raw. I loved the way the author explored Edith and Art's unhappy marriage. It must have been very hard for her to be married to someone who treated her and their son with such cold disdain. It must have been equally hard for him married to someone out of obligation to avoid a scandal. The main theme of this novel is secrets and how they can devastate those who have been lied to once they are revealed. Never Too Late is jam packed with secrets. Art kept many secrets from his unhappy wife. I felt awful for Edith unravelling all of his secrets after his death. Her son kept secrets and the consequences were almost disastrous. At the end, Edith understands Art a little more and has a better, stronger relationship with her son, daughter-in-law and grand-children which are good things. I really liked how Edith develops over the course of the novel, becoming much stronger and more assertive. Never Too Late is a wonderful novel.

Kelly Cain says

This was an easy, quick read, but that's not to minimize the strong themes present throughout.

Edith wakes up on Christmas morning to a dead husband who she didn't really like all that much. She goes on a journey to figure out some mysteries her husband left behind, but instead solves some mysteries about herself she didn't realize needed solving.

I loved the way the author handles race in this novel. Edith's (who is white) sleuthing takes her to a predominantly black establishment and her dialogue (both internal and external) is so honest. She doesn't try to be politically correct and that was refreshing.

This book is marketed as HenLit, and it is, but please do not let that deter you from reading if you're not of a certain age. I don't fall into the target audience and probably wasn't super excited about reading it initially, but I would have seriously missed out on a wonderful book if I hadn't decided to jump in. I can't wait to read the other two novels she has out.

Sue says

I received this book from NetGalley for an unbiased review.

First off, let me say how nice it is to read a book with the main character in their 60s facing real problems of this age group. The book starts out with Edith waking up on Christmas morning to find her husband dead beside her in bed. Even though they had been married for years it was a loveless marriage and her husband treated her badly. She is shocked by his death but not very upset. As she realizes that she is now the master of her own destiny, she realizes that she is not happy with what she has become and starts out making changes. She also finds out that her husband had a lot of secrets in his life and she tries to unravel them. This is a very interesting book and someone who learns, at an advanced age, to live their life to the fullest.

Margaret Millmore says

Edith awakens on Christmas day to find that her husband of more than forty years, has passed away in the night. One would think this would devastate her, but it doesn't...Edith's marriage and life in general had been more of an arrangement made possible by the unexpected pregnancy of her son Brian, which forced her marriage in a time when unwed mothers were shamed upon. She'd spent her married life cooking, cleaning and caring for a husband who treated his wife with utter disdain...a man who blamed her for trapping him in a loveless marriage and family he never really wanted.

The only bright side to Edith's life is her son Brian, who she doted upon. Brian now has a family of his own, a wife that Edith doesn't really care for and two children that Edith doesn't really know. When Edith begins to clean out her husband's belongings she comes across several items that she doesn't understand, items that lead her to believe her husband led a secret life, but what was that life? As she begins to investigate this mystery, her daughter-in-law becomes her inadvertent assistant and confidant, which creates a positive relationship between the two, it also reveals a rift that is developing in her son's marriage and allows her to become closer with her grandchildren. Another side-effect of Edith's investigation is learning about herself, her needs and desires and the realization that she can start again, fresh and new, because it's Never Too Late.

I've read several of Ms. Barney's books, her ability to create realistic and real life characters is uncanny, but more importantly, Ms. Barney's stories delve into real life issues that people face day-in and day-out. Once

again, Ms. Barney weaves a tale that I found very difficult to put down and one that I thoroughly enjoyed.

This book was provided to me for free for an honest and unbiased review (see all our reviews at <http://www.bookexplosions.com/> or on Goodreads at <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/...>)
