



Forgiven

Janet Fox

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Kula Baker never expected to find herself on the streets of San Francisco, alone but for a letter of introduction. Though she has come to the city to save her father from a cruel fate, Kula soon finds herself swept up in a world of art and elegance - a world she hardly dared dream of back in Montana, where she was no more than the daughter of an outlaw. And then there is the handsome David Wong, whose smiling eyes and soft-spoken manner have an uncanny way of breaking through Kula's carefully crafted reserve. Yet when disaster strikes and the wreckage threatens all she holds dear, Kula realizes that only by unlocking her heart can she begin to carve a new future for herself.

Forgiven Details

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From Reader Review Forgiven for online ebook

Pamela Hubbard says

Kula Baker has grown up in the mountains of Montana with her outlaw father. When someone puts her life at risk, her father sends her away to safety. When he is accused of a murder he didn't commit, Kula goes to San Francisco to find a box that holds secrets that she believes will free him. Once she arrives, she finds herself in a spiral of mystery and deceit, not knowing who to trust or how to believe, and also finding her heart drawn to two very different men. As she makes mistakes and adapts to her new surroundings, she also finds herself passionate about a new cause - the sex trafficking of young girls from China. When the great San Francisco earthquake hits, all hell breaks loose and Kula and those around her struggle to survive as well as continue to save the lives of the young girls.

I liked that this book dealt with various different issues, especially ones that aren't brought up in historical fiction very often, such as sex trafficking. The characters were well-written (especially the villains) and while Kula could seem ignorant and naive at times (I often thought she acted more like a 13-14 year old than a 16-17 year old), it was easy to identify with her struggles and triumphs.

Kathy says

Forgiven is about a girl from Montana, her name is Kula (love that name), she is Maggie's half sister (Maggie from Faithful), and she is a spitfire and a treasure. Set in San Francisco 1906 at a time when the local government is corrupt, the Chinese population is important to the community and are severely oppressed. Also the earthquake and fires played a major role in the end.

She goes to San Francisco to find a box for her dad, he's been thrown in jail for a murder he didn't commit. Only when she gets there a man named Wilkie is out to hurt her and stop her from saving her dad. Kula meets a man named David Wong, his sweet and kind manner brings down the walls of defence she's erected, because of his race she sees that he can't give her what she is looking for in a husband. She is hoping to meet a man with station and wealth so that she doesn't have to live in service anymore. When all is said and done she is stronger and more fierce than ever.

The reason I didn't give Forgiven 5 stars is because it's a tragedy, but it still found its way to my favorites shelf. This story is very bittersweet so have tissues on hand when reading this, and the only thing I like bittersweet is my chocolate.

Gabrielle Carolina says

It's incredible, and personal, heartfelt and true. It has weight and power and love and beauty and Forgiveness between its pages. Forgiven is spectacular.

Long Review TK

Savannah (Books With Bite) says

Given that I like the first book very much, I thought I pick up this one and see how it went.

Plot: This story follows Kula who is thrown in some troubles of the past. Her dad is accused of murder and there is not much time to save him. He gives her clues to follow and it leads her to a path she didn't think she be on. I liked this plot. It is filled with much drama and action. Kula's life has been hard as well. She is struggling with so much. To see her come into her own, was done well.

Love: Kula has done nothing but what others had told her. It good to see her make her own designs and of course follow her own heart. I think the guy who steals her heart knows her better than she knows herself.

Ending: The ending is bittersweet. Kula is getting what she dreamed of but at a cost. I was hoping for more of a happy ending but when you live in times like these, I can see why it was the way it was.

Overall, this is great companion story. The emotions that came from Kula and her thoughts matched perfectly. And of course the time period and the wonderfully writing only kept me deeper in the story. Forgiven is awesome!

Amy says

Definitely had its moments, and it's very strong at times. Personally, I got bogged down about half way through. This is a book that strangely manages to feel 1000 pages long (in actuality, it's not even 300 pages long). Kula (and the reader), have an almost impossible time getting the crucial details straight so we can go about finding the damn box and saving Pa from hanging. I guess it's supposed to be a suspenseful mystery, but it just felt like we were forced to be clueless and naive and not clever enough to make any accurate connections. She also threw in the kitchen sink along with the historical setting of the early 1900s, San Francisco's seamy Barbary Coast, Chinese girls being sold into slavery, race relations, romance, and a VERY complicated family drama. Oh, oops, the devastation of the Great San Francisco Earthquake of 1906 is in the mix too.

Rebecca says

Kula Baker was raised near Yellowstone by her father, an outlaw. She never knew her mother, who was forced to return home when Kula was a baby and later died. Now that Kula is older, her father does not think it is safe for her to live with him, and he wants her to have a better life. So he arranges for Kula to move to the city of Bozeman, Montana, to work as a servant to a kind woman named Mrs. Gale. But Kula wants more than that. She wants to find a rich man to marry, one who will treat her well and raise her social status. Just when Kula is starting to adjust to life in the city, her father comes to find her. He has been falsely accused of murder, and Kula watches as he is arrested. His last words to her are to go to San Francisco and find a box, the contents of which could save him.

Kula sets out for San Francisco, desperate to save her father's life. As she searches for the box, she meets many people, including two young men to whom Kula is attracted, and she is not sure who she can trust. One

of those young men, Will Henderson, is rich and handsome and is everything Kula has always wanted in a husband. There is also David Wong, who is exactly the opposite. He is Chinese, an outsider, and he is not rich. But Kula can't seem to forget him. Kula also faces danger as she encounters many villains in San Francisco, some of whom are after the same box she is, and others who would exploit the helpless for their own gain, while discovering that what she always thought she wanted might not actually be what her heart truly wants.

From the start, *Forgiven* drew me in. I felt sympathy for Kula, who lived a hard life and dreamed of something more. As she journeys to San Francisco, the book is full of romance, adventure, and a very complicated mystery. There is quite a bit of history which is both interesting and sad, as Kula learns of child slavery and experiences the San Francisco Earthquake in April 1906. Although this book is a companion novel to Janet Fox's previous novel, *Faithful*, the story in this book stands alone and it is not necessary to have read the first book to enjoy *Forgiven*, although I would recommend it, as I really enjoyed *Faithful* too! I highly recommend this book to readers who love young adult historical fiction.

Disclosure: review copy provided by publisher.

Aimee Berg says

I'm not going into huge detail in my review, but there's a few things that I wanted to mention.

First, for me, the love story was not very believable. There was practically no development between David and Kula and yet they decided that they loved each other?? After meeting like three times?? But I digress.

Second, Kula came off as rather selfish. Although, she did indeed have a compassionate heart for the Chinese girls, some of her decisions seemed rather selfish. But she seems to realize later that she had only been looking out for herself so that was good.

I didn't like how they don't really tell you what happens to her at the end.

I think, in general, the book could have been developed better, but all in all, it was a quick read, and not entirely terrible.

Katieb (MundieMoms) says

This is a great companion book to *Faithful*. You can read my full review here <http://mundiemoms.blogspot.com/2011/0...>

Lauren says

If there is one thing that always draws me to book it is a beautiful cover, and that was just the case with Janet Fox's *Forgiven*. Thankfully, *Forgiven* contained much more than just a stunning cover, as it was a lush and fabulously built historical fiction read as well.

For Kula Baker, life has always provided quite the thrill and excitement thanks to her father's chosen

lifestyle. However, those characteristics are heightened to an extreme one chilly and dark night in May of 1904. Kula is left alone at her father's camp only to have a man with snake eyes attack her, and in the process leave everything in her life in complete chaos. Because of this, Kula's father decides that this life, the one of stealing and thrill riding, is not the one for Kula any longer, which is how she eventually ends up in San Francisco in 1900s, looking for a way to free not only her father from an increasingly freighted faith but herself as well. On the way, she will find love, faith, and forgiveness. However, what happens when everything is thrown to the wolves once again? Will Kula learn how to forgive and let herself be, or will everything be left in utter shambles? Only time and more pages can tell in this fantastic sophomore attempt.

Kula's story intertwined me from the very first page from the very last for a variety of reasons. For one, Kula was a girl who was incredibly strong and brave, even if those traits often got her in trouble. She was someone who anyone would want to have on their side. However, what I loved most about her story was the way that she wasn't looking for love exactly, but instead forgiveness and acceptance, because no matter the time period or the circumstances, these are things any person, young or old, are always on the search for in life. The secondary characters in this were interesting as well. I loved the addition of David and Will, because not only were they completely different individuals, but they continually brought interesting turns, twists, and levels of heart to the story.

Another aspect I enjoyed about *Forgiven* was the setting. Ms. Fox did a fantastic job of bringing the 1900s San Francisco to life with her vivid descriptions. In addition, I loved how she brought to knowledge little things about that time period that I did not know, such as circumstances involving China town to the incredibly hard topic of human trafficking.

Even though I did enjoy this one, I did have a few problems with it. For instance, I felt that some characters were lacking necessary development. Furthermore, I am a bit torn over the ending, because while I did love how realistic it was, there was a certain aspect to it I did not find exactly necessary.

Nevertheless, *Forgiven* is well worth a read. Lush, informative, memorable, it is sure to captivate many readers.

Grade: B+

Lexie says

Prelim Review: Much like *Faithful*, the companion novel to this in which we are first introduced to Kula and her...unique ideas about life and behavior, I was drawn in by the story and the characters. Though I had some disagreements with Kula in *Faithful* I found that I understood her better and her motivations in that book thanks to this one.

Full review to be posted at [Poisoned Rationality](#)

Holly says

The great thing about Janet Fox's historical fictions is that they cover events or places that I don't generally read about. I hadn't read anything about Yosemite Park before *Faithful* and I certainly hadn't read anything

about the great earthquake of 1906 in San Francisco. It's a nice change from the average stories set in the Victorian era or what have you.

I really liked the way this portrayed the different places in good ole S.F. Between Chinatown and the more upscale neighborhoods, it had a little of everything. And the things Kula sees while she's there...I have such a hard time coming to terms with the fact that stuff like that actually happened--and still does.

The one thing I have some issue with is Kula's realization as to how to love. It's like, "Well, I sort of like him, but this other guy makes my heart do funny things." And then after something happens, she's just like, "Oh, I love him." She's known him for like, 2 weeks...

Also, Kula talks about her self in the third person, which this reviewer finds to be very weird.

Krista Basilio says

I love this. It is so amazing and it personally feeds my heart.

Fox's writing is such a breath of fresh air. It's raw and honest, without being dramatic and advantageous. She paints portraits of the scenic wilderness in Montana as skillfully as she illustrates the hectic streets of San Francisco. She writes characters with fallacies and passion who have to come across life lessons the hard way. She writes love stories that are the reward of leaning on something greater, rather than overwhelming the plot in angst. I love it all! San Francisco in 1906 is only a taste of what the worlds sex-trafficking rings look like in the present day and I am so glad Kula's path led her to give her life to the girls who suffered abuse; it was an amazing way to forgiveness.

Mundie Moms & Mundie Kids says

Forgiven is the perfect companion book to Faithful, it follows the story of Kula, a secondary character from Faithful with an extraordinary story. Kula's journey takes her from the beautiful rugged wildness of Bozeman, MT to the enchanting, and sometimes dangerous high society of San Francisco, CA.

In Faithful I had some reservations about Kula, but with Forgiven I felt like I was really able to understand her. She's had a rough life and now that her Pa is going to be hanged for a murder he didn't commit, Kula travels to CA to find a box her father sent her to retrieve. Along this dangerous journey Kula will unravel a past full of secrets and deception and in the process she'll learn to let go, find herself and fall in love.

She's also had her fair share of prejudices from having to work at a young age in Faithful as a maid. It's Kula's feisty determination that I loved the most about her. It's what makes her a strong character in a twisty world she's just beginning to understand. What I find intriguing about Janet's writing is not only does she have in-depth, complex characters who's stories are all woven together, but she brings her settings to life. She has a talent for not only giving a vivid picture of what San Francisco looks like in the early 1900's, but how society behaves, including the darker part of the city with it's human trafficking, racism. She introduces that world via her characters David Wong, one of the love interests for Kula, and the Chinese's girls who have been trafficked. Being deemed an outsider because of her darker complexion Kula herself is a beautiful

character and is able to understand what David Wong and the young Chinese girls she meets are feeling.

There are so many layers to *Forgiven's* story and I really liked how many of the character's are all interconnected. I liked that I was able to piece together each character's connection to her story with her. I felt the story moved flawlessly and while it's a little darker than *Faithful's*, I felt more of an emotional connection to it and more of an adventurous one *Faithful*. *Forgiven* has a rich history that not only includes child slavery & trafficking, but the April 1906 earthquake. There's plenty of adventure, mystery and romance in this story. Though Kula is a character found in *Faithful*, you don't need to read *Faithful* to follow *Forgiven's* story, but I highly recommend picking up both books.

Tasse Bentson says

Companion book to *FAITHFUL* by Janet Fox. While I really like *FAITHFUL*, I loved this book about a girl from Montana who goes to San Francisco to find a box that might save her father's life from certain hanging. Like *FAITHFUL*, it has heart, gorgeous writing and a plot that keeps you reading well into the night. I read this book in one day, which is the highest compliment I could give a novel. But it also had rich layers, depth and a teen protagonist who learns to care, not just about a boy, but the needs of others around her and the suffering of humanity. I would recommend this for anyone who loves historical fiction or simply a captivating read.

kirpa says

One of the best books I've ever read.
