



# Life is But a Dream: On the Lake

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## **Life is But a Dream: On the Lake** Cheryl Shireman

Imagine going alone to a secluded lake cabin to redefine your life. In this stunning debut novel by writer Cheryl Shireman, the main character, Grace Adams, is a woman who faces an uncertain future. Despite the fact that she built her life around them, her daughter and husband have created lives that no longer include her. Thought provoking, sometimes frightening, and often funny, Life Is But a Dream is the story of a woman redefining herself and taking control of her life as she struggles to understand her present circumstances. It is the story of the power of love, the devastating consequences of depression, and the strength of the human spirit. Ready to get lost in the pages of a novel? Life is But a Dream will capture your attention from the first word to the last. Be swept away today! And be sure to check out the sequel: Life Is But A Dream: In the Mountains! Cheryl Shireman is also the author of the novel Broken Resolutions and the Cooper Moon novel series. She also wrote the bestselling non-fiction book for women You Don't Need a Prince: A Letter to My Daughter. NOTE - THIS IS THE PROFESSIONALLY EDITED VERSION OF THE ORIGINAL NOVEL.

## **Life is But a Dream: On the Lake Details**

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Author : Cheryl Shireman

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## From Reader Review Life is But a Dream: On the Lake for online ebook

### Kia says

Good story, excellent setting. I love this sort of cozy, in-the-heroine's-head, romantic-mystery-thriller. The story takes place mostly on an isolated island in a remote lake. Moves along at a good clip and the author's voice is relatable and compelling. A little tough to read in spots, as all three protagonists are clinically depressed. Also, the author does the unforgivable (for me) – she hops in and out of the first person. Ugh! Totally jarring. I am sure she wrestled with this decision and had her artistic reasons for doing it, but I would have been perfectly satisfied with the whole story in the third person. Shireman does an excellent job of fleshing out her colorful palette of characters, so third person really works for her. Also, too many mentions of peeing. Again, jarring. Between the book's dreamy title, mysterious setting and meditative tone, I could have gotten completely lost in the story if not for these distractions. Good read otherwise - I couldn't guess where the story was going and had no idea whodunnit. Plus, very satisfactory ending. Nice!

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### Carol Luce says

Life is But a Dream: On the Lake, is a hard-hitting mystery thriller that kept me guessing to the very end. I like to think that I can pick out the killer before the revelation, even in the most complex of plots, but Shireman played her hand close to her vest. The character development is superb. The protagonist, a recently divorced woman, struggling to find herself, goes through the pain of rejection while trying to survive a killer on a remote island. The product description doesn't play up the tension and suspense that Shireman is so good at building. The ending will have you on the edge of your seat. I can't wait to read the second book in the series.

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### Heather Adkins says

Updated Sep 2011

Shireman can certainly weave a story and create characters that worm into your soul. This novel is a roller coaster of emotion. It is something I think women can relate to with characters that seem as real as my own family. I love how the protagonist's POV is nearly like you're inside her head - her thoughts seem very much like my own weirdly nonlinear thoughts. Because this story felt so wrapped up in a nice bow at the end, I'm interested to see where the author plans on taking this character in the sequel.

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### Val Wilkerson says

Grace & Matt have one daughter. Matt loses his job, his mother passes away, and he files for divorce after its discovered their house is being repossessed as he has failed to make the mortgage payments. The daughter is off on a long backpacking trip when this comes down. Grace has nowhere to go so she goes out to a cabin that is owned by Matt's family on an island. She finds a dead body on the island and the killer is soon after her.

## **Elaine says**

Despite Grace contemplating suicide, there are funny parts. She can be so analytical. She's grieving her lost marriage and also her daughter leaving home.

Grace thought about hanging herself and when she had inadvertently ended up going to church with a fellow islander, the pastor asked "Are you at the end of your rope?" Grace thought about her use of a rope to hang herself and tried to work what the pastor said into that. Well, so, okay, you would have to read it. :D

She concluded that because she isn't going to be around much longer (her death-in-the-planning-stages), she can get away with things, but when she's in the "thick" of things, her racing mind comes up with different scenarios, hence her finding herself in a pharmacy off the island which brings about some chuckles when this woman sees her perusing some items. She finds herself in predicaments in which one might conclude that God has a sense of humor in getting her out of them, though the author doesn't mention God as doing such. Like I said, you got to read it.

Grace almost stumbles upon a dead body and her own death-in-waiting becomes suspended. She is now determined to find out what happened to this young lady and along the way, we get to meet some other characters as well. There were parts where I found myself wondering about them. Could one of them be guilty? Could Grace?

I give this a 5-star; The characters were so real with real feelings. Being self-analytical myself, I can laugh at some of Grace's ponderings while at the same time, understand them. And the situations she found herself in!

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## **Karen Fowler says**

It's not everyday that a book can be depressing one minute and funny the next. Or suspenseful. Or both. But this novel manages to run the gamut of human emotions, much like real life.

I found the writing to be exquisite and insightful. Most of the character's were fully fleshed-out and just quirky enough to feel real and not contrived.

I'm still thinking about this book a few days later, so that has to tell you something about it's ability to invade your neural pathways and hang around for a while!

Read it. Seriously.

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## **Jan says**

From what I understand this book has now been proofread/edited and I read it in this new version for the very first time unlike the others in the other reviews with the older version of this book. It was an interesting story and I had no idea of who the killer was for the longest time! It was different and made you think, "well she thinks she has it bad, look at what the others in the book are dealing with in their lives". The very first part of the book gave me chills as it related to nearly the same thing my almost 4 year old daughter went

through! The end of the book had lots of unexpected twist and turns. Looking forward to the next in the series!

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### **Belle says**

This book had potential...I just got lost and confused. So many things discussed that were never resolved, character's sudden interest in God and she attended church...then it was never discussed again. Too many sub plots to keep up with, character development was lacking. I hope this author will write more novels, but a word of advice you need a top editor to help you weed out your story better. Wish I could give it more stars, I just found it boring and I had a hard time finishing it. The idea was there you just needed more guidance and it might have been better.

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### **Patricia says**

At the beginning I was afraid this was a religious book in disguise, but that part passed and the story picked up. The ending was a little predictable, but there were a few surprises thrown in along the way.

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### **Kerry Fletcher says**

**A very good story.**

Talk about twists and turns. Who done it? I thought it was Nick, but you don't know until the end. Other characters keep popping up, could it be them. I now want to read the next one. Good reading.

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### **Mindi Lamar says**

**Interesting**

Grace goes from wanting to kill herself to seeing 4 other people dead...then reconciling with her ex-husband. The ending was abrupt and felt hurried as if the author was late getting the book to print.

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### **Tina says**

I won this book on Goodreads First-Reads. I honestly don't even know what to say about it. I enter to read this because the description and seeing that there were so many good ratings and reviews that it sounded like a really good life adjusting story. Well I really wanted to stop reading this when I was on page thirteen, but I stuck with it until I reached one-hundred three days later. It just dragged on-and-on that it felt like I was reading every single thing she did. I was so depressed I couldn't take it anymore.

I think this book would have had a lot of potential if the main character didn't give up on everything in her life and wine non-stop about it. I realize there are a lot of people who go through this in their life but what

ended the reading for me was the every single step-by-step/ minute-by-minute details.

I left the bookmark in place where I stopped, maybe I will be able to finish reading it one day and give it a recommending review.

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## **Albert says**

**Overall Feedback:** So here I am again looking at a romance novel. I can not believe that I have started to actually like this genre and do not mind reviewing it. Sure I still think of most books in this genre as recycled but I have been steadily coming across books in this genre that have completely taken my breath away and made me re-evaluate my opinion of this seemingly complicated genre called romance. This story is one of those books that slams it's being into my stereotyped belief in a wafer thin genre and makes me wonder about my predetermined views. I met Cheryl through the Facebook Group called Indie Writers Unite. She reluctantly asked me to review her book as she does not like to seem like she is begging for reviews (at least in my opinion). So here I am after reading her book and let me tell you, speechless, breathless and most important entertained. Cheryl has taken the romance genre and spiced it with a murder mystery. Some will say, but this is not a romance, it is a murder mystery suspense. I say this because this book carries true to both genres and really is kind of carving its own. Maybe most of the persons reviewing in the beginning of this book's history should have approached it in this way. I saw a book that weaved a wonderful tale of intrigue but was written to speak to women. Most if not all women will relate closely with the main character (Grace)and will experience every emotion that Cheryl is trying to have her characters convey. In short do not pass on this one, it will bend your ideas of two major genres and entertain you all the while.

**Point of View:** This story is told through first person so that you may experience the characters world as they see it. Wonderful living vicariously through the creations of another.

**Voice:** In my opinion I get the feeling the author was trying to convey that we all have trials to go through to find the person we should be and the person we want to be. Once we discover those we have to try and find a way to mesh the two together in a way that works.

**Character Development:** I feel that character development was amazing in most areas and lacking in others. Although Cheryl has obvious talent at writing you can see she struggles with character development. There is not anything in here that will cause the reader to slam the book down and walk away but just a few things that cause the reader to question why that tidbit was needed and this one was not.

**Plot:** Although we find ourselves in a story that has been told and we can try to guess what is coming next, Cheryl was able to keep us guessing wrong thus carrying our intrigue and desire in the plot further. This is how an author gets a reader to tell their friends and tell I shall.

**Dialogue:** Natural and flowing.

**Pacing:** Cheryl has some trouble finding her story's heartbeat in the beginning but soon overcomes and causes the reader to lose track of their heartbeat.

**Setting:** You can see this place even now and probably have visited a place just like it.

**Continuity:** If you have any doubts on my opinion on the story then look no further than here. When I judge a book I take a look at this point and wonder to myself. "How long did it take me to get into this book and how long did it take me to read it?" If I had to pick it up and put it down and repeat this process countless

times until I finished, then chances are it suffers a lack of continuity. If I can put the book down and not come back to it in days it suffers the same fate. However, if I can latch onto a book a read through it in a day or less, then my fellow readers we have a winner. Well here is the winner this time. I read this in two hours and still taste the deliciousness of the read.

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### **Angela says**

This story was good but it almost felt like 3 stories in one. There was the story line of the main character and her husband, the story line of the hunk across the lake and his demons, and the story of the detective and the dead girl. I was really sad when the detective was killed and they did not have a chance at romance...bummer. I was also kind of bored with the "happy ending" she suddenly had with her husband after he left her, lost her house, and divorced her. I wanted to see more of the strong woman I knew she could have become on her own. Great twists and turns.

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### **Evangeline Han says**

Life is But a Dream's blurb says that the book is thought-provoking and how true it is! The incidents the characters face will have readers questioning on the themes of life and death. While not every incident in the book happens to most people, the character personalities are very real. Among all the characters, the character of Grace Adam is the most realistic and I'm even wondering if it was based on a real person. Although there are some funny parts in the book, the thought-provoking themes overwrote those. I found Life is But a Dream a sobering read. If you're looking for a book that will make you feel good, you won't find it in Life is But a Dream. Overall, the book did not really appeal to me particularly because I could not relate with the characters nor identify with the incidents, but nevertheless, it is time-worthy.

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