



Divine Appointments

Charlene Ann Baumbich

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With the big 5-0 fast approaching, Josie Brooks begins to question her structured, picture-perfect (mid)life.

Josie Brooks, at the age of 47, thought she was leading an enviable single life. A successful consultant, she calls her own shots, goes where the money is, and never needs to compromise. But her precisely managed world begins to falter during a Chicago contract when an economic downturn, a bleeding heart boss, and the loyalty and kindness between endangered employees ding her coat of armor.

Throw in hot flashes, a dose of loneliness, a peculiar longing for intimacy, an unquenchable thirst—not to mention a mysterious snowglobe with a serene landscape, complete with a flowing river and lush greenery that seems to be beckoning her in—and Josie’s buttoned-up life is on the verge of coming completely undone. Maybe her solitary existence isn’t as fulfilling as she has convinced herself to believe.

It will take a few new friends, a mystical encounter, and an unexpected journey to set Josie on her own path to “right-sizing” and making the life changes that really matter. Filled with laugh-out loud moments and a gentle dash of inspiration, *Divine Appointments* is another heartwarming charmer from a master storyteller.

Divine Appointments Details

Date : Published November 1st 2010 by Center Point (first published 2010)

ISBN : 9781602859036

Author : Charlene Ann Baumbich

Format : Hardcover 431 pages

Genre : Fiction, Christian Fiction, Christian

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From Reader Review Divine Appointments for online ebook

Amanda Stephan says

Divine Appointments is a relevant and thought provoking look at the issues many people face today. Economic downturns, job loss, as well as loneliness and second chances.

Meet Josie Brooks, one of the most self-assured and strong personalities I've ever 'met'. At the age of forty-seven, she thought she was leading an enviable single life. A successful consultant, she calls her own shots, goes where the money is, and never needs to compromise.

Enter Barb DeWitt, selfless encourager with a good word to say about everyone, including, Josie Brooks.

My favorite character...

Barb DeWitt. With a selfless and an encouraging attitude, I couldn't help but love her to pieces. Struggling against bitterness and the unknown, she's always putting someone else's feelings first.

Her motto:

Helping others was always the best way to help herself... a motto I want to apply to my own life. What a wonderful way to look at things! Imagine what could be if more people would put this into practice.

My least favorite character...

Josie Brooks. Throughout the book, I had a difficult time getting past her selfish disdain for the feelings of others. Being a very sensitive person, I found it very tough to understand or connect with her. Near the end of the book, I had almost reconciled myself to her ever-so-slowly changing attitude.

I wish...

the author would have delved into the life of Barb a little more than Josie Brooks.

Drinking - moderate

Inappropriate scenes - none

swearing - some

I received this book for free from WaterBrook Multnomah Publishing Group for this review

Dianne says

I searched for a humorous fiction audio book and found this one. Just started listening to it yesterday. I felt the story dragged on too long, otherwise I enjoyed it.

Chris Curtis says

This is the story of a 40 something business consultant named Josie who is going through menopause and starting to re-think her loner lifestyle. Josie is not the only main character. Several other people who work at the company Josie is helping to streamline during the hard economic times in 2009 are also featured prominently. Lyle is a Vice President who has left a career in non-profit work to work at Diamond Mutual, Barb is a department manager of 20 years and nearing retirement, and Marsha is one of Barb's department

workers who is getting over a divorce by focusing her anger into writing a science fiction novel. I was disappointed at how little mention of anything Christian there was in the book. Barb is a Christian and prays for her co-workers who are losing their jobs. She starts Encouragement Meetings for them to help them deal with being laid off and find new jobs. I would have loved to read more about these meetings and how she might have helped others find faith. Instead prayer is only mentioned briefly and too much space is taken up with selections from Marsha's bad science fiction book. I tried to read a few of these and ended up skimming or skipping them. Josie is always thirsty and has a magic snow globe that comes to life whenever she has done something in her life to quench her thirst for friends and family. This was just odd to have a fantasy taking place in one person's life while there is such a clear division between another character's real life and the fantasy she writes in her novel. The book starts out very slow with a lot of description about what people are doing and what they are thinking about. It picked up once the layoffs started and the Encouragement group was founded. Josie's life changes very quickly after this, almost too quickly. I never did warm to her character and enjoyed the stories of how the other Diamond Mutual workers dealt with being laid off more. To comply with regulations by the Federal Trade Commission, please note that Waterbrook Multnomah Publishers has provided me with a complimentary copy of this book for review purposes. I received this book for free from WaterBrook Multnomah Publishing Group for this review.

Janna Ryan says

This book is a step away from what I usually read. It is full of main characters which makes it a little disjointed, I had some issues keeping the characters and the time line straight (not usually an issue for me). The overall storyline was quite interesting - Josie is a freelance consultant that goes into big businesses and helps them streamline and cut where necessary. Many times this means cutting staff, and in this case she has to make some recommendations. Soon Lyle, Barb and many more are out on the street while Marsha finds herself getting promoted. These are the 4 main characters and it is interesting getting to know them and seeing how the chain of events that is set in motion open doors for each of them... some of them very unexpected. I wouldn't say it is one of my favorite books of the year, but it sure made me think and people that love women's fiction might love this book.

Carmen says

I am giving this one a "high 2 looks / low 3 looks" because it was the typical Christian fiction book. All of the story lines were predictable, loose ends were tidily closed and everyone lived happily ever after. In that same vein, hard personalities softened, anger gave way to forgiveness, relationships were on their way to restoration. The only thing missing was a rainbow in the sky at the end of the story.

The huge problem that I had with this particular book was the heavy hand that God seemed to have in making sure everyone got what they wanted in the end. He was never outright credited for the massive "coincidences", but the effect of prayer in this story is a very clear "ask and you will receive in no uncertain terms and with very little effort on your part...and let's answer it right now so you don't have to wait." Sorry, people, that is trite, incorrect and does God's plan a huge disservice.

I will probably not read more by this author and can't recommend this one.

Rev. Linda says

Wonderful "stay out of the heat" book that I sandwiched in between reading textbooks for Fall 2016 Brite courses - from the publisher:

"With the big 5-0 fast approaching, Josie Brooks begins to question her structured, picture-perfect (mid)life. Josie Brooks, at the age of 47, thought she was leading an enviable single life. A successful consultant, she calls her own shots, goes where the money is, and never needs to compromise. But her precisely managed world begins to falter during a Chicago contract when an economic downturn, a bleeding heart boss, and the loyalty and kindness between endangered employees ding her coat of armor. Throw in hot flashes, a dose of loneliness, a peculiar longing for intimacy, an unquenchable thirst—not to mention a mysterious snowglobe with a serene landscape, complete with a flowing river and lush greenery that seems to be beckoning her in—and Josie's buttoned-up life is on the verge of coming completely undone. Maybe her solitary existence isn't as fulfilling as she has convinced herself to believe. It will take a few new friends, a mystical encounter, and an unexpected journey to set Josie on her own path to "right-sizing" and making the life changes that really matter. Filled with laugh-out loud moments and a gentle dash of inspiration, Divine Appointments is another heartwarming charmer from a master storyteller.

Carly says

Having really enjoyed Charlene Ann Baumbich's last book, Stray Affections, I was really excited about her next book in the Snowglobe Connections series. Divine Appointments was a good story with a good premise and a positive, uplifting Christian message, but some of this book fell flat with me. There were some parts, mostly the more in-depth business parts of the story that caused the book to move very slowly. It actually got to the point where I had to put the put down for a little while and pick it up again later. I understand the need for all the "business talk" in this book because that is Josie's life. Her existence is her work and that had to be a big part of the story. It just did not hold my attention very well.

I really liked Josie's character. I could see some of myself in her, which made me relate to her easily and I enjoyed watching her change and soften as the story when on. It was also nice to see how Charlene tied Stray Affections into this story in a small but meaningful way.

Overall, Divine Appointments is a nice book, not a particularly fast read, but it has a good message and is fairly well delivered. I definitely liked Stray Affections better and I will continue to look forward to more books in this series. I do like Charlene's writing very much and I like her characters very much. More than anything though, I like the snowglobe theme.

Gmr says

Book 2 in the Snowglobe Series and my verdict...as good or even better than the 1st. The mysterious snowglobe still plays a role in the story but this time rather than hiding in the back corners, it sits in the passenger seat to help guide our leading lady. Overall, it struck me as a book about the heart warming changes that can take place if you just give life, in all it's vibrant colors, a chance. Josie was not the only one transformed in this book...far from it. Each character was changed in one way or another, but all for the better. From the frustrating losses to the triumphs both professionally and personally, the resounding

message I heard was that of a fairly famous quote...No man is an island. In living that lesson by example, her characters create an Encouragement Club...something of which I think we could all use at one time or another to get through the bad times and celebrate the good.

Bookmarks up to author Charlene Ann Baumbich as she strives to send a message of good will to readers round the world. Recommended reading for young adult readers through adult. There's a message in here for one and all...you just need to turn to page to discover it. Happy reading!

Ellen says

Divine Appointments by Charlene Ann Baumbich carries you into the world of corporate restructuring through the eyes of a 47 year old consultant. Josie is smart, talented and at the top of her game - helping businesses restructure during the current economic downturn. She is living a dream life of no financial concerns, no day-in day-out boss telling her what to do, the next work site just around the corner, and thriving on her independence. Yet, can anyone truly live happily in their well-ordered solitary existence?

While working a job in Chicago, Josie simultaneously battles hot flashes and a mid-life crisis. After picking up a mysterious snowglobe while on a trip, she slowly sees her life as it is - lonely, loveless, and transient. But is it too late for her to make relational connections so late in life? How?

Charlene Baumbich has invited us into the lives of the characters - many of whom I can relate to! Grab a nice cup of tea, a warm blanket, and curl up and enjoy Divine Appointments.

[Click here to read Chapter 1!](#)

My rating: 4.5 out of 5 stars

I received this book for free from WaterBrook Multnomah Publishing Group for this review.

Cafelilybookreviews says

Second book in the Snow Globe Connections series, Divine Appointments was an "average" read for me. I was pretty disappointed with it, after enjoying Stray Affections so much.

If you missed the first book in the series (Stray Affections), you can check out my review here: <http://redlilycafe.blogspot.com/2009/...>

Some of the characters from the first book show up in this story, so it may be helpful to read this series in order just to keep up with the background.

Josie Brooks has convinced herself that she is very happy living the single life. Working as a consultant who helps companies downsize during economic upheavals, Josie has earned herself the nickname of "Hatchet Hand". Ultra-uptight and independent, Josie doesn't allow her roots to go deep anywhere. She moves from town to town on temporary assignments streamlining businesses, orchestrating lay-offs (and firings) all the while maintaining a safe impersonal distance.

As she quickly approaches 50 and begins a serious inventory of her own life (complete with hot flashes),

Josie starts to realize that maybe she isn't as happy as she pretends to be. Her current assignment with Diamond Mutual is getting under her skin and causing her to question just about everything. The lifestyle and career that used to bring her so much satisfaction is no longer the balm it once was. Always the outsider, Josie is lonely and unsure of what her future holds, while wielding the power to change the futures of others.

When the Vice President of Diamond Mutual (Lyle Waters) begins to creep into Josie's thoughts, her confusion grows even deeper as she tries to write off the man she considers to be too sensitive and a bleeding heart.

This is a story of a woman with complex emotions who is trying to navigate the choppy waters of mid-life, menopause and emotional turmoil. I did not enjoy it as much as the first title in the series, and didn't see the need for random interjections of mild language. I found *Stray Affections* to be a more enjoyable story overall.

Kate says

The story centers around Josie and Lyle who work at Diamond Mutual. Josie whose job is to give fellow employees the "pink slips" seemed harsh and unsympathetic in her execution of her job. I would assume that would be the type of employee to have in that position, one who doesn't get too attached to her coworkers, and add on top of that hotflashes well I guess her character would seem more miserable, I know I would! Lyle who is kindhearted and hates to say a terrible word about anyone would be the perfect boss. Add to the story Marsha and Barb co workers of Josie at Diamond Mutual who's private lives are very different from each other. Although I did laugh a few times I just couldn't relate to the characters in the book. I wanted to read this one because I am the same age as Josie and I have been through a corporate downsizing myself. This is the second novel in the series I think the first one needs to be read I am not sure I would consider this a stand alone novel. I received this book for free from Waterbrook Multnomah Publishing Group from this review.

Mandolin says

A life of planning and precision, order and rules, certainty and forethought....Josie Victor Brooks would have described her life in such terms until it was upended by hormones and the most bizarre yearnings she's ever experienced. Once a firm believer in her own skills and a ruthless corporate downsized when necessary, Josie was an independent woman who needed no one. But now, caught in the emotional turmoil of a corporation whose employees are being dismissed as a result of her recommendations, she suddenly finds herself pulled into their plight and yearning for companionship and connection that she never before desired. Battling what seem to be never-ending hot flashes and a fierce thirst that is quenched only by the mysteriously living creek in her recently purchased snow globe, Josie is at a loss to explain what has happened to transform her heart. Why is she suddenly longing for - and actually seeking out - friendship? Why do her thoughts constantly return to the guy with a "bleeding heart" that she met during this most recent employment opportunity? Suddenly, the firing matrix that has all of Diamond Mutual's employees gathering for solace in an Encouragement Club, led by one of the most loved ex-employees, is developing a bleeding heart herself! Ride along with Josie as she discovers that having a heart may not be such a bad thing after all...

I've enjoyed all of Charlene's snow globe connections books, but found this one just a little bit harder to truly appreciate. The book's underlying theme of living life to its fullest and not wasting the time that we have is a beautiful one that Charlene tells well with a full cast of likable, full-bodied characters. With equal parts of humor and compassion, she gives us a story that touches the heart. Parts of the book including the incorporation of one character's very amateurish literary efforts and the incidences with the snow globe itself, however, create a drag on the narrative. Neither are very believable and I think the book would be much more enjoyable without them (unfortunately, that would take it out of the series for which it was written!) Despite those two flaws, though, the overall message of the book makes it well worth the read and worth at least four stars in my book.

My favorite quote: "What a hassle it must be to constantly compromise, Josie thought. That was one of the great things about living alone: she got everything her way."

Margaret says

I just couldn't get into this book so Divine Appointments was a divine disappointment. The writing was very dry and tedious and the promised "laugh out loud moments" never came.

Josie is a consultant who is hired by large companies to help them downsize and eliminate jobs. Having been a "military brat" she is used to traveling and uprooting so the job is ideal for her. She has few personal possessions and likes her stark and impersonal lifestyle and she has an impersonal way of looking at her task of ridding people of their employment for the good of whatever company she is working for.

I didn't like Josie, found her to be cold and analytical, but I realize that that was the important part of the storyline. If I had kept reading I may have been pleasantly surprised to know that Josie had a change of heart, but I became too impatient and too confused at the other storylines being addressed. Aside from Josie, there is Barb, a 62 year old department head who is being let go from the job she has held for 20 years. There is Marsha, Barb's co-worker whose husband left her for a younger, more attractive woman. Marsha, in my opinion, was a little crazed and the fact that she was writing a sci-fi, mystery, thriller, fantasy novel about her ex was a little hard to digest. Finally, there is Lyle, the head of the company for whom Josie is consulting. He regrets never marrying his former girlfriend and mourns her death on Valentine's Day even though it was 12 years ago and she had married someone else. He is, in Josie's opinion, too soft-hearted when it comes to delivering the dreaded pink slips.

Somewhere in the story there is something mysterious about a snow globe that Josie purchased some time ago at a county fair--an uncharacteristic impulse--both attending the fair and buying the globe. I didn't stay with the book to find out how the globe would change her life.

When reading a book becomes a chore, as reading this one did, I have to stop. Not only was Josie detached from life, the writing about Josie seemed detached as well. Perhaps someone else will enjoy this one. It moved too slowly and the plot was too descriptive rather than active. It just wasn't for me.

Tina Peterson says

Divine Appointments is book 2 of a 3 book series and for the most part I thoroughly enjoyed this book. I really liked the main characters of the book - Josie, Lyle, Barb and Marsha and their story was easy to read and follow. Marsha has a "twist" to her story that I personally felt could be left out of the book and I skipped

those parts when I got to them and to be honest I wish the book hadn't closed with her as I felt kind of unsettled when I read it. Maybe it's a "cliff-hanger" to encourage reading the final book?

Part of the reason I choose this book was that Josie is close to my age and I've been feeling some of the same things mentioned on the back of the book. It's not often that an author writes a story about a woman who is nearing the middle of her life and starting to notice "changes" so I was looking forward to reading about Josie's experience.

I was also looking forward to reading a Christian fiction book and wanted to see how the author handled situations like pending layoffs, death, marriage and other themes from a Christian perspective. If you are looking for a story with a strong Christian background you won't find it in this book. I don't believe that the Bible was ever really quoted and other than Barb who was known for "praying and encouraging" there wasn't much else that encouraged a strong Christian belief system. I personally would of liked to see more scripture and seeing Josie come to lean on her faith in God as her savior and stronghold. (There is one section where Josie's father marries a woman who is strong in her faith but doesn't expect him to have the same faith.)

I am giving Divine Appointments 3 1/2 stars out of 5. There is no sexual content or language in this book. There are discussion questions in the back of the book that you can use to encourage talking about our faith and dating/marriage as Christians or if you are in a book club. I think you'll enjoy the story as Charlene is a very good writer and will definitely keep you turning pages.

Teresa says

In the beginning I was sure I was going to like the book. Josie came off hard and was given the nickname of "dragon" which she well deserved. As I read the book further Josie had to have this type of personality in order to be able to perform the job she was asked to do. With her giving recomendations on who kept their job and who was to be let go did not make her many friends.

Although Barb was ultimately let go she started the Encouragement club to help the people who were let go. Barb kept up her relationships with Marsha & her former boss Lyle. I did not really care for Marsha's side book. To me it was overkill.

After all the recommendations Josie had made through all the different companies she had the tables turned on her and she was one of the cuts. This made Josie more likeable to see how it feels to be to be ont he other side of the coin. I like that she made a friend and finally had someone she could talk to. I also like the additon of her dad and the background it mde Josie be more multi dimensional.

Overall I like the book, and once I started had a hard time putting it down.

I received this book free for my review from Walterbrook Multnomah
