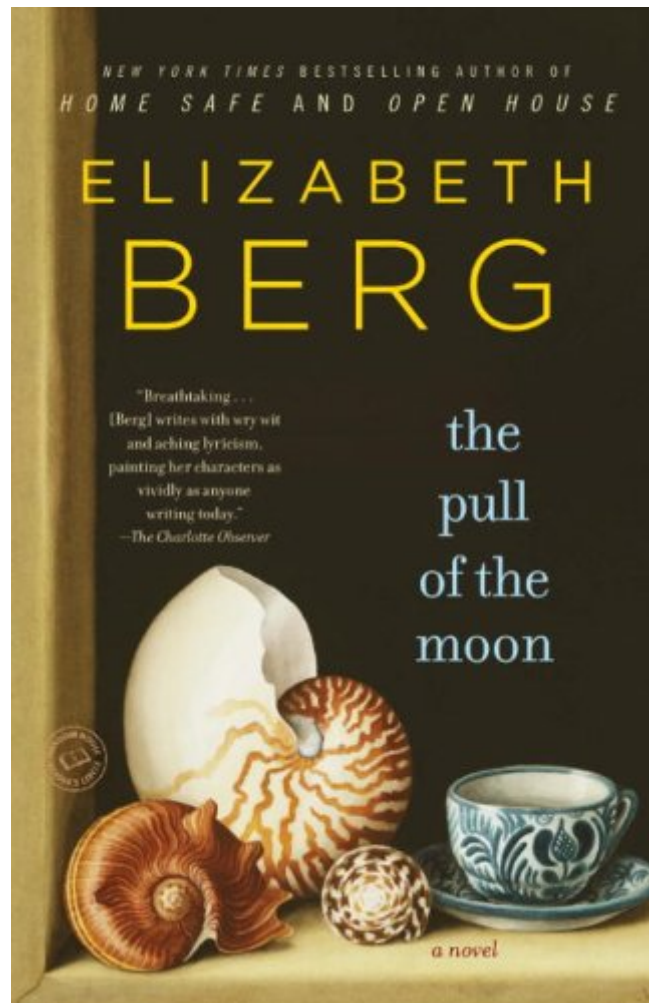


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The Pull Of The Moon: A Novel (Random House Reader's Circle)



Synopsis

BONUS: This edition contains an excerpt from Elizabeth Berg's *Once Upon a Time, There Was You*. Uncomfortable with the fit of her life, now that she's in the middle of it, Nan gets into her car and just goes--driving across the country on back roads, following the moon; and stopping to talk to people. Through conversations with women, men, with her husband through letters, and with herself through her diary, Nan confronts topics long overdue for her attention. She writes to her husband and says things she's never admitted before; and she discovers how the fabric of her life can be reshaped into a more authentic creation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When I enjoyed this slim change-of-life novel, I enjoyed it very much. When I did not, well, it was a sore disappointment. Berg's work has, in the past, rated high on my fiction likes, but unfortunately I won't be adding this novel to my Berg favorites. And still. There was, as I stated earlier, much that I did enjoy about it. "The Pull of the Moon" is about Nan, apparently a financially well-off woman (because it is one of the lackings in this story that Nan does what she does with such carefree extravagance with nary a care about how to pull such things off in the "real world" most of us live in),

turning 50 and not quite ready for it. This is the story of her midlife crisis. Maybe not so much a crisis to her, though, as one wonders if it might seem so to Martin, the husband she leaves behind as she suddenly takes off on a cross-country road trip to find herself at midlife. We never do find out how Martin feels about this. The book consists merely of Nan's letters back to him, one would assume posted and mailed, and the tone is usually one of "here I am, having these fine adventures without you, I'll fill you in when it suits me to return home." Nor does it ever seem to occur to her that Martin may not so readily welcome her home. Okay, so it's an interesting journey. And Nan fulfills perhaps several fantasies of the aging woman. Taking off into the wild blue yonder with no apron strings attached. Ah, yes. If only. She travels where whim leads her, and en route has occasion to contemplate her life backwards and forwards. Many of us in the same age range, I'm sure, will identify with Nan's musings and meditations on a woman at this stage.

This is the story of a bored, rich housewife with too much time and money on her hands. She feels unsatisfied with her life at fifty--like all of her best years have passed her by--and her solution is not to try a new career, do some volunteering, or see a therapist. Instead she opts for the dramatic route and hops in her Mercedes for a solo cross-country road trip, writing increasingly insipid letters to her poor husband as she continues on her way. Nan whines and complains about how her husband doesn't appreciate her, but we never see much about her to appreciate. Apparently he is the breadwinner, and for that he is chastised because a) they have too much money and b) he is preoccupied and c) he never followed his original dream of becoming a scientist. Yet someone has to earn the money to pay for the Mercedes, the road trip and the beach house that Nan insists they buy and decorate according to her exact specifications. For someone who boldly accuses Martin of making too much money, Nan sure does have expensive and particular tastes. It also takes a lot of chutzpah to accuse her husband of "selling out" when Nan never even reveals what, if any, dreams she ever had. She certainly gives us no indication that she has realized any of them, either. I am not against the idea of a middle-aged woman "running away" from her life. I loved the novel "Ladder of Years" by Anne Tyler. But in that novel, we are shown what the protagonist is running from. In this one, the only indication we are given about why Nan runs away is that her husband is preoccupied and she feels old. I'm sorry, but there are too many women out there worried about feeding their families, making house payments, balancing jobs and families, etc. to make my heart bleed for Nan.

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