

## Lovereadings Reader reviews of Beautiful Day by Kate Anthony

Below are the complete reviews, written by Lovereadings members.

### Cathy Burman

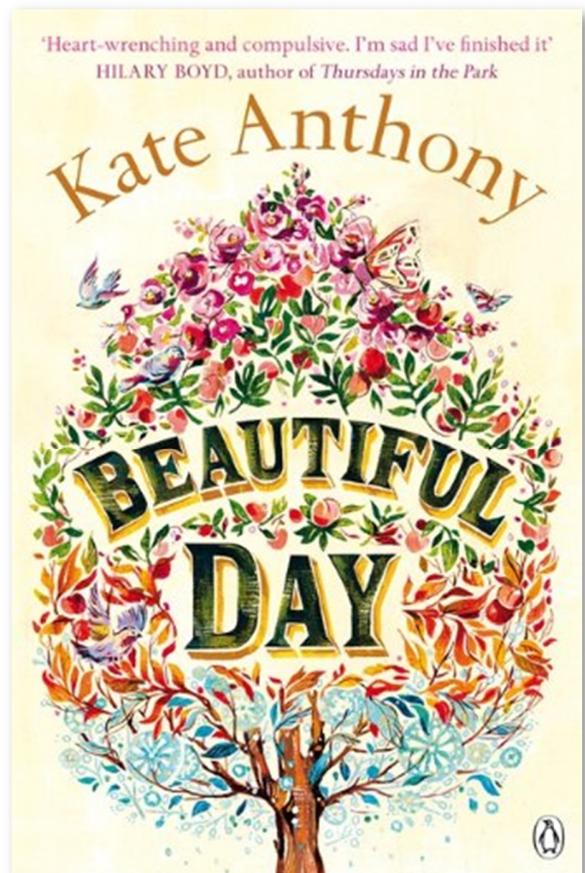
*Rachel's life has been turned upside down. Her husband has left her for another woman and she has to rebuild her life and provide security and stability for her three young children who are themselves entering difficult phases in their own lives.*

*She attends an interview and secures a position in a care home. She has no experience and enters a whole new world and so begins a whole new work/life balance. As she struggles to cope with her new roles she suffers a number of setbacks which shake her confidence but she rises above them and achieves so much.*

*The care home not only provides her with an enormous challenge in the shape of Philip, a new resident with problems that can't even be imagined but it is also the unlikely setting for a potential romance. As well as these challenges she also has to deal with a difficult au pair, an ex-husband and his mistress and a manager who seems to constantly put her down. Will her determination get her through the trials and tribulations?*

*Will romance blossom? Will her dark days become beautiful?*

*I really enjoyed this book. The reader can't fail to empathise with Rachel and to identify with her and share her feelings of rejection and inadequacy, her doubts and insecurities. The reader also can't fail to wallow in the elations of her progress and triumphs. **A very touching book with a mix of drama,***



**romance, sensitivity and humour. A well written easy read that you won't want to put down. Highly recommended.**

**Sue Burton**

*I received this book on Tuesday 11th and finished it on Thursday 13th. **What a wonderful, funny and touching book. I absolutely loved it and would highly recommend this to other people.***

*I totally engaged with all the characters and it is a story that has not been done many times and highlights the need to have the right positive sunny attitude when working with people that are vulnerable.*

**Suzanne Marsh**

*As I used to work in a beautiful Residential Care Home which sadly closed, this novel caught my attention, which meant for me I just had to read it. The story right from page one sweeps you into Rachel's life. Readers will be clinging to each page unable to put this beautiful novel of 'Beautiful Day' down. I am sure 'Beautiful Day' is a tale that will appeal to a wider audience.*

*Rachel Bidewell decides it is time to work again for the first time since the arrival of her three children Jess, Luke and Alec. Rachel is divorced which has changed the financial situation for her.*

*For Rachel returning back to work meant that she will need a routine in getting the children collected from school and making cottage pies for the freezer and doing the housework.*

*When Rachel Bidewell arrives for her new job she knocks on the door of Clifton Park Retirement Home by mistake.*

*Then she makes her way to Clifton Avenue Residential Care Home. First impressions that Rachel's eyes caught sight of was that the home looked like it had been made in the 1970s looking tired and scruffy, with grey curtain hanging off the track and the windows looked dull with years of dirt from the traffic. The garden Rachel could see looked unkempt with the whole place looking unloved and sad.*

*At Clifton Residential Care Home Rachel is given her first person to care for Philip, who she becomes very fond of and was succeeding to help him. When a neighbour who used to lived next door to Philip for thirty years came to visit Philip she claimed to Rachel that his mum who died never sent her son Philip to school because he was retarded and she never even sent him to a day centre.*

*At home Rachel is feeling tired back to work and her son Alec goes missing.*

*This story is jammed packed with various themes in the Residential Care Home and Rachel own circumstance. **I recommend 'Beautiful Day' because it is a funny, heartwarming novel of family life, love and friendship.***

*You can buy this book from [lovereadings.co.uk](http://lovereadings.co.uk) or all major book shops.*

### **Jayne Burton**

***A wonderfully insightful book about families, divorce and what life throws at you.** Rachel's life was turned upside down when her husband left her and their three children and little did she know how much things would change when she went to work at a residential care home. She meets Philip a new resident who is lost and in a very different way Rachel is lost too. This is a lovely story of real life and the day to day anxieties that goes with it and of love - lost and found. A really good read.*

### **Christine Schollar**

***I found myself reading late into the night. All the characters were completely believable. I envy new readers of this book, they have a real treat in store***

*I absolutely loved this book. It was 'unputdownable' and **I found myself reading late into the night** because I wanted to know what happened to the characters next. I had complete empathy with Rachel who was living with a difficult situation as a single mum 'battling' her ex-husband and his new partner along with starting a new job. However this is not a depressing book and there were many humorous moments which were very real to life. All the characters were well rounded and the author has the ability to make you like and dislike the characters while at the same time understanding their behaviour. The situation Philip found himself in was sad and his reaction to it was understandable but Rachel showed patience and care despite the circumstances. **All the characters were completely believable.** Although I couldn't get to the end quick enough because I wanted to know how it all turned out, when I did reach the end I was sorry the story was over. **I envy new readers of this book, they have a real treat in store.***

## **Rebecca Whymark**

***A surprisingly good read, I really enjoyed it and identified with the characters in various ways.***

*This book surprised me. Normally I'm not usually a fan of this genre but this I loved. It had depth, Kate explores the feelings and emotions of a family ripped apart by divorce so well I wonder if she has been through one either as a child watching her parents or as an adult. Some of the phrases and arguments had arisen between the characters were so similar to what I experienced when my parents divorced it brought back memories I thought I had forgotten.*

*The relationship the main character Rachel, has with Philip is lovely, you can see that it was really what Rachel needed to take her mind off her own troubles.*

*The reason I think I liked this over other novels I have read of this genre is Kate's ability to make it have some real meaning and depth to it. It isn't superficial and air headed. A little predictable at times but a good book none the less. I will be looking out for Kate's next one.*

## **Julie Collins**

***You will be rooting for Rachel from the opening chapter as she tries to juggle returning to work with caring for her children whilst hiding her struggles from her boss, her ex and her useless au pair.***

*In 'Beautiful Day' Kate Anthony takes the much written about topic of divorce and combines it with a topic that on first glance seems somewhat incongruous given the book's title; the daily life of a residential social worker trying to inject some happiness and meaning into the lives of those in her care.*

*There are a lot of episodes in the book that would be considered ugly rather than beautiful but throughout them all the reader is always on Rachel, the protagonist's side. You will find yourself sometimes empathising, sometimes sympathising as she struggles with the demands of work and family.*

*'Beautiful Day' illustrates how the unpredictability of life can often be what makes it interesting.*

## **Sarah Tilley**

### ***A thought provoking read.***

*This was a good read, but I felt disappointed at the end of the book.*

*There was plenty of threads running through it but I just felt that the author had run out of steam at the end, and although there was a happy ending (of sorts) it felt rushed and you are left feeling a little let down.*

*There is plenty of angst throughout, and you feel the despair of Rachel who is trying to keep not only her family together but her own sense of worth.*

*The setting of the care home just piles on more misery for her, and you do wonder if someone at such a low ebb in life would seriously consider looking after others.*

*I felt that some characters were left "unfinished" - did the mother in law ever make it up with her son?*

*The final pages for Philip also seemed a little out of kilter with real life, and I found it somewhat hard to believe. It is very thought provoking and I would imagine that anyone with children who has been through the pain of divorce will identify with the book.*

## **Bethan Townse**

### ***A simply beautiful look at two paths that cross and how they become important to each other. The characters, bad and good, are simply wonderful.***

*Before even commenting on this novel the beautiful cover cannot go unmentioned - it's truly one of my favourites of 2014 so far. The novel also exceeded expectations as Arnold handles the case of Philip, a man with serious learning difficulties, with care and subtlety. His character is entirely believable and reminded me vividly of people I worked with whilst working in the social care sector. Rachel isn't as easy to love but there were flashes of huge sadness for her, especially when all the trouble with her eldest son Alec occurs. Her raw feelings towards her ex-husband and his partner cut straight to the bone and I found myself saying YES despite never being in her position.*

*Rachel and Philip feel like real people, you could meet them and not even know it yet getting an insight into who they are as people and who they are to each other is a wonderful premise for a novel and I genuinely couldn't put it down. Arnold brilliantly paints normality in a way that makes it seem so much more*

*and simple, plain prose style makes it very hard to stop reading.*

You can read Bethan's blog at: <http://plasticrosaries.com>

### **Sophia Ufton**

***Brilliant book! The cover is beautifully designed and the layout perfect. The story amazing, wonderfully told, defiantly a must read.***

*The story starts off telling you about a woman named Rachel, who gets a new job working at Clifton Avenue. She has two best friends Grace and Mel. Her Husband Dom as left her, so she is a single mother to three children. Straight from the get go the book made me laugh. She meets a new resident named Philip and the journey begins. Very interesting read couldn't put it down. A must read! You won't be disappointed.*

### **Phyllippa Smithson**

***This is a perfect book to take with you on a summer holiday. It's easy to read, the story flows with a mix of humour, tragedy and sadness. This is not a book if you want something more challenging.***

*We meet Rachel and the disjointed life she which has been enforced as a result of her husband leaving her and her 3 children for another women. She is vulnerable as a result and is struggling to keep it together as she works to survive the need to balance the roles as a single mum, a new job (to pay for the bills), and the reactions to the marital change of those outsiders.*

*Her home life is made more unsettling as her eldest son (Alec, 11) wants space for his much younger siblings (Jess and Luke) by selecting to live with his Dad and his new partner.*

*At work, Rachel takes up a position at a residential home for adults with learning difficulties. It is here that she meets two significant men who will be the drivers to helping her move forward in her own life She learns to realise that she needs Philip, whose arrival as a resident at the home coincides with her own appointment after he lost his elderly Mum and was not able to live on his own, as much as Philip needs her. They establish a genuine friendship despite the very obvious and extreme differences. And then there is her colleague and deputy to the manager of the Home, Rob, who not only sees immediately her strengths in her role, also rekindles her confidence in her own self worth as an attractive woman.*

*The story flows. The characters are down to earth and familiar, everyday people who you know. And the plot very engaging. Beautiful Day will not win awards but it will leave you with warmth that life can be good despite the bad.*

## **Rachel Hall**

*Kate Anthony's debut novel tells the story of Rachel Bidewell and successfully manages to provide a wry look at the challenges faced by a woman who for the first time in her mid-forties finds herself apart from the only man she has ever loved, coping with three children and a new job whilst also being unexpectedly insightful and moving. Rachel is rife with bitterness and needs something or someone to help her keep her head above water. Financial constraints after the split force her to take on a role as a Residential Care Assistant working with adults with learning difficulties and she is assigned to the role of key worker for a new patient, Philip, himself floundering after his mother's death. It is unclear how both of these can form any sort of meaningful relationship, let alone play a significant role in helping the other to survive and learn to grow as individuals. Yet, totally unexpectedly, they manage to and this is the beauty of the novel.*

*This book was hugely enjoyable and very easy to read. The author manages to move between the home and workplace situations with a remarkable fluidity, whilst describing both realistically and successfully managing to combine this aspect with fully developing the characters involved. It was not too far into the story before I found myself willing Rachel on and caring how things were going to turn out! It was a real page turner of a book and the ups and downs of the characters were surprisingly involving! For a debut fiction author this is a remarkable achievement. Having worked in a similar social services area I can testify to the difficulties faced by Rachel as she gets to grips with her new role and finds herself battling obstructive colleagues and agency staff with not such a self-sacrificing motive for working in such an environment.*

*Perhaps the most poignant aspect of the book for me were the observations surrounding divorce, both practical and the emotional, the impact on the children who find themselves in the middle and what it forces a person to learn about themselves and the unexpected strength that can emerge. **Ultimately this is an uplifting tale which leaves you with a warm glow and keen to read more of Kate Anthony.***

## **Joanne Nuttie**

***A great debut novel... Even though this as quite a simple story, the author had a good use of words and she made her characters believable and very true to life.***

*I enjoyed Rachel, mithered single mum with too much to do and not enough time!!! Know that feeling well. I felt as though she embraced her new life and threw herself in to it... I particularly enjoyed her relationship with Philip and at times it was heart wrenching. Her patience, fondness and kindness poured out of every page.*

*The author's description of Phillip was very accurate and I felt as though I knew him. I had complete empathy and wanted to reach inside this book and give him the biggest hug.*

*Great news a happy ending and the best one for everyone.... Only negative is that it was slightly rushed at the end.*

*Over all I would certainly recommend this book, a light read with true to life topics and interests.... Well done and here's to the next novel.*

## **Susan Walsh - <http://keepsonstruckin.blogspot.co.uk>**

***A family in Turmoil. A wonderfully portrayed tale of modern day living. The rough with the smooth (more rough than smooth). A new job could be a new beginning.***

*A delightful read. A family finds themselves torn apart after the departure of Dom, who leaves Rachel to live with Deborah.*

*The family is thrown into chaos, as now single mum Rachel has to cope alone with the three kids.*

*A new job means the start of another chapter for Rachel, but all gets chaotic, the au pair does a runner, a disappearing son, a juggling act between work and the kids. A challenging role with a client with learning difficulties. A dog. A date with a colleague. Mix them all together & you have a great read, which brings you a happy ending. A book you will want to keep reading from cover to cover.*

## **Claire Simms**

***A very modern day down to earth book with parts that will make you laugh and also cry. A very enjoyable read.***

*'Beautiful Day' is a story a lot of women can relate to, sometimes funny in places other times emotional (I was in tears a few times). A very down to earth and modern day book about a newly divorced Rachel with three children to raise and a new job to hold down and all the turmoil life throws at her. I would highly recommend this book it was an excellent read and will be looking out for future books by Kate Anthony.*