

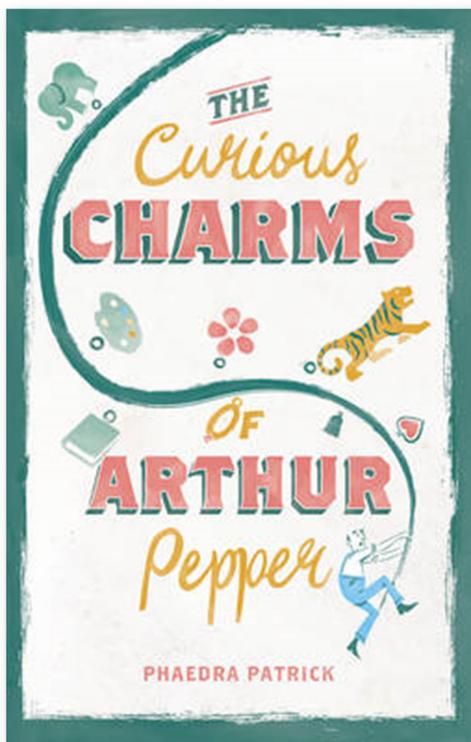


Helping you choose
your next book

LoveReading Reader reviews of **The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper** By Phaedra Patrick



Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.



Sarah Harper

A lovely tale with beautifully crafted characters, warmth, humour and poignancy. I romped through this perfectly delightful story.

Shell-shocked and alone for the first time in 40 years, 69 year old Arthur is left, as many widowers are, trying to cope on his own. Becoming increasingly distant from his son and daughter, Arthur finds solace and stability in the routines of his daily life, rising at precisely 7.30am, a single slice of toast for breakfast, a methodical wiping of the kitchen worktop using two lemon-scented Flash wipes.... And so he plods on in self-imposed isolation, afraid

to alter anything until the anniversary of Miriam's death when he summons up the courage to sort through her belongings. His chance discovery of a golden charm bracelet hidden amongst her things perplexes Arthur. Who gave it to Miriam and why had she hidden away so carefully? Resolving these questions and learning about Miriam's past are puzzles that Arthur finds hard to resist. With the encouragement of Bernadette, his vivacious and well-meaning neighbour, and against his own better judgement, Arthur starts searching for answers. And so begin the experiences which will change Arthur, and his knowledge of the past, forever. From London to Paris, a thrilling series of exploits and unlikely characters open Arthur's eyes to the truth about his loved ones whilst expanding his horizons in ways he could never have imagined.

Having met the endearingly staid Arthur we are immediately swept into his roller coaster adventure and don't stop to draw breath until the very end. It's such a lovely tale with beautifully crafted characters, warmth, humour and poignancy. I romped through this book and, although a little unlikely, I loved the flow of events. A perfectly delightful read.

Catherine Bryce

A lovely novel which is a sheer delight to read from beginning to end.

This is one of those books that once you start reading it takes over your life until you finish it.

A truly sweet and charming novel detailing the adventurous journey of Arthur Pepper, a pensioner stepping out of his comfort zone after the death of his wife in order to find out the stories behind the charms of a charm bracelet that he found in his late wife's possessions but knew nothing at all about its existence - intending to find out about the secret life his wife had before she met him.

A lovely well written book covering many genres with happy, sad, unexpected twists throughout the book. The author has written in a light-hearted manner which allows the reader to follow the story with pleasure and curiosity to see what happens next.

Definitely a must-read for this year!!

Sue Pledger

Very enjoyable read. A well written and very charming story. It is a feel good read, very satisfying and a lovely ending.

Helen Appleby

Arthur Pepper discovers a charm bracelet in his late wife's wardrobe while clearing out her things, this sparks him to set off on a journey to discover, charm by charm, her secret life before him.

Having been married for over 40 years, 69 year old Arthur Pepper is mourning the loss of his wife, on the anniversary of his death he starts to clear out her wardrobe and finds a mysterious charm bracelet and decides to embark upon an adventure to find out the stories behind these charms. This journey takes him from York to London, Paris and India in his quest to find out about his

wife's life before they met and the adventures that he encounters along the way including being mauled by a tiger, being robbed, making new friends.

'The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper' is such **a delightful book and was an absolute joy to read, Phaedra Patrick has created a story that draws the reader in from the first page and evokes feel good emotions from the start.** I was absolutely hooked from the start and felt like I was personally accompanying Arthur on his journey to find out the stories behind the charms on his wife's bracelet. Arthur was a loveable character and easy to relate to I had an image of him in my head and carried that with me throughout the book. I could have easily devoured this book in one sitting as I was keen to find out what happened next, each time I turned the page.

Shriya Khambhaita

Funny, warm and loving.

Arthur is a widow on an unlikely journey to discover what truths lay behind eight golden charms of his late wife. This book allows a reader to travel to London, Paris and India in their own hands. He sees himself in a new light whilst new bonds are made.

I took Arthur Pepper with me everywhere. I smiled a lot and couldn't stop guessing what this secret was? There were times when I thought this book reminds me of Fredrik Backmans writing style. I look forward to reading more from Phaedra.

You can follow Shriya on Twitter: @Shriya_Kham

Sophia

What a lovely book! Such a wonderful story!

It's been one year since Arthur's wife Miriam died and on this particular day he decides it's time to look through her belongings. On looking he finds a gold elephant charm, that he's never seen before and he notices on the bottom is a number!

This starts an incredible journey for him taking him from place to place and finding more about his wife! Her secret life, and he finds out things about himself too! A brilliant read! Thank you...

Janet Gilliard

*I loved this gentle book. Arthur Pepper is a widower who decides to clear his wife's wardrobe on the anniversary of her death. He finds a charm bracelet. His life is in a safe routine so it takes courage for Arthur to find out where the charms come from. Arthur finds out things about his wife but also about himself on his travels from York to Paris to India. **This book is warm and funny and poignant. Highly recommended.***

Kerry Bridges

An appealing, thoughtful read with the author's interest in people very evident. Certainly to be recommended.

Arthur Pepper has lost his wife and, a year after her death, starts to clear out her belongings. At the bottom of a boot, he finds a charm bracelet with a phone number on one of the charms. Arthur phones the number and finds that, far from being the quiet and sedentary person he thought, Miriam has had an exciting and varied life before she meets him. Arthur wants to know if all he knew about his wife was a lie, so he sets off on an adventure of his own to find out.

This is a lovely story, very reminiscent of Harold Fry and other gentle stories of that ilk. Arthur is a great character, starting off as appearing colourless and gradually learning more about himself as we get to know him at the same time.

The characters that he meets are also really well written - not all of them are very nice but they all certainly have an interesting element to them.

I found this book very easy reading and I would certainly recommend it to anyone who wanted a thoughtful story to hold their attention.

<http://iamalwaysreading.wordpress.com/>

Wendy Stubbs

Charmed I certainly was, from the first page to the last - Arthur Pepper, widower, a sad lonely old man. A decision to sort out his wife's clothes widens his horizons and opens up a whole new world.

A decision was made, today after a year of mourning his wife, the time had come to sort out her belongings.

Arthur's life would never be the same again, the discovery of a charm bracelet,

he had never seen before was to lead him into unknown territory.

A discovery of his wife's past, via the charms on the bracelet lead Arthur as far as India. **This book was so revealing, so beguiling. Tears, laughter and disbelief with every page.**

A joy to read, one of the best debut books I have read for a long time.

Angie Rhodes

Are you ready to meet Arthur Pepper? I hope so, because he is going to steal your heart!

Poor Arthur, his dear wife, Miriam has not long since died a year ago and Arthur is lost without her, now he isn't quite on his own. Bernadette his neighbour is always popping in with food for him.

While sorting out Miriam's belongings for charity shops he finds in one shoe a charm bracelet which leaves him a little confused. One of the charms, an Elephant, sparks a little light. Arthur wants to know where the charms come from and what they meant to his wife and what he finds is... well join the most lovable Yorkshire man you will meet, on his travels. You will not be disappointed.

I cannot believe that this beautiful, funny touching story is a first novel...

It will leave you wanting more.

Phyllippa Smithson

This is a delightful 'coming of age' of a 70 year old recently widowed man who, after 40 years of happy marriage, finds himself 'meeting' his wife for the first time a year after her death.

Arthur is desperately lonely and prefers playing 'National Trust statues' then answering his door to Bernadette, his 'interfering' neighbour who wants to feed him and impose on the regimented life he thinks he prefers.

At the first anniversary of the loss of her beloved wife, Miriam, he finds a charm bracelet which he has no recall of ever seeing. He needs, he wants and he is driven to find out what each charm meant to Miriam and so he journeys down a road of discovery not only to find a woman he never really knew despite their 40 years together, but a man he never knew he was.

'The Curious Charms...' is likened to the greats such as 'A One Hundred Year old

*Man....' and 'The Unlikely Pilgrimage Of Harold Fry' but it is not a humorous take on old age. What it is as a **powerful, brilliantly written and totally engaging review of love lost and new life found** and in finding that new life, Arthur's subtly and unknowingly helps those around him to find theirs.*

Totally saddened to have finished this great read. Arthur, I wish I could meet you but I am so very glad you came into my life, albeit over just 352 short pages.

Fiona Rothery

I really loved this book and the character of Arthur Pepper. The moment it arrived with its lovely illustration of Arthur and the charms on the front cover I couldn't wait to read it and thoroughly enjoyed it from beginning to end.

Arthur Pepper was married to his wife Miriam for forty years. After she dies he hides away behind his very precise lifestyle and set routine in the hope it will protect him from the loneliness he feels without her. On the anniversary of her death Arthur discovers a gold bracelet with eight charms hidden in one of Miriam's boots. The charms lead him on an amazing journey of discovery about his wife and himself.

I like the way the author has developed the character of Arthur Pepper in a very sensitive and intuitive way. She has done the same with the other characters, exploring diversity and an immense variety of emotions, making them all so vivid and vital to Arthur's journey. By taking Arthur outside his quiet, comfortable, predictable existence the novel demonstrates that it is never too late to make changes, to find courage, open up to others and explore life more fully.

The story is very heart warming, sometimes sad, often amusing and extremely enjoyable.

Lorraine Blencoe

*A man discovering secrets that his wife held for all of their lives together is irresistible as a story. He sets out on a voyage of discovery as much about himself as about his wife. There are some humorous and touching scenes in this book and it's an easy quick read. Having said that, I also found it a little disappointing. Some of the story-telling really is that, a feeling of having the implied things told again and again sometimes. **I so wanted to love it but there was bit of clumsiness to it that made it lose some of its charm.***

The characters are likable though and they make the reader need to follow them to the end.

Andrea Rayner

Arthur Pepper is grief-stricken after his wife's death. He cannot move on. His only comfort is the repetition of daily routines. On the first anniversary of his wife's death, Arthur decides to clear out her clothes. Unexpectedly, he finds a gold charm bracelet in one of her boots. Arthur has never seen it before, and he is intrigued because his wife never mentioned it.

There is a phone number engraved on one of the charms. Uncharacteristically, Arthur decides to ring the number to try and find out more about the bracelet. This is the start of a surprising journey to Bath, London and Paris, where he meets some intriguing characters and gets involved in some unusual situations.

It is a journey of discovery for Arthur, not just about his wife's life before they met, but also about his own character. It is also a journey that eases his grief and leads him to a new acceptance of his own life. More than that, it is a journey that brings him closer to his family and his friends.

This is a gently humorous book, full of insight and optimism about the nature of human relationships. *It is also a great read that takes a compassionate look at the aftermath of grief. The story is engaging and enjoyable, leaving the reader both happy and satisfied.*

Lynne Rapson

The charm of the title is well-founded. A charming odyssey.

When I received this book I was intrigued immediately and was charmed from the first page. It does indeed exert an influence over one as the story unfolds. Arthur is in the sad position of packing away his dead wife's belongings to take to charity shops. Being a methodical - dare one say, boringly methodical - man he checks all the pockets and inside the shoes. In the process he discovers a bracelet which he has never seen his wife wear. It has a small collection of charms on it, one of which has some contact details. This enables him to start his quest to discover the story behind the bracelet and perhaps something about his wife which he didn't know. The story that follows is an adventure as Arthur traces the givers of the charms and learns from them an untold story. From York to London to Paris via a country estate and further afield, Arthur follows the charms. He meets some great characters. It is a story which is both sad and

happy. It is well-written - hard to believe it's a first novel. It is truly a voyage of discovery, not just about his wife, but about Arthur himself. Highly recommended.

Ceri Forster

A light hearted easy read, with likeable characters and plenty of humour. However, it's a little forced in places and could have been really moving but somehow misses the mark.

This was a nice easy read, and has a generally uplifting tone to it, so it left me feeling fairly positive. The characters are well drawn, and there is enough character development to keep you reading.

I did feel that the plot was a little forced in places. There are eight charms on the bracelet that Arthur discovers - and some of these have some interesting and entertaining stories. Some of them, however, are verging on unbelievable, and some are explained much too quickly, which felt like a little bit of a cheat. The real story, of course, is not about Arthur's wife and where she got the charms, but about Arthur and how he grows and develops throughout the book. This is well done, but it still left me feeling disappointed that the story behind the charms wasn't a bit stronger.

It is very similar in nature to 'The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry' - in fact Arthur and Harold could almost be one and the same. But where Harold's story genuinely touched and moved me, Arthur's didn't. Perhaps Arthur's story is meant to be a bit more tongue-in-cheek and funny, but I think if there had been more emotion, it would have been a four-star book instead of just a three.

Jane Brown

Simply charming - excuse the pun- a lovely read and undoubtedly a 2016 best seller.

What a delight I loved this book and know this will be a best seller in 2016.

Life is predictable – or is it? Do you really know the person you live with?

A wife who has just died, the inevitable clearance of clothes and then a great find – a gold charm bracelet in which Arthur has never seen before. One charm holds a telephone number and thus begins an adventure and back to his late wife's past.

This is beautifully written such a moving and funny story at the same time. I

just could not put this down till I had read to the very end.

<http://browniebookworld.blogspot.co.uk/>