

## LoveReading Reader reviews of The Separation by Dinah Jefferies

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.

### Joanne Nuttie

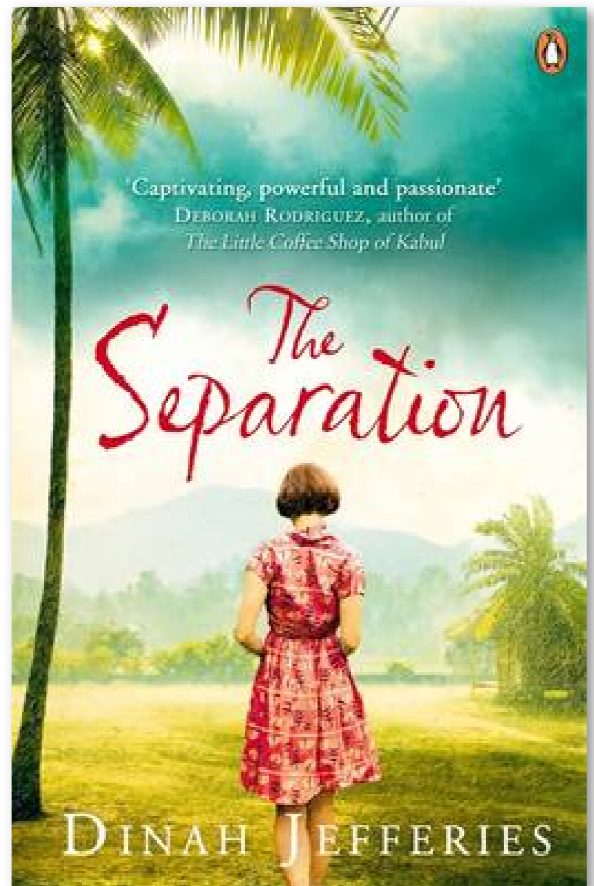
***Wow... I loved this book, it was full of intrigue, mystery and left me at times in suspense.***

*I connected with the characters straight away, the authors use of descriptive prose was very accurate and for me each character was very clear, both in their look and personality. Emma was most definitely my favourite and I loved her for being strong willed and feisty.*

*The book flowed very easily and the two stories, one based in England the other in Malaya worked really well and it never confused me.*

*My only concern was that the ending was slightly rushed, I was delighted with the positive outcome but would have liked it to have been spread out over a lot more pages.*

*Would be happy to read this author again*



### Phyl Smithson

***This was a story that hooked me at the start, left me frustrated with the slowing down of the initial pace as it progressed but then it recovered and I was again addicted. Perfect for a lazy holiday.***

*The separation occurs at the very start of the story. The reason why Lydia (the Mum) is separated from her beloved daughters, Emma (11) and Fleur (8) is a complete mystery, but there it is, happening within the first chapters.*

*Lydia has been temporarily absent from the family home to attend to a friend who is in ill health. Her absence proves to be an opportunity for her husband to empty the home of possessions, and children. Unbeknown to Emily, however, her Mum's return will not coincide with her departure back to the UK, nor will she catch up them soon after their arrival at her paternal grandparents in Liverpool.*

*In fact, Lydia's own return to the abandoned Malaya resident, is met with shock, horror and fear. Her emotions calm down when she speaks to a senior and respected British office, who advises her that her husband was urgently and unexpected rushed to the north of the country. And so, Lydia's own journey does not see her follow in the steps of her children bound for the UK, but a route that takes her into the ever more uncivilised and troubled heart of the Malayan countryside. A journey made more challenging as she is forced to take responsibly for a child whose own family believe he will be safer away from the political turmoil of the Capital City.*

*And so the story unravels as we learn how Emma and her Mum strive to make sense of their separate lives and the never ending search to find one another.*

*'The Separation' is powerful, atmospheric and descriptive but I struggled with too much unnecessary text that added to the length but perhaps not the quality of the story.*

### **Sophia Ufton**

***Oh Wow, so moving! Brought me to tears, but was amazing! A beautiful story of the love of a parent who loses her children and what a parent will do to find this love again no matter what!***

*This is the beautiful heart wrenching story of a mother who comes home from helping a friend to discover her two children have gone.*

*She doesn't know where and becomes very upset, but decides to find them, she goes round places and friends her and her husband knew and they tell her that they could be staying at temporary accommodation. She becomes happier at the thought she will be seeing them again soon, and journeys to the bank to withdraw money for the trip, only to find her husband has only gone and left her \$15. She is very confused as she knows she had more...*

*Will she find her two daughters and be reunited with them? Please read the book and find out. You won't be disappointed.*

**Suzanne Marsh - [www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com](http://www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com)**

*What a heart-wrenching story, but at the same time it captures your attention. 'The Separation' is **gripping, powerful and emotional. I can certainly see why Dinah Jefferies is classed as an extraordinary story-teller.** Dinah is a major new writer that millions of women readers are just going to love and I just see her fan base growing and growing. I think book clubs should snap this novel up as there is plenty of points up for discussion. I for one hope that in the future further books by Dinah Jefferies will be published.*

*'The Separation' is set in Mayala. Emma and Fleur were expecting their mother to collect them from school, but their father did instead. Emma questioned where is mummy? Their father just seemed to ignore their questions and simply said we are going away to England.*

*On the last day in their house in Malacca, Emma kept rushing to the window to stare her mother home. She wanted her mother home in time to leave for England.*

*A trunk was packed with just Emma's and Fleur's clothes and their fathers ready to take on the ship with them to England.*

*With no sign of their mother coming home before they left for the ship, Emma wrote her mother a letter to say that she misses her and that she is looking forward to seeing her in England. Emma wanted to leave her letter on the table in the hall but her father took the letter saying he will take care of it.*

*When their mother finally arrived home she shouted out to Emma and Fleur 'mummy's home'. She fought off a pang of how the house was too silent. As Lydia climbed the stairs and went into the bedrooms she noticed the wardrobes open and could see straight away that they were practically empty. She fought for breath thinking to herself that there must be a rational explanation to where her children and her husband had gone.*

*Every time Emma asked her father where her mum is her father always had given her a reason for her delay.*

*Will Emma and Fleur be reunited with mother in England? Will Emma and Fleur ever see their mother again?*

*I am now going to pass this wonderful story to mother to read as I know she will love the story too.*

*I hope that many readers who read 'The Separation' enjoy it as much as I have.*

*All readers can buy 'The Separation' from [Lovereadings.co.uk](http://Lovereadings.co.uk).*

**Edel Waugh** - [www.edelwaugh.blogspot.ie/](http://www.edelwaugh.blogspot.ie/)

***This is a remarkable tale by an incredibly talented storyteller. This story just blew me away!***

*From the opening chapter I was gripped when we first meet the characters then quickly learn something is not quite right. This is an intricate story with plenty of twists and turns making it very hard to predict what could happen next. The mother in the story is called Lydia and she has a big heart and is incredibly resilient, she needs to be to cope with what is going on in the story. The bond between her and her children, one of them especially, Emma, is very touching. The story is told from two countries by different people and it is fast paced. There are no slow moments in this book so if you want a book that will keep your interest then I recommend this without doubt. There is one particular character that I detested and that made the story even harder to put down as his behaviour is shocking so you want to see what is going to happen with him. There is so much to love about this book that I could recommend this to anyone! A story of hope and love.*

### **Jean Diamond**

*I thoroughly enjoyed this new novel by Dinah Jefferies. I became absorbed in this book from the start. The story of separation begins in the first pages and continues throughout the book, alongside the insight into the horror of the civil war in Malaya, tales of deceit and moments of tenderness. The contrasts between life in England and Malaya and the emotions of the various characters are enhanced by the writer's descriptive prose.*

*The story follows the children's mother Lydia in her search for her children, Emma and Fleur, who have been taken from Malaya by their father. Lydia's boundless love for her children takes the reader with her on her dangerous journey through the jungle, where she suddenly becomes responsible for the care another child.*

*Unbeknown to Lydia, life in England becomes more difficult for Emma who is forced into separation once again when she is sent away to boarding school by her father. However, Emma is strong willed and determined to discover the truth and reunite her family. The suspense of not knowing if the family will ever be reunited continues through each of the chapters of the book.*

*I'm sure this novel will be widely read at many book clubs as there is much to*

*discuss about the characters and the plot.*

***I hope to be able to read more powerful novels by Dinah Jefferies in the future and enjoy them as much as I enjoyed reading 'The Separation'.***

### **Cathy Burman**

*An intriguing novel with many twists and turns. Set in Malaya and in England in the 50's. A mother returns home from nursing her friend to find her husband and 2 children gone. There begins a frantic search to find them which leads her into many dangerous situations, heartbreak and despair but also unexpected spells of happiness and romance.*

*A gripping novel, with a powerful, spellbinding storyline. Exceptionally well written, the reader can taste, feel, smell and experience life and its dangers in the heat of the tropical jungle and also in the hustle and bustle of a busy city. In contrast, the reader is also transported to England, with its contrasting climate, its difficult times and different challenges. An emotionally charged novel with many ups and downs which graphically explores and tests to the limit the profound love and unbreakable bond a mother has with her children. There are many unexpected twists and turns which keep the reader riveted throughout, until the very end.*

***An excellent, exciting, powerful novel. A guaranteed page turner. Highly recommended.***

### **Glynis Elliott**

***Within the first couple of pages I was hooked line and sinker.*** *It was beautifully written and I was immediately immersed in the beauty and horror which was Malaya in the 1950's. But it wasn't just that it was the "separation" of a mother from her children that just tore the heart in two.*

*This novel has best seller written all over it.*

### **Rebecca Whymark**

***I really enjoyed reading this book. The characters have a depth to them that makes them more believable and means that you can really identify with them in one way or another.***

*The story swaps from being told by Lydia with the backdrop of Malaya to her daughter Emma living in England. Although the book swaps between the two and covers about 3 years it is not confusing in any way. It has been written very well.*

*I'll be looking out for her next book.*

### **Nicola Kingswell**

#### ***An emotional rollercoaster of a story about relationships, deception and abandonment.***

*I really enjoyed reading 'The Separation'. This was a fabulously intricately woven story about love, loss, deceit and abandonment. The descriptions of Malaya were beautiful and I really felt as though I was in the hot and sticky jungle. Our heroines and Lydia, and her eldest daughter Emma, who due to the deceitfulness of the generally miserable and downright nasty Alec, are separated by continents but refuse to give up on the notion that they are separated forever. Emma's description of an invisible thread between her heart and her mothers' heart is particularly poignant. Many twists and turns occur along the way, with a cracking supporting cast of colourful characters. I really felt for the lovely Veronica and how she was played by Alec. This is a great story well told and really enjoyable. I raced through the end of the book to find out how it would end.*

### **Susan Walsh - @truckermercedes**

#### ***An outstanding book. I couldn't wait to turn each page.***

*A Mothers love for her Daughters shines throughout, as sheer determination wins through.*

*A wonderfully written page turner.*

*You get swept along with the sheer joy this book brings to it's reader.*

*I was totally immersed from the first chapter.*

*Imagine 1950's Malaya & a conjure up a seemingly happy family...which rapidly falls apart when the children are taken away by their Father.*

*When Lydia arrives back home from a trip she finds an empty house... she looks around to find that most of their clothes have gone, worrying her Daughters may of been abducted by Rebels.*

*She is beside herself and outside her fears escalate knowing that some girls are taken as slaves.*

*The mysterious Jungle, the Mosquitos, the heat, the colourful birds, the chattering Monkeys all make her imagination work overtime.*

*But you can never underestimate a Mothers love and Lydia's determination to find out what happened to her family takes her on a long search.*

*A magnificent read which is full of emotion*

**Amanda Keeling - @pikalili**

***'The Separation' drags you in by the scruff of your neck from the first few pages and doesn't let go until you have ridden the ups and downs of every chapter in this emotional roller coaster of a story.***

*In 1950's Malaya Lydia returns home one day to discover her Husband and two children are gone without a trace. The quickening dread that fills her soon becomes apparent and after a cruel deception they are believed dead. All the while the reader is privy to information that Lydia is not. Her Husband has abducted Emma and Fleur and taken them to England.*

*Reading coinciding accounts of this story from Lydia and her eldest Daughter, Emma, is a desperate tale which takes many twists and turns along the way. However desperate I felt for their situation whilst reading the book I along with the main characters somehow never lost hope. It gripped me from the start and I was an emotional wreck by the end but I loved every single page of this amazing book.*

**Evelyn Love-Gajardo - @gajarlove**

***Looking for a good holiday read? Then this is the book for you!***

*I had just returned from a trip to Singapore when I read this book, and was immediately struck by the way the writer described the atmosphere of that fascinating place, conveying a very accurate impression of the heat, smells and sounds of Malaysia.*

*The book held my attention, and really made me want to know what happened to the characters, particularly Lydia, the mother who is cruelly separated from her children. It is a dual narrative, telling Lydia's story and her daughter Emma's in alternate chapters. The story is well paced and conveys a sense of the time in which it is set.*

*There are some aspects of the plot for which you have to suspend belief-it is a novel after all-but all in all I found this an enjoyable read which would be perfect for holidays.*

### **Jocelyn Garvey**

*Set in Malaya in the 1950's during the struggle for independence, this is a story of love, desperation and duplicity.*

*Lydia goes to look after a sick friend leaving her two daughters in the care of her husband Alec. On her return she finds the house shut and everybody gone. She goes to his employer who tells her that they have gone north.*

*Lydia tries to follow in search of the girls but when she arrives in Ipoh she finds that the guest house where they are supposed to be staying has burnt down, and that the girls and her husband have died in the fire. She does not want to believe this and goes on searching.*

*Alec has taken the girls back to England.*

*The story is told by Lydia, who is distraught, and Emma the elder daughter, and the strings that bind them.*

*Emma is told that her mother has disappeared and is assumed lost in the uprising. She will not believe that this is true as her mother will always find her.*

*Following an unsavoury incident, her father brands her as awkward and she sent off to boarding school whilst her little sister stays in their grandparent's house with father.*

*Having been brought up in Malaya she is totally out of water and struggles to find herself.*

*With the help of her fathers' new girlfriend she continues her search.*

***This is a gripping, fascinating book set in an era that we know little about. A really good read.***