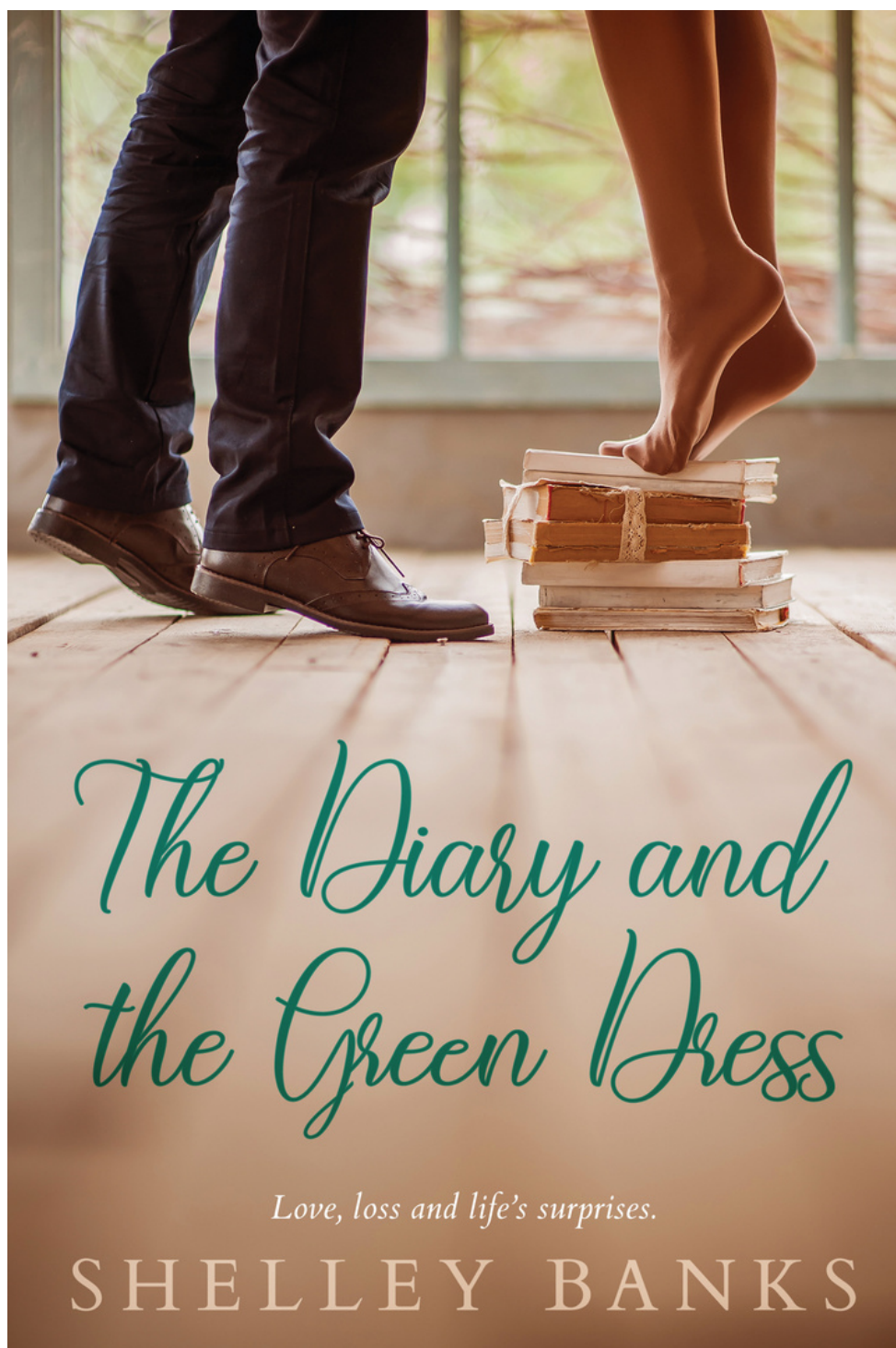




The Diary and the Green Dress
Shelley Banks

Book Club Kit

About the Book

When Izzy purchases an old Queensland house in Brisbane, she hopes it represents a fresh start after heartbreak and disappointment. Instead, she discovers a hidden collection of diaries and a beautiful vintage green dress belonging to Grace — a young woman writing in 1919 as she prepares for marriage in post-war Australia.

As Izzy becomes immersed in Grace's story, the past begins echoing through her own life in unexpected ways. At the same time, a shocking family revelation forces Izzy to question everything she thought she knew about herself.

Blending historical fiction with contemporary women's fiction, *The Diary and the Green Dress* is a story about identity, love, family secrets, friendship, healing, and the emotional lives women carry across generations.

About the Author

Shelley Banks is a Brisbane-based author of contemporary women's fiction. With a background in communications and a passion for storytelling, she writes emotionally resonant novels that explore relationships, identity, and personal growth.

Her other works include:

- Finding Home
- The Long Way Around
- One Weekend

She is also the creator of September Sprouts, a blog featuring both fiction and non-fiction pieces designed to inspire readers to explore new perspectives.



Themes to Explore

- Female friendship and support
- Love, marriage, and expectations
- Identity and reinvention
- Family secrets
- Emotional healing
- Women's lives across generations
- Trauma and emotional silence
- The importance of being truly seen

Discussion Questions

1. Which storyline drew you in more — Grace's or Izzy's?
2. What similarities did you notice between the two women?
3. How does the novel explore the expectations placed on women?
4. Why do you think Grace continued with the wedding despite her doubts?
5. How did Jason affect Izzy's confidence and identity?
6. Did you trust Trent immediately? Why or why not?
7. How does the discovery of Claudia change Izzy emotionally?
8. Why are the diaries so powerful to Izzy?
9. What role does friendship play in the novel?
10. How does the novel explore loneliness and emotional isolation?

Discussion Questions

11. What does the green dress symbolise?
12. Which scene stayed with you most after finishing the novel?
13. Did the ending feel hopeful to you?
14. What do you think happens next for Izzy?
15. If Grace and Izzy could meet, what would they say to each other?

AUTHOR Q&A

What inspired the idea for the diaries?

I've always been fascinated by the idea of discovering hidden pieces of someone else's life — especially through something as personal as a diary. Diaries capture thoughts people might never say aloud, and I loved the idea of a modern woman uncovering the private emotional world of someone who lived over a century earlier.

Did Grace or Izzy's storyline come first?

Grace's storyline came first. I initially imagined a young woman in 1919 quietly questioning the future expected of her while writing in secret. Izzy's story then developed as the perfect modern counterpart — another woman trying to rediscover herself and understand where she truly belongs.

AUTHOR Q&A

What inspired the green dress?

The green dress symbolises memory, femininity, identity, and the emotional connection between women across generations. I wanted an object that felt beautiful, mysterious, and personal — something that could survive time and still carry emotional weight long after its owner was gone.

What themes were most important to explore?

The themes most important to me were identity, emotional resilience, women's inner lives, family secrets, healing, and the ways women across generations experience similar fears and pressures despite living in completely different worlds. I also wanted to explore the importance of being truly seen and understood.

AUTHOR Q&A

Why do you think readers connect strongly with dual timelines?

I think readers enjoy seeing the emotional parallels between different eras. Dual timelines allow readers to reflect on how much society has changed and how much human emotion has stayed the same. There's also something compelling about slowly uncovering connections between the past and present alongside the characters.

What do you hope readers take away from the novel?

I hope readers come away feeling reflective, hopeful, and emotionally connected to the characters. I also hope it reminds readers that it's never too late to rediscover yourself, question the life you've settled into, or choose a different path forward. I also hope readers consider the untold stories within every family and every generation.

Reader Reflection

- Imagine you were alive in 1919. How different do you think you would be?
- How do you think you'd react if you'd discovered a family secret as Izzy does?
- If you discovered a diary hidden in your house from 100 years ago, would you read it?

Creative Engagement

Vintage Afternoon Tea

- Create a 1920s-inspired atmosphere with:
 - tea
 - cakes
 - candles
 - flowers
 - and vintage décor.
- Write a short diary entry from either Grace or Izzy about something they would never say aloud.

Get Your Copy

Amazon

Goodreads

Connect

Website:

<https://septembersprouts.com/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/writershellb/>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/writershellb>

One woman's hidden past. One woman's unexpected future. Discover the story that connects them.

The Diary and the Green Dress
Shelley Banks