



To Love and to Cherish

Kelly Irvin

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In author Kelly Irvin's first installment in the Bliss Creek Amish series, readers will find a charming, romantic story of how God works even in the darkest moments.

It's been four years since Carl left. Four years since he left the safety of the small Amish community for the Englisch world. And in four years, Emma's heart has only begun to heal.

Now, with the unexpected death of her parents, Emma is plunged back into a world of despair and confusion. It's a confusion only compounded by Carl's return. She's supposed to be in love with him-so why can't she keep her mind off Thomas, the strong, quiet widower who always seems to be underfoot? Could the man she only knew as a friend be the one to help her to heal?

In a world that seems to be changing no matter how tightly she clings to the past, this one woman must see beyond her pain and open her heart to trust once again.

To Love and to Cherish Details

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From Reader Review To Love and to Cherish for online ebook

Courtney says

There is nothing like starting off a book with a massive tragedy! Wow!! Right from the start we are sucked in to the story of Emma and her family – be warned the tears might start flowing! Emma loses her parents in a terrible accident and is suddenly found in a difficult spot. Her older brother Luke moves in with his wife Leah and helps Emma with the responsibility of caring for her younger siblings and the farm. There are lots of issues when you mix the two families together and it is bumpy road they travel as their emotions run high.

Not only is Emma dealing with the tragedy of losing her parents and caring for her younger siblings but she is also struggling with issues of the heart. Her ex beau Carl is suddenly back in the picture after breaking her heart in to a million pieces four years ago. On top of the new hurts she is dealing with now that Carl is back in her life, her good friend Thomas is suddenly showing an interest in her. As her heart begins to heal she can't decide who she wants to be with. You'll be wondering who will win her heart the whole time.

To Love and Cherish has everything I love in an Amish story, and a romance. There is a tragedy that tests the faith of all the characters and a story of forgiveness and redemption. There is a love interest that doesn't just fall in your lap but develops and strengthens as we read. You'll laugh and you'll cry! Best of all there are lots of unexpected events and you can't really predict what the ending will be! This was truly a great read and I'll be looking in to more books by Kelly Irvin.

I was provided with a copy of this book by the Publisher Harvest House, and was not required to give positive review.

Susan says

This was the first book I've read by this author and I loved it. I'm looking forward to the rest in the series. The story of Emma and her family struggling with the sudden loss of their parents was insightful and poignant. The story of whom Emma would choose to love and to cherish was moving.

Cheri Swalwell says

I had the privilege of reading To Love and To Cherish, the first book in The Bliss Creek Amish series by Kelly Irvin. What a great introduction to the Schirack family.

When I read an author new to me for the first time, I usually will look to see if there are more books by him or her. I was pleasantly surprised to see that this was not the first book that Kelly Irvin had written. She not only writes Amish fiction, but has two books in the Romantic Suspense genre. Those books are: A Deadly Wilderness and No Child of Mine. They are now on my "to read" list.

Regarding this series, To Love and To Cherish is the first book, then A Heart Made New just came out this month, October 2012, and the third book in the series is due out in January 2013, Love's Journey Home. If you want to read an overview of any of the books that Kelly Irvin has written, feel free to visit her website

site at: www.kellyirvin.com. However, if you don't want some of the suspense of the first book ruined for you, my suggestion would be to wait to read the reviews until after you have read the first book, To Love and To Cherish. The question will be answered by then and you will be very happy (I think) to read about the heroine in Book III.

Now, on to my opinion of To Love and To Cherish. The first chapter introduces us to the Shirack family. Emma, the oldest daughter but not oldest child, is the heroine and is lovable immediately with her kind personality and deep love for family shining through from the start. Ms. Irvin keeps her real, though, with her inward struggle over how to forgive certain people in her life as well as conflict with her sister-in-law whose personality appears to differ greatly from her own.

The main theme of the book dealt with forgiveness and how God calls us to forgive, even though it can be a painful process. In the Amish way of life, forgiveness is very important and the fact that Emma struggles throughout the book is written very well. I could feel her internal struggles with God as she tried to uphold her faith and her teachings. While others appeared to forgive so easily, Emma felt inadequate and as though she didn't deserve grace (or love) herself until she could resolve this conflict in a God-honoring way. Ms. Irvin does a great job showing how forgiveness is a choice, more for yourself than for the other person, but it does have a ripple effect and blesses the one you forgive as well.

Emma spends the entire book in conflict between two men. The conflict feels very real and I was able to step into Emma's shoes as she had to make the difficult choice between her conflicting emotions. I love how Ms. Irvin kept multiple storylines running throughout the book. I never got bored as there was always something going on with someone. Each family member was so well developed that I could picture not only each of their faces, but their unique personalities as well.

I can't wait to read the next book in the series and continue to follow this family that I have started to fall in love with. In fact, I have already started Book II, A Heart Made New, in the series and can tell you that Ms. Irvin keeps it interesting from the very first page.

I love how To Love and To Cherish ended. There were twists and surprises throughout the book that kept me guessing and things that completely surprised me. At the conclusion of Book I, Ms. Irvin set up Book II nicely without giving anything important away. It also stayed very real to the Amish culture. Emma ended up with the man that would best suit her and her wonderful personality. She definitely received a blessing for all the struggles that she had to endure, that started before the first page of the first book. I can't wait to continue to follow their relationship in Book II, A Heart Made New, and I'm sure I won't be disappointed. And then, if things couldn't get better, in January 2013, I get to finish this series with her final book, Love's Journey Home. Having read the back cover of the third book, I won't ruin anything for anyone, but I'm so excited about the main character in Book III. I fell in love with this woman during the first book and can't wait for her to find happiness as well.

I am definitely a new fan of Ms. Irvin and can't wait to read her other books when I finish with the Shirack family.

Cindy says

Wow!! I have never read a book that has so much happening in it. Buggy accident, tornado, barn raising, rebellious son coming home, and leaving, a nervous breakdown, a missing child in a snowstorm and that is not even a drop in the bucket. This book has lots of action. An Amish Action Adventure book, truly at times it was a bit overwhelming however, Kelly Irvin does an awesome job of keeping everything straight and tying the story together. This was a great story of learning that just as everyone does, the main female character in this story (Emma) struggles with forgiving and has for years. It began with her intended, leaving the faith, he had already been baptised, so he was not in rumspringa, but left to see what was out in the world. Emma struggles for four years to forgive Carl, but it is harder than she thought, and friends marrying and having babies makes the wound open up over and over. The death of her parents, even adds to the burden of forgiveness. How will she forgive the driver of the truck that struck their buggy, and how will she forgive God for taking her parents away? A great story that you have to read!! I loved the book and look forward to reading more books from Kelly Irvin. A 4 star rating is what I give this book! This book was provided for review purposes only, no payment was received for this review.

Sylvia says

I loved this book!! Great story!! Starting to like this author's books!!

Kym McNabney says

LOVE'S JOURNEY HOME by KELLY IRVIN, is a contemporary Amish romance. MS. IRVIN has done a fine job in telling a story about disappointment, hardships, everyday struggles, and second chances. Her characters deal with raising children after the death of a spouse, and all that entails.

Gabriel Gless, along with his passel of children, move to Bliss Creek in hopes of escaping the worldly influences of Indiana. Helen Crouch is doing just fine, taking care of her kids and getting by. Gabriel and Helen have so much in common. So why can't they seem to speak without getting into an argument?

*Please see my profile for more information on this review.

Brenda says

Emma's heart was broken four years ago when her beau Carl decided that he needed to try living in the Amish world. As a school teacher she believes that her pupils may be the closest she will ever come to having her own children. When an unexpected accident takes the lives of her mother and father she learns that an old family friend Thomas has feelings for her and actually talked to her father, but her father thought their age difference was too far apart. Thomas is a quiet widower with two small children who feels drawn to Emma, but decided to honor her father's wishes, but now since her parents are gone, their relationship slowly starts to change, but when Carl returns home saying he wants to return to the faith and tries courting Emma, her feelings are conflicted. There is a secret though that Carl is harboring, a secret that he shares with Emma. Will Emma and Thomas find love together, or will Carl be the one she chooses?

Amish fiction is my favorite genre to read, but I hadn't read anything by this new to me author Kelly Irvin, so I was excited to give her writing a try. Well I loved this story. I was immediately drawn into the story. The story opens with a major tragedy that caused me to feel sorrow for Emma and her siblings. While the primary story was of 23 year old Emma there were a few secondary stories that really pulled this book along at a brisk pace. For example her sister Catherine was struggling with PTSD because of something she saw. Her brother Luke and his wife Leah had to move back to the family farm so that Luke could fill in the gaps left open by the loss of his parents, which wasn't an easy transition for Leah by any means. There was also the struggle her seventeen year old brother Josiah was facing because he was thinking of leaving the faith. With several story lines going on one might assume that it would be difficult to keep things straight, but the author does an amazing job of weaving them together to make for a fast moving plot that kept me wanting to know not only how things would work out for Emma but for everyone else as well. I thought the author's message of faith and forgiveness was perfectly blended into the story, we see how Emma struggles with finding forgiveness for the truck driver who caused the accident, and finding some wonderful words of wisdom from her aunt.

Overall I really enjoyed the first installment of The Bliss Creek Amish and look forward to reading the next installment in the series.

Lyn Mether- fairbairn says

I really enjoyed this book. Twists and turns to make the story interesting.

Rachel says

My first Kelly Irvin book and I enjoyed it. To Love and to Cherish is the first book in The Bliss Creek Amish series. It's centered around Emma and her siblings who lose their parents unexpectedly. It deals with some of their struggles and also the problems Emma faces after her old beau turns up after having left the Amish four years ago. It's a good story though sad at times that even deals with mental health issues. The story and the characters are both written well and for me it was hard to put down. I'm hoping we get to see some of Emma's sister Catherine's story in the next two books. I'd like to see how she turns out.

If you're looking for a new series or well technically a trilogy as this has only three books then look no further. This may only be the first book but I'm definitely going to continue on and see where the rest go.

Mary O'Brien says

****I received this book from Harvest House Publishers through NetGalley. I am not required to give a positive review, just an honest one****

This is the first book in the Bliss Creek Amish Series

Emma's life has been turned upside down. It all started four years ago when the man she loved left the Amish community for the English life. Finally, four years later her heart has begun its healing process. That is until the unexpected death of her parents occurs. Now her heart is broken yet again.

Thomas, a widower with two children of his own has taken an interest in Emma. However, both Thomas and Emma are taken by surprise when Carl shows up out of the blue.

Will Emma chose to go back to Carl and forgive him or will she chose to start over with Thomas? To find out read: To Love and to Cherish by Kelly Irvin.

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley. This is the first book that I have read by this author. I must say that I really enjoyed everything this book had to offer. This book is about forgiveness, family, new beginnings, and finding love.

I enjoyed getting to know the Shirack family! Each and everyone of them are unique individuals that brought different qualities into their family. I will say, I was not fond of Leah. I think she is hard headed and cruel. However, as the book progressed, I came to a better understanding of who she really was.

This book made me laugh and cry. It also made me realize that we have to live each day to the fullest. I am truly amazed that the Amish can forgive as easily as they do. I don't know if I would be so forgiving.

I rate this book 5/5!

Linda Heidelberg says

Very Good

I really enjoyed reading it was a very interesting read I really enjoyed all the characters I thought the ending was a little sudden it left you in a cliffhanger but overall I thought it was a very good read.

Abbie says

Emma's life is changed forever that day as she was walking with her younger sisters to the produce stand. Her parents where killed in a buggy accident. Her brother forgave the driver at the scene but Emma could not in her heart say it as well. Now her older brother Luke is the head of the family and he and his wife Leah who Emma does not get along with the best move into the family home so they can keep the farm running. To top it off they are worried about there younger brother who does not want to be Amish.

While Emma is dealing with her parents funeral her old boyfriend who left the church returns and wants a second chance and she also finds out that the family's neighbor and good friend Thomas has been secretly wanting to court her. Emma must deal with all of this while she struggles to understand why God took her parents. Will Emma be able to forgive like God asks her to do or will it be to much? Can she find true love and a family that she wants so much?

I admit when I saw what this book was about I was afraid I might not like it but I was wrong I LOVED it.

What I liked: This book was so well written. Yes the baseline of this story is heartbreaking with the opening few pages dealing with the sudden and very tragic death of Emma's parents. But this story is about forgiveness and family. Emma came across so real to me. She struggles with forgiving the man who kills her parents as well as Carl her old boyfriend who returns to try and win her back. I was cheering for Emma to

make the right choices. The author did a wonderful job of expressing the characters feelings in this book even Emma's sisters and brothers. The romance part of the story was really good as well. I really liked Thomas but with Carl in the picture I found myself biting my nails hoping Emma would chose the right man.

What I did not like: I wished we could have had a chapter or two from Emma's brother's point of view. I could almost feel the weight of his responsibilities that he was caring as he worried about his family. Leah was another one who comes across so mean but really she has her own story to tell and I would have liked to know her a little better. Other then that this book was such a great story.

I am very excited that this book is the first in a new series I can't wait to read more about this family. It's not often I read two 5 star books in a row but what a treat! I HIGHLY recommend this book! A must read in my option if you love Amish Fiction.

<http://abbiesreadingcorner.com/2012/0...>

Dianne says

At times I found this book a little slow, but overall I enjoyed it a great deal. My only wish was the ending had been a little longer and we saw into their future happiness. Maybe if I am lucky book two will give me what I wanted to see at the end of book one!

Melissa says

it was a sad beginning ended with a good one. I don't like to give spoilers so I don't like to give out details. it's a very good read ..I couldn't put it down I always said if the book is well written its always to short ..this was very good off to Book 2 A heart made new.

Patty Hearts Dave says

The story begins with Emma Shirack's mother and father's buggy being hit by the truck of a neighbor, Mr. Cramer. Her sister, Katherine, and brother, Luke, witnessed them being thrown from the buggy and dying right before their eyes. Life suddenly changed for the Shirack children. They didn't want to lose their farm and there were younger children that needed care. Emma's older brother, Luke, and his family sold their house and moved in with his seven siblings.

Emma's heart was already broken and not quite healed from a past hurt. Her boyfriend, Carl Freiling, left the Amish community of Bliss Creek four years earlier. She didn't know why he left. She refused to be hurt again. She hadn't dated anyone since. Thomas Brennaman was interested in dating her. His wife had died four years before from cancer. Thomas wanted to start dating Emma but he kept putting it off because he had trouble expressing himself. All Emma saw him was as a good friend.

Carl returned to Bliss Creek and complicated things for Emma. Thomas finally decided that he may lose Emma to Carl so he told her he wanted to court her. Carl also told her that he wanted to court her. The whole story is about Emma coming to grips with what Carl did to her and who she decides to court.

There are quite a few subplots woven into the story. Emma's brother, Josiah, returns home after being gone for a year, Luke and his wife, Leah, are expecting their third child, Emma struggles with her relationship with Leah and Catherine deals with severe depression from witnessing her parent's death.

This story is about forgiveness. It also shows us the different ways people deal with grief. I really liked Emma, she was real with her inability to truly forgive. I can't believe she didn't notice Thomas being attracted to her. I was glad when he finally asked her to court him. I was also annoyed that Carl came back into the picture. It was hard to guess who Emma would choose to court. A few events happened at the end of the story that were surprising and suspenseful. One of the things is that a person ends up leaving the Amish community that I never suspected. You'll have to read To Love And To Cherish to find out what happens.

To Love And Cherish, Bliss Creek Series #1

A Heart Made New, Bliss Creek Series #2 out September 2012

I received a free copy of this e-book from NetGalley for my honest review.
