



More Than a Promise

Ruth Logan Herne

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Artist Elle Drake returned to her small town for peace and solace after a devastating break-up. She never expected to find herself posing as a widower's fiancée to help him keep custody of his three rambunctious boys. And she certainly never expected to fall deeply, desperately in love with him. The newest Christian romance by Ruth Logan Hearne combines heart and humor with a dose of small-town reality.

More Than a Promise Details

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From Reader Review More Than a Promise for online ebook

Susan says

More Than A Promise

Ruth Logan Herne

MORE THAN A PROMISE hooked me from the very first page and never let me go. I have been devouring Ruth Logan Herne's books these last few weeks and she never disappoints. She is a local author and I've been lucky enough to find most of her books in the libraries in my area of Upstate New York. I'm trying to read every single one of them and I have many more to get through! So happy about that because Ruth's stories tug at your heart and have you falling in love with all of her characters.

Elle Drake has returned to her small hometown nursing her broken heart. Her ex husband had a very public affair and Elle runs home to nurse her wounds. Her neighbor, Matt, is a widower with three rambunctious boys and at first, they come across as wild. Elle tries to see the best in everyone and while the rest of the town questions Matt's child rearing, Elle knows it must not be easy. MORE THAN A PROMISE shows you how Matt's mother in law is fighting him tooth and nail to get her grandkids away from him. When their house catches fire, Elle finds herself defending Matt to his mother in law and becomes his fake fiancé. There is so much humor in this story, you will find yourself chuckling out loud and maybe even snorting a few times. That is exactly what happened to me!

MORE THAN A PROMISE is a very realistic story in that it shows how everyone in a small town is all up in everyone else's business and there are no secrets. Even the parish priest is spot on. Ruth Logan Herne has the reader feeling like they can easily relate to the characters and what they are going through. Yes it's an inspirational Christian novel, but it does not preach and put the characters' faith all up in your face. As Elle gets to know Matt and his boys, she can't help falling in love with them and wanting to help. Can she help Matt find his way back to his faith? You will find yourself cheering them all along and wishing you could move to their small town and get to know them all. I love when an author can do that and that is exactly what Ruth Logan Herne does to me each and every time.

Lori says

I loved this book and so Ruth is going to be my favorite new author!!!

This story is about love, laughter and yes learning on how to find family time to spend together with three wonderful little boys who desperately need a mom to guide them along the way.

I never knew that 3 little guys could cause such trouble!!! They are funny, fun loving and it takes a wonderful neighbor to help show them the way.

I think shy quiet Todd has to be my favorite. Randy is second and Amos such a cute little guy!! Makes my heart melt into little shreds because that's how my son used to be.

Randy is my other half. By this, I mean his temper. He has a temper like mine but he also has a heart of gold. I think that God gives us a wonderful gift through children that they might teach us some lessons through life. Randy is just such a kid.

Matt is a dumbkoff. He can't see the precious gifts in front of him. He's a workaholic like his father before him.

I really don't know what a single parent is like but, it can't be easy. I have to applaud Matt though.

He really does try. I know what mothers in laws are like. We get along ok but not like Id like to.

Gloria can't see past her nose either. She has always given Matt a hard time no matter what it is or what he is doing.

Elle is my favorite character. I love her ability to adjust in any given situation. Elle has tried hard for years and has never had children. She reminds me of Abraham and Sarah. Sarah was barren for years. She's also wonderful with her hands. Hands that can create anything she sets her mind to!!

I laughed until I cried throughout this book. It seemed that everytime I turned a page the three boys were getting into something.

This town has a small town atmosphere and usually everyone knows everyone else's business even before you do!! I grew up in such a town!! Marysville, Ohio used to be such a small village until I moved away. It was the size of Matt's town. The first time I went back for a visit, I couldn't get over how much my hometown had grown. It's even got a Walmart now lol!!

In some ways, I think that small towns are an awesome influence and sometimes not. I was glad to get away from this town and now that I did, I miss it!!!

This book teaches us something that all of us needs to learn at some point in time. Sometimes it takes small hands to do it. Children are a blessing!!

Through Christ all things are possible!!

I received a copy of this book for an honest review. I strongly recommend this book who want to take a trip with 3 wonderful little boys!!!

Rachel says

I loved this book!! I've always loved stories with single parents with precocious children and a love interest that can charm and handle those children. This book has THREE children, all with different personalities, and Elle manages to charm them all.

I loved Elle's personality. She's been so wounded but she's still a fighter and stands up for what she believes. Although she hasn't had children of her own, she has worked with them and has a good grasp of how to teach them to behave and be respectful. She's got a big heart when it comes to children. And she has also not allowed her hurts to keep her from her artistry which the author describes wonderfully! I wish I could buy some of her art! :)

I also loved Matt's character. A single father with the huge responsibility of raising three boys as well as keeping his father's business afloat, Matt has a LOT to deal with. He has a lot to learn when it comes to raising his boys and he's a little lost in trying to keep them out of trouble. But he's a hard worker and he loves his boys with his whole heart. When he comes in contact with Elle, he's a little conflicted at first because she stands up to him about the boys' behavior. But he quickly changes his mind when they respond positively to her. I loved how loving he is to Elle and how quickly he allows himself to fall in love with her.

There was so much to enjoy about this book. Moments of hilarity as well as hair raising fear because of the antics of the boys. Moments of tender family interactions as well as not-so tender family interactions. And definitely moments of swoon worthy romance! :)

Thanks to SLB Tours for a complimentary copy of this book for review purposes. I was not required to write a positive review and all opinions stated are my own.

Ije the Devourer of Books says

A beautiful and truly inspirational romance which I absolutely adored.

I don't normally read inspirational romances and I don't read many male/female romances either. Having grown up on Mills and Boon, and Barbara Cartland and getting to the stage where I was rather bored with both, I now mostly read male/male romances or murder mystery with a frisson of romance.

I was attracted by the blurb on this story because it sounded different. I am a cynical romance reader and think many romance stories are too twee and unrealistic, or that they are packed full of padding in the form of cut and paste sex scenes. Both kinds of stories become boring after reading a few hundred as avid readers do.

But this book is just so different and so real. I could see aspects of myself in this story and this gave the story real credibility and hope.

Elle Drake is a famous and talented potter but life has dealt her some hard blows. She is childless, divorced and facing a future on her own. Her husband cheated on her with a swim suit model and to add insult to injury is remarried and expecting his first child. A certain word comes to mind here which would describe him nicely, but I am trying not to swear in my reviews

Moving on!

Elle returns to her home town to start life anew and she does this with courage and love because she has faith. Elle has a simple but sturdy Christian faith. She believes God will see her through and is holding onto God for the long haul. She channels her creative energies into her art, her mother and her sister and nieces. Even though she is deeply wounded by her divorce she is alive and grateful.

And so she responds with grace and wisdom to the rather harassed single father Matt Wilmott, whose three sons are rather energetic and very unruly. Having lost his wife some years before, Matt struggles to be a good dad and manage his family firm. His mother in law hates him and threatens to have the boys removed from his care, blaming him for the death of her daughter. When he meets Elle and is touched by her wise response to his rowdy children he doesn't realise that she is the solace to his soul.

When Elle finds herself pretending that she is going to marry Matt in order to protect him from his threatening mother in law, she doesn't realise that Matt would respond and welcome her whole heartedly into his life. And there it begins: redemption, love and hope, but not without some challenges and situations that demand both love and faith from Matt and from Elle.

This story was so beautiful for me because it was realistic without being patronising. I felt that what happened could happen to any one of us. I also identified with Matt as a single parent, Elle as a divorced woman and of course the parish priest as a parish priest (although I am not Roman Catholic).

And in identifying with these different dimensions of the story I could appreciate the struggles the characters went through because I had been through some of them myself.

Elle is a strong minded character, with determination, guts and grace. At the same time she is quite vulnerable. Matt struggles to care for his boys. He feels pressured by his business and because of people in the town who judge him. He doesn't have any faith because where was God when his wife died. And the so called good Christians in the town are mostly judgemental or so he thinks.

But Matt knows deliverance when he see it and Elle Drake is someone he falls for and deeply. Their love is real, strong and beautiful but it is a love that is born out of betrayal, loss, pain and ashes. Both Elle and Matt have to learn to love each other and trust each other.

So this is my first inspirational romance and it was wonderful! It has no sex in it which I don't miss. I have read far too many cut and paste, unrealistic sex scenes which are quite exhausting to read and very boring. In this story there is passion and plenty of romance but no sex and it works. We know it is happening but we don't get to see it and there was nothing lacking from this story.

The faith aspect is also beautifully done and not overpowering for people who do not follow a faith tradition. I loved how Elle put her faith into practice, challenging others who were less than charitable, sticking her guns with her family and above all taking a risk to marry a widow with three small boys.

The author has written a beautiful and amazing story which embodies faith, hope and love. I will definitely read more from this author in future.

Many thanks to the author and publishers who provided this copy via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. Much appreciated.

Andrea Cox says

FTC DISCLOSURE: I received a complimentary electronic copy of this book from NetGalley. A positive review was not required. These are my honest thoughts and opinions.

The cover of this book drew me in. The content left me annoyed, bored, and disappointed.

There were many issues I had with this book, but here are the lowlights:

Lying to kids to get them to behave, and tossing the lying off as the character's "eccentric humor." This, to me, was quite appalling.

Bribing kids to get them to behave.

Bad language (at least one expletive and three profanities).

Extreme gossip in the early chapters.

A dad showed no respect for fellow human beings by excusing his lack of discipline toward his wild-child sons as "boys will be boys." Um, that isn't supposed to cover destroying other people's property, disrupting

church, and throwing cherry bombs at a baby-sitter. This excuse came early and was very off-putting for me. I have worked very hard for over fifteen years to tutor students of all ages. Within the first two weeks of that time, I learned that excuses enable poor behavior, while kind but firm discipline and redirection instill good behavior and work habits in children. This aspect of the story was hard for me to overcome as I moved forward to new chapters.

Another major issue I had was about Randy, one of the children. It was stated that he was “two grade levels up in math and four levels up in reading,” yet he was also a class clown and big-time troublemaker. Those two things do not go together. From my fifteen-plus years of experience as a tutor of kids from multiple schools, towns, and counties, I’ve learned that class clowns and troublemakers are typically kids who struggle to learn at a quick enough pace to keep up with the rest of the class and have therefore been lost in the system; they “clown around” and cause trouble because they don’t understand the work they’re supposed to be doing. If the kid was as smart as the dad and school claimed, why didn’t he focus on his work rather than throwing fits every two seconds? If the motivation was the mother’s death, I wish that would have been emphasized more clearly. Tragedies at home can definitely make kids do strange things at school, such as becoming a class clown when they’re really smart and typical hard workers, but were this the case, his grades and levels would have suffered rather than still being so high.

Yet another problem was the nasty mother-in-law (MIL). She was a judge, which I didn’t have a problem with. What’s not okay is her using her leverage to threaten to take kids away OVER EVERY TINY THING. It’s a wonder her “former son-in-law,” as she calls him, didn’t move clear across the country or even OUT of the country to get away from the terrible woman who had little motivation for her awfulness. Okay, so your kid died. I’m terribly sorry about that, truly, but that does not give you the right to TERRORIZE your son-in-law and threaten him every couple of scenes over the simplest things to take his babies away. Sure, he needs to discipline his kids better, but that’s his problem to sort out. How about offering to help out rather than lambasting him? The culmination of this woman’s journey was too abrupt and, frankly, completely unbelievable.

I ended up skimming a few chapters in the final quarter of the book, because I was so fed up with the above issues and was bored with the melodrama of the MIL, but I got a clear picture of what happened in those chapters and even paused to reread a few cute sections, mostly having to do with Amos.

A couple of good points:

While I don’t usually like reading books that feature Catholicism, this one handled that aspect lightly, so as to keep it as a natural part of the story rather than a preachy sort of thing that always makes me uncomfortable.

I loved Elle’s work as an artist. It was unique and special and lent an artsy vibe to the book.

Amos was precious. I had no problems with him and enjoyed his bits of the story.

I wish I had more positive things to add here. I had such high hopes for this book based off the cover, so I’m disappointed right now. Hopefully my next read will be more to my taste.

Kav says

Rollicking fun, achingly sweet and peppered with large doses of love and laughter. Honestly, those Wilmot boys are a hoot! Had my hair standing on end a time or two and makes me glad I had a daughter. It’s easy to

see why Matt is in over his head where those three 'hooligans' are concerned. All male, conflicted by the absence of a mother and the strained relationship between their dad and their grandmother these perceptive little guys are left to their own devices way too often. With disastrous (and amusing) results.

And then there's new neighbour, Elle. A practical woman of strong opinion and love for children including the scallywags living next door. The way she woos them one at a time until she has even their father under her spell...blissful sigh...utterly sublime.

Secondary characters that make you cheer and jeer bring Cedar Mills to life and make things all the more interesting for Elle and Matt. The kind of romance that creeps up on you unawares and turns into something deep and abiding. Herne captures the heart and soul of family in all it's agony and glory.

Carole Jarvis says

Reviewed at The Power of Words: <http://bit.ly/1V4Ov8K>

Ruth Logan Herne writes the kind of stories that I like to read – stories with a sweet poignancy that will resonate with any reader. I've read two of her books this week, completely different on the surface, but with the same heartfelt emotion and rich, complex characterization. I'm not sure how to describe it, but there's that special "something" that elevates Ruth's writing in my opinion. Maybe it has something to do with the fact that, instead of standing on the outside watching the action, Ruth draws you right into their lives.

More Than a Promise is a heartwarming love story with great chemistry and conflicting emotions between Matt and Elle, but it's so much more. One of my reviewer friends, Kav, described it as "rollicking fun, achingly sweet and peppered with large doses of love and laughter" ... and I'd have to agree. There are several laugh-out-loud moments, coupled with themes of forgiveness, overcoming the grip of fear caused by past events, and acceptance.

Matt and Elle are sympathetic, appealing characters. Matt works too hard and long, carries the burden of financial responsibilities in the family business, is often clueless as a dad, but loves his boys with all that's in him. Elle is the no nonsense type, willing to meet things head on, felt that she'd been "born the ugly duckling in a family of swans," and brought laughter back into the lives of Matt and his boys. Elle is a most memorable character. I loved her wisdom, courage to confront, and her giving heart.

And then there's Matt's boys. Todd, Randy and Amos just leap off the printed page and straight into your heart, making me want to wrap my arms around each of them. Todd, the oldest, is a lost soul and in need of a friend. Little Amos is gentle, kind and giving. But Randy "carried his anger like a coat of armor, still and unyielding" – and the way he defended a classmate was amazing. All three boys are heart stealers, and Elle's gift for connecting with them is precious.

I particularly loved how a good bit of this story takes place after Matt and Elle marry, for I enjoy going beyond the "I do" and seeing couples grow closer as they deal with conflict and draw nearer to God at the same time. The Catholic faith of this family is a very real and natural part of this story.

More Than a Promise is an uplifting, true-to-life story that pulls at the heartstrings – an exquisite read. 5+ stars, best of the best. Highly recommended.

Thank you to Singing Librarian Tours for providing a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

Carrie Schmidt (Reading is My SuperPower) says

I LOVE THE KIDS IN THIS BOOK!!! Todd (“thoughtful and kind with a little bit of his dad’s protective nature”) , Randy (he could teach some adults a thing or ten about how to be a friend), Amos (oh, be still my heart with his widdle wisp)... even feisty niece Jenny in her brief appearance in the very first chapter.

And along with the kids comes a lot of the humor. Particularly as poor beleaguered Matt tries to wrangle all three boys into church. At the same time. By himself. Needless to say, it does not go well for anyone in the vicinity. It’s a comedy of errors and awkwardness, topped off with Randy’s “Can we come again next week?” I laughed out loud at that. Matt did not. :)

Speaking of Matt, he’s a lot clueless but a lot dreamy too. Elle makes such a great match for him with her practical yet nurturing personality. Neither of them have had an easy journey through life so far, and both have their fair share of battle scars deep inside. Having a front row seat as Ruth Logan Herne weaves their stories together with grace and romance is not to be missed!

Delightful, warm, and charming, More Than a Promise is more than a love story. Or rather, it’s more than a story about two people falling in love. It’s a story of hope and faith, of humor and family, of blending lives, of second chances, and most of all it’s a story that points to the Author of all love stories and how He’s head over heels for us. You will instantly relate to these characters – whether married or not, single parent or multi-parent, or even just a “cool aunt” like me. Ruth Logan Herne has written another story that wraps you up in a warm quilt, hands you a piece of just-out-of-the-oven apple pie, and sits down with you on the couch to chat a while.

(I received a copy of this book in exchange for only my honest review.)

Read my full review at [Reading Is My SuperPower](#)

Karen says

I have never read any religious fiction books, and was determined to read this with an open mind. Having said that, I will admit I was completely & pleasantly surprised by this book!! This story is about Matt Wilmot, a single father of 3 young boys...Todd, Randy & Amos. His wife died while giving birth to Amos, and Matt is doing the best he can to raise them. A few years have passed since his wife died, and his mother-in-law Gloria is insisting he take the boys to church, and this is how they story begins. Little did Matt know, but getting 3 young boys to sit quietly through a church service was a challenge. This is where he meets Elle Drake. Elle immediately has sympathy for Matt & the boys, and through a series of events involving the young boys, Elle becomes involved in their lives.

I really don't like giving too much detail, as I feel it spoils the book for the reader. This book had me laughing early on at some parts, which is a good thing. The author writes in such a way that you feel like you truly can relate to the characters. You actually care what happens to the characters in the book, which means the author did an excellent job in writing it. Although it can be classified as religious fiction, it isn't a constant preaching of religion. With that in mind, I feel this book can be read by everyone, regardless of their religious beliefs.

I would highly recommend this book. It definitely was a great read! I know I will be reading more by this author! More Than a Promise

Maureen Timerman says

I loved this book, from beginning to end it kept me page turning, and enjoying. Whether I was laughing out loud or wanting a box of tissues, the author completely captured my attention.

The writer gives us two coping and trying to go on with their lives adults, a man Matt a widower with three rambunctious boys, and Elle a divorced gifted artist. One alone with children and the other hurting because of her failure to be able to have a baby.

Once you turn the cover you are going to be completely lost, the book is that good. I just never wanted it to end!

I received this book through JustRead Publicity Book Tours, and was not required to give a positive review.

Madison says

More Than A Promise is a delightful story of family, love and second chances. This is the first book I have read by Ruth and I have to say I enjoyed it immensely. It certainly won't be the last book of hers which I read, and I can highly recommend it.

Elle is a strong woman. Despite having her heart broken and being vulnerable about her differences which are often looked down upon by others (her ex-husband running off with a supermodel didn't help her self-esteem all that much either) she still has no problem speaking her mind or standing up for herself. Which is exactly what Matt Wilmot needs to help straighten out his life. Matt lost his wife a few years ago and desperately needs help parenting his three young boys. When Elle and Matt's worlds collide they come to an agreement of convenience. Matt has a fair bit to learn regarding looking after his family, balancing work with his children and valuing Elle as more than just a glorified nanny. He is still rather charming though, so that helps his case and he isn't above apologising for his numerous mistakes.

It's wonderful to watch Matt court Elle. I loved the sparks that flew between them, at first frustration and then attraction which slowly develops into love. Theirs is a wonderful romance, with strong chemistry mixed with the harsh reality of daily life, struggles and fears. They have plenty to work out between them, but do so with kindness and love (and a bit of kissing, not gonna lie about liking those bits).

The book is full of great characters, especially the three rambunctious Wilmot boys. Todd, Randy and Amos leap off the page with their personalities and escapades. And the no-nonsense, loving way in which Elle treats them is a joy to read.

As always with great Christian fiction, faith underpins the whole story. In this case, Matt is struggling with the loss of his first wife and contending with raising his boys. He doesn't want to believe in God and certainly not any of His plans. Elle and a few of the other characters are Christians (Catholics) and rely on God to direct their lives. I liked how it was their gentle demonstration of their faith that gets to Matt.

Overall, a very charming and heartwarming romance.

The publishers provided a complimentary copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Find more reviews on my blog [Madison's Library](#).

Suzie Waltner says

When happily ever after gets cut short, sometimes all that's left is survival. Day by day, Elle and Matt are going through the motions, doing their best to survive.

As these two neighbors grow to care for each other, their past hurts, disappointments, and grief throw obstacles in their paths. The seed of tremulous friendship with begrudging admiration takes root and begins to blossom into more. But will the weeds of life's difficulties and their past experiences choke out the blooming of love?

More Than a Promise is a story of forgiveness, faith, and family. A story of finding hope and happiness. A story of God's gracious provision. A story you don't want to miss!

Disclosure statement:

I receive complimentary books from publishers, publicists, and/or authors, including NetGalley. I am not required to write positive reviews. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.

Heidi Robbins (Heidi Reads...) says

I loved the gentle pace of this book as the lives of Elle and Matt are transformed. The three boys were hilarious, and the author wrote them with authenticity. I couldn't put the book down as I read about the obstacles that Elle and Matt overcame. Highly recommend!

(I received a complimentary copy of the book; all opinions in this review are my own)

Angela Walker says

I received a complimentary copy of the book and a positive review is not required.

I remember the joys of being a single mom of two trying to take my little bundles of energy to church and totally related to Matt in this story right in the beginning. This was very cute story with all the feels. The characters stayed true with believable growth. There is humor and as a mother I can totally relate to dealing with the antics of small children and having help and support in the community. There were a lot of great truths and Godly examples from the main character, Elle, and most of the supporting characters. Even though flawed and dealing with life's unexpected turns and disasters, they worked through problems together learning to trust each other and to trust God.

Just Commonly says

Wow. I'm in awe with how much there are in More Than a Promise by Ruth Logan Herne. Right off the bat, we meet Elle and learn of the betrayal that shook her and crushed her dreams of being a mother with a happy family. Two years since, she moved back to her hometown, the small town of Cedar Mills. Then we're switched to Matt and his three delightful (though rambunctious) boys, with a reputation that precedes through the constant gossip in town and church. O, how I laughed at the antics of these boys, and how I softened and learned something through Elle's approach to understand and build these boys' confidence.

I love how there's bits of stories throughout, from Matt's Dad's pride to Randy's compassion for his classmate to the reason of Mrs. Wimple's disparate complaints of the Wilmot's family.

Ruthy gave us a story that's relatable, warm and inviting even with all the struggles Matt and Elle experienced individually, and together as a couple and family. From topics of betrayal, loss, bitterness, gossip to forgiveness, acceptance, love and trust, More Than a Promise is not just a story about a family, but of family. And in all, faith. Faith in each other and in our God. Letting yourself trust Him so you can trust others.

And last might I add, Ruthy's has quickly become one of my must read authors. Her stories are delightful in the least, nurturing of mind and soul is what makes it stand out. And look at that cover! Many thanks for that!

This review first appeared on Just Commonly Blog.

NOTE: I received a complimentary copy of this book from the publisher, Franciscan Media for an honest review. All opinions expressed are my own. For my review policy, please see my Disclosure page.
