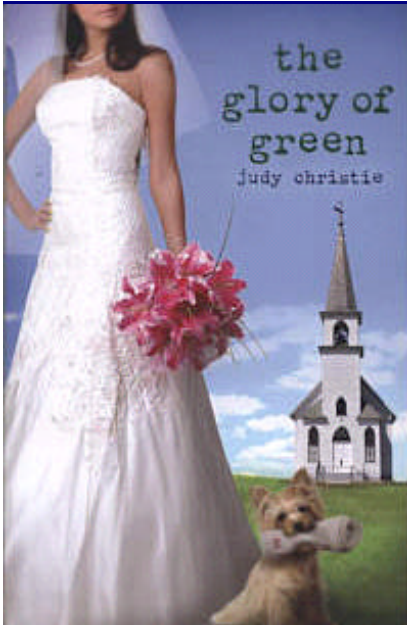


## Christian Fiction: Contemporary Romance



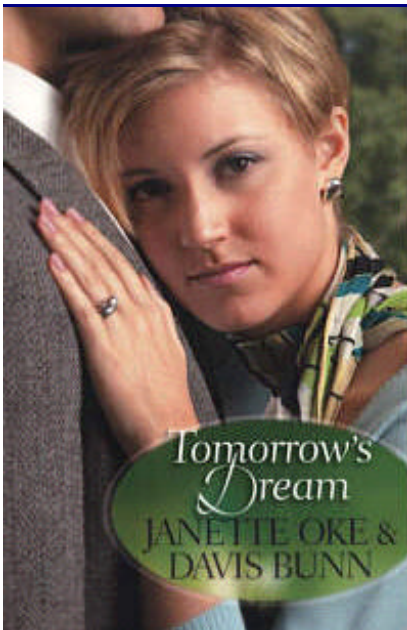
### The Glory of Green

The Third in the Green Series

by Judy Christie  
publ by Abingdon Press from Alban Books  
in Paperback  
at (check price) (978-1-426-70056-9) Mar 2012

Once more, I read this next - Green - book as soon as I could after it arrived! - Lois and Chris are getting married at last – but all does not go according to plan! - The marriage service is hardly finished when Green is hit by a tornado. - We meet all the familiar characters as they battle with the aftermath of the disaster and it is the usual thoroughly good story, but what impressed me most was the description of what a tornado does and how it affects the lives of the people in the whole area. You read in the paper or see on television that a tornado has hit somewhere in America, but in - The Glory of Green - you really find out what that actually means. Judy Christie has somehow managed to create a story that although centred around a tragedy, is the usual page turner of life in this mixed small town community. - A gloriously happy ending is a lovely surprise.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)

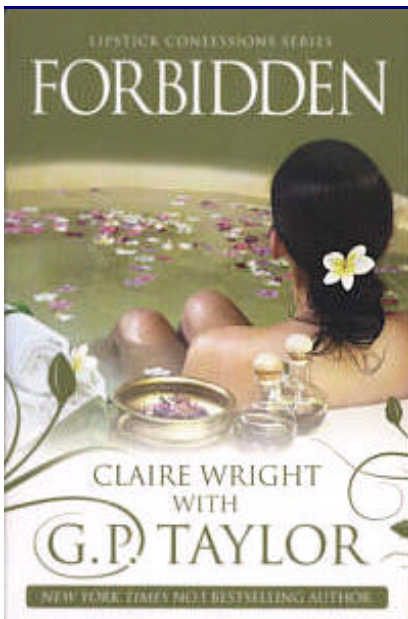


### Tomorrow's Dream

by Janette Oke & Davis Bunn  
publ by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-0-764-22054-8) 21/10/2011

This book is the sequel to - Another homecoming. - ISBN 9781556619342. At the start of the novel life seems very idyllic for Kyle Adams, she is re-united with her biological parents and she is happily married. - However, tragedy soon strikes. The book explores the Christian problem of pain! We see very quickly that the loss suffered impacts in unexpected ways on every relationship within the family. Whilst Kyle's faith is shaken to its very foundation, we see that trust in God is vital for the healing process to begin. Whilst Kyle's problems are very moving, the ideas are not strikingly original and the story is fairly predictable.

Notes by [Joyce \(Yue\) He](#)



### Forbidden

Third in The Lipstick Confessions series

by Claire Wright with G.P.Taylor  
publ by Authentic Media  
in Paperback  
at £7.99 (978-1-850-78900-0) Feb 2012

David and Bathsheba's story in the Bible is the inspiration behind this contemporary story. -

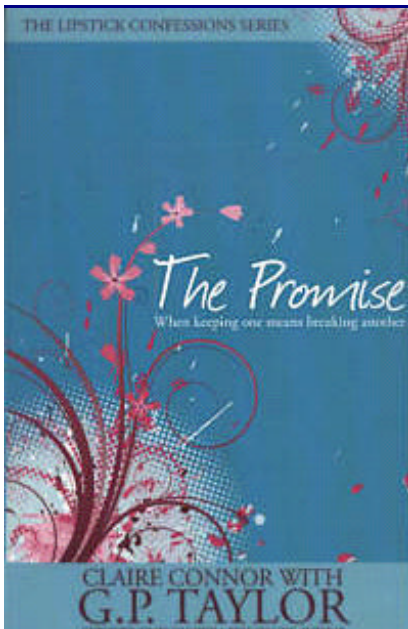
A group of university friends have kept in close touch over many years. David, one of their number, has become the Chief Executive of a powerful oil company and the others have joined him in the company as time has gone on. -

David has been recently widowed and is grieving deeply, Rich, one of the group has recently married Beth and both are blissfully happy. Nathan and Jenny are happily married with a young and demanding family and watch the story unfold without being able to deflect David from his purpose. -

A parallel story is of Beth's sister Cerys and her problems; tied into the others by her friendship with Jenny. -

Although the story has a sense of inevitability, you can't guess how it is going to pan out and you have to keep reading to the last page.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



### The Promise

Second in The Lipstick Confessions series

by Claire Connor with G.P.Taylor  
publ by Authentic Media  
in Paperback  
at £7.99 (978-1-850-78885-0) Oct 2010

Another modern story reflecting a Bible story; this time the story of Sarah and Abraham and their longing for a child. -

Lawrence at fifty-seven is a highly successful business man, Sarah his wife is distraught at being childless and nearing the menopause. To make matters worse, she has a gift for dealing with little ones and their friends Philip and Jemma's little girl is the delight of her life but that doesn't lessen the ache in her heart. -

Back into their lives comes Arima, a free spirit if ever there was one. She has been living abroad for a number of years but has parted with her companion and here she is in fashionable Kensington with her shabby camper-van. -

When Arima volunteers to be a surrogate Mum for Sarah and Lawrence you know things won't go smoothly. -

A compulsive read – one that is very hard to put down – and one that I shall remember for a long time.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)

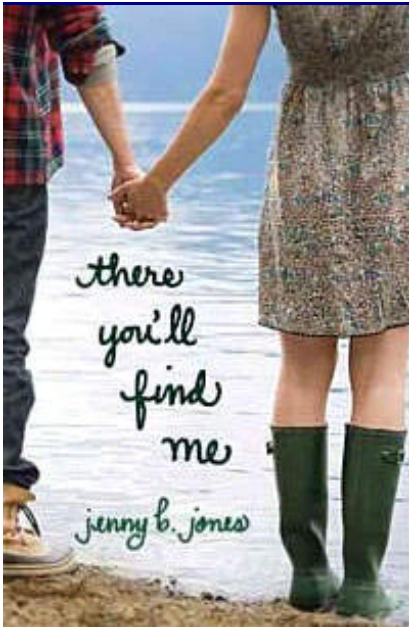


**Save the Date**

by Jenny B Jones  
publ by Thomas Nelson  
in Paperback  
at £9.99 (978-1-595-54539-8) 12/02/2011

I sank into this story with a warm feeling of contentment. I was having a break from work, I could just read and read with an uncritical eye and great pleasure. -  
A harder look could have found fault with the sometimes implausible twists and turns, but so what! I read for enjoyment and that is what I got. -  
Lucy has grown up in the town where she is now putting heart and soul into providing a stable home for girls who have outgrown the social system and are now left to struggle on their own. She is among people who she always felt looked down upon her. Her mother had been a single mum, a cleaner, always struggling for money yet who insisted on sending her to a posh school. Not easy for either of them. -  
As the story unfolds, Lucy meets with Alex, a famous ex-footballer known as the Playboy. He had scorned her at school and does not appear to have changed. -  
And yet..... -  
Indulge yourself; read on to the happy ending and just enjoy it as I did.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



### There You'll Find Me

by Jenny C. Jones  
publ by Thomas Nelson  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-1-595-54540-4) 04/10/2011

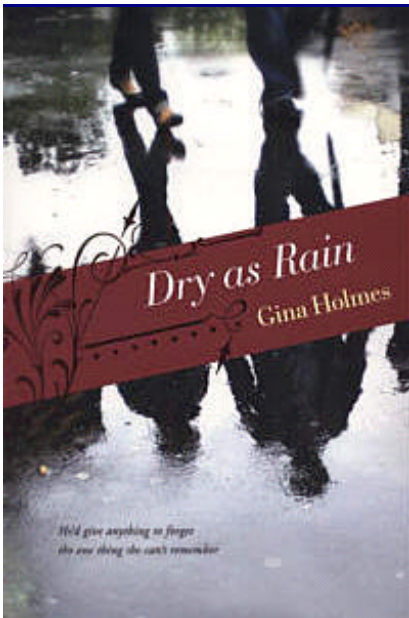
I have never read Christian fiction before but with this book I was pleasantly surprised. -

The story when first read is appealing to both believers and non believers. The journey of a girl, Finely, following in her dead brothers footsteps via a diary he wrote is to find what he found, a profound love of God. Throw into the mix a young film star and an old cantankerous lady who is dying of cancer and you have a well rounded story. -

You feel for Finely as she tries to hear from God like her brother did. She eventually realises God was there all the time she just wasn't listening properly for him. -

I really enjoyed the relationship between Finely and Mrs Sweeney(the old lady) - All in all I would recommend this book to anyone who likes a good read which you can't put down and after reading this book I would definitely look for other books by this author.

Notes by [Julia Bennett](#)



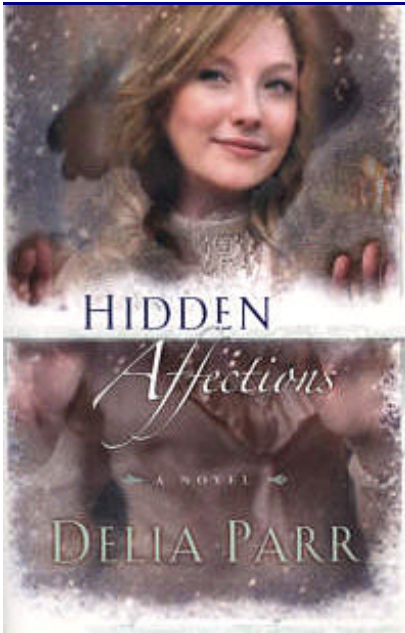
### Dry As Rain

by Gina Holmes  
publ by Tyndale House Publishers  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-1-414-33306-9) 17/08/2011

To review - Dry as Rain - by Gina Holmes is a pleasure. It charts the long course of Eric and Kyra's marriage which from Page 1 has reached an all but complete halt, not helped by Eric's straying into dangerous waters with Danielle while at work in a company that sells expensive cars. -

From soaps on TV for example, we know by the daily conversations we have, that people take each other on, often repetitively, but sometimes in ways that change the lives of the folk they're engaging with. The style is compelling, full of Americanisms which are understood by us the other side of the 'pond' and often quite humorous. The men are easily drawn from life, and betrayal, lies, posturing and more are handled, often in order to bring to our notice the ways in which old friendships don't give way when pressures (financial, love, anxiety over health) force challenges for the characters in - Dry as Rain - .

Notes by [Joyce \(Yue\) He](#)

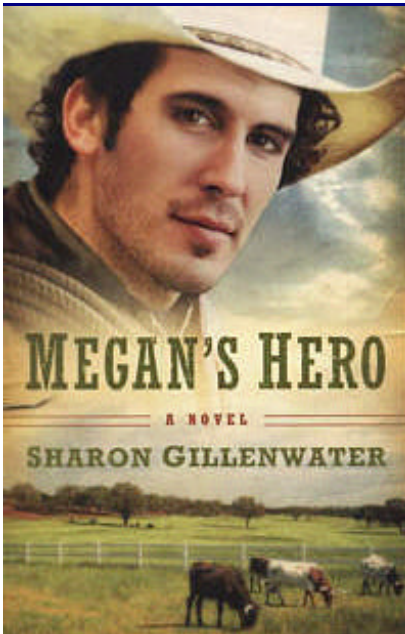


### Hidden Affections

by Delia Parr  
publ by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-0-764-20672-6) Jul 2011

This book is a true romance novel and one I believe is great to curl up with on a winter's night. Brought together by misfortune Annabel and Harrison are forced into marriage. With lots of twists and turns the couple try not to fall in love with one another, but with God all things are possible in every kind of situation. - I fell in love with this book and found myself being drawn into the story, finding it difficult to put down and would highly recommend this book to any female looking for a great read.

Notes by [Jayne Hounsome](#)



### Megan's Hero

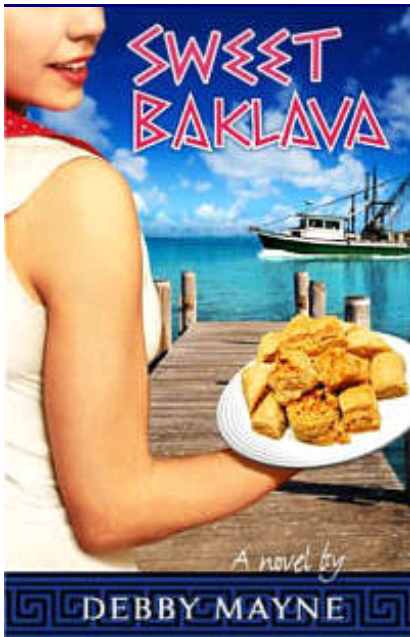
Callahan's of Texas Book 3

by Sharon Gilgewater  
publ by Revell imprint of Baker Pub from Lion  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-0-800-73355-1) 2011

The third instalment in the Callahans of Texas trilogy, - Megan's Hero - finally finds Chance Callahan a girl! This was inevitable seeing as there are 3 books and 3 single siblings in the family so that was certainly not a surprise. - Megan is a young pregnant lady who is leaving her old life behind and looking to start a new one. On her travels she gets caught in a tornado which destroys literally everything in its path. However, having prayed that God would protect her and the baby, the tornado miraculously passes over her without causing her any harm. -

When Chance finds her, she is marching down the road looking for help for another injured driver who she passed after her miraculous escape. - It seems that Sharon ran out of ideas for this third instalment and combined elements of the first two book to create this story – for that I was disappointed, however once I made it through the first few chapters I did get into the story and found it enjoyable. It tells not only about Megan and Chance falling in love but also about a young lady who never really having believed in God, realised after the tornado event that He must be real and who then sought to find out more about Him and learn to trust in Him.

Notes by [Charmaine Hill](#)



**Sweet Baklava**

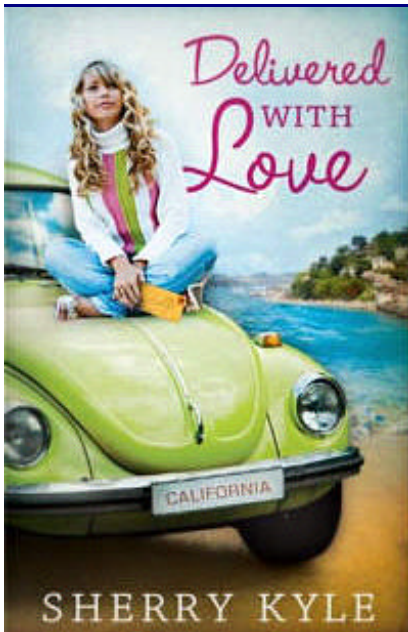
by Debby Mayne  
publ by Abingdon Press from Alban Books  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-1-426-70870-1) Apr 2011

So often our past affects the way we view things, work, home, love, friends and family. In - Sweet Baklava - Debby Mayne shows through Paula's life how, through various situations, her past is affecting the decisions she needs to be making. -

Paula lives in Tarpon Springs, Florida where she grew up and fell in love with Nick. After Nick had gone to the Air Force and Paula had completed a business degree she set up a soap and candle business which is growing from strength to strength. The only thing missing in her life is Nick – her childhood sweetheart who is the only man she desires more than the baklava that his family keep feeding her to keep her around!.

While the storyline is somewhat predictable (show me a contemporary romance novel that isn't) this is a great holiday read. Half way through the book with all the talk of baklava I was dying to have some myself! An added bonus is the mini recipe book at the back of the main book, with all the recipe's mentioned throughout. Happy baklava baking!

Notes by [Charmaine Hill](#)



**Delivered With Love**

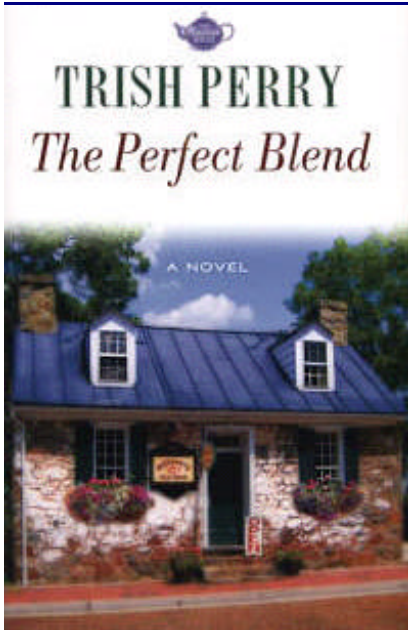
by Sherry Kyle  
publ by Abingdon Press from Alban Books  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-1-426-70866-4)

May 2011

Claire James loses her mother to cancer. Her dreams to study were put on hold while she was nursing her mum but when her mother finally passes away she has only an old love letter which she found in her inherited 1972 VW to hang on to. - Unable to move on from the past, things go from bad to worse for Claire when she loses her job as a waitress and gets kicked out of her sister's home by her alcoholic brother-in-law. She decides to search for the author of the letter. - Setting out to find out who had loved her mother so deeply she set out to Capitola to the return address that was on the letter. Little does she know that what she finds will be so much more than she expected and will change her life forever! - Much of what happens along the way during Claire's journey is unrealistic but despite this, author Sherry Kyle deals with a number of things in the lives of the characters. Love, guilt, forgiveness are some of the themes that feature throughout the book. -

What I didn't appreciate is that Blake who is clearly a Christian shows a very definite romantic interest in Claire who clearly is not a Christian but later becomes a Christian. For young Christians that read this it implies that it is ok to date a non-believer and that God will save them, however that is not always the case and scripture clearly instructs us not to be unequally yoked. Other than that however it was an enjoyable read.

Notes by [Charmaine Hill](#)



**The Perfect Blend**

by Trish Perry  
publ by Harvest House Publishers  
in Paperback  
at £6.99 (978-0-736-93015-4) Oct 2010

This is a fun, lightweight novel about a young lady who has left her family to elope with her boyfriend only to discover that he has deserted her. She finds herself with no money, no job and in a town she doesn't know. She is befriended by the owner of a tea shop and the story progresses from there with the heroine discovering friendship and love and is reconciled to her family. Not for the deep thinking reader but definitely one for holiday reading. Easy to pick up and put down. The characters are Christians and they live out their faith simply but don't expect lightning revelations of deep spiritual insight from them.

Notes by Jackie Scott



**Always the Baker Never the Bride**

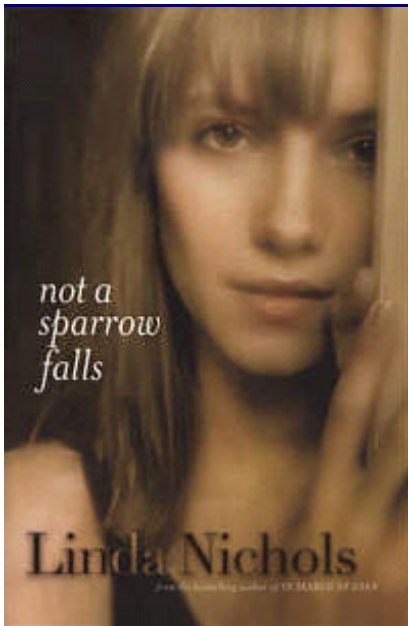
by Sandra D. Bricker  
publ by Abingdon Press from Alban Books  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-1-426-70762-9) Dec 2010

A fresh subject on which to base a romance novel – and it is a delight! - Emma Rae and her feisty colleague Fee, work for a miserable so and so at The Backstreet Bakery. Enter handsome widower Jackson who happens to own The Tanglewood which he is about to open as a specialist wedding venue. Throw in Jackson's amazing three sisters, Emma Rae's famous parents and an Italian Chef and you have a mix of characters that will keep you smiling with enjoyment all the way through. -

Emma Rae and Fee go to work for Jackson of course, and the description of Emma Rae's confections are enough to make your mouth water without the recipes and hints that are interspersed between each chapter. -

This is a book I shall keep on my shelf and re-read more than once.

Notes by Mary Bartholomew

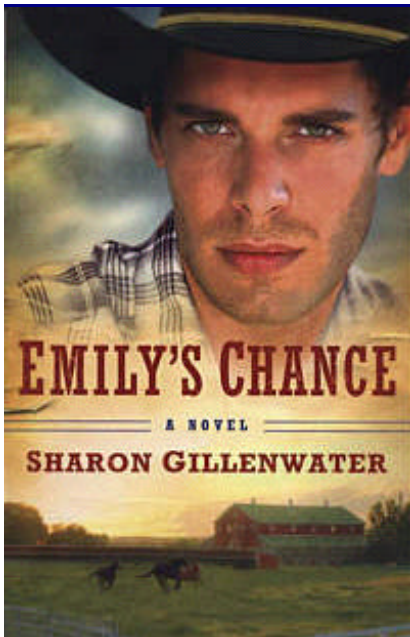


**Not a Sparrow Falls**

by Linda Nichols  
publ by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-0-764-20747-1) 23/07/2010

Many years after her mother passed away, Mary Bridget Washburn found herself on the wrong side of the law and running for her life. After taking on her mother's name Mary escapes to the city of Alexandria, Virginia and as she starts to build up her life finds comfort in visiting a church – if only to sit in it when empty. - She soon finds her calling to help the troubled Alasdair MacPherson, who ironically is the pastor of the church where she finds comfort, and his family. Over the months she counsels his daughter and helps her to face the death of her mother. She nurses Alasdair to health after he became ill from the flu – all this time encouraging him and herself by remembering scripture that her grandmother quoted to her as a child. No sooner has she broken through to Alasdair to deal with the past when she has to run from her own past – literally! - God however is in control and as Alasdair realises his love for her and his daughters love for her he finds himself leaving everything that was expected of him because of who he was and going to save who he really cared about and following God's calling for his life rather than his family's expectations.

Notes by [Charmaine Hill](#)



## Emily's Chance

Callahan's of Texas , Book Two

by Sharon Gillenwater  
publ by Revell imprint of Baker Pub from Lion  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-0-800-73354-4) 01/11/2010

The Callahan's have 3 children, Jenna, Chance and Will. The first book in the - Callahans of Texas - series told the story of Jenna and Nate. This, the second book tells the story of Chance and Emily. -

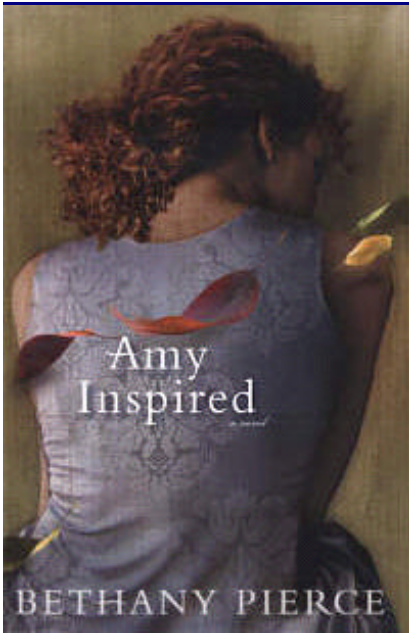
Chance first set his eye's on Emily when he saved her from the fire that swept through Callahan Crossing. Emily was trying to save everything from the museum when he saw her and he helped to get the last of the boxes and her to safety. - This story is not just about love and wooing the girl of your dreams but about realising God's will in your life and following in obedience to him. Chance and his family come from a longstanding line of strong Christians. They have been blessed financially and have a loving home and good family relations. Humility does not come easily. -

Emily comes from a wealthy family but had a difficult upbringing and doesn't get on with her parents. Succeeding in her career seems the only way that she will get their approval which she longs for. -

After falling in love she needs to re-evaluate life, work and love and decide if she is going to continue to run from love in the pursuit of her career for the sake of approval or to accept what God's will is for her life and to become the woman He intended her to be. -

We wait patiently now for Will to find the love of his life.

Notes by Charmaine Hill



### Amy Inspired

by Bethany Pierce  
publ by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-0-764-20850-8) 01/11/2010

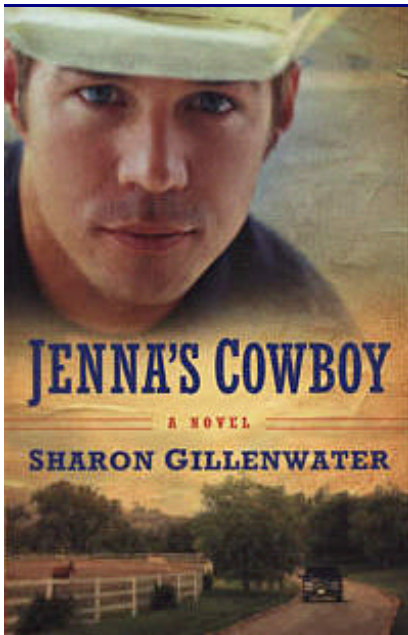
While teaching English at a university, Amy longs to be a writer but can't seem to get past her writers block and while she is receiving rejections from publications for stories she had previously submitted her friend Zoë seems to be off to a good start with household magazines publishing her work. -

It's always tough to watch a friend when things in their life are going from good to great and your own is stagnant with seemingly no hope of improvement. Despite being happy for them it is easy to fall in to bitterness and despondency. -

While Amy was raised as a Christian she still needs to figure out what she really believes and what she wants to live for. It is through the constant stream of rejection letters, the death of her best friend's mother and the possibility of losing the chance of being loved that she finds her feet and picks herself up out of the uninspiring hole she found herself in allowing herself to love and be loved in return. -

For one with 'inspired' in the title this was not the most inspiring book that I have read but it was enjoyable nonetheless.

Notes by [Charmaine Hill](#)



### Jenna's Cowboy

Callahans of Texas, Book One

by Sharon Gillenwater  
publ by Revell imprint of Baker Pub from Lion  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-0-800-73353-7) Mar 2010

Reading a romance novel from the guys perspective is something new – wow! - This is the first book in the 'Callahan's of Texas series'. The Callahans are a wealthy family who have a strong Christian heritage and loving family, although not without faults. The series is based on the 3 children; Jenna, Chance and Will. - Nate and Jenna grew up together; Nate was good friends with Jenna's brothers, Chance and Will, and worked at her father, Dub Callahan's ranch. Having been in love with Jenna most of his life, he left for the armed forces after Dub told him he was not good enough for his daughter. - After years in the forces and Jenna having her own difficulties including a failed marriage, Nate returned home and found himself working at Dub Callahan's ranch and more in love with Jenna than ever – the feeling was mutual and this time Dub had realised his own mistake in choosing what he had thought best for his daughter. But the years spent in service had had a profound effect on Nate who had yet to admit he was struggling with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). And Jenna had her own fears to deal with as well as looking after her toddler. - This is a story of a supportive and loving family who show a strong dependency on God as they struggle with their difficulties and grow closer together. This is a great read and a reminder to us of what our soldiers are going through and will go through when they get back from fighting in a war. - A book well worth reading.

Notes by Charmaine Hill



**Hatteras Girl**

by Alice J. Wisler  
publ by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion  
in Paperback  
at (check price) (978-0-764-20732-7) 01/11/2010

Jackie is Hatteras Girl, which is on the outer banks of North Carolina. She loves the ocean is a laid back and relaxed person and does not spend lots of time dressing up. Nearing her 30th birthday her family are set to get a ring on her finger by the end of the year and so follows a number of unsuccessful blind dates. - Jackie and her best friend Minnie have always dreamed of owning The Bailey House B&B, a place with numerous happy childhood memories. Jackie prays for this dream and one other, to have a kind and loving husband. When Jackie meets and falls in love with Davis Erickson who also happens to hold the key to The Bailey House she thinks both prayers have been answered. - However all is not as it seems and she soon finds out that Davis Erickson is not who he makes out to be. Has God not heard her prayer? Or did He have other plans? Perhaps God's answer has been right beside her all the time... - This was a lovely story to read. It was well written, easy to follow and I found myself saying every time I got to the end of a chapter "just one more chapter, and then I'll go to bed" and before I knew it I had almost finished the book!

Notes by Charmaine Hill

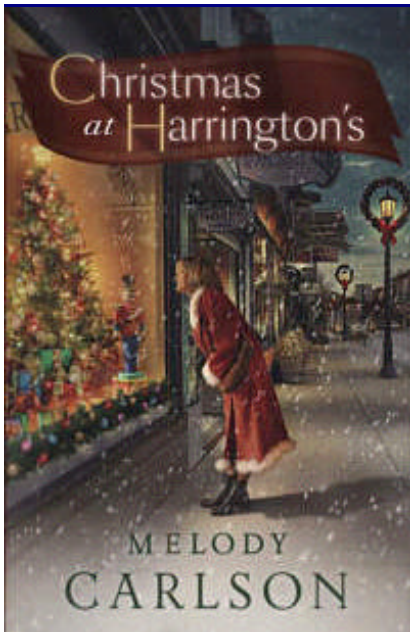


**Never Say Never**

by Lisa Wingate  
publ by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion  
in Paperback  
at £8.99 (978-0-764-20492-0) 2010

Donetta and Kai's lives are thrown together during Hurricane Glorietta. Donetta trusts in God to keep them safe in the storm but is forced to face up to her insecurities when she makes it back home to find her husband missing. Kai on the other hand has spent her life drifting from place to place and feels her life falling apart as she is forced to leave behind her truck and her livelihood. Landing up in Daily, Kai feels strangely at home, but can she stay in one place long enough to settle down and will the instant connection she had with Kemp blossom into something? One thing I can guarantee is that this is an enjoyable read with drama, humour and romance which will keep you flipping the pages.

Notes by Charmaine Hill



**Christmas At Harrington's**

by Melody Carlson  
publ by Revell imprint of Baker Pub from Lion  
in Hardback  
at £9.99 (978-0-800-71925-8) Summer 2010

A truly lovely story of a young woman falsely accused of embezzlement, released after a term in prison, trying to start a new life.

A kindly support worker sets her on her journey to a new home on a cold winter evening not long before Christmas. From the moment an older woman sits next to her on the long distance bus, things start to happen and I was so involved in the story I couldn't put it down. A shabby boarding house with a young mum and her daughter, a posh house with a rich lady and her son and granddaughter, and a store called Harrington's with its Mrs Santa and her elves. Read this and you will be enchanted too. Love, forgiveness and the true story of Christmas. Ideal as a seasonal gift.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)