



Miss Leslie's Secret

Jennifer Moore

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Decorated war hero Conall Stewart has spent ten years envisioning his return to his beloved Scottish Highlands. But now, with the days of battle finally behind him, it seems that his dreams of home have been in vain: the land of his youth lies in ruins, and his family is gone. Though he will never stop searching for his kin, Conall knows he must begin again. But when he takes on a rented farm in a nearby town, he finds far more than the fresh start he was looking for . . . After catching a mischievous local lad stealing, Conall returns young Jamie to his mother, Aileen Leslie—and finds the woman's coddling of the child maddening. What Conall does not realize is that Aileen hides a frightening secret: her devoted protection of Jamie is all that shelters them from discovery by a dangerous man from their past. Drawn together by circumstance, Conall soon develops a fatherly relationship with Jamie—as well as romantic feelings for Aileen. But even as the couple accepts their growing affection for one another, time runs out for Aileen and her son: after years of hiding, they have been found. Conall lost his family once—he will do all in his power not to let history repeat itself . . .

Miss Leslie's Secret Details

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Author : Jennifer Moore

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From Reader Review Miss Leslie's Secret for online ebook

Katie W says

What lengths would you go to in order to protect your biggest secret? In a story of tumultuous history and a need to survive, Aileen shows extreme bravery. She will do anything to shelter her young son, the precocious Jamie, from danger. Aileen is easy to cheer for and adore, as her charm shines through her mama bear tendencies.

Conall, an unlikely hero, reminded me to not base everything on first impressions because mine weren't that great of this man. He quickly wormed his way right into the center of my heart, right along with that darling Jamie.

This story obviously has fantastic characters, but a realistic portrait is also painted of Scotland. It's not all sunshine and roses, as hard times are shown. I loved the way age-old traditions were explained and entwined into the plot and sweet romance. The setting makes me want to pay this country a visit, especially if I could travel back in time and see things as they were about 200 year ago.

Content: mild violence; mild romance.

I received a copy from the publisher, which did not affect my opinion in any way.

Heidi Robbins (Heidi Reads...) says

I loved this book! Such a great setting in Scotland, in the aftermath of a tragic history that shows not only the mettle and strength of Aileen and the other members of the community, but their heartache as well. Everyone has lost someone, and both Aileen and Conall have family members who are lost. Aileen has created a new family for herself with Jamie and an elderly woman from her village (who is pretty funny) and soon Conall joins their tight-knit circle as he and Jamie take to each other. It was fascinating to learn about many of the traditions of the Scottish and how they weave into their spiritual beliefs. A wonderful story of change, opening up to love, and the importance of family and community.

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

Clara says

There are few authors that can bring a setting alive like Jennifer Moore.

It's obvious how thoroughly she's researched the culture. From the Scottish brogue to the description of the highlands, this book will completely capture your heart.

I received this book through NetGalley. All opinions expressed are my own.

Sara Cardon says

Five full stars. This story was perfect. A Scottish small town, families trying to survive and reconnect after wars and displacement, a mother's love for an adopted son, keeping a secret to protect loved ones, and the entrance into Leslie's precarious life of a returning soldier who inspires hero worship (and a male role model) in Leslie's son. Beautifully done. One of my new favorites by Jennifer Moore!

Kelly says

Scotland has always had a pull on me. So I jumped at the chance to read Miss Leslie's Secret. I was not disappointed. The book described all about the weather and the terrain and the life there. Having been there myself, it just makes me want to go back. I didn't care much for the haggis, this quote though, just eww....

His stomach growled as he thought of the mutton roasted slowly on a spit, the boiled eel, and the Highlander haggis the British soldiers had teased him about. They had no idea what a true delicacy 'twas.

But this one is what I love about Scotland....

Around him, Conall could hear murmured conversations. Deep tones, loud exclamations, and guttural sounds formed at the back of the throat- this is how language was supposed to sound, he thought. Not the rapid chatter of Spanish or the nasal tones of French or even the precise, clipped words of English. The Scottish tongue was warm and hearty, filled with feeling. The language was as rich as the land it came from, and throughout his travels, he'd missed it more than he could have imagined.

The book goes back to a simpler time that also had much more hardships. I like my air conditioning and the internet, thank you very much. Without the internet, both Aileen and Conall had a lot of work in order to find their family members.

The chemistry between Conall and Aileen and the affection that Conall felt for Aileen and Jamie was obvious in the writing. I felt anxious at all their meetings. Aileen had a secret to keep and also had a little pride in her that kept her from letting Conall totally in. Conall was a true gentleman and taught Jamie (Aileen's son) how to be one. Jamie seemed to soak up everything Conall taught him.

I liked how Connell was an honest man. He was a good listener and seemed to observe a minute before saying anything in response.. He was compassionate but could be an effective teacher as well.

“‘Tisn’t always a person’s fault if bad things happen. Nor is God to blame, nor the fire.” He glanced down and saw Jamie was watching him, listening closely. “We must have faith and do our best to be moral, honest people. And if misfortune does befall us, we pray for God’s mercy, and we help each other. ‘Tisn’t enough to count on a fire or the Lord to keep everything in order. The most important thing is to care for others and to help them, ye ken? Thinkin’ bad things happen because of something we did or didn’t do is useless.” He stopped walking, turning to look Jamie in the eye, willing the boy to understand the weight of what he was saying. “Blamin’ ourselves or others leads only to remorse and pain.”

Also, I saw somewhere that Jennifer Moore was working on a book about a woman named Fionn. I saw her mentioned in this book!

I always get sad at the end of a book I really enjoyed. I always want more of the characters. Just a little more into their lives. Just more of Scotland too! I know my review is all over the place but there was more than just the characters that I liked. I loved reading about the scenery and the culture, their hardships in life, things that matter the most to people!

If you like Scotland, reading about human trafficking, regency romances, keeping secrets and the consequences they bring, family, Military men, faith, forgiveness,, boats, suspense, then this might be for you.

Tori says

3.5 stars

Jennifer Moore is one of my go-to authors. I pre-order her books because I know I'll enjoy them. I had a harder time getting in to this one, and it's totally my own fault. I am HORRIBLE with accents. I have to watch movies with the closed captioning on if there's any kind of accents. Sad, I know. So I struggled some reading this because of the Scottish "accent" throughout the whole book. I had to sometimes re-read sentences, which made the book not flow as well for me as it may flow for others who aren't accent-impaired. Lol

That said, I liked the idea of the story. I enjoyed the characters, especially Conall. (*swoon*) I enjoyed the history, the culture, and the courage portrayed by Aileen!

Melissa says

I devoured this book. I love the Highlands and this part of history always breaks my heart. I loved the way they spoke to each other, the author did her homework and took her time writing this so well. The leading lady I wanted to strangle a couple of times but other than that I loved this book. This was clean with a great leading man and some sweet moving moments.

Andrea says

I have really enjoyed Jennifer Moore's books, so I was very excited for the opportunity to review Miss Leslie's Secret. I haven't read many books that take place in Scotland, so the historical situation was somewhat eye opening for me. Moore did a good job of making the reader feel for the hardship and heartache the people had gone through.

I can get held up in books when the dialogue or unfamiliar words interrupt the flow, but surprisingly that wasn't really a problem for me with Miss Leslie's Secret. I also appreciated that when Celtic words or terms were used the author usually shared them in a way that also told what they meant.

Moore created a great setting with likable characters. The superstitions added a fun and interesting aspect to the story. The first half was more intriguing to me than the last half, and as such I didn't devour this like some of her other books, but it was worth the read.

Lisa (Bookworm Lisa) says

4.5 stars

Miss Leslie is hiding a secret. Her secret is one that she holds close to protect those she loves. She is a loving and giving person who is willing to put her life in limbo to help a friend.

Conall Stewart came home from war to find his family home burned, and his family scattered. He wants the sense of family and community that he remembered before he left his home for 10 years as a soldier. He has a strong sense of duty and a commendable character.

From the moment that Aileen Leslie and Conner met there were sparks. First words, and then attraction. Conner's influence on Aileen's son is wonderful. It shows what hard work, positive words, and mentoring can do to help a child who is struggling. I enjoyed the relationship between the three. It is based on love and respect.

The book looks at parts of Scottish history that I was unaware of. I enjoyed learning a little while being entertained. Jennifer Moore is a talented author.

This book is fantastic and I give it a high recommendation.

Source: I received a complimentary copy of the book from the publisher to review. All thoughts and opinions expressed are my own,

Carrie Schmidt (Reading is My SuperPower) says

Scottish. Highlander. War Hero. In a kilt. You're welcome.

But swoony Conall Stewart isn't all there is to love in Miss Leslie's Secret. For starters, red-headed imp Jamie will steal your heart, especially as Conall takes the fatherless boy under his wing and teaches him how to be a gentleman. (The bowing! Be still, my heart!) Also in the 'things to love' category is the Scottish history, the Highlands setting, and the townsfolk of Donaid. From Davy and Catriona to Mrs. Ross and Mrs. Campbell, there is much to be said about friendships and meddling 'auld' ladies.

And then there's Aileen, a young woman thrust into a situation for which she may have been ill-prepared but at which she has excelled. Her fierce love for Jamie, as well as her inner strength, make her a heroine that is Conall Stewart's undoing – and his match.

Bottom Line: In Miss Leslie's Secret, Jennifer Moore has crafted a sweet story with characters who move into your heart and a romance that may begin slowly but ends strong. Historical tidbits are woven seamlessly through the story, and the setting becomes its own character more than once. While I wish the romance had begun a bit earlier, I also enjoyed watching their friendship grow first. Yes, the child-Jamie stole my heart but I'm also hoping we get a story with man-Jamie as a hero. The epilogue left some room for this possibility, so I'm gonna go ahead and hope!

(I voluntarily reviewed a complimentary copy of this book)

first seen at Reading Is My SuperPower

Kathy Jo says

3.5 Stars

I have really enjoyed all the books by Ms. Moore that I have read so far and was really looking forward to reading Miss Leslie's Secret. I have book friends who absolutely loved it so it saddens me to say I only just liked it. It seemed to drag for me in some places and there were parts that I had a hard time getting through. I found myself wanting to strangle Aileen at times. But I adored the relationship between Conall and Jamie. All in all it was good and I did like it. I'm looking forward to seeing what Ms. Moore has in store for us next.

I voluntarily reviewed a copy of this book. All thoughts and opinions are my own.

Mindy says

Miss Leslie's Secret is another wonderful book by Jennifer Moore. I laughed, I cried and at the end, I was felt content and appreciated the wonderful book I just finished. I loved the Scottish setting and the accents were enjoyable. Each character was perfectly written. Aileen, Conall and Jamie were amazing. Does also was a fabulous supporting character. What a tough and spunky lady she was. I loved it when she was around. I appreciated the father figure roll Conall had with Jamie and I loved their relationship. There is particular lovely scene with the two of them that was very enduring and sweet.

Aimee (Getting Your Read On) says

This book transported me to the Scottish Highlands. Conall has been far from his home for a long time and through him I was able to feel the longing to be there and the peace that he felt in coming home. This story is full of Scottish traditions and I love how traditions bind people together. I had a really strong sense of this while reading. The author does a really good job of capturing the pride of the Scottish people, their struggles and their love for the land and each other.

Aileen is such a good mother with very strong mama bear tendencies. I loved her for that. She loves that little Jaime with everything in her and I can surely relate to that! Aileen is a strong woman, and a hard worker which made her an easy character to like and root for.

This was another great story from Jennifer Moore!

Content: kissing, mild peril

Julie Carpenter says

4.5*

What a beautiful story. I will warn you though, if you're looking for a fast paced mystery/suspense read with some romance thrown in, this is not the book for you. Although I'm not trying to discourage you from reading and enjoying this book, I wanted to make sure you know that the pacing is nice and steady. Steady, as in no sudden moments of intense action and then back to a slower moment, then bam, action. Steady, as in continuously moving forward at a constant pace. The story flows and moves along like a constantly moving stream. A few little rocks in its path here and there but nothing treacherous until it reaches the end of its journey and must pass through a group of boulders.

That may not be the best analogy there and truly I didn't sit down with that in my mind, it just sort of popped out. ~ok, little tangent here~ Have you seen the 2007 Masterpiece remake of 'Sense and Sensibility'? When the character of Anne is getting interrogated about what she knows about Edward Farris' relationship with her and her sister and she lets slip some important (like mega, super important info) and then her sister arrives on the scene and looks at her and says "Anne, what have you done", then Anne replies "I'm so sorry, it just 'popped out'". Love that scene and the way Anne says it! Well that was kind of me with the analogy, it just 'popped out'. ~Tangent over~

Scottish Highlands, a secret, a young boy, a young mother, a soldier returning home from 10 years at war, villages burned to the ground trying to recoup, missing family, friendship, sickness, bees, orchards, rain, mud, rain, mud, rain, rain (ok it is the coast of Scotland), animals, growing up, peril, love, ships, library, celebrations, community and sweet kisses.

I really enjoyed this read. Flawed and imperfect characters, learning and growing, teaching and helping others to become better. I loved the moments between Connall (male MC) and young Jamie Leslie. A young boy finds a confidant and teacher in a seasoned soldier who needs peace and healing. Miss Leslie, or Aileen, has her own secrets and will go to great lengths to protect them and her family. This newcomer, who is he? Has he come to tear apart her secrets or help her protect them?

The peril and danger come and it's a race against time for these characters to save each other and put to rights the mistakes of the past. Will they be too late to keep everyone safe and whole? Or will their family be broken and missing members? These characters are definitely Scottish through and through and are quite enjoyable to read about. I loved the traditions used within the story and the descriptions of the land. I always enjoy a good story from this author.

I'd share a few more thoughts but I'm running off for rehearsal and packing dinner and getting kids before this crazy week begins. I will say on my final note though, that I loved it and highly recommend it to anyone looking for a cozy read.

Content: Clean. Talk of villages being burned and destroyed, death, kidnapping, and some moments of peril. Sweet romance with nothing more than kissing.

I received a copy from the publisher, Covenant Communications, via NetGalley. All thoughts and opinions in the review are my own.

Happy Reading!!!

Amy says

Beautiful story, set in the stunning Scottish Highlands. One of my favourite places on this planet is the area around Glencoe, Glen Nevis - Fort William & Glenfinnan. You can imagine my delight when I discovered that Jennifer Moore had set one of her stories here. She has developed a consistent reputation for doing her homework. Always thorough with her research, you can be sure that Miss Leslie's Secret will follow suit. I was impressed with her use of the language and the local dialect. While I'm not a fan of too much written speech in the form of the way it would be spoken, because no matter how skillfully done it can be difficult to read and follow as a reader. Especially one you are not familiar. I think the 'thoughts' of the character are better written without the dialect. It works here though, which is mostly used in the spoken text. To a certain extent it adds to the authenticity.

What do I love about this book in addition to the location that just sets my mind wandering through all my memories of walking through these places? The originality of the plot. The villagers of Dunaid are written into the life of the heroine, Aileen Leslie. They have been her sole support system for almost 8 years. Posing as a widow with the son of her best friend who died, she has been hiding from the boy's father. Sergeant Conall Stewart is back from the war, a hero and ready to return to his homeland. A place he always felt the need to escape as a young boy, he now feels that longing to return. His family are gone and he intends to do what he must in the interim while he waits for news of their whereabouts. They emigrated to America, and although he has the opportunity to live and farm in the Highlands in fairly comfy able circumstances - he dreams of the day when he will see his family again. Aileen and Conall are thrown together almost immediately and he thinks her a soft woman who refuses to see the true nature of her son. There is every element of a good story within the pages. History, danger, survival, mystery, hope, joy and romance. This one was hard to put down. As ever the covers just seem to be getting better, I've LOVED the past two.

In addition - I was not surprised in the slightest to discover (in the acknowledgements section) that Carla Kelly is an inspiration to Jennifer. You very much get the feel of a Kelly book as you read Moore's. That same quality and certainly both of their deep love for history, and writing beautiful stories with it.

Thank you to Netgalley & Covenant for the eARC. This is my honest review.
