



A Promise for Miriam

Vannetta Chapman

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A Promise for Miriam, the first book in a brand-new romantic series from popular author Vannetta Chapman, introduces the Amish community of Pebble Creek and some of the kind, caring people there. As they face challenges to their community from the English world, they come together to reach out to their non-Amish neighbors while still preserving their cherished Plain ways.

Amish schoolteacher Miriam King loves her students. At 26, most women her age are married with children of their own, but she hasn't yet met anyone who can convince her to give up the Plain school that sits along the banks of Pebble Creek. Then newcomer Gabriel Yoder steps into her life, bringing his daughter, an air of mystery, and challenges Miriam has never faced before.

Will Gabe be able to let go of the past that haunts him? He thinks he just wants to be left alone, but the loving and warm community he and his daughter have moved to has other plans for him. After a near tragedy is averted, he hesitantly returns offers of help and friendship, and he discovers he can make a difference to the people of Pebble Creek?and maybe find love again.

A Promise for Miriam Details

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From Reader Review A Promise for Miriam for online ebook

Mary Shipman says

Eight year old Grace Miller does not speak. It is up to her new teacher, Miriam King to find the reason and help Grace find her voice.

Grace's widowed father, Gabe, seems to oppose Miriam's efforts as well as efforts of his new community to assist him in rehabilitating the derelict farm he has purchased.

When Grace is lost in a snow storm, Gabe realizes that he has to accept help, from the community and from Miriam. In doing so, he finds himself doing battle against a real estate tycoon who is trying to cash in on the local Amish community.

I found this an enjoyable book. It shows some of the every day situations facing the Amish in our 'English' world in a sympathetic and realistic way. I felt a kinship to the main characters as they overcame obstacles and found reasons to 'keep their faith' in a changing world.

I would give this book 4 stars and recommend it to anyone wishing to know more about Amish life in the Old Order community.

Rachel Brand says

GENRE: AMISH ROMANCE

PUBLISHER: HARVEST HOUSE

PUBLICATION DATE: JULY 01, 2012

RATING: 5 OUT OF 5 – NEAR PERFECT

PROS: Wisconsin setting brings something new to the genre; great characterisation; engaging sub-plot

CONS: None!

Gabriel Yoder decides to uproot himself and his daughter and move to a new community in Wisconsin, hoping that this will help them to move on from the death of Hope, his wife and Grace's mother. The Pebble Creek community is far more conservative than they're used to – no indoor toilets, no heated buggies and ice boxes rather than gas-powered fridges – but a new start is necessary. But Gabriel doesn't expect Grace's new schoolteacher to become such a large part of their lives. Grace quickly becomes attached to Miriam King, but Gabriel doesn't appreciate the teacher meddling in their lives. Although his daughter hasn't spoken since her mother died, Gabriel has learned to adapt to Grace's needs and thinks that Miriam's suggestions will be more harmful than helpful. But as Gabriel and Grace become more integrated into the Pebble Creek community and start to open up to their neighbours, he comes to appreciate Miriam's help, especially when tragedy strikes during a snowstorm. Will their relationship become something more than one between a concerned teacher and loyal parent?

There have been times when I have a large stack of books waiting to be reviewed, all from the same genre, and I find myself wondering if I might end up getting bored or find it hard to review yet another Amish novel. I love Amish fiction, but reading one book after another about the same topic can make me feel a bit Amished-out. I really didn't know what to expect from *A Promise for Miriam*. When I started this book, I needed to escape. I was buried in wedding stress and the audiobook I'd picked up from the library contained so many divorces and broken relationships that I was starting to feel a bit discouraged. Knowing that *A Promise for Miriam* was next on my list, I felt a bit happier, as I've rarely come across a depressing Amish novel. I figured that even if this book didn't completely blow my mind, it would at least be a nice, easy read. Well, it was far more than that, and it did end up encouraging me, in more ways than one.

Firstly, the relationships between Gabriel and Grace, Miriam and her parents, Miriam and her fellow schoolteacher, not to mention Gabriel and Miriam, and those of the general community, were very heart-warming. In a world where everyone is out to help themselves, often at the expense of others, it really encouraged me to see how everyone in the community pitched in to help Gabriel and his daughter. I may have had a tear in my eye at a couple of points, but then again, I am overly emotional right now. But even if you don't end up bawling your eyes out at this book, I'm sure you'll be able to appreciate the beauty in the way that the Amish reach out to each other.

I was also incredibly encouraged to find that, even if there are probably around a hundred new Amish books coming on to the market this year, authors can still come up with new and original material. I did not feel Amished-out in the slightest while reading *A Promise for Miriam* and it was so refreshing to read about a new community and setting, as well as the fascinating topic of Grace's loss of speech due to a traumatic event. Both the introduction of a new community and Grace's problem were dealt with in a way that was touching and informative, without feeling overly sentimental or too much like reading a textbook.

While I loved the sweet, slowly-blossoming relationship between Gabriel and Miriam, I'd have to say that Grace was probably my favourite character in *A Promise for Miriam*. I'm a sucker for stories about widowers who have kids, but I've come across very few authors who can accurately write from a child's perspective. Vannetta is one of the authors who manages this well, and I loved being able to see events from Grace's point of view; it definitely brought something fresh to the story. The dynamics between Grace and her dad were brilliant as well, and it made a nice change to read about a caring, supportive Amish father for once. Even if Gabe cut himself off from the rest of the community to begin with, including Miriam, he never shut out his daughter.

As well as the insights into dealing with a child who has stopped talking, *A Promise for Miriam* was also educational in terms of the conflict with a businessman who wanted to start up an Amish tourist attraction in a nearby town. While I know that a lot of Amish fiction fans like to visit places like Lancaster County, Pennsylvania to see the sights and pick up some Amish-related trinkets, they might think twice about the Amish-inspired cafes and gift shops after reading *A Promise for Miriam*. While this sub-plot was wrapped up rather quickly, I still found it interesting to read about the dilemma over how the Amish should attempt to fight against the possibility of their community being turned into a stop on a tourist trip, as well as figuring out whether they could work with the English community to sell Amish-made goods and present an accurate depiction of their faith.

I genuinely thought that *A Promise for Miriam* was just going to another light read that would take my mind of the stress of planning a wedding, but I ended up falling completely in love with the characters and the community of Pebble Creek. I now recall why I thought so highly of Vannetta's debut novel, *A Simple Amish Christmas*, and I'm glad that she hasn't lost her touch. *A Promise for Miriam* brings something refreshing and original to Amish fiction and will hopefully remind many readers of why they fell in love this

genre in the first place. I can't wait for to read the sequel, *A Home for Lydia*, in February 2013.

Review title provided by Harvest House.

Pat says

A good story about an Amish community in Wisconsin. A widower and his daughter, who has not spoken in 3 years move to the Pebble Creek community and struggle with their past. A school teacher struggles with decisions she has made for her future.

Mercedes Cordero says

It's very unusual to find a romantic story with compelling main characters, heartwarming and moving back stories, well written second characters and side stories, a little suspense, a little funny side, and a beautiful message of love, grace and new beginnings. *A Promise for Miriam* has it all. This is the story of Miriam, a 26 year old Amish woman who by Amish standards should have married a few years ago and should be raising her own children instead of teaching other people's children. She has had her suitors, but no one has captured her heart as much as her students have. When she meets Gabe and Grace, she is quite content with her life.

Miriam is immediately drawn to Grace, who has not spoken since her mother died, and wants to help her, knowing that the little girl is smart and very much able to speak. But Gabe is reluctant. He is a strong male lead, set in his ways, stubborn and in no way interested in anyone's help. Miriam, however, is almost as stubborn as he is and very determined to help Grace even without her father's consent. And so begins the relationship between Miriam and Gabe: sometimes sweet, other times strained; sometimes passionate, other times timid. Both Miriam and Gabe are very outspoken where Grace is concern, but when it comes to their feelings for each other, not so much.

Much like anyone else, Miriam and Gabe have a hard time admitting what is obvious to everyone else: they are falling for each other. The complexity and realness of these characters is fantastic. They are strong, but cute; stubborn, but endearing; outspoken, but shy. And the secondary characters are just as great. Mostly made up of Miriam's family, these characters are written to steal your heart, bring wisdom and a sense of family, and community that is very common in Amish novels. The way Vannetta Chapman writes, however, any commonality is enhanced by how she uses words, settings and situations to make the ordinary just a little bit extraordinary.

I don't want to miss the opportunity of mentioning how great a character Grace is. Not many writers know how to write children. Grace is neither too precocious nor too immature for her age. She is just right. The way her mind works, the way she acts, how she thinks is so touching, so pure, so very much like most children her age. A very well written little girl. Also, I have to say that, as a mother, Grace's story moved me. It was hard to read how the loss of a mother can affect a child. I was constantly reading and praying, with tears in my eyes and my son in my mind, asking God to let us (me, my husband and my son) enjoy each other for many years to come.

This is a beautiful story of a first chance at love, a second chance at happiness, and God's grace and His

purpose for our lives, even in the middle of our sorrow.

Vera Godley says

In the summer of 2012 I received a beautiful signed copy of A Promise for Miriam by Vannetta Chapman as a courtesy from the author. I sorely regret that it has taken me so many months to sit down and read this delightful story of the Amish of Pebble Creek. What a joy I missed by not reading it early after receiving it. Well, here is what I thought.....

Ms. Chapman has woven a beautiful tale of the Amish in their gentle ways. In developing Miriam King, she shows that even though the Amish usually marry young and raise large families and their lives are centered on family, Miriam has waited to marry and is the "spinster" school teacher in the Amish school house.

Into the Pebble Creek community there is a new arrival, Gabriel Miller and his young daughter, who moves to this settlement of Amish from another in a different State. Both are old order Amish with similar guidelines and rules for their people. Gabriel is a widower having lost his wife three years prior. His young daughter is smart, artistic, and mute. Her ability to speak has not always been lacking, though. Just since losing her mother.

Miriam has a definite talent for working with children. And Gabriel has a definite desire to devoid himself and his daughter of interaction with the others in the community as much as is possible. However, the bucolic scene of country life and the Amish is not always a constant. Sorrow, danger, and a spirit of community mingle to break the shell of the hardest nut.

I heartily recommend this as an I-must-read book for those who especially love stories of the Amish, and an I-think-I-should-read this book for others who simply want a really good read.

DISCLOSURE: I was provided a complimentary copy of A Promise for Miriam by the author in exchange for my honest review with no obligation for a positive review. Opinions expressed are solely mine.

Judy says

A Delightful Read!

I have read several books by author Vannetta Chapman and I have enjoyed them all. A Promise for Miriam did not let me down.

I fell in love with the Characters in this book. Who wouldn't be concerned for Gabe who lost his wife to death 3 years ago. Would he ever get over losing his wife? Could he, would he, be able to move on? His eight year old daughter Grace captured my heart. She is simply adorable. Miriam, the school teacher, has never married but she is content with being single because her students are her life. Will she always be content with teaching? Will she long for a family of her own some day?

My emotions loved this book. I found myself laughing our loud, I found myself worrying, and I found myself shedding a few tears.

This book in my opinion deserves a 5 star rating; one that I will gladly give.

I urge you to buy a copy of this book. I promise you will not be disappointed.

I can't wait to read A Home for Lydia, Book 2 of The Pebble Creek Amish Series.

Nancy says

I enjoyed reading this book very much. I liked reading about the simpler life. Gabe and Grace were suffering from the loss of his wife, and her mother. There was a sweet love story in this book. The community pulled together for the members. They stood up for their beliefs and life style, when they were threatened by those who didn't understand them.

Janie R. says

I loved it! What a wonderful story! The characters seemed so real to me- Grace was a really sweet girl, felt so bad for her loss, but she was strong and overcame her obstacles. Miriam was a great teacher who really cared about her students. I enjoyed reading of a day at an Amish school. I liked Gabe, he was a great father, but he like, held his feelings in, and others around him had to read his mind, esp. Miriam. I did like the way he stood up to Byron Drake!

It was very interesting to learn about the Amish in Wisconsin, I enjoyed it!

Sally says

Good, clean, quick, enjoyable read.

Susan Hollaway says

Another winner by Vannetta Chapman! I really enjoyed reading Miriam and Gabe's story and particularly liked Vannetta's unique characterization. It was as if I lived alongside them in the story. I'm looking forward to reading more books from the Pebble Creek Amish Series.

No spoilers here! You're going to have to read it. And I highly recommend it.

Kathleen E. says

Wednesday, July 11, 2012.

A Promise for Miriam by Vannetta Chapman, c2012

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Vannetta Chapman has published more than 100 articles in Christian family magazines. She discovered her love for the Amish while researching her grandfather's birthplace in Albion, Pennsylvania. Vannetta is a multi-award-winning member of Romance Writers of America. She was a teacher for 15 years and currently resides in the Texas Hill country. Her first two inspirational novels—A Simple Amish Christmas and Falling to Pieces—were Christian Book Distributors bestsellers.

Visit the author's website.

SHORT BOOK DESCRIPTION:

Amish schoolteacher Miriam King loves her students. At 26, she hasn't yet met anyone who can convince her to give up the Plain school at Pebble Creek. Then newcomer Gabriel Yoder steps into her life, bringing his daughter, an air of mystery, and challenges Miriam has never faced before.

MY REVIEW:

Book 1, The Pebble Creek Amish Series

I can identify with our youngest protagonist, Miss Grace. My mother died when I was five, the month before I was six. I was born 50 miles away from Cashton.

This story is a story of Grace. God's Grace. How He divinely sets us where we are to be. Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

Gabe Miller moves with his young daughter, Grace, from Indiana to Wisconsin following the death of his wife to a dilapidated farm, matching his dilapidated heart. He refuses help in restoring it and sets out to do it alone. Closed off in pain, he remains, until he must request help. The warmth that follows melts his isolated heart and healing begins for both of them.

I really liked the interaction between Miriam King and Esther Schrock, the two school teachers who teach together at the one-room schoolhouse. How interesting that they are housed together there on a second floor and not with a family in the district. My dad and stepmother taught in country schools in Wisconsin before my time. My dad said he taught one of his brothers, and my stepmother said she needed to start her own woodstove in the mornings before the students came. They each taught alone. Miriam teaches the younger children and Esther teaches the older children. I think this would be fascinating and I liked how the older students helped the younger ones. They would learn from each other, hearing them recite their lessons too. One drawback for the teachers would be living and working in the same building, however not so different from a storefront business. They did go to their families on the weekends.

I like how the community stepped in to help each other and it is the story of families embracing each other. It is very well written and the story easily flows. There is conflict that is overcome by being worked through instead of ignored. Our lives really do touch each other. I liked the wisdom of Gabe as he grows within the community and is willing to function within positions he is entrusted with. From a closed position to giving

and receiving, everyone is benefited. Miriam finds out her strengths and weaknesses when she comes up against heart awakenings! Her mother and father are so loving and caring in the ways they live out their lives by example. I look forward to Book 2: A Home for Lydia.

Special thanks to Ginger Chen, Marketing Assistant, Harvest House Publishers for sending me a review copy.

Danica Page (One Page at a Time) says

Official review forthcoming.

Michelle says

Miriam King loves her life in Pebble Creek, Wisconsin. She loves her teaching job at the local Amish school. At twenty six many wonder why she has not married. She is beautiful and adores her students. Gabriel Miller is a widow who decides to move to Pebble Creek. Gabe is determined to leave his past in Indiana and start a new life with his daughter Grace. Grace is an adorable little eight year old who has not spoken in three years. When Grace comes to Miriam's school, Miriam is determined to help her speak. Gabe moved to Pebble Creek to keep to himself and not take any help or handouts, but now that's all out the window because the feisty Miss Miriam with jet black hair and beautiful gray eyes demands his attention. He has guarded his heart well since the death of his wife, but feels a spark when he is around Miriam. Torn by his feelings for her and also realizing he is but a humble man with nothing to offer her, he pushes her towards Aden Schmucker. He feels Aden can provide an easy life for her. Miriam feels a connection to Gabe and is confused when he encourages her to give Aden a chance. She knows he feels something, so why is he rejecting her? How can she make him realize his heart is the one she longs for?

A Promise for Miriam is an endearing love story written by Vannetta Chapman, who has quickly become one of my favorite authors. This was such a heartwarming story. I found myself laughing, crying, and smiling, all the while feeling a sense of joy reading about these characters. I loved reading from Grace's point of view. It's very refreshing to see the world through a child's eyes. I am only covering the tip of the iceberg with this review because this book has so much more to offer than I can put into a few paragraphs. It's a book filled with honest and genuine characters that will make you feel right at home in Pebble Creek.

Barbara Shelton says

Heart touching story, sweet miracles to ponder and beautifully written. The characters are life like and personalities are cleverly and clearly identified. Personally, I was impatient for certain things to happen, and was delighted with the way Vanetta handled their resolve. Well done, Vanetta - I'm looking forward to reading another of your writings. What do you suggest?

Melissa says

can't wait for book 2
