



# When Mercy Ruins

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## **When Mercy Rains** Kim Vogel Sawyer

She left, heavily weighted with secrets.

But God reveals all things, in His timing.

And He redeems them.

Suzanne Zimmerman was only seventeen and pregnant when her shamed mother quietly sent her away from their Old Order Mennonite community in Kansas. With her old home, family, and first love firmly behind her, Suzanne moved to Indiana, became a nurse, and raised a daughter, Alexa, on her own.

Now, nearly twenty years later, an unexpected letter arrives from Kansas. Her brother asks her to bring her nursing abilities home and care for their ailing mother. His request requires that Suzanne face a family that may not have forgiven her and a strict faith community. It also means seeing Paul Aldrich, her first love.

Paul, widowed with an eight-year-old son, is relieved to see Suzanne again, giving him the chance to beg her forgiveness for his past indiscretion. But when he meets Alexa, his guilt flickers in the glare of Suzanne's prolonged secret--one that changes everything.

Suzanne had let go of any expectation for forgiveness long ago. Does she dare hope in mercy-and how will her uncovered past affect the people she loves the most?

## **When Mercy Rains Details**

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# From Reader Review When Mercy Rains for online ebook

## Madonna Dolin says

I have got to say I loved this book. The characters were believable as being real humans who made mistakes and had done things to mess up their lives yet all of them were forgiven and redeemed by God. Some of them made choices I wouldn't have but who hasn't made mistakes they regret. At first I did not like the grandmother at all but I grew to understand and like her better. I really liked that the characters were Mennonites. I have read a lot of Amish books but this is the first one I have read on Mennonites. I used to work with a Mennonite woman years ago but had no real experience with the religion. I enjoyed what I learned about them from this book. I want to learn more about Mennonites now. I read this whole book in one sitting because I couldn't put it down. I just kept wanting to see how things went. (next morning I was sorry I had stayed up so late) There is such a surprise twist to the plot that I completely did not see coming ( I won't tell you what it was) but I loved it. I am so glad there is a sequel because there were a few things that didn't happen but I want to know how they turn out so I will order the sequel to find out what happens to everyone.

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## Maria says

I have become a real fan of this author. She manages to write books about hardship and life without it becoming sappy or having totally happy endings. I like that this book has several twists in it along the journey of the characters lives and that the ending isn't quite what I expected.

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## Julia Wilson says

When Mercy Rains is the first book in the Zimmerman Restoration series by Kim Vogel Sawyer. It was the first book that I had read by her, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. It is set in the Old Order Mennonite community and focuses on a family torn apart by an event twenty years earlier. It concentrates on personalities, their feelings and the interaction with the rest of the family and the wider community.

Suzanne Zimmerman was sent away from her family by her mother Abigail, after she found herself pregnant and unwed at seventeen. Abigail arranges for an adoption for the baby, after which Suzanne may return home. As the novel opens, so twenty years have passed and Suzanne had built a life for herself and her daughter Alexa in Indiana. Suzanne is a nurse, so when her mother has an accident and is confined to a wheel chair, she receives a letter from her brother Cleve asking her to return home to nurse their mother. Suzanne struggles to decide whether to return to her family in Kansas. Alexa encourages her to go, as she wants to go too and meet the family she has never known. The problem is that Suzanne's family have no knowledge of Alexa, Suzanne worries about the repercussions if the two turn up.

When Mercy Rains covers a variety of themes including that of family and secrets. Families come in all sorts of different shapes and sizes. Suzanne and Alexa are a small but loving family unit. Their relationship is grounded in love and openness. They contrast with Suzanne's birth family that is large with a matriarch figure in charge. On the surface they appear to work together, but secrets and tensions are simmering beneath the surface. Can they ever be the united loving family that God intended?

The novel reveals that whilst covering up past secrets and sins, one can never live a life free from guilt, bitterness and torment. The past has the power to shape lives for good or bad. The state of Abigail's house

mirrors her internal state. The truth needs to be brought out into the light, and the past needs to be dealt with in order to set the characters free.

When Mercy Rains shows the destructive nature of being more concerned with the world's judgement than with what God says. Focusing on the world means that relationships and families can be altered in the blink of an eye. This destructive force and bitterness if left unchecked, can pass down through the generations, until some-one is brave enough to finally act on God's word. Our God has the power to transform lives, if we would only let Him in to our situations. There is never a point where we have gone so far, that we are out of reach of God's grace. We can all have second chances and new beginnings if we just let God into our lives. The novel is told in the third person but from alternating viewpoints. This technique works well, as the reader is able to see the action from different points of view.

The characters were wonderfully drawn, and each one different and unique. They were not just people in a book, they were 'real' and alive in my head. My favourite was Alexa with her charming and sunny personality, always trying to bring out the best in situations and people. Abigail was a true matriarch, and it really helped to get inside her head to understand why she showed the world the face she did.

I was sorry to come to the end of When Mercy Rains, but the good news is...the story continues in When Grace Sings, and that is definitely the next book for me to read. If you have never tried a novel by Kim Vogel Sawyer, I can highly recommend When Mercy Rains, you too may be hooked on her novels!

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### **Rita Mcallister davidson says**

Suzanne Zimmerman was sent to her aunt & uncle's to stay for 9 months by her Mother. Suzanne didn't go back home until her brother sent for her help to take care of the mother. She arrived with her daughter and the family didn't even know she had. I enjoyed this story and hope all will read. Saltville, Va. Library with Kris Sheets is where I received this book to read. Wish I will be taking back soon, thanks Kris for having the best.

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### **Brittany says**

Wow! This story drew me in and would not let me go until the last page was turned! And even then, I did not want the book to be over. I NEEDED book two to be available RIGHT AWAY! How much of a hold did this story have on me? Well, I read it in one day...grabbing every free moment that I had in order to dive into the story and discover what would happen next.

One of the things that drew me to this story in the first place was finding out that the main character, Suzanne, would be coming home to her old order Mennonite community and facing all kinds of issues with her family based on the way she left twenty years earlier – aged seventeen and pregnant. But, what I didn't realize, was that her leaving (and returning) was even more complicated than I could have imagined.

The author did an amazing job in When Mercy Rains of surprising me time and time again. I kept thinking I had everything figured out and could see where the story was heading and then BAM...she threw in a twist I would not see coming! This made the book intriguing, and the fact that it was coupled with extremely interesting characters, made it a really enjoyable tale.

Not only did I like Suzanne, but I also had a real respect for her daughter, Alexa. What a gem of a daughter

Suzanne raised. The way she dealt with family members and situations was admirable. The spiritual maturity in both Suzanne and Alexa served them well when they returned home to their extended family.

Paul, Suzanne's former teenage love, was also a character that I was very fond of in the story. His reaction to truths that he discovered throughout the story seemed very realistic to me. He was a good father to his son and worked hard to be a good member of his community. He loved God, and family was very important to him.

I do not want to give away anything about this story that could prove to be a spoiler, so I will simply say that there is one twist that to me left things a little up in the air regarding the future. I am really hoping that somewhere in the Zimmerman Restoration Trilogy, this will be resolved. Because this left me a little unsettled at the end, I am giving 4.5 stars instead of 5 stars on my blog. But I will be rounding up to 5 stars on all bookseller sites.

I do have to say that this is one of the best books I have read regarding the subject of forgiveness and the extending of mercy to others. It is very realistic in the way this is handled. God's forgiveness and God's mercy toward us likewise is shown in the way the various characters learn to repent, forgive, and accept forgiveness in return for the things that they have done in their lives that have hurt others. This was an emotionally deep story.

I would like to express my appreciation to the publisher for the complimentary book that I received through Blogging for Books, in exchange for my honest review.

You can read this review on my blog at:  
<https://brittreadsfiction.wordpress.c...>

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### **Patti says**

This is the first book in the series. It hooks you right from the very beginning with the strong feeling of guilt forced onto the main protagonist. I loved how the family dynamics changed as hearts were opened and learned to forgive.

Suzanne was forced to leave her home at 15 when she became pregnant. Her mother and father never told th family why she left. Suzanne did not return as expected but started a new life for herself and daughter. When her mother is seriously injured and needs hands on care, Suzanne returns to help and face the whispers of the past.

An excellent story of faith, trust, lies, and love! I can not wait to read the second book.

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### **Shannah Mauney says**

What happens when mercy rains? Kim Vogel Sawyer writes an engaging story about God's forgiveness, grace and mercy. I thoroughly enjoyed this story and look forward to reading more by this tremendous author. View my full review: <http://faithlovebooks.blogspot.com/20...>

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## **Mackenzie Carol says**

When Mercy Rains is the first book in Kim Vogel Sawyer's Zimmerman Family Restoration Trilogy, and is a novel that came as a total surprise to me. Although I was sure I would enjoy it since its description completely captivated me, I never expected it to blow me away. But it did. With its captivating secrets and heartbreaking story, this novel pulled me in, touched my heart, and left me forever grateful I read it. I may have never imagined it would be such a blessing to me, but I am so glad it was.

Let me just say, Suzanne is Superwoman. Literally Superwoman. Even after all she goes through, she is strong enough to raise Alexa all on her own, to become a nurse even while a single mom, and most importantly, to forgive. Clearly she has superhuman strength. And God. Her patience is limitless, her kindness knows no bounds, and yet she was just enough imperfect to be human. Finding her to be a relatable character I could look up to, I couldn't help but love her. I cannot wait to see how her story ends.

Now Alexa; Alexa is just like her mother. Although she may have different talents and looks, it was obvious who raised her. She is loving, caring, respectful, and patient, and she obviously loves her mother and Father (the Heavenly one I mean). Her passion and spirited nature made me love her immediately, and I know if we could, we would be fast friends.

I could go on like this for really every character in this book. As I got farther and farther into the pages, I began to feel as if the Zimmermans were my family; as if I were a part of the story. I laughed with them, cried with them, and rejoiced for them when things went well. All in all, this heartwarming, touching story about family, faith, and God's merciful rain will forever be one of my favorites. I give it all five bookshelves without any hesitation, and know that this is a novel I will read again and again.

(This review is from my blog, [spreadinghisgrace.blogspot.com](http://spreadinghisgrace.blogspot.com))

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## **Virginia Winfield says**

I really enjoyed this story and had a hard time putting it down, it would be hard to be in a community where you are looked down on for making one mistake even if it is a bad one. It is well written and does well in leading towards redemption. I grew to like all the characters, even the crotchety mother. I received this from Blogging for books for a fair and honest opinion.

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## **Barb says**

"When Mercy Rains" by Kim Vogel Sawyer is the first book in the Zimmerman Restoration Trilogy. The secrets of an Old Order Mennonite family threaten to destroy them. Suzanne, a 17 year old girl finds herself in trouble. Her mother sends her away in shame. However, she stays in Indiana, becoming a nurse and raising a daughter. Twenty years after she left home, she is contacted by a brother to come and nurse her sick mother. She reluctantly returns to Kansas to face her family, community and first love. Suzanne hopes that she will find forgiveness for long ago transgressions, but she is not counting on that. Her past will eventually come to affect all those she loves.

I liked this book, however, I was very put off by the reactions of Suzanne's family during her problems and after she returned to them. I think this book left me a little unsettled. However, I would still recommend this novel. Kim Vogel Sawyer is a wonderful writer of stories of faith and hope.

I was sent a free print copy of the book by NightOwlReviews.com in return for my honest opinion of the

book. You can find this review on my blog at <http://wp.me/p2pjlt-d2>.

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## **Angela Brocato-Skaggs says**

Suzanne was made to leave her Mennonite home when she did the unthinkable and became pregnant with her boyfriend. Her mother sent her to Indiana to have the baby, give it for adoption to her married cousin and then return. Suzanne decided to stay in Indiana. At the urging of her brothers and sisters, Suzanne returns with her nineteen year old daughter in tow to care for her mother who is now handicap. What Suzanne did not expect was the love of her life from her childhood to be working at her mother's house. Paul has no clue that she was pregnant when she went away all those years ago. But things are not as they seem. Will Suzanne keep her secret or will everything come out in the open when she least expects it?

I read the third book in this trilogy a couple of years ago and was excited to read the first to see how it all began. Book One was just as wonderful as the third one. I did not want to put it down. It felt very realistic as I was reading.

The angst between Suzanne and her mom is so true of many mothers and daughters that faced the situation they found themselves experiencing. My heart was hurting for them. I especially felt for Suzanne's mom dealing with becoming handicap late in life as my mom has had to face something very similar. Her loss of freedom to do what she wants when she wants has been a very hard adjustment.

Kim Vogel Sawyer writes with grit and beauty in *When Mercy Sings*. You will find yourself looking deep into yourself as you read.

I received a complimentary copy of this book from WaterBrook Multnomah through NetGalley. Any and all opinions expressed in the above review are entirely my own.

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## **Heather says**

I inadvertently read this book's sequel first, so the big issues were not a mystery to me but it was fun seeing how they came about originally.

I thoroughly enjoy how Kim Vogel Sawyer switches the focus from one character to another without feeling like you've missed anything. It's a nice variation on the first person telling of a story while staying in the third person

My feelings regarding the characters are heavily influenced by the second book, so it's impossible to properly critique them here. As in *When Grace Sings*, Alexa is wonderful character that is easy to relate to and root for. She is beautifully created and well thought out character with multiple dimensions. Her mother and grandmother are also given wonderful character development, with some minor development by some of the other relatives in the book.

The religion aspect is not as over bearing as you might expect in a book such as this. It is definitely there but I did not find it distracting, but rather added to the book and storyline. I would highly recommend this series.

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## **Tammy G. says**

When Mercy Rains by Kim Vogel Sawyer is the first book in the Zimmerman Restoration Trilogy.

We meet Suzanne Zimmerman, aka Suzy, who always listened to her mother except for the one time when she made "the mistake." The mistake cost her a move and she was "removed" from her family because of the child she carried.

Suzy grows up quickly...she delivers a sweet little girl, Alexa. She goes to school and becomes a nurse. She has made a new life.

However, after twenty years her brother contacts her and asks that she come home and take care of their ailing mother...these mother/daughter relationships are tricky and somewhat hard to understand.

Suzanne decides it's time to go home. She meets Paul...the father of Alexa. Paul wants Suzanne's forgiveness and then he meets Alexa. Paul seems to feel guilty and he seems to feel betrayed...he never knew about Alexa.

A story of love and forgiveness and also, something much deeper . . . sometimes other people in our lives don't make the best decisions for us. And, yet, we follow their advice and sometimes, lose what is most dear to us. Forgiveness becomes bitterness and yet . . . it's the choice of life . . . to forgive or not to forgive? Not only is it a question it becomes a way of life.

An interesting read about Old Order Mennonites.

Looking forward to reading the second book in this trilogy, When Grace Sings.

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## **Mary Hawkins says**

Kim Vogel Sawyer is another of my favourite authors. I did think I had read "enough" Amish novels but bought this book because I did so much enjoy Kim's other Amish novels. This book is another winner and one not to be missed! I so agree with another favourite Christian fiction author of mine, Deborah Raney, who wrote the endorsement: "A beautiful testament to the power of forgiveness."

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## **Lucy says**

Where do I begin.....this book grabbed me by the heartstrings and never let go. It left me wanting more. I love Kim's books, but this one deserves ten stars. So beautifully written and identifiable, we all need mercy to rain on us. I must admit I am at a loss for words to describe how much I loved this. Well worth your time and dollars. I received an advanced copy for an honest review, but plan to purchase this for Christmas gifts.

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