



## The Heart's Frontier

*Lori Copeland , Virginia Smith*

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**The Heart's Frontier** Lori Copeland , Virginia Smith

An exciting new Amish-meets-Wild West adventure from bestselling authors Lori Copeland and Virginia Smith weaves an entertaining and romantic tale for devoted fans and new readers.

Kansas, 1881--On a trip to visit relatives, Emma Switzer's Amish family is robbed of all their possessions, leaving them destitute and stranded on the prairie. Walking into the nearest trading settlement, they pray to the Lord for someone to help. When a man lands in the dust at her feet, Emma looks down at him and thinks, The Lord might have cleaned him up first.

Luke Carson, heading up his first cattle drive, is not planning on being the answer to anyone's prayers, but it looks as though God has something else in mind for this kind and gentle man. Plain and rugged--do the two mix? And what happens when a dedicated Amish woman and a stubborn trail boss prove to be each other's match?

## The Heart's Frontier Details

Date : Published March 1st 2012 by Harvest House Publishers

ISBN : 9780736947527

Author : Lori Copeland , Virginia Smith

Format : Paperback 296 pages

Genre : Amish, Christian Fiction, Christian, Amish Fiction, Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction

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# From Reader Review The Heart's Frontier for online ebook

## Rachel says

This was certainly a unique historical Christian romance novel. Set in 1880's Texas, the book features an Amish family and a group of cowboys on a cattle drive who end up traveling and working together for days due to various encounters with a group of bandits/rustlers. While I liked the story and its unexpected conclusion, the whole scenario felt unlikely, and the characters were a little flat. I am unlikely to read more of the series.

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## Debbie Sue says

This was an excellent book ! I seldom read Amish books most tend to be angry and anti female IMO this was not that way at all. the characters are delightful. The heroine likeable and spunky I highly recommend it and look forward to reading the next one

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## Lisa Nelson says

The Heart's Frontier  
by Lori Copeland and Virginia Smith

A very interesting Western with plenty of humor, full of adventures of a cattle drive with rustlers and Amish.

An unusual plot, but the authors make it work.

I would be interested in reading of further adventures with these characters.

I like the cover art. You can tell you are in for quite a story!

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## Vera Godley says

Bestselling authors Lori Copeland and Virginia Smith weave an entertaining and romantic tale for devoted fans and new readers.

The story begins with a typical Amish family group loading their wagon for a move and having an assist from family and friends in the community. The Amish are a tight knit community of believers.

Kansas is the stage for this story and it is 1881. The Amish family undertaking this move (involving a history making handmade hutch) consists of grand mama, son (father), and two daughters as they begin their trek to a new community. They set out alone. No wagon train, no guide, no protection.

Down the road away, they are accosted by a band of renegades who taunt them, steal their wagon and oxen,

and all their food and possessions leaving them to manage on foot. They arrive in a small town penniless and in much need of help. Then a young cowboy (Luke) literally lands at their feet outside a saloon. Emma looks down and sees God's provision at her feet but thinks it would have been nice if "the Lord could have cleaned him up first."

Hence begins a tale that will tickle your funny bone in places, give you assurance of the guidance of the Lord in the lives of these characters, and reveal the inner workings of the beliefs and traditions of a not-so-typical Amish family.

Luke and his men and the four Amish help one another as rustlers try to steal the cowboy's herd that he is driving to market with his team of workers and as the Amish need to procure a means to get where they were going. And through their encounters with each other during this week-long cattle drive, an unlikely romance begins to bud. But that would be telling the story to you. When the wild and wooly west meets the calm, predictable, and traditional Amish, surely something interesting and unpredictable will happen.

New on your book sellers shelves March 2012. This book is sure to be an engaging and lighthearted read that will entertain.

I was provided a complimentary copy of *The Heart's Frontier* by Harvest House Publishers for the purpose of review. I was not required to render a favorable review. All opinions expressed are my own.

Published March 1st 2012, ISBN 0736947523 (ISBN 13: 9780736947527)

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## **Deb Storlie says**

### **Wonderful**

Great moving story that is captivating and exciting. Great characters that come to life on the page. Enjoyed it very much.

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## **Michelle says**

I'm not much of an Amish fiction fan, though I have enjoyed a few over the years. But I love love love historical fiction. So when the opportunity to read a combination of both came, I thought, why not give it a try? Well, I ended up loving it. The story was so heartfelt, and rather than making it sound like religion was the answer (the Plain life) it focused on Love being the answer. All in all, it was a warm, heart-felt novel. I had a warm glow in my chest at the end. We give up a lot of things for love, but the truth is without love, many of the things we used to care about mean nothing anyway. I loved that message in this story. It was loaded with adorable humor and distinct characters. The grandmother was a hoot, and honestly, there wasn't a character I didn't like...well, other than the bad guys. I'd highly recommend this book for people who want a feel-good read, but one that has a bit of spiritual depth to it as well.

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## LaGail Lenoir says

got the audiobook version. good story line.

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## Rachel Brand says

GENRE: AMISH/HISTORICAL/ROMANCE

PUBLISHER: HARVEST HOUSE

PUBLICATION DATE: MARCH 01, 2012

RATING: 4 OUT OF 5 – VERY GOOD

PROS: Unusual blend of Amish culture in a wild-west historical setting; unconventional ending; amusing secondary characters

CONS: Romance is fairly predictable; heroine constantly gets into trouble and needs rescuing

Emma Switzer never wanted to leave Apple Grove to live with her aunt, but she wouldn't have wished having their wagon stolen by thieves partway into their journey in order to prevent her from leaving. Stranded in the prairie with her father, grandmother and younger sister, Emma struggles to have the faith to believe that they will find a way out of this situation. When her family stumbles across a trading settlement and finds a rugged cowboy thrown at their feet, her father is convinced that God has sent this man to help them. Emma can't help but think, "The Lord might have cleaned him up first." But first impressions can be deceiving, and as Emma and her family travel along side Luke Carson's cattle drive to the nearest town she finds herself increasingly drawn to the young cowboy. Her father disapproves of their growing relationship and is keen to get her back to their Amish settlement, where there are no such temptations. Could an Amish woman and a trail boss ever set aside their differences for the sake of love? Or are there too many aspects of their disparate lifestyles keeping them apart?

Sometimes, you just need a book that puts a smile on your face and makes you feel relaxed and content. The Heart's Frontier was such a book. The novel also had the added bonus of being a mixture of Amish and historical fiction, two of my favourite genres, and a blend that is slowly becoming more popular. Anna Schmidt has written about an Amish boy who runs away with the circus in the 1920s, while Murray Pura has tackled the treatment of the Amish as conscientious objectors during WWI. Joining this sub-genre of Amish fiction, The Heart's Frontier features an Amish family who are robbed of all their belongings while travelling across Kansas to stay with relatives, and end up relying on the help of a cowboy leading a cattle drive across the country. I wasn't so much sceptical of a wild-west Amish novel, but rather intrigued. I do enjoy western historicals, but the difficulty with writing about the Amish in the late nineteenth century is that they don't have the barriers of electricity and technology to set them apart from those around them. It was interesting to see how the authors tackled the less overt differences that made them stand out; namely, the modesty of the women's clothing, their temperance and non-violence, and obviously, their commitment to God in all things.

Unlike some romance novels, I didn't feel that The Heart's Frontier had a plot with a distinct start, middle and end. As Emma's family travelled across Kansas with the cattle drive the characters and their relationships with each other also went on a journey, and the novel depicted how their attitudes towards each other changed over the course of the novel. While there were a few distinct incidents throughout the novel that moved the plot in one way or another, it felt more character-driven than plot-driven. The secondary

characters provided a lot of amusement, particularly with the clash of Amish culture against the attitudes of the men on the cattle drive. There were plenty of moments that almost made me laugh out loud, from Emma's grandmother's constant stream of proverbs to Emma learning to lasso a cow. All in all, it was a gentle, relaxing read, and although Emma and Luke didn't have a lot of personal hurdles to overcome, I enjoyed witnessing how their friendship developed. Because of the conditions under which their romance blossomed – chaperoned by Emma's father, grandmother and the entire cattle drive, as well as Emma being Amish and used to strict courtship traditions – the focus was more on the two of them getting to know each other and included far more wistful glances and gentle touches than passion and chemistry.

I did feel that their romance bordered on being of the “love at first sight” sort, which is not a favourite of mine. However, considering the circumstances in which the story is set and the genre nature of the romance, it did suit the novel. There are many variations of Christian romance novels, and there are some that are definitely aimed at more mature, married women. This is not one of those, and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend *The Heart's Frontier* to a young teenage girl. It's a very sweet romance and ridiculously squeaky clean; the hero and heroine don't even kiss until the last chapter. And while I do prefer the edgier romances that dare to show the passion a couple can feel for each other, there are times when a sweet romance is entirely satisfying. Yes, *The Heart's Frontier* was rather predictable, but the mesh of historical and Amish elements definitely made the well-used “forbidden love” storyline into something original. I didn't mind the predictability of the romance so much as I did the fact that Emma was continually getting into trouble – being kidnapped or dragged away by a rampaging cow or trampled by a herd of cows – and needing to be rescued by Luke. Each time something happened to her, Luke would rescue her and they'd realise how much they cared about each other. I wouldn't mind this so much, but it was used at least three times throughout the novel and I kind of wished the authors had used different ways of bringing Emma and Luke together. But the unexpected ending more than made up for the predictable elements in the story. Amish romances involving outsiders have a tendency to end the same way, so I was pleasantly surprised at the way Lori and Virginia chose to conclude *The Heart's Frontier*.

*The Heart's Frontier* takes a well-used romance of forbidden love and turns it into something new by having its Amish heroine fall for a rugged cowboy. The predictability of the plot is made up for in the unique period and setting of the story, as well as the amusing antics of various secondary characters. While I wouldn't place the first book in the Amish of Apple Grove series among my favourite Amish or historical novels, it was a very enjoyable reading experience and I would definitely consider reading the next book in the series. I imagine that those who are fans of Amish fiction and western historicals would enjoy this mesh of the two genres.

Review title provided by Harvest House Publishers.

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### **Liz says**

It was cute. A lot of will they/won't they with pursuing a relationship. Poor Emma was a sucker for bad luck and injuries throughout!

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### **bert-bobbi says**

easy read, enjoyable... even if you don't read rest of series

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## Camille says

From my blog: <http://books-camilleelise4.blogspot.com>

The Heart's Frontier by Lori Copeland & Virginia Smith

That's right, in just a few short weeks you can get your hands on this Amish fiction meets Western novel!

I was graciously given the opportunity to read this book and write a review through NetGalley and Harvest House Publishers. I am under no obligation to write a positive review, just an honest one.

How do you feel about Amish fiction? Christian fiction? And what about a Wild Western with cowboys and rustlers? And set in the late 1800s?

Well then, I have the perfect book for you!

The Heart's Frontier is a unique blend of historical, Amish and Western fiction all wrapped up in a delightful tale of adventure, romance, comedy and intrigue.

It's safe to say, this is not your mother's Amish fiction!

Emma Switzer and her family are leaving their home in Apple Grove to move to Troyer. After packing up their wagon to make the move, including Maummi's (her grandmother's) gargantuan and incredibly heavy hutch, she hits the trail with her father, Jonas, her sister, Rebecca, and her grandmother, to make the journey.

But along the way their wagon is hijacked by cattle rustling thieves and they are left stranded to walk to the nearest town. Upon arrival in an English Wild West town, Emma let's up a prayer to God for help:

"The saloon door swung outward and a body sailed through . . . A man landed at their feet with a gigantic poof of dirt. . .

A grin broke across Papa's face. 'See? The Lord has sent us help.'

Emma searched the dazed face at her feet. Disappointment stole any consolation Papa's words might have offered.

The Lord might have cleaned him up first."

Enter Luke Carson. A handsome young cowboy who has just gotten his first big job as the lead in a cattle drive. As a god-fearing and kind-hearted man, Luke takes it upon himself to help the stranded and now penniless Amish. He hadn't planned upon such a side diversion, but figured a few hours of time could be spared for the kindly, albeit quite lost and startled Amish family.

As the story develops, their paths cross again when Luke stumbles across an opportunity to help them again, and goes out of his way to do so.

But eventually, troubles strike his cattle drive and Luke finds himself needing answers to his own prayers:

"A sudden lightness lifted his spirits and a slow grin spread across his face. It looked as though the Lord had sent him help this time. His gaze focused on Emma. And He chose a mighty pretty delivery method."

As the two cross paths multiple times they get to know one another and a mutual respect grows between the two.

But Emma is Plain, and of the Amish, and Luke has a wild side, fit to live life as a cowboy. Not to mention, Emma's father and grandmother are doing everything they can to keep the two apart.

Will Emma and Luke find more than each other's help? Or is Christian help the most that one another can offer each other when they come from lives that are so different?

Read *The Heart's Frontier* to find out!

I have to say, I really did enjoy this book! Westerns aren't usually my more favorite genre, and I don't often go out of my way to read them. But I just couldn't resist trying an Amish-meets-Western book.

While I didn't connect as deeply with the characters in this book as I have with others, I found that the light-hearted joy that just emanated from the pages kept my attention easily. Plus, the occasional completely humorous passages kept me engaged and chuckling to myself out loud. The humor in this book is so much more interwoven than many other Amish fiction books that it was hard not to smile and laugh while enjoying this delightful read.

What is interesting is that most Amish fiction feels somewhat like a step back in time, with buggies and no electricity, so it's not unusual to feel like the book is period fiction. But when the Amish in this book were moving by wagon and oxen it just jarred me a bit because I guess I expected the assistance of a train or of a hired drive. Yet it really helped me to see that this book is period fiction, and that while contemporary Amish fiction feels removed in time, that even modern-day conveniences have intermixed with their lives, even if just a little.

My only criticism would be that Emma is almost a little too helpless at moments to fully mix with the rest of her character. For the most part she is a determined, and strong-willed young woman, especially for an Amish woman, but here and there she seems so helpless that it feels like it is out of her character, and I found that a bit jarring and a tiny bit inconsistent. But that is just a minor criticism, as I overall loved this book.

This delightful novel is a quick and enchanting read that will keep any Amish fiction lover, Western fiction lover, historical fiction love and/or Christian fiction lover entertained.

Pick it up next month if you want something that is completely unique in the ever-growing world of Amish fiction!

I just want to make a quick note that the quotes I used are direct quotes from this book and are copyrighted material of Harvest House Publishers, not to be used in any way without their express consent.

4 out of 5 stars!

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## **CarolynB says**

Very good. Not the usual Amish read, but very good.

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## **Beth Kaminske says**

Not one of Lori Copeland's better stories. I expected better from a Copland/Smith collaboration. Maybe Christian writers should stop writing so many Amish stories.

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## **April says**

The Heart's Frontier The Amish of Apple Grove, No. 1  
: Lori Copeland, Virginia Smith

This is a clean historical, western romance that merges Amish and English characters. It was a bit different than most Amish romance I have read. A nice relaxing listen.

The narration was well done. The characters were well portrayed. Cecily White does a fantastic job with accents. I enjoyed this very much.

I was given this free review copy audiobook at my request and have voluntarily left this review.

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## **Laura says**

Title: THE HEART'S FRONTIER  
Author: Lori Copeland and Virginia Smith  
Publisher: Harvest House Publisher  
March 2012  
ISBN: 978-0736947527  
Genre: Inspirational/historical Amish

Emma Switzer is traveling from Apple Grove, Kansas, to Troyer, Kansas, to help an elderly aunt. But enroute, her family's wagon is robbed of everything, leaving them stranded and alone in the middle of nowhere. They manage to walk to a town that has not much more than a saloon, but who can they find to help them?

Luke Carson is heading up his first cattle drive, pushing to get his cattle to Hays in time to catch the train. But when his best friend deserts him in favor of whiskey and women, Luke heads in to the saloon to rescue him. Instead, he finds himself landing in the dirt in front of four Amish people, with the man saying, "Thank you, Lord, for sending us help."

Luke had no intentions of helping anyone, least of all four destitute Amish. He had cattle to get to market. Besides, what happens when Amish meets the Wild West? Will they be able to mix?

THE HEART'S FRONTIER is the first historical Amish fiction I've read and the first book in the Amish of Apple Grove series. Luke is a total sweetheart, the stuff cowboy dreams are made of. He is a true hero. Emma is a mixture of characteristics, quiet and demur one moment, the next running and screaming, and the next manipulating people to do what they want. The father's faith is enviable and I—and most readers—could learn from him. Mammi, Emma's little sister, and Luke's best friend added comic relief to the story. I laughed out loud in several places.

If you are looking for a different sort of Amish—a historical, instead of contemporary—then THE HEART'S FRONTIER is a book you might want to consider. It is interesting, and it held my attention all the way to the end. I never would have thought of mixing Amish and the Wild West—but it worked for these two talented authors. Discussion questions and an excerpt from the next book in this series, A Plain and Simple Heart is included at the end of the book. \$13.99. 296 pages.

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