



Carry Me Home

Dorothy Adamek

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Finella Mayfield hates two things: liars and thieves. And she's determined to marry a man who's neither. Chasing her dead father's dreams, the twenty-year-old English bride arrives in Australia in 1875 for an arranged marriage. Anticipating her future as village preacher's wife, she records her thoughts in her Everlasting journal.

But instead of her fiancé, Finella is met by Shadrach Jones, a poor farmer sent to collect her from the busy Melbourne pier.

This is not what her father planned. And it's only the beginning of the unraveling of Finella Mayfield ~ the bride with no groom.

All Shadrach Jones longs for is rows of mustard and chicory. He's busy growing a farm near the Phillip Island fishing village of Cowes, and caring for Molly, his simple sister. Far from the brutal life they remember with their ex-convict father, Shadrach's building something new.

But he's also made a promise to a dying friend. To collect and marry the English girl destined to never be a preacher's wife.

Can Shadrach convince Finella she has a future with a farmer? Can he convince himself, knowing his family secrets will haunt their future?

Carry Me Home ~ Book 1 in the Blue Wren Shallows series. An Australian historical romance set in the pioneering era of the 1870s, on Victoria's majestic Phillip Island.

Carry Me Home Details

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From Reader Review Carry Me Home for online ebook

Rose Dee says

You can't judge a book by its cover, but if you look at this and think of a poetic romance set in a wild and vast land, then you will not be disappointed. The writing is nothing short of poetic brilliance. I found myself re-reading whole sections, just to enjoy the words. These characters are lovable, while still having a believably that complements the harsh Australian colonial setting. I enjoyed this story immensely. My only disappointment was that there was so much action at the end. I would have liked to have had some of that intensity spread out. I highly recommend this book. The writing alone will delight you, but combined with these complex characters and well researched story, it left me wanting to read more.

Sarah Sundin says

In Carry Me Home, Dorothy Adamek gives a familiar tale a fresh Australian twist. With gripping characters, a playful romance, delightful writing, and heart-rending moments, this novel held me tight and wouldn't let me go. Why, this gifted writer even makes mud romantic! A sterling debut!

deb says

I would like to say that it was the cover and the synopsis that let me know that this would be a magnificent story, but it was the beautiful lyrical words that were splashed across the first page that pulled me into the story. I knew the moment that Finella called her journal the Everlasting that I was in for a journey and adventure. I knew that I was getting a glimpse of a wonderful tale when George asked Shad to fulfill a promise. The love, forgiveness and healing that leaps off the pages and tugs at your heart leaves you breathless and makes you examine your relationship with our awesome Creator. There was a moment in the story where I couldn't contain my tears, yes they washed over me, and I wondered if I could have that type of will to forgive and love again.

Staci says

Beautifully written debut.

It was the cover and Australian setting that drew me in. It was the writing style that had me engrossed in this novel from page one. The writing was at once simple and flowery. In the pages, I visited the mud mired Australian farm Finella found herself in quite by accident. I felt Molly's outlook of sunshine and rainbows. I saw the flowers and birds the author described. I heard Shadrach's deep voice. I was there.

The story line was believable. Sometimes life's course is changed by one or two seemingly small shifts. The struggles Finella felt between her old world and a new possibility were realistic.

It was a lovely novel and I look forward to the next book in this series, Carry Me Away.

I highly recommend this novel for fans of Jody Hedlund and Lori Benton.

Deborah says

Dorothy Adamek's debut novel *Carry Me Home* was a page turning read from start to finish. With interesting, well developed and believable characters, this is a classic fish out of water story--the "fish" being the very beautiful and well-bred Finella Mayfield.

For as long as Finella can remember, her destiny has been to be the wife of a preacher, and serve both him and his flock. After years of gentle courtship by mail, Finella is finally traveling to Australia to marry her pastor fiance, but tragedy upon tragedy throws those plans into disarray. Now, far from home and all alone, a temporary solution comes her way through Shadrach Jones, a poor farmer of convict stock. A most unsuitable situation, in Finella's opinion, but it has to do until her austere aunt is able to make her way from England and rescue her from this uncouth life on Phillip Island.

The author has done a wonderful job of crafting the pace of this novel--from the start, right through to the unexpected dramatic turn of events near the end of the book. Although the book does have a Christian basis, the author has handled this aspect with a gentle hand.

Carry Me Home is highly recommended for those who enjoy clean historical romances. My only hope is that Dorothy is busy writing the second book in the *Blue Wren Shallows* series. I haven't read a book this fast in quite a long time.

(And just have to say ... that cover is glorious. Makes me want to pack up and head to Phillip Island tomorrow.)

Melissa says

I really enjoyed reading the story of Shadrach Jones and Finella Mayfield.

Finella arrives in Phillip Island expecting to marry the local preacher, a role she has been preparing for her whole life, only to find a completely different adventure is in store for her. She finds herself in the home of Shadrach and Molly Jones, caring for young Molly in a World that is completely different to the one she has known or had expected.

Dorothy has done a wonderful job sharing the world of 1870s Phillip Island. The themes of love and forgiveness are strong and, while it's a Christian book, non-Christians will still enjoy the story. There are a lot of twists and turns that will keep even the most avid of romance readers guessing.

Ruth Brennan says

I'm not a big reader of 19th century romances, especially with ladies in long flowing dresses on the cover. I have an assumption that they'll be a bit sickly sweet and that I won't identify with the characters. But, within a few pages I discovered with relief that Carry Me Home is different.

It is well-written and beautiful in the way that beauty is when it's forged from tragedy. The characters are flawed and multi-layered, the storyline and sub-plots are original and twisty, it has mostly non-clichéd secondary characters (the Pastor, Goliah, is a hoot) and a location that is right out of my childhood. Literally. Which is why I picked up this book in the first place.

Carry Me Home is set on Phillip Island, just outside Melbourne. I spent countless holidays there as a child. Small towns, gentle beaches, rugged coastlines, rolling countryside, koalas and penguins. It seems Phillip Island holds the same nostalgic magic for Dorothy Adamek and she does the landscape and its history justice.

And boy, can Adamek write a good hero! I was smitten with Shadrach immediately. You can tell she visualises each scene because the movements come alive on the page, which is magical when witnessing the growing attraction between Shad and Finella. It had my pulse racing! (This is who Adamek pictures as Shadrach: <https://au.pinterest.com/pin/26331990...> - :))

She deftly turns that spark into a gradual and deep abiding love worn deeper by the internal and external conflicts each has to overcome.

The thread of Christian faith weaves so gently through the story that I believe it would appeal to all readers, regardless of beliefs, who enjoy a well-written story of finding where one's heart belongs.

I'm not 100% sure I'm happy with the ending, I'll need a few days to mull it over. Even so, Carry Me Home is the best piece of romantic fiction I've read in a long time. And as it's romance week and I'm feeling all fuzzy and loved up, I might give another one a go....

Carry Me Home is the first in the Blue Wren Shallows trilogy and I eagerly await the next one.

Carol Preston says

This is definitely one for sweet romance lovers. The story, written alternatively from Finella's and Shadrach's point of view, follows the ups and downs and frustrations of their sometimes tender and cheeky and other times fragile and fraught relationship. Both characters are likeable and engaging and both have deep issues which take the story through some unexpected twists and turns. Shadrach's young sister, Molly, is completely endearing, probably my favourite in the story. There are very emotive issues around her character and a reader should expect to shed tears at a number of points.

The setting on Phillip Island is well described. I could sometimes feel the sand or mud between my toes. And there's an interesting historical and cultural side story about mutton bird egg gathering, which provides some lightness and a good distraction from the interpersonal conflict and agonising over the outcome of the relationship.

Dorothy addresses the Christian and spiritual values and needs of the characters in a well- balanced,

meaningful and sensitive way, which gives a good message without being preachy. The issues of developing trust, adjusting to change, loss and grief, and forgiveness are all woven thoughtfully and realistically into the story.

An excellent first book in a series and I'll look forward to reading the sequel.

Amy says

Carry Me Home is a fabulous debut for Dorothy Adamek. It is beautifully written, with fascinating characters, and wonderful historical Australia. What is not to love?

I highly recommend this book and can not wait to read more by this author.

5 plus stars.

Amber Stokes says

From the drama of the Australian coastline to the drama of fledgling (and unexpected) love, *Carry Me Home* offers a vibrant addition to the world of inspirational historical romance. The writing is rich with descriptions of wild, treacherous, and beautiful scenery and feelings.

The road to love is a rough one in this story where the heroine is out of her element physically and the hero is out of his depth emotionally. There's a lot of head-butting as Finella and Shadrach walk down the path set before them—to the tune of one step forward and two steps back more often than not. It's enough to frustrate a reader to no end, while still cheering them on, of course!

I felt sorry for each main character in turn, as these two and Shadrach's sister, Molly, face a lot of hardships. But those difficult circumstances certainly held my attention as I followed them through stormy weather, sickness, competition, and the haunting of past demons. I admired the bond formed between Finella and Molly, as well as the moments when tenderness couldn't help but prevail between Finella and Shadrach, despite their concerns and bouts of anger.

Realizing what you really need and appreciating who others really are requires a long journey, indeed...but it's a vastly rewarding venture. Historical romance fans will find a lot to love in this *Love Comes Softly*-esque story with some unique twists derived from the coastal farm setting.

With thanks to Relz Author Support Services and the author for providing me with an e-copy of the book in exchange for my honest opinion.

Iola says

Orphaned Finella Mayfield arrives in Australia in 1875, expecting to marry the preacher on Phillip Island, but instead finds herself as nanny/companion to fourteen-year-old Molly Jones, in the care of her brother, Shadrach, a simple farmer. It's a far cry from the life she was expecting, and she records her thoughts in her Everlasting journal.

Shadrach, the son of a convict, would have been attracted to Finella even if he hadn't promised the preacher to marry her and care for her . . . not that he's dared tell Finella that titbit. He just hopes he can convince her to stay, despite only being able to offer dirt, hard work and poverty—the opposite of the life she deserves.

Finella was a distant character, especially in the beginning, which made her hard to get to know. Despite this, she was easy to sympathise with, arriving in a strange place, knowing no one, and having her expected future stolen from her. We got to know her gradually, through her journal and through her outbursts towards Shadrach, and it occurs to me that this is how we get to know many people in real life: gradually, as people open up more once trust has been established.

Shadrach was equally likeable, a noble character despite the misfortunes of his upbringing, and someone who occasionally did stupid things to get the attention of the woman he loves. But I think my favourite character was the spirited but simple Molly, who did more than anyone to bring Finella out of her shell. The plot was also excellent, with more than one unexpected event, and I was blown away by the depth of the historical research, and the way it was subtly layered into the plot.

I rarely cry when reading novels. That might be that I deliberately don't pick emotion-packed stories to read, or that I'm too hard-nosed to cry. But I definitely teared up reading *Carry Me Home*, which is a testament to the quality of the writing, both in the way it made me care about the characters, and the way it inspired emotion. An excellent debut, recommended for anyone looking for a historical romance with a difference.

Thanks to Dorothy Adamek and Relz Reviews for providing a free ebook for review.

Nola says

The year is 1875 and Finella Mayfield sails from England to Australia to marry a respected preacher. However, when she arrives at Phillip Island, things do not turn out as planned. Rather than a comfortable life as a preacher's wife, she finds herself living in a shack on farmer Shadrach Jones's property caring for his mentally challenged 14-year-old sister Molly. Although a bond quickly develops between Finella and Molly, this is not the life Finella had dreamed of. Shadrach certainly has his appeal, but it's not enough to overcome the mud and primitive conditions in which she lives. She decides to stay only until her aunt arrives from England, but a lot can happen in a few months. Will Finella follow her heart or will the past stop her from embracing her future?

I really enjoyed this debut novel from Australian author Dorothy Adamek. The two protagonists are endearing, but well-rounded and come across as real people with very human flaws. The character of Molly adds an extra dimension to the story, as the developing romance between Finella and Shadrach is very much tied up with the welfare of young Molly. The historical elements were woven into the story well and it was refreshing to see an Australian setting that was a bit different.

Finella and Shadrach each have a strong faith which informs their actions. However, the faith elements are conveyed in a sensitive way that never feels preachy. Both of the protagonists have to grapple with loss and forgiveness in order to move on, and their struggles will resonate with readers.

The author has also gone to a lot of trouble to inject the prose with strong verbs and interesting metaphors and similes. For example: 'the shadows matched the tides, and night lapped at the edge of the day'; 'a well-known ache dragged across his chest like a rusty anchor tangled in a reef' and 'like a cool wind, his words

draped Finella with an expected freshness'.

This is the first in the Blue Wren Shallows series and I'm looking forward to the next one. If you like historical romance, there is a lot to enjoy in this book.

Susan Snodgrass says

This is a wonderful debut novel by Dorothy Adamek. Book one in her Blue Wren Shallows, set in Australia at the end of the nineteenth century, *Carry Me Home* is a sweeping novel that carries the reader away to another world.

Finella has come to Australia to marry the minister her father has chosen for her. Her father dies on the trip to Australia and when she arrives, the preacher has died, too. However, the preacher has asked his friend, Shadrach Jones, to marry Finella and fulfill his obligation to her. Finella wants no part of this. Shadrach is determined to honor his dead friend's wishes, and sets about winning Finella's heart.

Dorothy Adamek has crafted characters that seem real to the reader and her vivid descriptions of life in the Australian bush bring them to life! I could have sworn I was there during the reading of this book. I was very impressed with everything about this book. It did not read like an amateur effort, but was very well written and held my interest completely. I do believe Dorothy Adamek is an author to watch in the future.

The novel speaks of God's grace for us all. Guilt is a burden God never intended for His children to bear and this book teaches a wonderful lesson for believers.

I highly recommend this novel.

*I was given a copy of this book by the author in exchange for my honest review, which I have given. All opinions are my own.

Jamie says

I can't believe we're winding down 2015 and this is one of my last reviews of the year. What in the what Internet? How? Why?! I'm not ready!!!! Just kidding, I'm totally excited for 2016. I'm also excited to share about this debut from Dorothy Adamek!

First, this book takes place in Australia. That's a major win because I don't come across many historical fiction novels that are set there. I really enjoyed reading about Australia, as well as some of the historical aspects and what it was like.

This is a story that reminds the reader how life is often full of instances and happenings that often change the course of perfectly charted lives. What happens when things turn out so differently and we're a position we didn't plan? The story of Shadrach and Finella weaves through these questions while building a relationship and I really enjoyed the journey.

As a reader, you're drawn in each of their stories as each fights through unexpected circumstances, painful pasts and sorrows. Following a story of growing strength that can only come from faith, with each passing page, you'll find yourself more and more involved. A debut worth reading for historical romance fans!

I already really REALLY want to go to Australia and this book only added fuel to the fire. One day internet. One day.

What countries would you like more novels to be set in?

(With thanks to the author for a copy of the book in exchange for my honest opinion).

Originally posted at: <http://booksandbeverages.org/2015/12/...>

Shrilaxmi says

I won this book in a goodreads giveaway.

This is a historical romance set in Australia in the nineteenth century. It is about a twenty year old who arrives from England to marry the man her dead father chose for her. She is also determined to find the thief who caused her mother's death. Stuck in a strange land with nobody she knows, she finds happiness caring for a mischievous girl and in doing so, falls in love with her brother. This is a beautiful love story. The writing is simple yet powerful. The characters are amazing. The twist near the ending was completely unexpected. What I learned from this book is the power of forgiveness. It can make a huge difference in anyone's life.
