



## When Calls the Heart

*Janette Oke*

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Nothing in her cultured East Coast upbringing prepared Elizabeth for a teaching position on the Canadian frontier. Yet, despite the constant hardships, she loves the children in her care. Determined to do the best job she can and fighting to survive the harsh land, Elizabeth is surprised to find her heart softening towards a certain member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Book 1 of the bestselling Canadian West series.

## When Calls the Heart Details

Date : Published February 1st 2005 by Bethany House Publishers (first published 1983)

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Author : Janette Oke

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# From Reader Review When Calls the Heart for online ebook

## Haley S says

Have you ever loved a book SO much that you could read it over and over again and never get tired of it? Seriously? I am not joking? Because I know that that has happened to me. When Calls the Heart is my favorite book ever. That is why I reread this book to fulfill Reading Resolution #38 (Reread your favorite book). When by It Starts with a Book and I were creating this list, we both thought that rereading your favorite book would be a fun idea. At the beginning of the year, I wasn't sure what book I would use for this resolution. Then, after watching an episode from the Hallmark TV show, When Calls the Heart, I picked up this book and started reading it for the who-knows-what time.

When I first read this book, I couldn't put it down. In less than a few days, I finished the entire When Calls the Heart Saga. I fell in love with Wynn and Elizabeth. Janette did an amazing job writing their story. I love, love, love (if you couldn't tell) the whole saga.

Throughout the years, there have been many different covers of this book. So, I am rating just the cover above. That is the cover of the book that is on my bookshelf. I am giving this cover 4 stars. It may seem like an old-fashioned cover, but that is why I love it! If you get the whole saga in the old covers, you will see how the art keeps getting better and better, clearer and clearer. It gets more "real".

If you already couldn't tell, I am giving this book 5 stars. If I could, I would give it 10. But, I haven't to follow my rating system. So, a shout out to everyone who loves a good read: When Calls the Heart is definitely worth it!

P.S. The TV show, When Calls the Heart, is also really great! I love it!

Title: When Calls the Heart

Author: Janette Oke

Reading Resolution: #38

This review is written in my own opinions and words.

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## Sandy says

I had to read this book for our week on Christian fiction for my grown-up books class. And the reason why I didn't like this book wasn't because it was Christian fiction, as I had expected. I actually thought that the spiritual/religious part was pretty tasteful and not overly preachy. Cheesy at parts, but tolerable. Not that I have a problem with religion or anything (I don't at all), but I just don't like being preached to and feeling like fictional characters are morally superior to me because they constantly talk about religion, which I think

(admittedly, stereotypically) often happens in these kinds of books. But I could handle it here.

The problem is that the writing is pretty terrible. It's an interesting enough premise and there are sections of the story that are nice. But it's just not pulled together very well. I had been hoping that the romantic tension - what the summary on the back builds up to be at the center of the story - would keep things interesting, but Elizabeth and Wynn's motives and their resulting actions just didn't add up in my mind, and I just have a hard time believing that it can all culminate in a "I'm-going-back-East/Please-don't-leave-me" scene like we got in the final chapters. Elizabeth's frontier life was more interesting than the romance, which was what really disappointed me in the end.

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### **Kellyn Roth says**

I've watched most of the Hallmark TV show of the same title (which is amazing, by the way), so I decided to give the book a try. Well, it was nothing like the TV show ... but it was amazing. Once I got started, I couldn't put it down. Elizabeth was a great character (though sometimes this country girl thought she was being silly, such as with the 'wolves') and I love Wynn. He wasn't Jack (or Gil) ... but he was still a great hero. I loved that last scene at the train depot. ❤️

Originally posted on my March 2017 Mini Review Day post.

~Kellyn Roth

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### **Celeste says**

I have a confession to make: I absolutely love When Calls the Heart. You know, the Hallmark show? The Christian historical romance that borders on cheesy where everything always turns out okay? Yeah, that's the one. It's one of my favorites. In this show, community is about celebrating together in the good times and supporting each other through the hard times. Faith in God is the norm, and that faith actually means something. And love always finds a way. The show idyllic and wholesome and just makes me really happy every time I watch it. It's my visual comfort food.

Last week, Chris and I very unexpectedly became foster parents for two little boys. A couple of days ago, they just as suddenly returned home to their mom. Our emotions during this time went haywire; we were terrified because we've never been parents and didn't know what to do, we were thrilled with the boys themselves and fell in love with them despite our efforts not to get attached, and we were a weird mix of devastated (for us) and relieved (for them) when they went home so soon. When they left and our house felt just the slightest bit hollow, I needed to disappear into a book. But the books I'm reading currently, while they're great books, they were darker than what I needed. So I decided to read the book that inspired my favorite feel-good show.

The book wasn't perfect. It was stilted and felt a tad forced in places. It was different from the show that I've come to love, even though they shared a common name and framework. But it was exactly what I needed when I picked it up. It was short and sweet and full of love and hope and Jesus. Though Christian historical fiction is not one of my favorite genres, it's what I tend to turn to whenever I'm going through a rough patch in my life. I love how unapologetic the characters are about their faith, and how that faith permeates their

lives. I also love how faith is just an expected aspect of life in these bygone eras. And in the vast majority of the books in this genre, you go in knowing that everything is going to turn out okay, and that a happy ending is almost inevitable.

Janette Oke provided me with exactly what I needed here. It gave me some of the hope I needed when I wasn't feeling all that hopeful. Even though I enjoy the show more than I did this book, I'll probably continue with the series at some point.

For more of my reviews, as well as my own fiction and thoughts on life, check out my blog, Celestial Musings.

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## **AlixJamie says**

This book started out in a promising way, despite that fact that the plot was crystal clear and there were splatterings of formal language interspersed in and around the more casual setting, which made for an uneven read.

This is a typical Christian romance. The gorgeous heroine, the gorgeous hero, the cliché emotions and phrases, and the unoriginal conversations about God and faith. For a while, I thought I would like it, because Elizabeth had some spirit and she wasn't perfect. But as soon as she fell in love with that Wynn, pfft - end of the good stuff. From then on it was crying and pining and frustration and all those klutzy moments that are supposed to make you sigh at the romance.

I found it absolutely amazing that, even though Wynn is a Canadian Mountie and supposedly "married" to his job, he still finds the time to be EVERYWHERE Elizabeth is, even though she skips from Calgary to Pine Springs every other chapter. And he always shows up at the right moments too. When she's in trouble, Wynn is always there. To fix her stove, to carry her when she "sprains" her ankle, to drive her home from church, to buy her box lunch (which, I should add is one of the most overused settings in Christian romance. If you want to have romance, just stage a box lunch fundraiser and have the love-interest bid up a storm), and to kiss her so she doesn't faint.

Yes, you read that right, folks. Elizabeth runs into a bear on the way home from a student's house, she promptly faints and is rescued from a certain mauling by Wynn, who conveniently shows up to carry her out of danger (gag). Then, when he perceives that she looks rather pale, he kisses her to take her mind off the bear. She then misunderstands his apology for his sudden action and runs off in the direction OF THE BEAR. Makes sense, no?

And then, when they go sledding and she twists her ankle slightly, Elizabeth pretends that she can't walk only to have an excuse to rest her cheek against his broad, red-coated chest after he gently swoops her up. The next day she admits her deceit and realizes that when Wynn checked her ankle HE lied and said it was injured so that he would have an excuse to carry her. Nothing like a relationship built on mutual deceit, eh? Then there were all those times when Elizabeth fell, tripped, or did some other clumsy thing (unintentionally, these times) so that Wynn was forced to catch her, steady her, or hold her. Cliche, I say.

It seemed to me that for a schoolteacher, who was impressed upon me as intelligent enough for her chosen career, should not be able to figure out the things that I knew for a fact as soon as they were mentioned. Honestly, Elizabeth was so slow. She sits there and puzzles things out until you want to shake her. Is it so hard to believe that a man who paid 10+ dollars for your lunch, puts up with all your klutziness, lies in order to carry you a few feet, solicitously kisses you so that you do not faint, and always turns up at every tense moment to rescue you, could possibly be in LOVE with you? Apparently Elizabeth, who can teach kids from kindergarten to high school, cannot grasp these obvious things that are staring her in the face. \*sigh\* All in all, a quick, mindless read that did not make me laugh, cry or learn (three things the back of the book

advised I should do), so I suppose it was mostly wasted time. I will, however, read the sequel to see if it can make me laugh, cry and rejoice, though I have small faith in its ability to do so.

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### **Ashley Perham says**

Definitely exceeded my expectations! (It's a good 3 stars) It's kind of a bunch of vignettes, and I enjoy that style. However, I didn't really like Elizabeth's moping around about Wynn, even though I really liked him. I get that stuff like that happens, but I don't really enjoy reading about it. Idk, it just wasn't a stand out book to me, although I did enjoy it. I'll probably get around to reading the others in the series at some point.

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### **Hannah says**

I'd never been very attracted by Oke's books just because I wasn't drawn by the synopses. But a Goodreads friend (Beth) gave a good review while I was in the midst of a Westerns challenge, so I decided to try it out, and was not disappointed. It's the tale of a young woman who goes out to Alaska to teach school, and through turn of circumstances ends up in a remote location as the community's first teacher. She learns to face mice and coyotes with fortitude...well, maybe the coyotes; mice doubtful. I loved it that the romance was more to the side, and I could focus on the life of a healthy young Christian lady as she ventures into a new adventure. Suitable for all ages.

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### **Staci says**

Such a sweet story set in the Canadian frontier.

Main character Elizabeth Thatcher is a teacher from the east that ventures to the wild frontier to live with her brother and his family and be a teacher there. Her experiences in travel and getting established as a teacher are entertaining and touching. Her experience wasn't what she planned, but in the end her heart was overjoyed with gladness.

This novel was a great introduction to Janette Oke. I look forward to continuing the series.

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### **Lindsey (Books for Christian Girls) says**

About this book:

*“Nothing in her cultured East Coast upbringing prepared Elizabeth for a teaching position on the Canadian frontier. Yet, despite the constant hardships, she loves the children in her care. Determined to do the best job she can and fighting to survive the harsh land, Elizabeth is surprised to find her heart softening towards a certain member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.”*

Series: Book #1 of the “*Canadian West*” series. {There is a movie based on this book of the same name, p

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When Calls the Heart

By: Janette Oke

Rating: 4 stars

Ages: 13 and up (for mild romance)

I adore the Hallmark Channel series, When Calls the Heart. Who wouldn't? It is wonderful. It was inspired (loosely) on the first book in the Canadian West series, When Calls the Heart. I have heard great things about Janette Oke, so I decided to give her Canadian West a try. Here are my thoughts:

When Calls the Heart was intriguing and humorous. I started the book and really enjoyed the beginning,

when Elizabeth first gets the invitation to head West, and her emotions and reactions and thoughts are normal and easily understood. Actually, her whole character and the way she acts throughout the entire book is so easily understood.

The plot was simple and fun - it is a good, light summer read. It wasn't as much fun as the movie version (starring Stephen Amell as Wynn Delaney, and Maggie Grace as 'Aunt' Elizabeth Thatcher), but it was enjoyable. I related some of the things that both Wynn and Elizabeth did throughout the story to my older sister and we both ended up laughing. It was fun.

The 'boxed lunch' scene in the school when the men are bidding for the boxed lunches made by the ladies was quite humorous. The game was that the ladies would make and bring a boxed lunch (enough to feed two people or more) and the men would bid on the lunch and whoever won got to eat the lunch with the lady who made it...Poor, poor Wynn...being snubbed by Elizabeth again and again and he has no idea why! :)

The ending was very satisfactory. Honestly, Elizabeth's hasty decision to leave town was just that - hasty. Thank goodness Wynn caught up with her at the train station!

Overall, a cute clean romance I would recommend to Janette Oke fans and historical fiction/romance readers.

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### **Melanie Kilsby says**

4.95 Stars!

To me, this book is a classic!

Pure and simple.

Yes, compared to modern day writing, the plot is a little less riveting. But the love story is all the same endearing. However, her clear craft of writing, to me, is a staple on any shelf and hones the likeliness of Jane Austen. Therefore, lending to me, the "Jane Austen" status for Christian Lit. Yes, it's that good!

A lovely story with a strong female character now embarking out on her own and trying to battle life on the "West" with her head held high and trying desperately not to get married. That is, until a Royal Canadian Mountie Policeman walks into her life! \*Sighs\* It is Canadian, what can I say. It is a perfect story ;D

A must read for any christian reader.

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### **Rachel Melton says**

I've never read more than a couple Janette Oke books, so when I picked this title up, it sat around for a while before I decided to read it. Unfortunately, I started reading at a time when I probably should have been busy doing something else. So much for finishing what I should have been doing! I couldn't put the book down and read on through the next few hours, that night and the next day till I finished. Janette Oke masterfully weaves the tale of a schoolteacher coming west to take a position near her mother's favorite, her elder brother. She begins to like it there, but at odds with the local headmaster, is sent to a remote section of the country to teach - far away from her brother in Calgary. Throughout the story line, she endures many trials, but you will find yourself inwardly cheering her on through her journey.



Read for a second time in March, 2014 - still worth the read! Excellent book!

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## Ashley says

*\*\*These books aren't anywhere near as amazing and profound as SGW's Prairie Winds trilogy, but I love them anyway!\*\**

Its been years since I've read these, but I have definitely read them a few times. These are easy, adorable quick reads. The first one...Its probably closer to **4.25** in my rating, but I round up. I know they get better as they progress, and that is all that matters. The 'good stuff' didn't really happen until about 3/4 of the way through the book.

I love this series. I grew up with Oke's "Love Comes Softly" series, and I didn't love them as much as I came to love these books. I love Elizabeth, poor girl, haha I can kind of relate to her in a way. And I love Wynn! I am really looking forward to revisiting the rest of the series.

There is actually a show loosely based off these books. Same title, same character name, but I think THIS Elizabeth is supposed to be an older relative of the Elizabeth Thatcher that is in the show. Its a good show. I love the Hallmark Channel.

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## Beth says

I can see why this series is much loved by many readers. It is a shorter read, and while nothing is unpredictable, the setting and characters hold a lot of charm. I was surprised (happy) to see that it was written in first-person because that is not done very often inspirational fiction. The plot flowed well, and I appreciated the look into such a secluded and wild place. I've always found the life of teachers during this time period fascinating, and Elizabeth was a kindred spirit of sorts, with her tea-drinking and book-reading. It's easy to see why readers liker her. She has great voice; the only thing that bugged me was when the love interest came on the scene, she suddenly lost her wits (not just on their first meeting either), and that was annoying to me when she was so independent and adventurous in other ways. But even that I could overlook since it's a shorter book and holds a lot of appeal in it's other aspects.

I hope to eventually get to the rest of the series!

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## Lana Jackson says

I read this after enjoying the Hallmark Channel series "When Calls The Heart." This book is the original that inspired the Hallmark Channel movie by the same name. The movie incorporated a few changes that made

the story better. The series (books and T.V. show) has a different location and some of the characters are different.

Eastern born Elizabeth travels West to teach in a wilderness school in Canada. She finds difficulties in the surroundings, but adapts quickly and forms strong bonds to the people of the community.

I liked the history behind the Canadian Mounted Police.

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