



Fraying at the Edge

Cindy Woodsmall

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"Family, community, faith, and love. These "quilt blocks" sewn together made Ariana's beautiful life. When they are pulled to pieces, will anything familiar remain? The Old Order Amish life Ariana Brenneman loved vanished virtually overnight with the discovery that she was switched at birth twenty years ago. Now she's immersed in the Englischer world, getting to know her mother, and under the authority of her biological father, an atheist intellectual with resolute plans to expand Ariana's worldview. Only Quill Schlabach, a childhood friend living Englisch, can help steady Ariana's tilting ground between the two worlds, but can she trust him after so many betrayals? At the same time, Skylar Nash is forced to choose rehab or spend several months with her true relatives, the large Brenneman family and their seemingly backward life--no electricity, no technology, no fun. What the young woman can't leave behind is her addiction to illegal prescription drugs and deep emptiness from the belief that she doesn't belong in either family. New ties are binding Ariana and Skylar to the lives they were meant to have. Can they pray for the wisdom and strength they'll need to follow God's threads into unexpected futures? Fraying at the Edge is the second novel in The Amish of Summer Grove series"--

Fraying at the Edge Details

Date : Published August 16th 2016 by WaterBrook

ISBN : 9781601427021

Author : Cindy Woodsmall

Format : ebook 352 pages

Genre : Amish, Christian Fiction, Amish Fiction, Fiction, Christian, Family, Romance

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From Reader Review Fraying at the Edge for online ebook

Kristin says

Fraying at the Edge is the exciting second installment in the The Amish of Summer Grove series by bestselling author, Cindy Woodsmall.

If you've not yet picked up a book by this author, you should. Cindy Woodsmall really has a way with character building and I promise you that even her supporting cast of characters are very well fleshed out.

If you enjoy a good "Switched at Birth" tale and you're a fan of Amish fiction, this one isn't going to disappoint you at all. You'll see the struggle that Ariana faces as she tries to get to know her English family and deals with a lot of culture shock. I know that we don't think about how shocking it is to see a girl dressed in skimpy clothing or even if we see a commercial or a billboard for something like cigarettes or alcohol. To a sheltered Amish girl, all of those things would feel like a demonic assault.

Likewise, imagine the culture shock for a young woman who comes from a broken home, addicted to drugs and used to all the comforts of the world to find herself in an Amish home with no access to her drugs, television or other amenities.

My heart went out to both of these young ladies. Honestly, I'm so torn with how I want things to turn out. I want to see Skylar remain clean and I would like to see Ariana stay close to her Amish family and her birth mother. Her birth father is a bit snooty so I'll have to wait to see if something profound happens for me to actually like the guy.

The only thing that really bothers me is that I have to wait until August or September to read the next installment. I want to know what's going on and it's going to drive my daughter and I insane. Yes, the book is really **that** good!

This book offers real thought about topics like adultery, drug addiction and even sensitive topics such as what God may expect of us when growing our families should we suffer from health conditions. Most of all, it will challenge you to stop thinking of God as some dictator in the sky that is looking down on you with hate and condemnation. Through the characters you will begin to look at Him as a Father that looks down on us with love and compassion.

I highly recommend this book and this author. Be sure to check out book #3 in this series that is set to be released on August 15,2017

Gathering the Threads (The Amish of Summer Grove #2) by Cindy Woodsmall

Series: The Amish of Summer Grove

Published by Crown Publishing Group on August 16th 2016

ISBN: 9781601427021

Genres: Fiction, Amish & Mennonite, Romance, Contemporary, Christian

Pages: 352

After three months of *draus in da Welt*, Ariana has returned to Summer Grove, the Old Order Amish community where she was raised for twenty years, and life with her Brenneman family. Skylar Nash, the Englisch-raised young woman is working in Ariana's café while getting to know her birth family and their

Plain way of life. Skylar's time in Summer Grove has changed her outlook, just as Ariana has grown to see her personal faith in God in a different light than the manner she was taught while growing up. Both women will have to make decisions about their paths—and Ariana must decide what role her childhood friend, ex-Amish Quill Schlabach, will play in her life.

Gathering the Threads is the third and final novel in the Amish of Summer Grove series. This review was originally posted on A Simply Enchanted Life

Cheryl Baranski says

Fraying at the Edge is book two in The Amish of Summer Grove series by Cindy Woodsmall. Wow this is a wonderful piece of Amish fiction with a twist. Cindy draws the reader into the story hook, line and sinker right from the very start. This is a story that deals with love, faith, heartache and betrayal. Will Ariana Brenneman be able to get her Old Order Amish life back? You need to read this book to find out for yourself what happens to Ariana. I received a complementary copy of this book. This review is my honest opinion. 5 stars!

Amy says

I began this book unaware that this is the middle of a 3 part series. Which really is more like one novel split into 3, than what I would expect to be a traditional series. For that reason, because I was missing an obvious beginning to this book, it took me a very long time to not only figure this story out, but the myriad of characters retelling the story from their perspective. I usually don't find that works well, but as the book progressed, I came to recognize them, and their part in the overall story. Understanding that if you read the first book 'Ties That Bind', then you will already have become familiar, and this would be a non issue. Overall the plot is solid, and it left me asking many questions as I read. The awesome complication of discovering you had been switched at birth and everything you knew to be safe, secure and real, suddenly changed - and lets face it our families and those relationships are the very core of our identity and belief system. To find out you did not grow up with your birth parents, but belong in a completely contrasting community such as the Amish and vice versa, is mind blowing. How would you deal with that? Everything would be unfamiliar. The girls are now 20 years old, which, I find this age too old, to make this story believable. I felt like 16 or 17 would have been a better age, though to have Arianna be on the edge of getting engaged, that would have caused a problem. A significant relationship could still have been written into the story. I just kept thinking to myself, 'seriously? At 20 years old you will allow your situation to be dictated like that?' Many 20 year olds have moved out, living in college, working or married. Not responding like children being forced for legal reasons to relocate to their birth family.

I enjoyed the way the 'switched at birth' concept explored and Cindy approached it in a sensitive way. I grasp from looking at the genre of books she writes, that she is well researched in the Amish faith & way of life. I don't think the way she writes is consistently favorable to the Amish people. Its obviously a vastly different way of living and practicing of the Christian faith than many of us choose to, but still their religious right to do so. Unhurried and set at a natural pace, this middle segment of the story of Arianna & Skylar develops in a realistic way, both of them thrust into living - seemingly without a choice, an alien lifestyle. Small details, for example when Arianna attempts to bake with 21st Century appliances, and sets off the home alarm system, and for Skylar the simple loss of running water, something that we all so readily take for granted - brought out a richness to the story.

I prefer the books I read to have a solid ending and this one did not. It reminds me of when movies try to create sequels or trilogies and end on cliffhangers, it's really annoying and I dislike that even more in books. I may or may not seek out this final book in this series, my 3 star rating is the indication that I don't want to pick up a book and realize I've missed a significant part of the story, and finish 300+ pages with it incomplete. The concept and plot is 4 star.

I received the ARC 'Fraying at the Edge' by Cindy Woodsmall from Blogging for Books & WaterBrook Multnomah in return for my honest review.

Laura says

Wow. FRAYING AT THE EDGE was an emotional read that I so was not expecting. I mean I should have been, I read Ties that Bind earlier this month. It was so emotional, with Ariana missing her family, being forced into a world she wanted no part of and having everything stripped away except a friendship with Quill that she didn't want. Likewise, Skylar, going from being a not exactly only child, but one with everything handed to her -- and a drug addiction, to being one of like a dozen children in a small house with a family that is dirt poor. How would either girl survive the culture shock?

Quill. Oh. My. Word. I am so in love with him. And Abram. They are both so wonderful, thoughtful, beyond awesome men. I am looking forward to reading Gathering the Threads (releasing next month, squee!) so I can read more about them. And yes, I have my wants about how I want this series to end, but whether they go the way I want or not, I know I'll be engaged.

This is a series you will want to read in one sitting, starting at the beginning with Ties that Bind, Fraying at the edge, and Gathering the Threads, so you might want to start now at the beginning. I absolutely loved the first two books in this series. There is a reason why Ms. Woodsmall is one of my favorite Amish authors.

I was given a free copy of this book. All opinions are my own.

Ibjoy1953 Hannabass says

MY THOUGHTS ON THIS BOOK

This first book in this series, Ties That Bind ended with Ariana Brenneman and Skylar Nash going to live with their biological parents. Skylar's parents were not together, so she had two families to get to know. As well as doing everything on the lists that her parents had for her to complete. One the other hand, Ariana Brenneman did not care for her biological parents and their lifestyle. She didn't want to live without electricity and everything that goes with that, including cell phones and internet.

This series deals with the harsh situation of babies switched at birth. These two young ladies were from completely different lifestyles, so it makes for an amazing read. My heart went out to both ladies, because neither of them wanted to change their way of living. But as I followed their story in Fraying at the Edge, it was interesting to see the changes in Ariana and Skylar, the longer they stayed with their biological parents. Cindy Woodsmall does an amazing job of weaving together each family and the interaction between the two. I read this book in one setting, because I had to find out what happened to these young ladies I have grown to love. I simply can't wait for book three to hit the shelves. This is such an amazing series I plan to keep this

series on my shelves and read it again. Ms. Woodsmall puts a different twist to her Amish stories that makes them different from all other.

If you enjoy Amish fiction, Fraying at the Edge is one you need to check out. And don't forget the first book in the series as well, Ties That Binds. I just can't say enough about this wonderful book and series! I received this book from Blogging for Books to read and review. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 55.

Nora St Laurent says

This story reminds me of the authors' first series titled Sisters of the Quilt. The thing I loved about the stories was the fact it took place mostly outside the Amish community. While reading that first novel, When the Heart Cries; I learned to expect the unexpected from this author. I loved that. The same holds true with The Amish of Summer Grove series. The story and characters have grabbed my heart and never let it go.

This is not your typical Amish tale. Far from it. If you didn't read book one in this new series you will be brought up to speed by the author in the sequel, BUT you will have missed the richness of this story and the depths these families have been through and still agonize over their circumstances in Fraying at the Edge.

This author has a wonderful writing talent that quickly pulls readers into her books hook, line and sinker. In book one Ties that Bind, Skylar and Ariana discover at age 20, that they were switched at birth. Each family wants the chance to get to know their biological child. Nicholas (Ariana's biological father) has threatened the Amish community with a huge lawsuit (and/or jail time for the nurse in charge) if they don't comply with his demands. So Ariana goes off with her Englisch family and Skylar has the choice to submit to an inpatient rehab center OR to go to the Amish community in order to know her biological Mom and Dad. She chooses the Amish family. The author placed the reader inside the main characters shoes and had them looking at the world through their eyes. It was moving as both girls' worlds are turned upside down and are plunged into a surreal one year experience.

Here's a peek at the girls first impression of their new life. "Skylar had a lot to adjust to – new family, Amish rules by the silo full, no modern conveniences, and the frustration of living in a poor home. Every time she turned around, another pipe had broken, which meant someone had to haul water into the house so she could brush her teeth. ...Who lived like this – no electric lights, washing clothes by hand even when the water worked...the hardest part of this ordeal thus far was the lack of drugs...All she could think about was a couple of tablets of Xanax, Ativan, or Valium. Anything to stop the incessant restless legs."

Ariana was having a different kind of challenge. Who knew that making breakfast for her new family would cause so much chaos? Her biological mother's husband Gabe looked at Ariana. He told the person on the phone to hold a minute. "He lowered the phone to his chest, "It's the security system people. They said the emergency button inside the house was pushed. Is everything okay?"

"I..I guess," Ariana shrugged. "As far as I know I was trying to turn on the stove."

"The stove?" Gabe repeated.

"Dad ----Cameron rolled her eyes –"tell the guy all our secret code stuff, convince him the house hasn't been invaded by body snatchers, and let him get back to the people who aren't trying to figure out how to use

electricity."..."It's a whole new world for you, isn't it Princess Jasmine?"

"That's enough Cameron."

"What?"... You don't think I'm being nice either, Dad? Ariana and Toto aren't in Kansas anymore! Is anyone in this house surprised by that?"

"I am, Ariana's words were a growl.... I'm totally surprised by it. Shocked. Miserable. But it's just funny to you, isn't it?...Tell you what. You learn Gabe isn't your Dad at all, and trade him for someone as difficult as Nicholas. You give up your comfortable life and put yourself, by yourself, in, I don't know, maybe the Middle East, where the culture is totally disrespectful of you and all you've been taught to believe. Then we'll talk about how nice you've been okay?"

Does that make you want to read more? Can you feel both girls' anxiety, pain, loneliness, despair? I like how one of Quill's siblings explained the experience both girls were having. "You're in a room of people who, in one way or another, had a high-magnitude earthquake hit their lives, Ariana...Quill had it the worst!"

This is why Quill was so helpful to Ariana. He was great at helping her navigate this strange new World.

Another aspect of this novel I loved is how naturally the spiritual thread is woven into this story. Just when the reader is totally invested in the novel and on the edge of their seat wondering what will happen next; I was stirred in my spirit and my heart by something I was dealing with and/or had dealt with in my own faith journey. That's another thing I love about this authors novels. I can expected the holy spirit to working in my heart. That's also unexpected on many levels and one of the main reasons I read Christian Fiction.

Quill teaches Ariana to listen to that still small voice inside of her. He says, "Never discount anything your senses are telling you, not at first. Let the information sink in, and trust your ability to reason out the truth. If you're wrong, that will become evident soon enough. Usually when one part of us is telling another part of us what's going on, it's a gift from God. Use it. ...Quill continues, "You know what you need? His eyes reflected hope. "You need a new view of the Heavens."

"Of the Heavens?"

"Ari, our God is so much bigger than we can grasp. As children we saw him as if we were inside a snow globe and he was just outside it, on his throne out of sight, looking down at us. For those of us raised to believe in a jealous, angry God, we see him with a frown, scowling. And as all Amish know, being frowned on is one tiny step from being shunned."

Ariana says when asked about life outside the Amish community, "The Englisch world was a mixture of fascinating beauty and deviant horror."

This author brilliantly pens an engaging, heart-felt story where I instantly cared about these young ladies and their struggle. The other thing I adore about this novel is the well-tied humor. This novel spoke volumes to me as I read how everything these girls believed about live and themselves was being tested. They had to start picking up the pieces, of their shattered lives and discover who they really were and how God fit into all of this?

Fraying at the Edge would make a wonderful book club pick. I am a huge Cindy Woodsmall fan. I think this novel is her best yet. It's a keeper and a must read novel.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received a complimentary copy of this book from the Publisher through the Blogging for books site. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising"

Nora St. Laurent

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The Book Club Network blog www.psalm516.blogspot.com

Book Fun Magazine www.bookfunmagazine.com

Carolyn V says

unique storyline. Book 2 of the amish of summer grove. Book 3 comes to publish this year in August. This series has been a good reading experience. A story of two gals, thrown into totally different lifestyles; and how it changes their life and decisions.

Kav says

I somehow missed the first book in this series and like most of Cindy Woodsmall's stories this is a continuous series where major elements play out over the course of all three books. So, if you are looking for closure, you won't find it until book three comes out. But having said that, this time round the author has done something fabulous -- she's included a brief overview of the story so far at the beginning of this book. So I was able to read that and then dive right into Fraying at the Edge without any trouble. That's a brilliant perk that I hope more authors who write serial type series adopt. Plus she has included a comprehensive who's who list of characters at the back of the book. So you can definitely dive into this story right now if you don't want to play catch up with Ties that Bind first.

And what a captivatingly convoluted novel! My emotions were all over the place as I got deeper into the story. Both Ariana and Skylar are displaced and totally out of their element. I think Skylar got the better deal -- though she wouldn't agree with me. She's all gnarly and rude and completely self-centered at the beginning but a bevy of siblings are pretty hard to ignore and they slowly begin to wear her down. But she feels abandoned and lost and is just beginning to find herself by the time this book winds down. I feel like there's a possibility for romance in her future and I'm anxious to see how that plays out. Plus Skylar is at a crossroads and I have no idea what she's going to do next.

Ariana -- oy -- I spent most of the read feeling furiously indignant on her behalf. Her biological father is...gah!...words cannot express how I feel about his tactics. Manipulative. Conniving. Major superiority complex. Watching how that relationship plays out and how it influences Ariana kept me an emotional pretzel for the whole read! But again, I have no clue as to what she will do next. Two men interested in her -- one Englisch, one Amish -- and she's not certain where she belongs.

A complicated story with promises of much more to come. Can't wait until book three comes out...and hope it's soon!!!!

Maria says

I read the third book before I read this one which is the second book! Still a great read however.

Amy says

Fraying at the Edge is book two from Cindy Woodsmall's The Amish of Summer Grove series. I want to warn the reader that it would be best to read Ties That Bind first. I think it may be confusing if it has not been read yet.

Fraying at the Edge is a wonderful sequel and I was happy to catch up with the characters. I have always loved Ari and now Skyler has started to grow on me. The two women were thrown into unknown worlds and certainly had their struggles adjusting. Which is the main focus of this book. The ending had quite a cliffhanger that I did not expect at all. I cannot wait to pick up the next book in the series, Gathering of the Threads, to see what happens next.

Highly recommended.

100 stars.

This book came from my own personal collection. This review is 100% my own honest opinion.

Lisa Johnson says

Title: Fraying at the Edge (Summer Grove #2)

Author: Cindy Woodsmall

Pages: 352

Year: 2016

Publisher: Waterbrook Press

My rating 5 out of 5 stars.

The first novel in the series is titled, Ties that Bind, which introduces us to two families from different worlds, the Amish one and the English one. Two women brought up in different societies with polar-opposite type parents, expectations, understanding of the world and so much more. Through each chapter the questions of the soul and heart for Skylar and Ariana get deeper, more complex and without quick resolution. Skylar is learning not to live dependent on drugs and learning who she is without them as well as who she is on the inside. What is Skylar made for and what is in her future? Those seem to be just a couple of the questions Skylar has ruminating within her. Ariana is glad to see the café booming, but no longer is sure of who she is when she notices herself acting, thinking and talking differently when she returns to Summer Grove.

The author masterfully shows there aren't so many clear-cut answers as there are questions within the heart of each woman. Ariana is also questioning what she believes and how that is lived outside the Amish community's control. Skylar wants nothing to do with anyone who seems controlling whether God, Isaac or her other dad.

I cannot wait to read the final book to see how this tension is brought to conclusion! I highly recommend this faith filled series that handles real life issues that affect our heart, mind and soul.

Erin says

Life could not have changed more dramatically for either Ariana Brenneman or Skyler Nash. In this sequel to "Ties That Bind," the two twenty-year-old women who discovered they were switched at birth are now trying to fit in with their biological families. Ariana has agreed to leave her Amish home for a one-year trial period in exchange for her father not suing the midwife who made the mistake, while Skyler chose a year with her Amish family rather than going to rehab for a drug addiction.

Ariana has a sincere desire to do her best in getting to know her new family, but she is quickly overwhelmed by all they ask from her. Her biological father is an atheist who challenges the beliefs she was raised with, and he gives her a 'bucket list' of experiences she can pursue in order to earn points towards a visit with her boyfriend. The title of this book perfectly describes the confusion and self-doubt Ariana goes through as she navigates the changes that have been thrust upon her.

Meanwhile Skyler is determined to be as insolent and difficult as possible towards the Brennemans, feeling like her parents disowned their troubled daughter in exchange for a chance to bring home a brand new innocent one. She believes she can still find suppliers to keep her drug habit going, and as soon as she can manage it she plans to run away. Yet as she unwillingly helps around the farm and in the cafe Ariana that bought just before finding out about her heritage, something begins to change inside Skyler. If this is what working together and truly loving others looks like, maybe she could begin to accept the love and care the Brennemans are offering.

We also continue following Quill, the former Amishman who helps families who want to leave the Amish community. Having facilitated Ariana and Skyler reuniting with their biological families, he is the last person Ariana wants to reach out to, but he is also the only one who can help her make sense of all she is thinking and feeling.

I greatly enjoyed the second book in The Amish of Summer Grove series. Cindy Woodsmall has a way of drawing you in with characters you can't help but cheer for.

I received an advance reading copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for this honest review. All opinions are my own.

This review originated at <http://reviewsbyerin.livejournal.com>

Beth says

Love this cover! Oh goodness I always wonder what is our deal with loving the Amish, do you think it is 'cause they are so quiet and keep to themselves. I love their simple ways. I think we have so much busyness in our daily lives. I am new to Cindy's books. I love her style. Trying to decide which I love more book 1 or 2? A three book series. For me I've been easily pulled into this world and these amazing characters. I look

forward to each book. I am reviewing this after I have read book 2 ... so I am curious where book 3 will take us. I have been super lucky to get these books from the publisher for an honest review and my thoughts. I will definitely be looking into more from Cindy. I only wish I had read her books before now. Funny how I have been so lucky to have found so many new authors to me lately, and they are all so different, in genres, style, it is all so awesome!! So love her writing style. But please know that Cindy doesn't do the light and airy side of the Amish ... she brings in a darker side. fear. Such a great read. Loved it!! Well done.

Susan says

Fraying At The Edge

Cindy Woodsmall

Received from Netgalley.

Ariana has been raised Amish and that was exactly how she planned living out her life until one day she learns her parents aren't really her parents at all. She was switched at birth with an Englisch baby. There was a fire at the time, lots of panic and confusion, and the babies were accidentally switched. Now it's twenty years later and the parents of the Englisch baby want the chance to get to know their biological daughter. So, in order to keep the midwife who delivered the babies out of jail, Ariana and the other woman, Skylar switch places for one year. **FRAYING AT THE EDGE** is the second novel in the Amish of Summer Grove series by Cindy Woodsmall.

Skylar Nash is being forced to choose rehab or spending a year with her biological family. Sky has a problem with prescription drugs on top of believing that she doesn't belong with either family. Will she be able to survive a world of no electricity, modern technology, or fun? To top it off, she is having a difficult time finding the pills she thinks she needs to survive. Meanwhile, Ariana is trying to stay true to her Amish faith while having every temptation laid down in front of her. Will either one of them be able to come to terms with all that happened and is still happening to them? After a year is up, will they stay with their biological families or return to the family that raised them?

Wow, **FRAYING AT THE EDGE** is an emotional roller coaster story. It is filled with very many themes including drugs and adultery. I have to admit that Quill is growing on me. He is a former Amish man who tries to help Ariana while she is with her biological family. He has lied to Ariana many times but he feels that he is doing it for her own good. Ariana doesn't want to reach out to him, but he is the only one who can help her. I'm so excited to continue this series as well as all the rest of Cindy Woodsmall's books that I haven't read yet.

Debi Lantzer says

Fraying at the Edge is the second book in The Amish at Summer Grove series by Cindy Woodsmall. Ariana Brenneman is 20 years old and recently learned that she was switched at birth at the birthing center she was

born as a result of a fire that occurred the night she was born.

Ariana must live in the Englisch world with her biological family - her father is Nicholas and her mother is Brandi Nash, but they are not married. Nicholas doesn't believe in God and doesn't have any respect for the Amish culture or organized religion. On the other hand, Skylar Nash is the daughter that was switched with Ariana, and she is given the choice of staying with her birth parents (Lovina and Isaac Brenneman) or going to rehab due to her drug problem and rebellious behavior.

Skylar picks staying with the Brenneman's and works in the café hoping it will provide a chance to see her boyfriend and drug dealer. Her birth mother, Lovina wants to get to know her, but Skylar is not interested. She feels that Nicholas and Brandi were glad to be rid of her and her birth family did not care enough to look for her.

My heart really went out to Ariana and to Skylar as each of them were forced to adjust to ways of life that are completely foreign to each young lady. It was great to see the closeness, respect and love that eventually formed between Ariana and her birth parents, and between Skylar and her birth family.
