



# A Chance at Forever

*Melissa Jagears*

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## **A Chance at Forever** Melissa Jagears

In early 1900s Kansas, Mercy McClain, determined to protect Teaville's children from the bullying she experienced as a child, finds fulfillment working at the local orphanage and serving on the school board. When Aaron Firebrook, the classmate who bothered her more than any other, petitions the board for a teaching position, she's dead set against him getting the job.

Aaron knows he deserves every bit of Mercy's mistrust, but he's returned to his hometown a changed man and is seeking to earn forgiveness of those he wronged. He doesn't expect Mercy to like him, but surely he can prove he now has the best interests of the children at heart.

Will resentment and old wounds hold them back, or can Mercy and Aaron put the past behind them in time to face the unexpected threats to everything they're working for?

## **A Chance at Forever Details**

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# **From Reader Review A Chance at Forever for online ebook**

## **Lisa (Bookworm Lisa) says**

Can a person really change? What are morals? Those are some of the interesting thoughts that I had while reading this book. There are examples of cause and effect. Someone who is abused can become a bully. This book is about choices, the choice to change or live a life of unhappiness.

Mercy is an amazing character. She illustrated compassion throughout the book, but knows where the boundaries are. You cannot remain compassionate and let people use you. That is her dilemma in this story. Is she being swayed unfairly because of her compassionate nature? In spite of it all, she is positive, trusts, and is someone you would want on your side.

Aaron comes from a complex past. He is a contrast between being in control or being controlling. I loved that he was trying to give restitution for his mistakes. It takes a man of integrity and character to make things right, or at least try to.

I mentioned morals in the first paragraph, because there are characters who give the impression of having high morals, but their characters reveal that they are only moral as long as it is of benefit to them, or just pretend to have morals. This book gave me a lot to think about. What philosophies do we speak, and what do we really believe?

I should also mention that this is a fun book to read, besides thought provoking. The characters are well written, the pacing is great, and there is always some dilemma that needs to be taken care of.

It is clean with kissing. There is mention of prostitution and non-graphic violence. The book contains Christian themes.

Source: I requested a copy from Netgalley to read. Thanks to Bethany House for approving my request. All thoughts and opinions expressed are my own.

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## **Staci says**

In this final book of the Teaville Moral Society, there is a focus on the red light district and helping those that want to have a better life. This followed the same pattern as the first two books in the series.

What was new for this novel is the subject of bullying. Main character, Aaron, has a past as a bully. Mercy knew Aaron when he was a bully and finds it difficult to see him in another light. Aaron is desperate to make amends for his past.

This was a sweet story. The ending was especially heart warming.

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## **Clara says**

Bullying is a horrible practice that leaves unfathomable consequences, especially in regards to trust and self-acceptance. What can be most heartbreaking is that it may come from those who should be unconditionally at your side.

Mercy McClain knows the many sides of bullying, being from someone close or from another kid. This other was George Firebrook, someone she thought she'd never had to see again and be reminded of all her limitations. But, as I said, bullying isn't just a rebellious child practice, and Mercy is still reminded of her limitations and dependency even without George in her life. The balm to her soul is that she has a job she is crazy for, a job through which she can make a difference and be a support to the fatherless.

Until Aaron Firebrook steps in her life again. He might have changed his name, still, Mercy feels wary to trust him and destined to prove there's still a tormentor inside him. As other stories are uncovered, Mercy has to decide where the truth stands and, consequently, where she stands, who she'll protect.

When both find in each other the support to take care of an orphanage and children who desperately need role models, will prejudice continue to be in the way of the possibility of a stronger bond? Will pride endanger the discovery of a love never failing, never judging, always accepting, always caring?

Unwavering trust and hope might be difficult to be born in a heart that has been hurt. But the obvious love pouring out might be enough to build bridges and atone for the past. Enough to believe in a chance at forever.

Melissa Jagears's ingenious characters have left me dumbfounded in each book of this series. It has challenged me as well as entertained me. I'm really sorry to say goodbye to these characters but I'm just happy they've been written. Though I can definitely see a spin-off coming out... ;-)

\*I received an advanced copy from the publisher. All thoughts are my own.

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## **Anne says**

A great third installment of the wonderful *Teaville Moral Society* series that did not fail to captivate me!

I absolutely *loved* the opening chapter...there is something unexpectedly endearing about a former bully who finds himself attracted to a woman he used to torment mercilessly as a child. It's a twist on the typical "redeemed rake" trope I have a penchant for, and worked wonderfully well in this book.

And also, a heroine who finds herself falling for her worst enemy...\*swoon\*

The romance in this book = highly, HIGHLY APPROVED. I was incredibly impressed at how swiftly and efficiently Jagears handled Mercy's growing attraction to Aaron, and Aaron's tender emotions for Mercy. Given the nature of the romance, there was the danger that feelings would come out of the blue or that things wouldn't make sense, but it was superbly well-done, easy to follow, and feelings progressed naturally and weren't developed overnight (which is a big pet peeve of mine in romances).

As usual, it was a pleasure to journey back to Teaville and follow the inhabitants about their business, meeting familiar and beloved characters from the previous two books - such as the Lowes and the Wiselys -

as well as plenty of new faces. I, for one, was HIGHLY pleased with the side romances, and am so glad that Caroline-the-prim-and-serious-housekeeper also got a taste of happily-ever-after. ?

Following the more serious tones of the two previous novels in the series, *A Chance at Forever* deals with mature subjects and explores subjects more substantial than mere fluffy romance, as well as delving into the lives of characters in the early twentieth century who do more than wearing pretty things and gossiping at sewing circles. I highly admire Jagear's way of crafting a fun and engaging book that manages to leave you with a good impression of having wisely invested your time in reading it; it's not an empty read, it challenges you, and makes you think. I love that.

Where the book loses points resides in its predictability and repetitiveness, especially in the latter half; a denouement which felt flat after the possibility of more exciting suspense, as well as the habit of writing the narrative using a lot of questions. Where would she go? What did she do? Why was she there? Would she come back?

For some reason I found it very irritating, and hadn't noticed it at all in the two previous novels. Not a deal-breaker in an otherwise highly commendable book, but it was annoying.

Other than that, I really enjoyed this third installment of the Teaville Moral Society series, and would like to sincerely thank the author and NetGalley for a chance to read and review this book – I apologize once again for the late review!!

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### **Caitlyn Santi says**

I have been loving this series and I was highly anticipating Mercy's story! This book was phenomenal, I loved every single minute! I already knew that I really liked Mercy, so I was sure that I would love her hero too, there is just something about a hero who is working super hard to be better and overcome his past mistakes, and doesn't feel that he deserves to be loved that never fails to make me swoon, and Aaron was no exception, what a hero, I was totally in love with him from the first chapter on!

I loved, loved, LOVED this book and it just may be my favorite of the series! I also loved the continuation of the secondary characters' (Caroline and Henri; Sadie and Franklin) stories that we got in this book, those story threads were tied up brilliantly and put the biggest smile on my face! While there are so many parts of this book that I absolutely love, my most favorite part was the epilogue, it just concluded both this book and the entire series in such a beautiful and absolutely perfect way, ahh! so good, it had me grinning from ear to ear and not wanting to say goodbye to my friends in Teaville!

I don't know what else to say except that I absolutely adored this book, highly recommend it, and cannot wait for Melissa Jagears' next book!

I received a copy of this book from the author and publisher, which did not influence my review in any way. All thoughts and opinions are one hundred percent my own.

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### **Aerykah says**

Two good, mostly uninterrupted, afternoons of reading and this book was finished! Obviously, it was a pretty fast read for me. :)

I was a bit disappointed in the first book (A Heart Most Certain) in this series-- not because it was bad or anything (it was pretty good), but because I was unable to connect with any of the characters-- and I will admit that had me a bit worried going into this book. However, I ended up really enjoying this one and flying right through it at near record speeds!

These characters felt much more relatable and I even liked the characters from the first book better in this one. It sounds terrible to say this, but... I actually really loved that the main character is missing her hand. See what I mean? That's such a horrible thing to say, right?! :( And yet, it's still true. I'm pretty certain that the only books I've read where a character was missing a limb were cases of soldiers having been injured in battle so this-- a girl being born without part of her limb and having to grow up suffering through the teasing, bullying, etc. as a result-- was a new and quite interesting perspective, especially, I think, for a historical fiction book. It's not something that you typically see and I thought it was very well written!

I feel like I really can't say enough about these characters. Mercy is a beautiful, realistic, totally relatable mess of kindness and compassion... and bitterness and unforgiveness. She really made me consider my own actions toward certain people-- how I can have kindness and compassion toward some, but what about when I am confronted by those who have hurt me? Do I express that same spirit toward them or do I stubbornly harbor those hard feelings that most people would never even realize I have? Food for much thought right there, let me tell ya.

And Aaron... Sweet, hurting, repentant Aaron. He is such a different person now than he was when Mercy knew him as a child. God has worked such a transformation in his life and it shows in every way. Oh, I cried over this man... I have no shame in admitting that. Seeing how badly he desired forgiveness for all the hurt he had caused years ago-- the lengths to which he went to show others how sorry he was for what he had done-- and seeing how he wanted to be a different, better man and wanted to use his past and his present to impact others like his younger self and show them God through his own life. How could a reader not love this character?

In the end, I was left with some questions and felt that some of the secondary characters' stories didn't end in quite as satisfying a way as I would have liked, but that is a bit of reality that should be expected. Overall, this book is one I am glad to have read and one that I will likely read again. The pain, the struggles, and the ultimate forgiveness and growth of these characters makes this the type of story that resonates in hearts and minds, lingering long after the final page has been read.

*I received a free copy of this book from the publisher. I was not required to write a positive review, all opinions expressed are my own.*

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## **Cathy says**

Such a beautiful, beautiful love story...love between a man who had been emotionally crippled by a wounded past ...who took his hurts out on others when he was younger and lived to deeply regret it...a man who turned into a godly, humble, sensitive, romantic and totally swoon worthy hero. This was a deeply moving story of a woman who was born with a disability, yet she didn't drown in self pity...she chose to trust God and use her

life to help orphaned children who needed her selfless love and devotion. Seeing this couple overcome seemingly impossible challenges and grow to deeply love each other gave my heart such joy. I was also deeply moved by the supporting characters, the precious children. It was also so good to see my favorite characters from the previous books. This book was enthralling and such a satisfying ending to the series. I am going to be reflecting on these characters for many weeks to come. My book is highlighted and dog eared because there was so much godly wisdom packed in these pages. I give this book my highest recommendation! I was given a copy of this book by the publisher. The opinions expressed are my own.

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### **Dana Michael says**

I really enjoyed A Chance at Forever. This is the third book in the series. The heroine Mercy was bullied as a little girl by the hero Aaron. As an adult, and a born again Christian he attempts to ask forgiveness from Mercy and others as well.

This book is well written and easy to read. I loved the message of forgiving others. I also loved the sweet romance as well.

\*I was given a copy of this book by the publisher and this is my honest opinion.

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### **Rebecca says**

"Aaron Firebrook . . . . . she'd figured he was likely related to the worst bully she'd ever known, but to actually be him?"

George Aaron Firebrook has a lengthy list of those in Teaville with whom he feels led to make restitution; Mercy McClain being at the top of the list. Seeing her in a school board meeting, with his very future in her hands, wasn't exactly how he would have written the script.

Mercy McClain is stunned to encounter "Aaron" Firebrook as a candidate for their high school math instructor. He had been the meanest boy in town; taunting and teasing her for days on end, his cruelty towards others practically legendary. Sure, he had grown a beard, changed his name, and put on a guise of kindness, but she could not imagine trusting him with the children of Teaville, Kansas; could she?

Instead of easily avoiding Aaron while the school board interviews other potential teachers, Mercy finds Aaron employed by Nicholas Lowe as a gardener for the very orphanage where Mercy lives and works with her brother and sister-in-law. As the weeks progress and Mercy has a close up view of the older and wiser version of Aaron Firebrook, everything that she supposed to be true is held in question, while everything that was supposed to be in question appears to be true. But there are other more pressing issues to confront than Aaron Firebrook's code of conduct; others are struggling to accept that lives can be changed from the inside out, with the power and grace of the Holy Spirit.

A lovely story with deep spiritual undertones.

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## Nicki Olsen says

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### \*My Thoughts\*

I have been a part of Melissa Jagear's influencing team ever since "Love in Store", and I'm not lying, her books get better and better.

Mercy is the character everyone loves to love. She is kind, sweet, and loving but she still has flaws and a hard time with forgiveness. She's the kind of character that you can "feel" with, and commiserate with. Her name is something she struggles with, but not in a mean way, she's just had a lot to deal with in life.

Melissa did a fantastic job with Aaron. Mercy was sweet enough to be angry with Aaron over hurting her, but Aaron had just enough hurt in his own life to cause sorrow on the part of the reader. Trying to turn his life around, he was such a strong character while still being like a fragile little boy.

Overall, the storyline was amazing. I have never read a plotline like this, and I think it was so well written. Melissa added in plenty of twists that I NEVER saw coming, and kept my jaw on the floor. The ending of this series is such a sad feeling for me, but she did a wonderful job wrapping it up! Unlike others that like to tie it all up with a shiny red bow, Melissa kept it real while still making the reader sigh in pleasure. A thoroughly enjoyable, captivating read that puts it at the top of my 2018 favorites list!

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### \*My Rating\*

I give A Chance at Forever...

5 stars!

\*I received this book from the publisher, but was in no way required to give a positive review.

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## Trixi says

*"You shouldn't let the voices of your past or present define who you are. Let God do that."*

Aaron embarks on a journey to try to make up for hurts he caused others in his childhood. The one person in the world Mercy McClain could go without seeing again is Aaron Firebrook. It seems God has plans for these two in spite of their painful pasts.

Melissa Jagears does it again with this emotionally charged tale of forgiveness, redemption, and becoming new in Christ in spite of your past sins. I loved seeing the character growth in them both, especially Mercy as she begins to accept herself as God sees her. Aaron is our wounded hero. Humble to the core, knowing he doesn't deserve grace or mercy in the people he hurt. But yet he knows he received it from God who looks at



the heart of man. These two certainly spark whenever they are near each other & not always in a good way. When both of them begin to understand the forgiveness God extends, then healing can come and love can grow! Two unlikely people put together by God with a bond that is unbreakable, beautiful and lasting. A wonderful redeeming love story to touch heart & soul!

\* I received a complimentary copy by the author and was under no obligation to leave a favorable review. All opinions are my own. \*

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### **Brittany says**

This book was so good!!! I could hardly set this novel down because I was seriously invested in the these two main characters.

Mercy had a lot to deal with in her life, from being born with a deformed arm, to being bullied relentlessly as a child, to being treated as a burden by her brother. So when her former bully showed up claiming to have changed, I understood her reluctance to trust. Aaron was also a great character. It was fascinating to see how God had changed his heart, how noble of a man he had become, and to learn of the ways he had suffered as a child. It was interesting to be so connected to a character in the story who had once been a cause of such heartache!

I loved the growth of both Mercy and Aaron throughout the novel. I also loved the development of their feelings toward each other. It felt so natural and real, as did both of their reactions to this change. The interactions with the various orphans and the general day to day life at the orphanage kept the story flowing and captivating. Beautifully done!

I received a complimentary copy of this book. All opinions are my own.

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

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### **Hannah says**

Whew...what a beautifully crafted story! I have a hard time reading Melissa Jagears's books quickly because I just want to soak up all the details. I managed to make this one last a week. Of course, though, I finished the last hundred or so pages in a single night because I simply couldn't stop to put it down.

At the end, I had warm fuzzies and a deep regret over having to say goodbye to these characters. The small-town feel is authentically crafted and made me feel like I could go visit it if I lived a century ago. The epilogue was good, but not enough material on my new "friends" to satisfy me. I want more books set here!

I've always liked the name Mercy and I loved how our heroine embodies some of this and seeks to live up to her name. I loved the Christian lessons included. Aaron was an enjoyable and believable character also. I really admired his gutsy decision to come back to the town where he had been a bully and been miserable in order to try to make amends. I love how their story unfolds gently until everything about the past is understood and there's just the present and future to deal with.

I really have a hard time with writing reviews on books I love too much. In fact, a lot of the books on my favorites shelf don't have reviews because of that. I highly recommend the whole series, and this is a great story to end it with (though I will continue to protest the series having to end.)

Content: some mention of the shady houses of the red-light district. Some drinking/drunkenness, not condoned.

Thanks to the author for a free copy of the book in exchange for a review.

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## **Beth says**

Melissa Jagears is one of my favorite historical romance authors. When I want a story that is romantic yet still focused on true-to-life issues, I can count on Jagears to deliver. *A Chance at Forever* is one such story. Endearing characters and the theme of forgiveness are the highlights of this novel.

Mercy McClain is such an admirable yet relatable character. Born with a limb deficiency, she grew accustomed to others making comments and behaving cruelly towards her, but no one tormented her more than George Firebrook. When George, who now goes by Aaron, comes back to Teaville in order to teach, Mercy is sure that he would only bring heartache to the life of a child the way he did to her. Both Mercy and Aaron perfectly demonstrate how long and difficult, yet so very rewarding, that the road to forgiveness can be. Mercy must forgive Aaron and make peace with the new person that he says he is, while Aaron must forgive himself and let go of the condemnation he has carried all of those years. Though at first their interactions are fraught with tension and a feeling of heartbreak, they soon take on a sweet hopefulness that I loved.

In addition to the theme of forgiveness, Jagears continues to touch some serious issues that have carried throughout the Teaville books, namely the consequences of prostitution and the plight of the town's orphans. Mercy and some of the other characters that readers will be happy to see again take on prejudices of their peers, while trying to do their part to help. I appreciated that the plot showed that sometimes no matter what, you can't help everyone, but you can help someone. Not every book succeeds in being both challenging yet entertaining, sobering yet hopeful, but that is just what *A Chance at Love* accomplishes.

Several secondary characters whose story has been sprinkled throughout the series finally get the ending they deserve. Their stories were told nicely throughout the overarching plot of each book, reaching a satisfying culmination without taking away from Mercy and Aaron's story. The epilogue ties everything together perfectly. I am a big fan of epilogues, and this one does such a good job of taking care of any lingering wonders I might have had about certain characters. Teaville has been such a wonderful place to visit, and I'm both sorry and happy to see the last of this bunch.

*A Chance at Forever* can be enjoyed as a standalone, but I recommend starting at the beginning of the series. It just makes it really fun when the characters show up again because I know their story. I highly recommend this novel, and the entire series – for fans of entertaining yet challenging historical fiction with a sweet romance.

I received a complimentary copy of this novel from the publisher. I was not required to write a positive review, and the opinions expressed here are my own.

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**Trisha Robertson (Joy of Reading) says**

I have enjoyed reading all the books in the Teaville Moral Society, but this one is my favorite! This story deals with some heavy topics and situations, but every page points back to Jesus and His love. This is a beautiful story of Faith, Forgiveness, and Love. This story could easily be read as a stand-alone, however, for those who have read the other books, characters from previous stories do make appearances.

From the first chapter to the last I didn't want to put the book down. I felt emotionally involved in the lives of Mercy McClain and Aaron Firebrook. These characters are so real and engaging you can't help but feel their hurts, and cheer for their breakthroughs.

With a mystery to solve, and surprises to keep you guessing, two fantastic lead characters, a strong tread of faith, and a tender story of love, there is a little something for everyone to enjoy!

At its core the gentle reminder that in order to become who God wants us to be we need to allow God to change us, we need to ask for His guidance in our daily lives. Our willpower isn't enough. I give this wonderful story 5 stars and would encourage you to pick up a copy for yourself to enjoy!

(I received a copy of this book from the author/publisher in exchange for my honest opinion. I am not required to write a positive review. My thoughts and opinions are my own.)

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