



# The Promise of Home

*Kathryn Springer*

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## **The Promise of Home** Kathryn Springer

As temporary guardian of her sister's two children, big-city magazine columnist Jenna Gardner is forced to face her past. She isn't in Mirror Lake for long before she realizes that everything has changed. And it's not her past throwing her off-kilter now—it's handsome next-door neighbor, Dev McGuire. Though Dev gets under her skin, he quickly proves himself an excellent father figure for the children. Soon he's encouraging Jenna to believe in second chances. But it'll take a leap of faith to believe that her future just might be in Mirror Lake after all.

## **The Promise of Home Details**

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Author : Kathryn Springer

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# From Reader Review The Promise of Home for online ebook

## Kelly\_Instalove says

*"Sailors and explorers looked to the North Star to help them remain on course. It might not be as flashy or get attention like a shooting star, but it's the one you can trust to always be there. To help you keep moving in the right direction. A constant."*

### THE HAPPY COUPLE....

She's a high-maintenance magazine columnist who's suddenly dropped into parenthood when her wild-child sister goes into rehab. He's a reclusive photographer hiding some Very Angsty Secrets.

### THE ROMANCE....

This one had some pretty good relationship building, starting with amusing mutual annoyance, then evolving into mutual trust (aided by the kids) and eventually love. There's only one smooch at the end, but a few near misses interrupted by the kids and a ginormous slobbery dog.

### THE SETTING....

Mirror Lake, Wisconsin, is (painfully evident on the Rainbows & Flowers & Plot Moppets cover) an idyllic, idealized small town, overflowing with Godly People and Good Advice. However, most of the action in this installment takes place in the remote back woods, where the heroine and hero are forced to learn to trust each other for the sake of the kids.

### THE STORYTELLING....

I was surprisingly absorbed by the believable set-up and character-driven plot. While there were some of the expected heart-tugging "'h, those poor babies" moments, the troubled-kids drama was never manipulative or conveniently forgotten. The hero's Very Angsty Secrets provided a bit of mystery, but the buildup to the rather melodramatic ending seemed like an afterthought.

### THE FAITH MESSAGE....

*"The heavens proclaim the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world." - Psalms 19:1-4*

For me, the spiritual themes played out really well in this book. We learn how religious convictions led the hero to become a reclusive photographer, and we see how his quiet, unapologetic faith affects the heroine's perception of him.

The presentation of some of the other residents of Mirror Lake, featured in previous books, was a little too jarringly "Rah! Rah! God is Great!" compared to the understated introspection of the hero, but fortunately their appearances were few and short.

### THE RECOMMENDATION....

Great for readers looking for a contemporary inspirational with compelling characters - but I don't think I'll read the rest of the series. But I NEVER would have chosen this book based on the cover.

[NOTE: I read a digital Advance Readers Copy provided by the publisher through NetGalley.]

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### **Jessie Anne says**

I'd forgotten how much I liked this author.

This was a great story about a young woman trying to forget her unstable childhood who suddenly ends up taking care of her sister's kids. Through the kids- and a giant dog - Jenna meets her neighbor Dev, the small-town's "recluse." While Dev and the kids click right off, the adults are another story. Jenna doesn't trust much, and Dev is turned off by her society image because it reminds him of the past...

I liked the twist on "people from different backgrounds." A quick, fun read.

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### **Teri-K says**

When I'm not loving a book I like to ask myself what's wrong. Sometimes I can pinpoint why it's not working for me, but other times I remain puzzled to the end. This is one of those times. There's nothing exactly wrong with this book, but I was bored all the way through, and only enjoyed the last few chapters.

Perhaps that's a clue to why it didn't work for me - we didn't learn much about our MCs until the end of the story. They danced around each other, but not even literally because nothing happened at all, until the very end. Our heroine didn't confront her estranged sister, the kids didn't create any real conflict, we didn't learn why the neighbor is a recluse, we never understood why our heroine loved the city so much... everything was left hanging until far too late to get me interested in this book. As for the Christian aspect, "God will never leave you" was stated a few times, but I wasn't impressed by any reality there.

2 stars because it's not terrible, just dull.

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### **IrenesBookReviews says**

Jenna is a city girl and finds herself in a country setting. Stepping up to help her sister with her niece and nephew, she moves into their home to help take care of them. While there she meets a handsome neighbor called Dev. Dev has moved to the country to get away from the city. How the two main characters interact is interesting but only part of this story. The children in the story actually play an important part and help keep the story line moving. Without the children and town people the story might have been a little boring.

I gave this book 4/5 stars. I liked the children in the book and thought they were portrayed well. The main character, Jenna, was just not that likeable. I did not think the writer wrote her well. The other main character, Dev, was written pretty well but not really someone you could cheer for. However, I like reading Love Inspired for the escape factor and thought it did well at giving me a story that entertained.

I would like to thank NetGalley and the publisher for the copy of this book I enjoyed reading. I gave an honest review based on my opinion of what I read.

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### **Jenna Scribbles says**

The Promise of Home is a wonderful, touching story. I haven't read any of the other Mirror Lake books, but didn't have trouble jumping right into this one. Sure there are some patches of backstory presented, but nothing was too overdone or confusing.

I'd like to thank NetGalley and Harlequin for a review copy of this title.

If you are looking for a sweet, spiritual tale set on the shores of a lovely lake, then The Promise of Home is a book for you. The author gave us a vivid setting of cabins, mosquitos, fishing on the dock, and hiking in the woods. I grew up in a small town and frequently visited cabins in northern MN or WI. Ms. Springer hit the nail on the head with her description of the people and surroundings. Well done.

I fine read. A lovely, inspiring story. I recommend it.

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### **Brittani says**

How does Jenna Gardner escape her past life and become a successful adult? Well, she works at Twin City Trends magazine in Minneapolis, MN, writing articles about current trends and fashions. Jenna's life is going great when suddenly she receives a phone call from her sister, Shelly, who is in rehab. Shelly requested that Jenna take care of her children while she is getting the treatment and help she needs. Jenna tentatively agrees to care for Shelly's children, not knowing exactly what is in store for her. With help from her neighbor Dev, Jenna learns the life lesson how to trust others and applies this skill to raising her sister's kids. Jenna didn't plan on caring for the children so long, but now she has begun to develop a love for them and does not want them to disappear again.

At times, the book events seemed to move slowly and drag on, but then parts would move so quickly I didn't want to put the book down. I liked that the book contained important life lessons that are applicable to my life. For example, even though our society has fallen to pieces, there are still good people out there. You just have to give people a chance and look for the best in them. I would definitely rate this book as a good read especially when a reader wants to find the positive points of life's adventures.

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### **Janga says**

Jenna Gardner enjoys her life as the most popular columnist for the upscale magazine Twin City Trends. She's not prepared for the call from a social worker that brings back the past she'd like to forget and threatens the life she has carefully built. Jenna's sister Shelly, whom she hasn't seen in seven years, has escaped serious injury in a house fire that started when she fell asleep with a cigarette in her hand, but the fire has forced Shelly to admit she needs help and she has entered rehab for her prescription drug addiction. As her nearest relative, Jenna is given temporary guardianship of Shelly's two young children: seven-year-

old Logan, whom Jenna hasn't seen since he was a newborn, and five-year-old Tori, of whose existence Jenna was unaware.

Jenna goes to Mirror Lake, the small town in the north woods of Wisconsin where Shelly has been living for a short time with Logan and Tori. Jenna expects to take the kids back to Minneapolis with her, but the social worker thinks the children need to stay where they have some sense of belonging. Country life is a big adjustment for latte-drinking, designer-clothes-wearing Jenna. But her sense of responsibility ensures that she'll do her best for Logan and Tori, and soon their innocence and vulnerability have love, not duty, as her prime motivation.

Once Devlin McGuire thought life was all about power and wealth, but the death of his brother has left him with emptiness, guilt, and the need to find meaning beyond the externals that his old world valued. He has retreated to the woods with his camera, a mixed breed mutt who adopts him, and a seeking heart. He's not thrilled to have a pretty blonde neighbor and two engaging kids ending his seclusion, but it doesn't take much before they are taking his time and capturing his heart.

But Jenna and Dev both have lots of baggage from their pasts and secrets they are not sharing with one another. And then there's Shelly. All these characters need another chance, but first they must learn how to trust and whom to trust.

This was my first book by Kathryn Springer, but I checked her backlist as soon as I finished the book. This is the kind of inspirational that merits the name. The characters are likeable and credible, story is not sacrificed to sermonizing, and faith is a journey, not a panacea that offers easy answers. This is the fifth book in the Mirror Lake series. I've already bought the first one for my Kindle and plan on adding the others.

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### **Veronica says**

I really enjoyed this book. I also really enjoyed the fact that Springer tied another of her series in with this book especially because the character tie in was from my favorite Love Inspired novel ever. I enjoyed all the characters in this book. The love story was really sweet and not too cliché.

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### **Jessie says**

I'd forgotten how much I liked this author.

This was a great story about a young woman trying to forget her unstable childhood who suddenly ends up taking care of her sister's kids. Through the kids- and a giant dog - Jenna meets her neighbor Dev, the small-town's "recluse." While Dev and the kids click right off, the adults are another story. Jenna doesn't trust much, and Dev is turned off by her society image because it reminds him of the past...

I liked the twist on "people from different backgrounds." A quick, fun read.

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## **Anna Marie says**

My favorite X-mess movie is a little Hallmark direct-to-video called "Season for Miracles" with Carla Gugino. In it, the heroine grows up in a broken home with substance abusing mother, constantly being uprooted, and having to take care of her little sister. She grows up and has her life in order, but her lil'sis perpetuates the abuse with her own two kids. When she's plopped in rehab, the heroine has to travel from her home to take care of the children, with the help of a kindly community and a handsome hero who (of course) falls in love with her.

This book? It's the EXACT same story, only with a little more rustic backwoods to it (instead of an X-mess theme). Jenna is a big city writer, Dev is a backwoods recluse. But in the flavor of Springer, he is - naturally - actually rich off his butt, having left one of the top companies in the Midwest to go play 'Red/Green Show' in his grandpa's cabin. Because EVERYONE who comes to Mirror Lake are rich off their butts, gorgeous beyond words, and just happen to find this little town in Wisconsin. Riiiiight.

I bought it with Abby (the ex model from Chicago). And okay, her hotel mogul brother, Alex. But on top of them, Dev the construction mogul, and five years later minor celeb Jenna, too? C'mon...!

And then there's the other problem that I had with this. Once upon a time, I read Lori Wick books. Loved them. But after the first five or six, it started to be clear that... well, her characters are so saccharine that that you can't stomach them. Men always not only say the most understanding things, but go above and beyond. Every. Single. One. The ladies never lose their patience, everyone is absolutely perfect. And that's what I'm starting to feel with this series. Abby is perfect. Kate is perfect. Emma is perfect.

And now Jenna is perfect... because after ALL she goes thru, she never says no to the kids. She never just needs to go and sit down and think things thru. She's poise and composure, constantly. And it just... got to me after a while. If it were me and I was in a hole of a shack with two children that weren't mine, job deadlines a state away, and half the additional worries, on top of all that, I wouldn't be smiling the entire book. She does break down at the end, but it's only a literary plot to get her in Dev's arms. She should've cracked before that. \*I\* would've.

They just seem too good to be true, anymore. And the screwed up character? She's kept mostly behind a protective literary veil (or a glass window)... safely away from the H/h and children. That's not real life. I'm not saying that I haven't enjoyed the books (up until now), but I had to suspend some serious reality where the characterizations were concerned, in this one.

On top of it being a repeat of someone else's story, it just didn't do it for me. I'm not saying to skip this, but I'm saying you can watch a movie version of it, complete with Patty Duke. I had to deck a few stars on this one.

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## **Rhonda says**

Wednesday, July 18, 2012 The Promise of Home by Kathryn Springer

4 STARS The Promise of Home was a charming novel. Love the kids and dogs. There is nothing to offend someone with swearing or sex scenes. They do quote a couple of scriptures and bring up church and a church activity. It was part of the story and not just thrown in. Jenna Gardner has not seen or heard from her sister

since the birth of her nephew over 7 years ago. Now she gets a call that her sister is in rehab. after a fire in thier her home. The social worker told her to come Mirror Lake and take care of her neice and nephew. She did not even know that tori existed. She has not seen Logan after her visit when her sister left the hospital. Jenna takes the kids back to were they were living before the fire. It turns out to be a rundown cabin close to a lake. Jenna is a city gal in fact that is what her news story are about the good life in the city. As she is getting Tori out a big dog comes and scares them. When the owner hears the scream and comes running he looks scary too. Devlin McGuire had just come back home from camping when he hears screams and runs into a women sitting on her car with his dog enjoying her shoe. Once he confirms he is not a wolf the kids get out of the car and loves the dog. Devlin left the city with his good job in the company his father owns. His fiancée who wanted the rich life style to enjoy nature by staying in his grandfather's cabin. Devlin is a hermit now days. Next day Devlin is fishing when Logan comes to join him and he lets Logan catch a fish. When Jenna and Tori come looking for Logan . Tori names the fish that Logan was going to eat Fred. So they let Fred go back into the lake, because you can't eat Fred. Logan looks out for his little sister. Jenna is worried about her sister and her kids. She has not had much experience with kids. Jenna is trying hard to do whats best for them. Mirror Lakes sounds charming I would not mind reading about the characters in the town in the future. I was given this ebook to read in exchange for honest review from netgalley. 06/05/2012  
PUB Harlequin Imprint Harlequin Love Inspired

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### **Crystal Memmott says**

It was fun to visit Mirror Lake again! City girl, Jenna Gardner and Nature Photographer, Dev McGuire were made for each other. Both had experienced heartache and loss in their lives, yet opened up their hearts to God's help and intervention.

Since I am a mother to a boy and a girl, I could relate to the children, Tori and Logan. I felt empathy for their plight and, being a sucker for happy endings, loved the happy ending to the story.

If you want a clean romance with just the right amount of empathy, tenderness, friendship, and love, read this book. I wish I could really visit Mirror Lake, it sounds beautiful and serene. (By the way, I love the dog's name!)

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### **Hannah Fielding says**

A heart-warming, touching 'clean' romance with a charming setting and appealing characters. I found myself absorbed in the story from the first pages, starting as it does with two frightened and traumatised children who pull at your heart strings, and their caring but way out of her depth aunt, Jenna. The story is simple, but powerful in its messages – the true meaning of family, the power of letting go and of forgiveness, the joy and peace that come with following your heart and being your authentic self and the fulfilment that comes from finding a true home at last.

I was particularly moved by the author's exploration of the choice between career and success and the modern, fast-paced, image-conscious world – and a simpler, calmer more creative existence closer to nature. By the end of the book I found myself slipping into daydreams about cabins amid woods in rural Wisconsin, and small towns where communities thrive.



The romance that blooms between Jenna and her enigmatic neighbour, Dev, is expertly set up and developed, and I found myself really rooting for them to be together despite what seemed like irreconcilable differences, given that Jenna is a city girl and Dev has shunned that existence. Jenna is a warm and realistic heroine, and Dev is a most attractive hero – I have always found male characters with strong paternal and protective instincts very appealing.

In all, I had a wonderful afternoon curled up in an armchair lost in *The Promise of Home*, and I put the book down with a light heart and a smile on my face. Lovely.

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### **Ausjenny says**

Firstly thanks to Harliquin and Netgalley for my review copy.

This is my first book by Kathryn but it won't be my last. I found out this is the third book set in Mirror Lake Wisconsin but if you haven't read the other two books you won't be confused. This book is a stand-alone read but I am sure the others would add to it. In this book we see Jenna arriving at the place her sister and children had been living. Now to set this up Jenna is a city girl who is use to the best of city living and where she is now is a small town and the home leaves a lot to be desired. Next door is Dev who is very much a recluse and seems to be a thorn in her flesh. He also seems to be there when they need him. I enjoyed the story and it read well. Sometimes I will read a book that seems to take ages and then books like this one I seem to be flying through them. I read this in a day which even for me is fast. I love the people and the caring shown here. Jenna has a lot of past hurts that she is dealing with and letting people in is not easy. We see her discovering things about herself. What I really like is the way the book plays out so we see the insecurities and why they are happening. Trust is a major issue this book tackles. Well worth the read.

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### **Maxine Billings says**

This was the first book I've read of Ms. Springer. It is a heartwarming, wholesome read that held my attention from beginning to end. The detail in which she painted the scenery and the life she brought to her characters made me feel as though I was right there.

Since I am a country girl, I absolutely loved the scenes where she vividly described the beauty of God's creation. And I simply fell in love with Logan and Tori and their sweet innocence.

I also liked the way she portrayed Jenna and Dev's past relationships with their siblings and how she brought everything together full circle by the end of the story.

I loved this book so much that I cannot find enough words to describe how much I enjoyed it. I look forward to reading more of Ms. Springer's stories.

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