



A Stitch and a Prayer

Eva Gibson

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A quilt becomes a labor of love for a lonely wife mysteriously separated from her young husband.

After her fiancé returns from the Klondike gold rush in 1897, Florence Harms sets about building a new life in her new marriage—even though the lingering effects of illness have left her weak and vulnerable. She and her young husband, Will, work tirelessly to clear the land around their Northwest cabin, content with their modest life.

But then a stranger comes knocking and Florence suddenly senses a restlessness in Will's spirit that she had never seen before. When he leaves her with only a note that tells her he will return before their baby's birth, she is devastated, and the illness that stiffened her joints returns. Counting the days until Will walks back through her door, Florence busies herself with a Tree of Life quilt displaying a map of the farm they call home. Doubts claw at her heart as Florence struggles to believe Will's promise to return to her. Will her labor of love—and faith in God—sustain her as she waits to see her beloved once again?

A Stitch and a Prayer Details

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Author : Eva Gibson

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Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Christian Fiction, Fiction, Inspirational

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From Reader Review A Stitch and a Prayer for online ebook

Tia says

Florence and Will are newlyweds and have had a long distance relationship before they were married. There is always a period of adjustment, learning about that person and really getting to know each other. At times, Florence seems immature and so does Will, but who has not had to grow up when they are married at a very young age and spent more time apart than they did together before getting married. Also, how she has really started growing in her faith by prayer and reading God's Word. She used the difficult time to memorize scripture, pray and trust God.

How well do you know your spouse? You think that everything is fine and then they start distancing themselves from you and then you wake up one morning and they tell you they are leaving. How are you suppose to feel? They don't tell you the reason that they are leaving and you have to trust them. Also, the only way to communicate is through written letters. You have to trust the person and believe that they love you and will return to you and the home that you have begun to build together. How could your faith stand the test? How would you handle the situation? Could totally trust and depend on God to meet your needs and answer your prayers.

I enjoyed reading and seeing through words the love story between Will and Florence blossom and unfold. Her also growing in her faith and trusting in God.

I am totally in love with this series!!! Each book is a stand alone and does not matter where you start. I love these love stories that does not get you bogged down in only one era, but it covers from World War II to Gold Rush to Modern Day and every other era in between.

I received this book free from Litfuse Publicity Group through NetGalley. I have not received any monetary compensation for a favorable or non-favorable review of this book.

Sarah says

I have read several book from the Quilt of Love series and again this book exceeded my expectations the others books have set precedent for this series. Florence, has a physical disability that brings emotional turmoil, especially when it comes to being a wife. Will a man pursuing her heart, continues to tell Florence that he loves her and that he is choosing her despite her physical impairment. He promises her future, children and cannot wait to build a life with her. After the two become married, Will disappears for a while, when he returns, she is over joyed as it is difficult for her to house chores without help. However, this book doesn't come without it's ups and downs and questions about will their marriage stay afloat when Will has to leave again..... I enjoyed this book and the love that Will has for Florence despite what some might call as a "Flaw." He is able to see beyond her physical impairment and love her just the same. I also love the story behind the quilt, which speaks of faith, family and love. Overall, this book gets 4 stars from me. Thank you Abingdon press for providing me this book to review. I was not compensated for a positive review, but was just provided a copy of the book.

Kristin says

Suggested Age: 14+

Genre: Christian, Historical Fiction

You know, I just couldn't get into this book. I tried, I really did.

The main character, Florence—oi, that woman came off so needy and whiny.

I literally read all of her dialogue in a pouty, baby voice. I understand that she was pregnant, alone, and dealing with a medical condition but she came off more like a young child.

The constant stuttering to denote moments of weakness happened far too often for my liking as well.

I honestly thought this book would have a bit of pioneer spirit. I just didn't find it in this book. I wish I could have enjoyed it—it just wasn't my cup of tea.

The year is 1899 and Florence has married her love, Will and together they are settling in a newly built cottage.

Florence is plagued with a medical condition—one that is alluded to throughout the story but I can't recall what actually happened to her. It seems that the details surrounding her illness are swept under the rug.

Shortly after her marriage, Florence finds out that she is pregnant. However, after a threatened miscarriage—life for her is pretty stressful. This was one thing I could understand a bit. I can imagine that if a woman had a threatened miscarriage in those days—it'd be a very difficult, "wait and see," situation for the expecting mother.

Then, Will leaves for reasons that Florence can't begin to understand. However, he has promised to return before the birth of their baby. This results in quite a bit of whining from Florence. I mean, in truth, I'd be whiny and needy if my husband up and left me as well but—it wasn't very pleasant to read.

Overall, I think that the book could be enjoyable if you're not bothered by needy characters. As it is a character trait that grates on my nerves—this just wasn't the book for me.

[View all my reviews](#)

I received this book free from the publisher through a fantastic program called Litfuse Publicity. I was not

required to write a positive review. The thoughts and opinions I have expressed are my own. To view other reviews and learn more about the blog tour for 'A Stitch and a Prayer' please visit the Litfuse group by clicking [here](#)

J.C. Morrows says

I have read other reviews that said they had difficulty connecting with the main character.

I did not have that problem.

I connected with Florence right away. And I was pulled right into her world. Eva Gibson is a very skilled author. She paints a beautiful picture around our characters and I truly felt like I was right there with Florence as she struggled and worried and tried to pass the time until her beloved would return.

And I find myself wondering if perhaps the difficulty with some people connecting with Eva's main character is perhaps the health issues she is struggling with...

Many people who have never dealt with health concerns themselves or even watched as a loved one navigated the difficulties involved are incapable of understanding what goes through the person's mind as they attempt to go about their day and be as "normal" as possible.

I am blessed to have good health (aside from some seasonal allergies and a semi-bad knee) but I have watched my mother combat fibromyalgia and diabetes for years and I speak from experience when I say there are many people who enjoy good health that are unable to comprehend the daily hardships she has to face.

So I can understand quite easily how some people might have difficulty connecting with Florence and understanding the things she does. However, I would like to say that I feel Eva Gibson did an excellent job of writing the story. I could feel Florence's irritation and worry. That alone may have helped a number of readers who would not normally identify with those issues - be able to.

A wonderful story that anyone can enjoy!

Disclaimer: I received this book free in exchange for an honest review. Actually I never got the book - due to address issues but I was supposed to so I got it for the kindle...

Tania Godwin-evans says

The author is from Oregon, the setting of this historic novel which unfortunately leaves a lot to be desired. Although a historical book there is no sound timeline that the novel follows – things seem to jump about and often happen without explanation. It often seems that this is part of a larger novel with the first part missing. Much of the language used by the character in the book is alien to the historical setting and this makes the book a difficult jarring read.

The moral of the novel is “to trust in God” and very frequently references the phrase “God is my strength and refuge”.

Religion is a very personal thing and in this instance the main point of trusting in the Lord has been lost. Yes trust in him and give your struggles to him but this is not a magical solution. The Lord also wanted the person to try and work out solutions to their troubles and not just to wonder around constantly winging and complaining like our female lead. The main protagonist is immature (even for the time of the novel) and very unlikeable. Yes she has health issues but please grow a backbone. It’s more “oh woe is me ... oh I must trust in the “Lord to provide”. Her new husband is no better just upping and leaving without telling his wife or even communicating with her. In fact there is no real development of the characters and this leads the reader to being unable to identify with them.

By the middle of the book the female lead had not even started her quilt of love and had barely stitched anything else. We never do learn what the finished quilt looked like giving us yet another unexplored and unexplained element to the novel.

Not only are the main protagonists unlikeable their conversations are stilted and abrupt. More depth has been given to the lesser characters although how these people related to the main protagonist is unclear. The story itself also lacks depth and appears rushed. The ending is also extremely unsatisfactory.

In short, the story had loads of potential that was not explored and so we ended up with a mediocre novel at best.

The language used in the novel is very elementary and more suitable to teens and young adults. There are loads of grammatical errors that hopefully have occurred due to lack of proof reading rather than a lazy author who needs to pay more attention to her writing.

Full Disclosure: I received a free copy from Netgalley for an honest review

Kathleen E. says

Monday, June 2, 2014

A Stitch and a Prayer by Eva J. Gibson, © 2014 ~ Quilts of Love Series

A young couple marry and begin their lives together on a small acreage near the Willamette River in Wilsonville, Oregon, the beginning of 1899. Within their home in a clearing carved out near a mighty forest, the story follows the thoughts and cares of this young wife.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on earth.

--Colossians 3:1-2 KJV

Florence proclaimed this is what she wants her marriage to be and for those with her to tell her if she is not living according to those precepts. A story of survival, love, and secrets, Will and Florence begin a life uncertain at best. Yet there is a promise to lean toward.

For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;
yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

--Job 14:7-9 KJV

Florence has the love of her family and family doctor to see her through her struggles and see the light at dawn as strength returns to her limbs. Called away to settle his earlier life to enable him to go forward, Florence's husband, Will, promises to return by their child's birth. Florence begins a Tree of Life quilt reminiscent of a dream in which she sees the pieces of their lives intertwined, leaving an heirloom for the generations to come after them. As she stitches she prays for her husband's safe return.

A Stitch and a Prayer is a settlement story of endurance and trust in God who sees our tomorrows. Florence and her family support each other as they wait for her husband Will's return. Life is daily as each one is encouraged by the strength offered each other. I liked the forgiveness given a neighbor and the bond they form together because of kindness. The making of the quilt is healing physically for Florence and the ability to receive help from others to aid in the completion of her dream.

Eva Gibson is the author of twenty books, including The Gift of Forgiveness and The Three Marys Bible studies. She currently teaches "writing your life story" classes for Portland Community College and is an active member of Oregon Christian Writers. She has lived most of her life on the family farm in Wilsonville, Oregon, which is the setting for A Stitch and a Prayer.

Thank you to Litfuse Publicity Group for inviting me to be a part of the blog tour for this Quilts of Love Series story and to Abingdon Press for sending me a copy of A Stitch and a Prayer. This review was written in my own words. No other compensation was received.

Victor Gentile says

Eva Gibson in her new book, "A Stitch And A Prayers" Book Eighteen in the Quilts of Love Series published by Abingdon Press brings us into the life of Florence Harms.

From the back cover: The frontier life isn't easy—especially when you're alone and with child.

After her fiance returns from the Klondike gold rush in 1897, Florence Harms sets about building a new life in her new marriage even though the lingering effects of illness have left her weak and vulnerable. She and her young husband, Will, work tirelessly to clear the land around their Northwest cabin, content with their modest life.

But then a stranger comes knocking and Florence suddenly senses a restlessness in Will's spirit that she had never seen before. When he leaves her with only a note that tells her he will return before their baby's birth, she is devastated, and the illness that stiffened her joints returns. Counting the days until Will walks back through her door, Florence busies herself with a Tree of Life quilt displaying a map of the farm they call home. Doubts claw at her heart as Florence struggles to believe Will's promise to return to her. Will her labor of love and faith in God sustain her as she waits to see her beloved once again?"

This book is all about family and love and how love lets you see the person on the inside and not how they

are physically. Ms. Gibson is a wonderful story teller. I fell in love with Florence and suffered with her through every moment not really knowing what would happen next. Will is terrific—he's a good guy, he's a bad guy, you want to hurt him, you want him to succeed. This story affected me. It has its up and downs and moments of real darkness but Ms. Gibson has a skillful hand and pulls everything off just perfectly. There is a lot in this book, much to think about and it just interesting and exciting as well.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from Litfuse Publicity Group. 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."

Kathleen (Kat) Smith says

I find that in order for a novel to be a great one, you have to find a way to connect with the main character in order to have compassion for what they are involved with. With *A Stitch and A Prayer*, the latest novel to join the Quilts of Love Series, from author Eva Gibson, I was missing that connection point. I don't know where along the line I might have missed it, but it seemed as if the story was simply too broad for me to gain that connection to either of the characters in the novel.

It is set in the late 1800's in Oregon as a frontier family of Florence and Will Nickerson marry and attempt to create a home for the beginning of their new life together. Florence suffers from chronic joint pain and weakness which she fears will prevent her from becoming the perfect wife for Will. Knowing that her husband will need to provide an income for them, she worries about him being gone from home so long. Even though Will reassures Florence he will always return home, she struggles with finding security even in the scriptures of the Bible. When she learns that she is pregnant, her insecurities increase. Thankfully she isn't alone in the wilderness. She has her Aunt Amelia, Tilly and Faye to help her that are staying nearby, as well as the loyalty of a dog named Vaughn.

In her frail state, she is constantly finding herself falling and waking up back in bed, thanks to the kindness of family or strangers that find her and care for her. Even though she promises to not wander off alone from the cabin, she falls off the porch. Knowing that they are recently married and wanting that initial time alone I can understand why she doesn't have someone living with her at first. I do find it interesting that with so many of her family members knowing her of her illness, she wouldn't have someone living with them to take care of her while Will is working. They do happen by from time to time and I feel that is where I find the disconnect in the novel with wanting to care about Florence and Will. It's only after she wakes one morning and finds a note left behind from Will, telling her that he will be back soon, she has her Aunt Amelia move in to help her.

She passes the time working on a quilt of her own that with each stitch sown offers another prayer for Will's safe return before the birth of their child as well as her own health. It also helps with her health issues as she can stay safe in the cabin and create something that she can show him when he returns. Will has a secret he hadn't shared with Florence before they got married and his disappearance is the result of trying to clear up his past.

I received *A Stitch and A Prayer* by Eva Gibson compliments of Christian Fiction Blog Alliance and Abingdon Press for my honest review. I did not receive any monetary compensation for a favorable review and the opinions expressed are strictly my own. This is the 18th novel in the Quilts of Love Series and for

me personally, I just couldn't connect with this one. The story was simply too broad and too fast that you couldn't connect with either Florence or Will. The author did use the account of her grandparent's lives as the background for this novel but I think it missed the intent she might have been trying to achieve. It simply toggles back and forth between daily tasks to quick and doesn't allow time enough for the reader to truly care about the characters. I am a huge fan of historical romances, but this one just didn't work for me. I would rate this one a 3 out of 5 stars.

Beverly says

A young married couple faces their first year together, their first challenges, expecting their first child. Their faith in God and their belief in one another were severely tested. Yet this sweet love story set in the Oregon woods in the post Westward Movement era is a tale of dreams, prayer, community, and family that is timeless.

Married in February, Florence and Will Nickerson set up housekeeping in their newly built log cabin. Florence suffered from the muscle and joint stiffness of a rheumatic illness that plagued her seasonally with fever and chills, joint and back pains. She walked with the help of a cane. Her fear was to never be the kind of wife Will deserved. Because of past events, she was also afraid Will would leave again, although he promised he would tell her if he needed to be away from her.

Will worked tirelessly on his farm throughout the summer. He had a suspicion he may be called away and he wanted Florence to be taken care of until his return. But he didn't tell Florence any of this. Then one day she woke up to find Will had gone, leaving only a note behind with the promise to be back in time for their baby's birth.

Florence wasn't alone. She had extended family: her Aunt Amelia, Tilly and Faye, and friends and neighbors. Aunt Amelia moved into the cabin to help take care of Florence and share in the chores. The settlement's doctor checked on her regularly. Florence decided she would take on an heirloom quilt project to keep her mind and heart mindful of God's love and care for her. She decided to create her own version of the Tree of Life quilt, knowing the stitching would be difficult but may help ease the stiffness in her fingers. She wanted to have a large portion of the quilt finished to present to Will when he returned.

As the months wore on and Florence did not hear from Will, the project became a prayer quilt. Florence asked for help from a friend, and Tilly took the largest section to the quilting circle at their church. Women signed up to work on the quilt and to pray for Will's safe return, for Florence's health and the health of their baby.

"Each stitch a prayer; each prayer a hope."

I enjoyed reading this short novella. I was easily able to read it in a day. I couldn't tell by reading the book if there was a story written that precedes it within the Quilts of Love series. There were many references of a back story how Will and Florence met, but I couldn't find a specific title. As far as I know, the series titles are mostly written as stand alone stories.

The author has done a wonderful job creating a sense of community in the characters of this book. They lived in a settlement ravaged in the past by flood waters, so they were used to doing things together, helping each other. This was especially evident when people started helping Florence cut the pieces for her quilt,

since cutting fabric was painful for the swollen joints of her hands.

One of my favorite parts of the story was when Tilly, Aunt Amelia and Florence celebrated the return of the pearl necklace after it had been lost. This is when the reader is given the story of Florence's birth, the note her mother wrote to her, and the origin of the pearl necklace. Florence then presented the necklace for Tilly to wear for her wedding, proving to Tilly that they didn't need to be related to be part of the family.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received a complimentary review copy of this book from NetGalley on behalf of Abingdon Press. 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."

Lindsey (Books for Christian Girls) says

About this book:

"A quilt becomes a labor of love for a lonely wife mysteriously separated from her young husband. After her fiancé returns from the Klondike gold rush in 1897, Florence Harms sets about building a new life in her new marriage—even though the lingering effects of illness have left her weak and vulnerable. She and her young husband, Will, work tirelessly to clear the land around their Northwest cabin, content with their modest life.

But then a stranger comes knocking and Florence suddenly senses a restlessness in Will's spirit that she had never seen before. When he leaves her with only a note that tells her he will return before their baby's birth, she is devastated, and the illness that stiffened her joints returns. Counting the days until Will walks back through her door, Florence busies herself with a Tree of Life quilt displaying a map of the farm they call home. Doubts claw at her heart as Florence struggles to believe Will's promise to return to her. Will her labor of love—and faith in God—sustain her as she waits to see her beloved once again?"

Series: "Quilts of Love" number #18 {They do not have to be read in order, see my review of number #17, "A Promise in Pieces", Here!}

Spiritual Content- Colossians 3:1-2, Job 14:7-9, Hebrews 13:5, Isaiah 40:31 and many, many other Scriptures are quoted; Many, many, many (detailed) Prayers & Blessings over food are said; God speaks to Florence's heart about different things.

Negative Content- A mountain lion attacks many chickens & a lamb, some men later kill it (semi to very detailed); Florence paints some gross (and semi-detailed) images about mountain lions and their food; Will tells about "Dead Horse Valley" and that he lost a horse to it (a tiny more detailed than that though)

Sexual Content- A Semi-detailed kiss and many not detailed kisses; Aunt Amelia asks Florence if she's "been late on your monthy".

-Florence Harms (at the beginning) then Florence Nickerson (at a bit in)

P.O.V. of Florence

Set in 1899

197 pages

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### Pre Teens- One Star

### New Teens- Two Stars

## Early High School Teens- Three Stars

## Older High School Teens- Three Stars (and a half)

(Lower all stars a half star because of the mountain lion parts for animals lovers)

My personal Rating- Three Stars

While I really liked the writing style, the storyline was not the most intriguing and/or complex storyline I've read. But see, I felt like this was a second (or even a third) book in a series...like I should have known more (way more) about the main characters and their struggles. I did enjoy reading about Florence and reading her Prayers.

Link to review:

<http://booksforchristiangirls.blogspot.com>

\*BFCG may (Read the review to see) recommend this book by this author. It does not mean I recommend all the books by this author.

\*I received this book for free from the Publisher (Abingdon Press) for this review.

## Mazzou B says

## A Stitch and A Prayer by Eva Gibson

The eighth book in the "Quilts of Love" series, *A Stitch and a Prayer* is about newly-wed couple beginning their life together in the woods of the Northwest. The bride, Florence is just recovering from her recent struggle with a bone-weakening sickness. Throughout the book, she must learn to trust and rely on God's strength, not her own. All women will be able to relate to the fears and struggles of the young wife in this book.

Personally, I was not impressed with this literary work of fiction. I was confused about the time period in which it takes place. It sounded more to me like present-day Amish than regular pioneers of 1897. Being a history buff, I found several mistakes in the book- references to one character's denim dress, recently-coined words such as "okay", etc.

Secondly, I thought the romance between the husband and wife over-wrought. Almost as if the author was

trying to prove to the reader that they did indeed love each other! It was just too repetitive. Thirdly, I wasn't able to really understand the main character, Florence. I realize it is difficult to make a character come to life in a book. But I have read many, many books. Some accomplish this feat, some do not. Unfortunately, this author had a difficult time creating a realistic woman in this new book.

I conclude, I do not think this book was well-written or featured a great plot.

I received this book free through the Litfuse blogger program and was encouraged to give my full and honest opinion.

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### **Neva says**

Fairly good

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### **Patricia Kemp Blackmon says**

Florence Harms eagerly awaits the return of her fiance. Her health is unbearable at times but she wanted so to be well enough to marry Will when he returned to her from the Klondike. Will had hoped to surprise her with a cabin as her wedding gift. They loved each other dearly and looked forward to a long life together.

Just as she seems to be healing a stranger enters their life causing Will to leave her yet once again. She thought she was over her illness when she has a relapse. Family and friends feared for her life. Will must return so her broken heart heals which will no doubt give her more strength to get well. With so many praying for her and she praying for Will's return she puts her faith in God to bring Will home.

At first I found the story hard to follow. It had the feel that there was a book prior to this one. If there had been another book I would have liked read it first. Other than that I enjoyed the story.

Life was really tough back then for a healthy person let alone someone with an illness that keeps recurring. Her Aunt in this story took on a heavy burden in caring for her niece. Her Aunt did this without complaint and with loving care. I found it difficult to like her fiance and his pattern for disappearing.

I recommend this book.

I rated this book a 4 out of 5.

Disclosure: I received a free copy of this book from Litfuse Publicity Group for an honest review.

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### **Lisa Johnson says**

Title: A Stitch and a Prayer

Author: Eva Gibson

Pages: 240

Year: 2014

Publisher: Abingdon

When I began reading the tale, I simply couldn't put it down until the very end as there is a mystery woven within the learning to wait on God. The main female character, Florence, has a physical ailment that not only brings pain but emotional hardship as she cannot imagine being able to handle the duties of being a wife. Will continues to assure her of his love and his choosing her to be his wife and the mother of their children. Will asks Florence to wait to be married. Then, after they are married, it seems Will disappears for long hours. When he comes home in the evening, she is overjoyed as her illness keeps her from doing normal chores. Now, there is a threat to their married life and Will must leave without knowing when he will return. I found the story really interesting and spellbinding for many reasons. First, is the love the couple has for each other. Then, there is Will loving Florence even when he knows her health at times may mean she will need care. Above all is the learning to draw near to God and believe even when there is no communication between the couple for several months. My heart was deeply touched by the foresight Florence's mother had before she was even born. Florence's mother leaves behind written treasures that speak to Florence about her mother's heart and faith. The quilt in the story was especially touching along with how it was passed from generation to generation, sometimes for the next one to complete or do as much work as possible on the piece. The quilt in this story speaks of life, faith and life. I hope you grab a copy, read and enjoy. This is a great story not to be kept to oneself, but to shared and remembered.

My rating is 5 stars.

Amazon Link: <http://www.amazon.com/Stitch-Prayer-Q...>

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received one or more of the products or services mentioned above for free in the hope that I would mention it on my blog. Regardless, I only recommend products or services I use personally and believe will be good for my readers. 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."

Other reviews can be read at <http://seekingwithallyurheart.blogspot...> . Also follow me on Twitter @lcjohnson1988, FaceBook at <https://www.facebook.com/lisa.johnson...>

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## **Barbara Shelton says**

When the email from Litfuse arrived featuring A Stitch and a Prayer, my eagerness to read it was highly elevated. My familiarity with the locale of Oregon as the geographical setting invited me. Willamette is indeed a place I know, being close to Portland where I have resided in and visited often.

I realize this story took place during 1889 in raw territory of Oregon and based on the history of the author's family. That is to be respected; however my connection with the story did not fuse as I had anticipated. Since Eva Gibson is a new author to me, I want to be fair to her creative efforts and stress the good points of the story as well as those points that left me wanting more. For the greatest part, I found most of the characters to be sanguine and mature. Aunt Amelia is a sweetheart and compassionate to a fault. Perhaps the author surmised the reader would know what pioneer spirit was in that date and time – but a bit more explanation of what conditions were actually like would have been helpful. Too much was left to the reader's imagination. Relating to living in a tent for a year while sites were cleared for homesteads gave me chills. It obviously took hardiness and guts to survive. That is to be admired for it is awesomeness.

Protagonist Florence Harms was immature, a whiner, often disquieted, although kindhearted. Her illness was seriously crippling and ill-timed to strike someone so young. The coddling she was given by family and community was well meaning, but perchance that is why she began to lack confidence in God. Young

Florence was facing many hardships and her crankiness and depression in loneliness is understandable from my own standpoint of personal physical pain and being a military wife that endured many lonely separations during my husband's military career. Florence seemed to place more faith in her new husband's promises than in God's; but she was young and God continually worked through the situation so that she matures and begins to understand her life is truly graced by God.

Will's love for her was genuine, but he gave little or no explanations to Florence or the reader for his mysterious absences. Personally, I needed more insight into Will and his story. First impressions of Will left me irritated – how thoughtless to leave his bride alone in wild country. Even though he had left only a note for Florence when he disappeared – and a promise to return at the right moment – when that time came I read his being there as a dream or figment of imagination of Florence. Too perfect to believe.

The book cover is beautiful, colorful, and interesting. The theory behind the title and Florence's creative drawings and thoughts drew me into the story. The Tree of Life idea that came to her mind from Job \*14:7-9 brought her much hope for the future of their marriage and family's future. Although it seemed to me the story began somewhere in the middle, it still seemed incomplete at the end. One joy was the faithful affection and antics of Vaughn, the dog, the encouragement and strength of the surrounding settlers, and of course the forgiveness and kindness offered to the new neighboring family that had caused problems for Florence. Overall, there was an interesting flow, however disjointed or incomplete. Better explained as it seemed, these chapters could have been an excerpt from an entire novel. Eva Gibson displays excellent writing skills as well as factual historical research – an important ingredient to any mixture.

Beginning my review, I had no intention of a long philosophical conversation. Being succinct is difficult for me when I feel something more than criticism is due in praise worthiness to an author's hard work and talent. Looking ahead, I will definitely give Eva Gibson's novels a place on my to be read stack. She has proven her excellence as a writer and is a published author. I definitely credit her as a qualified author, after all – my penning is merely an opinion, and I hope seen as respectful.

\*For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

Job 14:7-9 KJV

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