



## Belonging

*Robin Lee Hatcher*

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## **Belonging** Robin Lee Hatcher

In the high desert town of Frenchman's Bluff, Idaho, Felicia Kristoffersen has set out to create a future for herself that is better than her painful past. Alone in the world with only her faith to sustain her, she must prove herself as this tiny community's new school teacher. She cannot, must not, fail. But, there are those who never wanted her there to begin with.

Five years after the death of his wife, local merchant Colin Murphy cares about just one thing: raising his daughter, Charity. Colin wants to give her the educational advantages he never had. The new schoolmarm's inexperience doesn't sit well with him, and if this teacher up and marries like the last one did, Charity's heart will be broken once again.

A woman who hasn't known love. A man who lost the love he had.

In the midst of the wide, sage-covered plains, each is about to discover that life's bitterest circumstances truly can work together for good.

## **Belonging Details**

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Author : Robin Lee Hatcher

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# From Reader Review Belonging for online ebook

## Hilary (A Wytch's Book Review) says

Hmm this is not really the type of book I would normally read, I will say it was well written but just too much Christianity and romance for me! Others will love it however not me - sorry!

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## Mary says

i don't normally read christian fiction. i don't want to be preached at. although a christian of sorts, my beliefs are very different from the christian right, who usually write christian fiction.

that said, i read this because several years ago i also read one of the prolific ms. hatcher's books. i like historical american fiction. i thoroughly enjoyed this book. the story was believable, the dialogue realistic, the characters well developed. the christian references were not offensive to me. although the bible was quoted, it wasn't done awkwardly, nor was it preachy. it fit the character, and didn't detract from the story.

i highly recommend this book. it is an enjoyable read, and a quick read in spite of the length of 273 pages. although i am not overly upset by novels with sex scenes, those who do like sex-free novels/romances will enjoy this read.

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## Margaret says

I lost myself in this one, perhaps it was a little predictable but I enjoyed it thoroughly. A good Christian fiction with all the trappings.

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## Lyssa says

I can't really say I enjoyed anything about this book. The plot, characters, everything has been done a million times before and better. Can no relationship be built without first being prejudiced against one another, then a bond over a child, and then \*the clincher\* falling in love over being rescued (most likely from a near-drowning)? Then of course, there is a misunderstanding, causing one to flee and another to follow after them, culminating in a undying love confession in a train station.

ugh.

The best stories have characters who change, who are flawed, real, relatable. They have plots and events that could happen to anyone, things that happen regularly. This had NONE of that.

If you want good historical fiction, try Lawana Blackwell's Gresham series. Sadly, I've not come across another like it.

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## **Maureen Timerman says**

Robin Lee Hatcher is sharing another wonderful story with us! She has gifted us with some wonderful characters that we can be absorbed into.

The Tale is set in Idaho in the late 1800's, Felicia Kistofferson has arrived in Frenchman's Bluff to become the Teacher. Her life hasn't been easy, she became an orphan, when her Mom died. Put into an orphanage in Chicago, she was put on the Orphan Train, and taken by a couple, that wanted a Housekeeper. She was under the impression that the Kristofferson's had adopted her, but sadly when they passed, she found out the truth! Colin Murphy has been raising his daughter on his own, since his wife passed 5 years prior. He doesn't like the idea of a teacher with no experience, and figures she won't last.

The town, like most small towns has a busy body that rules!! You wonder if things will work out the way the one who rules wants, or the way God wants?

There is a lot warm fuzzy feelings in this book, loved how when things go wrong there is someone there to help. Makes you wish you lived there! Throughout the whole story I Loved the deepening relationships with God!

Included at the end of the book is an Epilogue...yes how I love that. You get to glimpse the future!

I received this book from Netgalley and the Publisher Zondervan, and was not required to give a positive review.

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## **Jamie says**

Being the history dork I am, I often think of eras I would like to have lived in (even though the grand ol year of 1982 and E.T. is legit). Am I the only one who does this? If I am, just ignore the previous statement.

But if you are like me, then awesome – it's good to know I'm not riding solo. Take the Civil War for example. How exciting and scary would it have been to be a nurse or lead people through the underground railroad? Or even during World War II, imagining doing my part (Rosie the Riverter style) in a war that was fighting for something with meaning.

Then there's the days of American history when settlements popped up in the 1800s all over the West (and died just as quickly). While I heart my running water and world wide web, what an adventure it must have been to start something new, be in a small town and know everyone. It's against this backdrop that Robin Lee Hatcher takes us through in Belonging. She paints a beautiful picture of the late 1880s Idaho in the small town of Frenchman's Bluff.

I love her characters. There are ones with depth, ones you really want to punch and Hatcher's development is superb. Like I want to be Felicia's (the main character) friend. The characters are like anyone today. Some have painful pasts they're trying to move forward from, some are just mean and you definitely root for the ones trying to find love. It's a great story!

The next book in the series Betrayal is now out and I'm looking forward to grabbing a copy of that one!

[booksandbeverages.wordpress.com](http://booksandbeverages.wordpress.com)

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## **Agnieszka says**

Felicia Kristofferson leaves Wyoming after her parents' death when she finds out she was never legally adopted and can't therefore inherit their farm. She accepted a teaching position in a small town in Iowa. From the beginning she has to deal with the dislike of the town's 'elite'.

I'll admit I'm no more that much into historical fiction and only started this book because I needed one set in Iowa. After the first chapter I was hooked and loved the book very much. I loved the characters especially the both MCs, Charity (his daughter) and Kathleen (her friend) and their development within the story. The story was very interesting and I struggled to put the book down.

I rated the book 4 stars because there were parts that appeared not very realistic. Despite this little flaw I'm already looking forward to continue this trilogy.

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## **Lynn says**

After losing their mother at a young age, Felicia and her two siblings board the orphan train in Chicago, bound for the West. Felicia lived on a farm in Wyoming with her new family, separated from her two siblings. After the death of her new parents, she moves to a small town in Idaho to become their schoolmarm.

Colin, the local mercantile owner, is part of the schoolboard and has offered his little cottage behind his store to the new school teacher, Felicia. As their lives intertwine, will loss from both of them in their past hold them back to love in the present? Will Felicia ever find a place to call home? You'll find out when opening up this delightful story set in the late 1800's Idaho Territory. A wonderfully quick read will delight you even after you turn the last page!

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## **Paula Phillips says**

Reading Christian Fiction , like any genre can become a bit tiresome as it all starts to blend in together and the overall feeling of formula fiction kicks in every time you read . However, amongst all those books , there are a few authors that will bring out an amazing novel and will re-inforce and remind you why you read that genre continuously.

Belonging by Robin Lee Hatcher , the first in a new series Where the Heart Lives was one of those books that remind you why you read as it was an excellent story from the pace of the novel and the ability to capture the reader's attention as you moved swiftly from one page to the next. Belonging features a young woman named Felicia whose adopted parents have just passed and now she has been given the option to either leave and strike out on her own or marry her cousin Gunther. However, as the story goes along we can see that they never really gave her an option as she starts to receive threatening letters . As a young woman ,we read the prejudices that Felicia has to overcome as a young, unmarried woman and teacher in a world where men seemed to rule. What I loved about Belonging is that Felicia's background of being an orphan and travelling on the orphan train is weaved throughout the novel and we also read as she searches for her

siblings which I hope to read the next books in the series to see if she will be reunited with her brother Hugh and sister Diana. Belonging reminded me of the novel by Kim Vogel Sawyer - My Heart Remembers.

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### **Jenn says**

I think this would be a fine book and I liked the premise however, and unfortunately, I couldn't get into this story as I had hoped.

I'm sure this is a pleasant read and I really hope others will be able to enjoy it and be immersed into it where I was not able to.

What I was able to read, I did enjoy and I did like the dual points of view and I loved the cover. I wish I could have been able to really dive into this book, it just wasn't meant to be for me.

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### **Robin Hatcher says**

What a delight to "help" (as the author) each of the three orphans in the Where the Heart Lives series find happiness. It's one of the perks of being a novelist.

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### **Ruth says**

OMG!!! I loved this book from the beginning. Maybe because it was about a teacher or maybe because the author is just so fabulous at what she does!!! This story is so amazing I don't know how to put it into words. First off I fell in love with the characters. (Besides Mrs. Summerville XD) Also I love that the main character was a teacher because when I grow up, I want to become a teacher! This story is about Felicia. She was an orphan when she was about 10 and then a couple adopted her but they didn't love her. She then goes to Idaho to become a teacher. Colin didn't want a new teacher. The last one left about a month later after she got here. But after a while he starts to open his heart to Felicia. I hope you guys love this book as much as I did!

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### **Michelle says**

I really enjoyed this story and read it quickly. There were a lot of things to like about it. First, there were Scriptures quoted by the heroine, Felicia, and her random thoughts about the Bible. This fit her personality so well that it seemed like a natural way for her to think. Sometimes in Christian novels the faith element feels a bit contrived or forced, but not so in this book. I loved the scene where the hero caught her praying. I could feel her joy and his wonder at the sight of her communing with God. I also felt his indignation when the town's busybody tried to insinuate things were less than pure in their relationship.

The hero, Colin, was amazing and hard not to fall for. I felt his pride when he was learning to read through his daughter's lessons. Also, the fact that the secondary character, Kathleen, had an occasional point of view helped me understand the other perspectives. I wanted to give Kathleen a high-five every time she stood up

to her mother-in-law, and the same for Colin. It was hard not to root for Felicia's friendships because she'd finally found people who truly cared for the first time since she was orphaned.

Felicia was a very sympathetic character and precious in the way she interacted with people and the way she saw the world. Having met the author before, in some ways Felicia's personality reminds me of Robin's. She is genuine, caring, and sweet-spirited. It's hard not to admire someone like that. Felicia wanted to belong and she wanted to love the children in the town and teach them. It was impossible not to want that for her as a reader. I feel like we became friends as I read the story and I can't wait to read the next book in the series.

This was a sweet romance, but I felt the love developing between them and it was beautiful and emotionally moving to see the love slowly blossoming in their hearts for each other. When he finally kissed her...well, it left me a bit breathless. That was the most romantic scene in the book, and one of the most romantic scenes I've read in a long time. Sigh. Very emotionally satisfying story and I was sad when it ended. But there is another book coming out in the series, and I'm excited about it!

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## **Faye says**

This one is quite possibly my favorite book by Ms. Hatcher so far. This book has it all, with an engaging, yet traditional story line that moves along swiftly and characters that move you, and easily draw one in.

Felicia is a schoolteacher in Idaho, during the late 1800's, determined to help her students learn. But there are some things--and people that stand in her way. What can she do to gain the trust of the town, and convince them to let her stay?

Well written, and very engaging, I loved this book from the get-go.

I was surprised at how much I liked all three of the main characters, because often I only like one or none of them, but this time I loved them all! Each of the main characters was well written, with their own unique backstory. I was intrigued and drawn in by every single one of them. though if I had to choose which one I liked best I'm going to say that I really liked Kathleen and her story alot :) The side character were also amazing, though, of course I had to dislike the villian :)

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed this story, it was exactly what I wanted out of this sweet romance. The plot was excellent as were the characters. The plot moved steadily, even to the point of keeping me up late! For me it was the perfect book at the perfect time and I enjoyed it immensely, and will most certainly be recommending this book :)

I received this book from the publisher in return for an honest review, which I have done my best to express here. Thanks :)

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## Holly Renee says

Following the death of her parents, Felicia Kristoffersen chooses to embrace the opportunity she had to sacrifice in order to help the aging couple who once took her into their family. She starts over as the new schoolmarm in Frenchman's Bluff, Idaho. She's determined to make an impression upon those who didn't want her as the schoolmarm--especially Colin Murphy.

Colin Murphy voted against Miss Kristofferesen as the new schoolmarm. After all, the other single schoolmarms up and left after finding a husband and marrying, leaving behind school children who felt that loss--including his own daughter, Charity. He doesn't want to see his daughter hurt when this schoolmarm does the same thing. As he gets to know Felicia, he realizes he just may be wrong about her motives for taking the position . . .and his own feelings toward her start to change. . .so much so that he can no longer avoid the very thing he was once against . . .taking away the town's schoolmarm.

Belonging will keep you hanging on every word. I couldn't put it down. This novel is filled with sophisticated prose and writing, as well as outstanding characters and a compelling plot.

I have to admit the writing style and tone in this novel appears to be different from any of Robin Lee Hatcher's previous works--which is both enjoyable and refreshing. While I've enjoyed Robin Lee Hatcher's other stories, I took to the style of writing, and the story itself, more than her others.

I loved seeing the use of historical idiomatic phrases this story. If you aren't familiar with historical idiomatic phrases, some of them might have you scratching your head for half-a-second, but most--if not all--are fairly easy to figure out.

I wish the trouble maker in this story had been a little more fleshed out, as far as motive goes. While I can understand what drove her despicable actions, I'm not sure what drove the motive for her actions. The one given to us didn't seem entirely too realistic. With that said, this trouble maker accomplished getting under my skin. I even found myself wishing she weren't a fictional character so I could give her a piece of my own mind.

All in all, this has to be one of my favorites by Robin Lee Hatcher. I definitely recommend it. Fans of schoolmarm stories, will absolutely love Belonging.

I received a complimentary copy of this book from Zondervan Publishers, via NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.

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