



The Saddle Maker's Son

Kelly Irvin

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Rebekah Lantz feels imprisoned by circumstances she didn't create. Tobias Byler is haunted by regret. Can two young runaways from half a world away teach them the healing power of true family?

Rebekah isn't like her sister who left the Amish faith, but the watchful gaze of her family and small, close-knit Amish community makes her feel as if she's been judged and found lacking. The men avoid her and the women whisper behind her back. She simply longs for the same chance to be a wife and mother that her friends have.

Tobias Byler only wants to escape feelings for a woman he knows he should never have allowed to get close to him. Moving with his family to isolated Bee County, Texas, seemed the best way to leave his mistakes behind. But even a move across the country can't erase the past that accompanies his every thought.

A surprise encounter with two half-starved runaway children forces Rebekah and Tobias to turn to each other to help a sister and brother who have traveled thousands of miles in search of lives of unfettered peace and joy.

In doing so, Rebekah and Tobias discover the key to forgetting the past is the one that will open the door to love and the future they both seek.

The Saddle Maker's Son Details

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From Reader Review The Saddle Maker's Son for online ebook

Cheryl Baranski says

The Saddle Maker's Son by Kelly Irvin is book three in The Amish of Bee County series. This is book takes you on an emotional roller coaster ride. This is a book that is full of love, faith, devotion, heartache and pain. Be sure to order your copy of The Saddle Maker's Son today. 5 stars. I received a copy of this book for my honest review.

Paula-O says

The Saddlemaker's son by Kelly Irvin

this is the 3rd book in a series -tales of three daughters,

One daughter left the community with her beau to marry and become Mennonites.

Rebekah comes from a large family and she has many chores when her Mam dies in childbirth and she must step in to help. She is beginning to think , she will never have a beau or get married, there is not enough time in the days.

Tobias Byler is a new man to the community and when he meets Rebekah and sees how hard she works and her work in the community ,he knows she is one to get to know more about.

A brother and sister runaways fill out the story as Tobias and Rebekah help them when they learn they are trying to find their father, sent to this country by their grandmother.

Rachelle says

EDIT 5/10/17

Putting this one aside for now for various triggers that are not sitting well with me. Yes, it is on my DNF shelf, but I'm not 100% sure I'm going to DNF this yet.

Switching things up with another Amish romance.

Yes I feel your judgy eyes.

No I really don't care.

<3

Leah says

This story was okay. I thought it was slow. The romances were sweet with happy endings, except for David's. I was hoping for a different outcome there. That was the storyline that I was most interested in, but it was only a minor part of the overall story.

Cherese Akhavein says

This is book 3 in The Amish of Bee County " The Saddle Makers Son" by Kelly Irvin

Rebekah Lantz is an Amish young woman who feels she is paying the price for her sisters choices, she loves her faith and her community however she feels that will never be enough for them.

Tobias Byler is trying hard to live his life with no regrets, problem is he still thinks about his past. Will he ever get over it?

Then Rebecca finds two runaway children can she and Tobias help them and together this help them all heal into a family?

This book brings us face to face with the struggle that faces illegal refugee's particularly children as they cross the border with the hope of a better life. Kelly Irvin does a wonderful job at showing us a glimpse of how that world looks. She also shows us the life on the streets as some wait for jobs, housing, interviews. You don't want to miss this book! It's a wonderful read!

Wendy says

BACK OF THE BOOK BLURB

Rebekah isn't like her sister who left the Amish faith, but the watchful gaze of her family and small, close knit Amish community makes her feel as if she's been judged and found lacking. The men avoid her and the women whisper behind her back. She simply longs for the same chance to be a wife and mother that her friends have.

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MY REVIEW

This story is quite different, I think anyway, than most Amish books as it involves lost illegal immigrant children who were sent by their grandmother to find their father. It was a moving book and shows how far the Amish will go to be helpful for 'anyone'. This has been a good series, it is better to read the three books in order, so enjoy!

Maureen Timerman says

Another great visit in the Amish Bee County, and back with some dear friends, and family. This story brings a new family into the community, and they quickly become active members, especially when some lost little souls come through.

These read brings a few new romances, some you will be surprised by, and others are just so sweet and seem so destined. Add to the mix another romance with an Englisher, the reason why the Byler's moved her, and then some tragedy.

Will these loving people be able to put away their differences and help two young Columbia alien children, they are running and so afraid, and yet hoping to find their father. We also find one of their own that has left the fold, coming to the aid of these little ones.

I found my heart breaking when Rebecca's sister stops by with her daughter, I can't imagine not having my family in my life. This story does allow some healing, but the things that happen here, are going to make this book a page turner, and linger with you a long time after the final page is turned.

I received this book through Net Galley and the Publisher Zondervan, and was not required to give a positive review.

Brittany says

I have enjoyed the entire Amish of Bee County series. The Saddle Maker's Son is book three, plus there are also a couple of related novellas. Each one has been SO good! If you have not read the other books, I definitely recommend them. But, if you pick up The Saddle Maker's Son without reading the other books, I think you will still be able to enjoy it as a stand alone. For me, each book has been a wonderful experience of returning to this unique community and seeing what is going on with each family.

This novel covers so many different topics, such as immigration, grief, the woman's place in the Amish community, forgiveness, and so much more. Sometimes it was hard to see Rebekah struggle with following the leading of the men in the community. However, the author handled it well, as she did with the other topics in the book, too.

I loved the romances that filled this story. Both of the couples were equally enjoyable to read about and it was so good to see love flourish between these characters. I really enjoy stories with epilogues and The Saddle Maker's Son had a great one that really made me smile. I loved this book from start to finish.

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

You can read this review on my blog at:

<https://brittreadsfiction.wordpress.c...>

Angie Fehl says

Teaching Assistant Rebekah Lantz feels her Amish community is harshly (and wrongly) judging her for the actions of her sister, who chose to leave the Amish faith. The women gossip, the men hesitate to court her.

Meanwhile, Tobias Byler is trying to work off the shame of a failed relationship with an Englisch (non-Amish) woman. He was tempted to drift away from all he knew to be with her but soon realized he didn't want to (could not, even) abandon his Amish roots. Heavy with the guilt of leading his lady love on only to have to break things off, Tobias comes to Bee County to begin anew.

The paths of Tobias and Rebekah connect when both are brought together to help two lost children who stumble into the community of the Bee County Amish. At first glance, these two children seem to have the look of runaways, but the truth quickly comes out. Tobias and Rebekah don't have the smoothest introduction right off. In fact, in pretty much no time flat Rebekah is already fighting feelings of guilt for bringing Tobias into a situation where she has to ask him to lie for her, before they hardly know each other at all.

Spanish turns out to be the native tongue of the lost children. Neither child seems to know more than a word or two of English, but luckily Rebekah knows enough conversational Spanish to gather that the older child, a girl of 12, is named Lupe while her brother is Diego. They say they were sent by their grandmother, on their own, from El Salvador (Central America) to Texas to try to locate their missing father. Lupe and her brother show signs of being a bit malnourished and seem to be wary around grown men -- any adult men, always fearing they might be "the bad men" -- and jumpy at the sound of guns.

The Amish of Bee County -- the children especially -- seem to take to Lupe & Diego quite quickly. Likewise, Lupe & Diego are fascinated with the culture and find they pick up English quickly here. The whole situation also gives Rebekah a break in that the town gossips let up off her a bit, instead showing their support and encouragement for her interest in the children. Many community members agree that any relatives of the children should try to be located, though some fear what it might mean for Bee County legally should word get out that they might be harboring undocumented immigrants. Rebekah herself of course wants to locate any of Lupe and Diego's relatives, but also worries that if none can be found, that these children might fall victim to being shuffled around and lost in the States' foster care system after they've already been through so much. There are also those who air their suspicions that the children might have ties to terrorist plots.

Rebekah, to ensure that the children have the best chance possible at a good life, enlists the help of none other than her sister Leila....the same sister who left the faith and put so much strain on Rebekah's own life. But Leila's husband just happens to work with non-profits that provide assistance to newly immigrated families, work that has him interacting with immigrants and the immigration office pretty much on a daily basis! Rebekah figures if there is anyone who knows their stuff, it'd be him!

Okay, so first off I have to vent and say that I was not impressed with the spoilers author Kelly Irvin left in her Note To Readers at the beginning of the book, regarding the other books in this series. I've seen quite a few reviews where readers have mentioned picking this book up without having read the previous (as I did) but way to kill some of the surprise if and when they might choose to go back to the earlier stories! Not cool!

Alright, that out of my system... on to this book and my thoughts. I do like the themes Irvin works with here. Not only does she illustrate the pain of being shunned (either literally or figuratively) by the people you most love for things you cannot control, but also uses her characters to show that one can work through the forgetting or forgiving of mistakes through the process of helping others worse off. Perfect reminder any time of year but especially nice to read during this holiday season. :-)

Rebekah herself is an admirable character, strong in her sense of self, comfortable with sharing her thoughts and opinions... a trait that gets her the label of "firecracker". Been there, girl. I can relate! {You say firecracker like it's a bad thing, ammirite ;-)} I also enjoyed experiencing the warm and caring sisterhood between Rebekah and Leila. I only have a brother myself, but this is what I imagine having a sister must feel like -- when you're on good terms with them that is!

As far as the slow burning romance between Rebekah and Tobias, it was molasses slow for me! I can appreciate a decent slow burn but with these two I just kept wanting to hit the FF button already. Nope, just too lukewarm and dragged out IMO. I even laughed when at around 200 pages, after pages of started-cute-now-tedious bickering, Rebekah says "maybe we should start over..." What? aww no girl, there's only like 155 pages til final curtain so let's just wrap this forced mess up already, 'kay? Susan and Levi had a better story on that front (at least for me).... and the closing of David and Bobbie's story was pretty touching.

My interest was primarily held simply on the story of the bundle package of cuteness known as Lupe and Diego. I found their journey to the States very much relevant to the times now, given the uncertainty many US citizens have over our newly elected president's statements / stand on immigration issues. This is just one story that illustrates that yes, borders have to be protected, but at the same time there are lives of children, CHILDREN, at stake... a reality that should not be taken lightly or approached with an all or nothing point of view. It's not and won't be a clear cut, black and white issue... there will be plenty of layers of gray for some time to come and at the very least we have to acknowledge that with an empathetic heart.

Note To Readers: This is the third book in Irvin's Amish of Bee County series. As I mentioned previously, I have not read the first two. While there were some minor points in the story where I felt something was being referenced that I did not quite catch the importance of, feeling like it must have been a nod to the earlier books, I still had no trouble reading this as a standalone piece. You can also find some of Irvin's short stories (set in this community, I believe) in the Amish themed anthologies An Amish Market and An Amish Christmas Gift.

BONUS: Irvin throws in a little something extra for her readers at the back of this book. In a nod to the Salvadoran heritage of her characters Lupe & Diego, Irvin offers a few Salvadoran recipes for you to try out!

FTC Disclaimer: TNZ Fiction Guild kindly provided me with a complimentary copy of this book with a request that I might check it out and share my thoughts. The opinions above are entirely my own.

Joy Kidney says

What would you do if you caught two homeless children in your shed? From South America? And you are part of a tight-knit Amish clan in Texas, a faith with many rules? These threads of story are woven in with one character who is still a believer but leaves the clan, another who almost leaves but painfully stayed, how to make a saddle, live without telephones and cars, and finding a suitable mate. After Discussion Questions are recipes for Salvadoran foods which are also part of the story. Just delightful.

Kav says

I have to say that one of the things I love about this Amish Bee County series is the setting. This drought-stricken Texas community gives a totally different spin to the typical Amish novel. There's something so elemental about the barren countryside and how it dictates the kind of life the Amish live. This little community is struggling to survive and that means they must turn to different occupations in order to provide

for their families. Unfortunately that requires more interaction with *Englischers* which brings its own kind of threat.

Life is a balancing act for Rebekah who finds herself living in the shadow of her sister's transgression. She's smart and tenacious and a bit of a free thinker which can get her in trouble since she's not shy about speaking her mind. Tobias arrives in Texas looking forward to a new start. The last thing he needs in his life is an opinionated woman who doesn't know when to keep her mouth closed. :-) Angst and mayhem ensue -- much to this reader's delight.

Irvin reaches deep to deliver a thought-provoking and inspiring story. I don't want to give specifics because there are elements that a reader should discover as the story unfolds. But I will say that this book challenges the characters and the reader to ask themselves this one question: "What would Jesus have me do?" And then it's just a matter of doing the next right thing and trusting the Lord to see you through. My faith soared with a renewed conviction after reading *The Saddle Maker's Son*.

And the topical subject matter makes this a great book club selection. There's tons to discuss and celebrate about this novel.

A captivating page-turner that will keep you thinking long after you've closed the book. That's the best kind of read, isn't it? The kind that inspires you to reach higher and draw closer to the Lord.

Marilyn says

The conclusion to *The Amish of Bee County* is filled with characters that will tug at your heart. This story is filled with pain, sorrow, overcoming, compassion, love and faith. A beautiful story showing how individuals can make a difference for others when they reach out in love and compassion. Cultural issues and beliefs can always be bridged with love and caring when no payment is expected in return. I would like to see Kelly Irvin continue the lives of the characters residing in Bee County Texas in another series.

Katherine says

I have been wanting to try out an Amish book for a while now, and the summary for *The Saddle Maker's Son* was too intriguing for me to pass up (plus it can easily be read as a standalone even though it is the third in a series). This was the book I wanted to introduce me to the genre of Amish fiction. Unfortunately, after reading, I don't think this is the kind of book for me, and I probably will not be reading any more Amish fiction.

I have only a general knowledge of the Amish community, so this book was an eye opener in terms of how the community actually works on a daily basis. While I enjoyed seeing how the children are taught and how money is made collectively by selling to *Englischers*, the way the women were treated as completely submissive to the men really grated on me. At one point, after the two children have been discovered and the men have gathered to discuss what will be done with them, one of the newcomers continually expresses surprise at the fact that one of the women- Susan- is so concerned with them, *even though she has no children of her own*. She's a school teacher! And he says it nearly six times- as if the only reason a woman would show any maternal instinct is because she has kids of her own! I don't want kids at all, but even I would be concerned over a pair of lost children. Also, apparently everyone outside of the Amish community is viewed as a threat, morally and romantically. I wanted to see just a little positivity instead of the constant

skepticism, especially with the way Bonnie's character was brought in for drama.

I was hoping the plot would focus mostly on the children and their plight, but there are four romances being stirred at the same time, as well as some drama caused by a sister who left the community in a previous book. I didn't really feel the connection for any of the characters and their romantic partners, and in regards to Susan and Rebekah, I felt the author was trying too hard to show that the women were interested. Constant blushing and being overbearing about the one they like. I wasn't really feeling it. There was no romantic development and everything happened really fast, especially for an Amish couple. It might just be the author's style that had me feeling so disconnected. Her writing structure is a bit rigid for my taste, and there is often more telling using short simple sentences than showing.

The best parts of this book came from Diego and Lupe, as well as the customs of the community. I liked seeing the kids interact together and the language lessons. I also liked seeing how the community worked; every time there was a gathering I found myself feeling more immersed in what was happening. The strength is in the love that flows through the members for each other and for the runaways they find themselves looking after. All in all, this wasn't a bad book. I just didn't feel that in tune with it. It wasn't that exciting.

2.5 stars. I wanted to round up, but I can't.

Jeanie says

Children gives us a hope for the future. They give us responsibility and a stake in what happens in this world. We can never stop fighting for them.

I love when an author of the Amish prose puts English and the Amish together. It brings a tension that is believable and also one a reader can reflect on.

Two Amish families come together in the great state of Texas. Tobias Byler's family has moved from Ohio along with his father and brothers and sisters. A family that has suffered great loss of a mother six years ago. The two eldest, Tobias and his sister Margaret, have taken the responsibility of helping their father raise the other children. The move from Ohio to Texas however, was not because of his mother's death but for a new start for Tobias. Tobias had fallen for an English woman and instead of choosing her, he chose his faith. The Byler's with their skills of horses and saddle making, make the trip for a new start in their business and to heal.

Tobias taking his brothers and sisters to their new community's school meets Rebekah Lantz, a teachers aide who is healing from the hurt of her sister who has gone English to start a church with her husband. A chemistry between Tobias and Rebekah occur but it takes two small children running away from Mexico to find their father to bring healing for all.

I loved how the story of two Amish families come together because of two small children who are illegal immigrants. Running from violence, their grandmother sends them to Texas on their own to find their father. Tobias and Rebekah dealing with other circumstances put their faith in God and his sovereign care when they put down their own walls to help the most vulnerable. It brings to light the plight of the border and the victims of families that we do not hear. It puts a face to a very real crisis and why as Christians we need to be advocates for these children.

A Special Thank You to Zondervan and Netgalley for the ARC and the opportunity to post an honest review.

Amy says

The Saddle Maker's Son is the third installment from The Amish of Bee County series. I enjoyed this series and this book is no exception. The story is unique and I liked it.
4 stars.
