



The Quilted Heart Omnibus

Mona Hodgson

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Dandelions on the Wind

When Maren Jensen took a job on Elsa Brantenberg's St. Charles, Missouri farm, she never expected to call the place her home. As she grows to love Mrs. Brantenberg and her granddaughter, Gabi, Maren is transformed from a lonely mail-order bride-without-a-groom to a beloved member of the Brantenberg household. But when Gabi's father, Rutherford "Woolly" Wainwright, returns to the farm unexpectedly, everything changes for Maren, and she feels compelled to find another job. Are her choices in obedience to God, or is she running from His plan?

Bending Toward the Sun

Dedicated to her education and to helping her father in his general store, Emilie Heinrich is convinced she doesn't have time for love. But when a childhood friend returns to St. Charles, Missouri, after serving in the Civil War, his smile and charm captures Emilie's eye and her heart. Will she be forced to choose between honoring her father and a future with a husband and family of her own?

Ripples Along the Shore

Change is brewing in St. Charles. A group of brave souls are preparing to head west on the Boone's Lick Wagon Train, led by the mysterious and handsome Garrett Cowlshaw, who served as a Confederate soldier in the war that killed Caroline's husband. Despite her dislike for him, Caroline is tempted to join the wagon train and start fresh somewhere new, but when Mr. Cowlshaw forbids her—a single woman—to travel with them, will one man's prejudice destroy Caroline's hope for a new future? Or will the ripples of God's love bring the answer she needs?

- See more at: <http://waterbrookmultnomah.com/catalo...>

The Quilted Heart Omnibus Details

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Author : Mona Hodgson

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From Reader Review The Quilted Heart Omnibus for online ebook

ASC Book Reviews says

A Lovely Collection. I had wanted to read these stories when they first came out separately, but never got the opportunity. So I was very happy when I got the chance to read them all in one! The first story Dandelions on the Wind is great! I love the characters especially the three main ladies Mrs. Brantenberg, Maren, and Gabi! The whole concept of this first story is a great one as these people try to pick up their lives and move on after the Civil War. Showing how God provides in ways we never expect, and that sometimes His ways aren't always our plans at all but they are far better! :) I was SO glad after reading the end of this novella that I didn't have to wait for the next one! Funny, sweet, and lovable.

The Next Novella Bending Toward the Sun was a little slower paced for me, but when I got into it I was deeply rooted! I LOVE the end of this one and the whole set up. Bending Toward the Sun touched on prejudices and letting go. I love the spunk Mona gives to each of her characters especially Emilie as she grows up and steps out! A very sweet read!

And Finally Ripples Along the Shore! Caroline's story was highly entertaining. Her courage and faith grows throughout Ripples Along the Shore which turns out to be just a taste of her tale. Hard decisions are made in this one, secrets are hinted at but not revealed, and good byes are on the horizon throughout. At the attempt to not give too much away; as the end came the good byes are bitter sweet and lovely. This is where I was torn up! Caroline and these other character's stories are cut short as they prepare to move on with their lives. The ending is so sweet with good byes and thanks to God, but there are untied ends, unfinished stories, and unanswered questions! I definitely need more! After reading the Authors Note I found that these characters stories go on to the first in Mona's Hearts Seeking Homes series Prairie Song! I really enjoyed reading the Author's Note as Mona goes into the stories behind the stories in a way.

Overall I love how these books show the different lives and changes after the Civil War and enjoy the whole quilting circle. All of these stories show God's provision and great love for His children! And I absolutely Love how Mona plants the title within the book so it drives home why she titled them thus; as well as the way she weaves scripture throughout. The thing that gets me is I NEED MORE!!!! LOL!!! I don't like where it ended and I REALLY want Prairie Song to see where Mona takes these characters!!! I highly recommend these Novellas, just maybe after you've already got Prairie Song in your hot little hand and can immediately go on! LOL!

Songs that were mentioned in the book and/or that fit: "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" by Chris Rice, "Sweet Hour of Prayer" by Yoshie Ueno, "Battle Hymn of the Republic" by Nashville Harmonicas Band, "Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed" by Sovereign Grace Music, "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" is also mentioned in this book but I couldn't find a clear enough MP3 on Amazon so I didn't link it up. Songs may change or be added in the future and if I find a version that's clear and I like I'll add links.

Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 4:23, James 4:10, Ecclesiastes 3:1, Psalm 119:103, Proverbs 3:5-6, 1 Samuel 16:7, James 4:6

~ASC

*I requested and received this book from Blogging for Books for the purpose of review it. This in no way affected my opinion and the above are my true thoughts and feelings about these Novellas. ~ASC

Deborah says

Like a beautiful patchwork quilt, the three novellas in *The Quilted Heart* tell stories of lives stitched together with love and God's unending grace.

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My Review:

All three stories tied in very well together, while keeping the story moving along at a good pace. I felt as if I was in Saint Charles, Missouri, as Hodgson did an excellent job in conveying her settings. Capturing the essence of the past can be quite the feat, and she did a stellar job of not only conveying her character's emotions, but also drawing me in as the reader no matter what was going on in the book.

The spiritual lessons in this book is not the only reason I love these stories, but makes it a book I will recommend to fans of Christian fiction, quilters, and history buffs alike! Hodgson is not shy with making God the center of the story, and clearly portrays her characters as people who need His guidance. Her stories are thoughtful, attentive to historic details, and just a wonderful read overall. This omnibus is a sweet collection of incredible stories that are not to be missed!

This book was provided by the author for free in exchange for an honest review. Thank you Mona!

Beverly says

Mona Hodgson writes a heartwarming tale where community means giving each other a helping hand when needed. The setting for this book is a small town in Missouri just a few months after the end of the Civil War. Nearly every family in the area was touched by the war in some way. Some had lost family members; some had family return either wounded physically or emotionally.

Maren Jensen had been a mail order bride, traveling from Denmark, who had been rejected once she arrived in America. Her eyesight was failing. The kindly Dry Goods and Grocery store owner directed her to Mrs. Brantenberg, a widow who owned a farm and was rearing a granddaughter on her own after the death of her daughter. Maren, Gabi, and the widow settled down into a contented little family unit until one day Gabi's father returned from the war. The first novella of The Quilted Heart trilogy is Maren and Wooly's story.

Corporal Quaid McFarland was one of the fortunate sons who returned whole. He was happy to be back, working in the family's business, hauling freight. He had served in the same regiment as Rutherford Wainwright, known to his friends as Wooly. On the harvest day at the Brantenberg's farm, Wooly introduced Quaid to his fiance, Maren. Much of the local community had turned out to help with the widow's harvest including a former schoolmate whom Quaid remembered--Emilie Heinrich. Book two of the Quilted Heart trilogy is Quaid and Emilie's story.

These novellas weave in the life stories of other members of the quilting group which met every Thursday, hosted by Mrs. Brantenberg in her home. The club was the social event for women in the area to get together and share news and gossip. It also doubled as a Bible study where hearts that were raw and bruised found solace in the widow's kindness and spiritual wisdom. The members supported and prayed for one another.

Recently, Caroline Milburn had started coming to Mrs. Brantenberg's quilting circle. She shared with the group that she hadn't heard news of her husband serving in the army in several months. The strain of not knowing whether he had perished or was alive was telling on her. Each week they encouraged and prayed for her. But bitterness sharpened her tongue. She would often embarrass her sister by her curt mannerisms. Another friend of Mrs. Brantenberg's family, Gerrit Cowlshaw, knew the right people to contact, and he obtained news of her husband. Caroline was a widow. This third novella of The Quilted Heart Trilogy is Caroline's story.

Besides being a collection of charming romances, this book showcases the author's skill in creating a feeling of community and closeness. I found it easy to care for its members. The relationships were warm, realistic, and sometimes poignant. I could easily imagine them as friends. If you enjoy a cozy read where friendship is a central theme, then I believe you will enjoy this book.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received a complimentary review copy of this book from Blogging for Books on behalf of Waterbrook 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."

Victor Gentile says

Mona Hodgson in her new book, "The Quilted Heart" published by WaterBrook Press gives us Three

Novellas in One.

From the back cover: Like a beautiful patchwork quilt, the three novellas in *The Quilted Heart* tell stories of lives stitched together with love and God's unending grace.

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Welcome to St. Charles, Missouri. The Civil War has been devastating to some of the women here and three of these women meet for quilting over at Elsa Brantenberg's farm. When they all come together it is more like a support group and each woman gets her own story. It is amazing to me how differently the same event, in this case the Civil War, can affect individuals. Ms. Hodgson had done a wonderful job of bringing each woman to life and giving her a unique experience. We fall in love with these ladies and when they feel pain so do we. When they experience love we rejoice with them. Every character is so well portrayed we feel as though we are living in St. Charles with them. It is a sad thing when the book ends and we have to say goodbye to them. However we had a wonderful time with them between the pages so it is all worthwhile.

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Miranda A. Uyeh says

I found this book to be quite engaging, start to finish. Mona writes in a style that is soft and subtle. Her

characters are bright, forthcoming and easy to relate to. Her writing skill is crisp, clear and hits right on its mark.

I love that this story is full of faith and hope. It mirrors clearly the uncertainties of life, but also a God who is in control.

Maren is a strong young woman who wouldn't let her disability get in the way of what needs to be done. Her faith is profound and she has a heart of gold.

Rutherford, as I prefer to call him, is a man persistent to make things right despite past mistakes without forcing his way. His character is a perfect example of how one ought to show gratitude for grace when it is offered.

Gabi is a sweet little girl and her bouncing curls always managed to make me stop with a smile. Mother Bratenberg was a wise old one. I loved that her character mirrored the true human nature that though we love God and let His Word sink in our hearts, it takes His grace to deal rightly with people, especially those that have hurt us.

The stories of some of the characters were left unfinished. I'm a fan of prairie romance as I'm sensing the next book in the series will be. So I'm looking forward to seeing how the trail to the west will affect the characters of this story.

If you love a simple, soft and subtle romance, one with modest character, then this book is for you. I'd compare it to a Lori Wick laced with spunky metaphor. It is a book you can read in one sitting if you push hard enough.

Though I offer this review to the public, it is my opinion and simply that. I received a free copy of this book from WaterBrook Multnomah in exchange for my honest opinion.

Brittany says

The Quilted Heart is a collection of three novellas: Dandelions on the Wind, Bending Toward the Sun and Ripples Along the Shore. Having read and thoroughly enjoyed the full-length novel, Prairie Song, last year, I was really excited to read these three introductory stories. I was not left disappointed. These three smaller stories are a great lead-in to the larger book.

In Dandelions on the Wind, my very favorite story of the three, Maren Jensen has a choice to make. She has failing eyesight and things have not worked out here in America as she had originally hoped when she sailed from Denmark four years earlier. She learns to trust that God's plans are not always the plans that we have for ourselves. I also enjoyed the beautiful story of reconciliation, when Rutherford "Wooly" Wainwright returns after leaving suddenly four years earlier, besieged by grief.

In Bending Toward the Sun, Emilie Heinrich and Quaid Macfarland renew an old friendship and love begins to bloom. But Emilie's father has other plans for her and is not in favor of a courtship. Is it possible for Emilie and Quaid to ever find happiness together while still honoring her father's wishes? This book deals with prejudice and asks the question of how does God really see people. This novella ended before I expected it too, however, their story continued on in the next novella nicely.

In *Ripples Along the Shore*, we mainly follow the situation of Caroline Milburn, a war widow. She is facing tough choices about where her life is headed. She can stay in an uncomfortable situation with her sister's family, try to make a life on her own in town, or attempt to join a wagon train that will be leaving in a few months. Garrett Cowlshaw complicates things for Caroline when he forbids her to join. But she is determined to find a way to go. This was a very good story that flows very well into the larger novel *Prairie Song*. This novella comes to an end without complete resolution for Caroline, as well as for Anna, another character who we follow in this book. This type of ending would not have set well with me if I did not already have knowledge of how things end up working out in the full-length novel, *Prairie Song*. My advice to readers of this collection is to have a copy of *Prairie Song* nearby because it will be a must read at the end of *Ripples Along the Shore*.

All of these novellas were written so beautifully. They just drew me in and kept me reading. The characters dealt with big issues and all three novellas were tied together so nicely, with one story flowing into the next. I do have to say that I am glad to have a copy of *Prairie Song*, because I had to pick it up again as soon as I finished reading this novella collection and read more about Caroline and Anna's stories. I very much enjoyed this collection.

I received a complimentary copy of *The Quilted Heart* from the publisher in exchange for an honest review, which I have given.

You can read this review on my blog at:
<http://brittreadsfiction.wordpress.co...>

You can rank my review at:
<http://waterbrookmultnomah.com/bloggi...>

Lynne Young says

Wow - 3 books in one! I really enjoyed getting to know the ladies in these books. Each one has her own distinct style and personality but they blend so well together. Each novella leads into the next one and at the end it all leads into the continuing series. I cannot wait to read more of this westward migration adventure. I am sure Maren, Emilie, and Caroline will give us, and the trail boss, many moments of excitement. Maren and Emilie are both married but Caroline is a widow with eyes for only one man. Oh and don't forget about Anna! Will she or won't she? This should be interesting!

The author has done a wonderful job moving from one novella into the next to keep the story smoothly moving along while building excitement about the next book. I cannot wait to see what happens next to the Boone's Lick Wagon Train in *Prairie Song*, the first book in the *Hearts Seeking Home Series*. I am so glad I read these 3 novellas in one book and not individually as they are also marketed. It was much easier to move from one into the next this way. You will love meeting these characters, and characters they are! This adventure is not to be missed!

Shannah Mauney says

These women touched my heart tremendously. I only wish this wasn't a collection of novellas! I would have loved to delve into each of their lives just a little bit more. Overall, this was a delightful collection of stories about being transformed. Just as these ladies learn from one another during their quilting circle, so we should

learn: "A quilted heart is a transformed heart." View my full review here.

Grace says

Maren Jensen has no choice but to live alongside a widow and her young grandchild in St. Charles, Missouri. This kind but stern older woman has given her food and a home. Maren is grateful, but lonely. She longs for Denmark where her family resides. Maren's dwindling eyesight makes work difficult, and she's determined to change her fate. Life turns a corner though, when Mrs. Brantenburg's lost son-in-law returns from the Civil War looking for a new beginning. His appearance shakes up both Maren and Mrs. Brantenburg's lives on the farm.

Emilie Heinrich is busy as a store clerk for her father's general store. She's satisfied with her position, but her father doesn't think it's enough. He insists that she pursues lady's college, but she thinks otherwise. Her life is further complicated when she chances upon an old friend, Quaid Mcfarland. She's intrigued by his visit back to Missouri, and he in turn, is curious about Emilie. Her father, on the other hand, is not amused by either Quaid's return or his growing interest in his daughter.

Caroline Milburn is a young widow. Her husband died in the war fighting for the North. With no means, she's journeyed back to St. Charles, Missouri, to stay with her sister and her family. Living in new surroundings, she copes with her feelings and emotions. With her fiery red hair that matches her quick temper, it proves to be no easy task. Not to mention the attention from an ex-Confederate man by the name of Garret Colishaw. Caroline feels she is still in the process of healing, but she knows that there must be a new path for her to follow.

My Thoughts:

This is my first experience with the author of this book. I was curious and decided to give her a try. I did not regret doing so. I enjoyed journeying through all three of the stories compiled into this omnibus, but I related most with Emilie Heinrich's story. Mona Hodgson's writing is sweet and simple. It's a light read and you could finish it fairly quickly.

I particularly liked how Mona Hodgson matched the characters together in a quilting circle. I felt it was crucial for making the connections to all three women and for finding what the ladies learned from each other. I don't even know how to quilt, and this made me want to.

I felt there were a few problems with the adjoining plot lines. There was an issue in the third story that was addressed, but never fixed. I don't want to reveal what it was, but I felt disappointed that the author didn't finish it. The endings for all three stories felt too abrupt. I think they could've been longer.

The Quilted Heart is a pleasant romance filled with charm and the feeling of long-forgotten times. I found the facts on how men and women adjusted to the end of the Civil War fascinating. I could have read more on that part of history. I recommend The Quilted Heart by Mona Hodgson to the reader who enjoys an airy afternoon and a glass of iced tea (if it's spring or summer). For winter, I would suggest a cozy day with a blanket and a cat for company.

This book was provided to me by Blogging for Books in exchange for my honest review.

Elizabeth says

The Quilted Heart
Three Novellas in One
Author: Mona Hodgson

I really loved The Quilted Heart that has three novellas in one. Mona Hodgson has done an excellent job of going from one to the other and you will not miss out on anything. You will love Elsa Brantenberg she is a very loved and wise lady. She and the other ladies in Saint Charles quilting circle gets together once a week at her farmhouse on the riverside town of Saint Charles, Missouri and work on their quilts and pray for one another. Before they start Mrs. Brantenberg or one of the ladies opens up with a prayer. All these ladies have been through heartache and hardship. They all have something in common. In these three novellas you are going to meet Maren, Emilie, Caroline, and you are going to love them. Maren takes on the job of helping Mrs. Brantenberg and her granddaughter, Gabi on the farm. Maren never expected to love these two like she does. Gabi's father Rutherford, who they call "Woolly" Wainwright returns from the war unexpected. Since Emilie's mother left she has been helping her father in his general store and has no room for love. Her father does not want her talking to a man. So what happens when an old school friend returns from the war? Will she listen to her father or her heart? Caroline in the other novellas has not heard from her husband who went off to war. She doesn't know if he is alive or dead. When a man comes to town he knows someone who might can find an answer for Caroline. This third novella is all about the people getting ready to head west on the Boone's Lick Wagon train. This wagon train is lead by the handsome Garrett Cowlshaw. This trip west is going to be very hard and long. This handsome Garrett also takes a liking to Caroline. Is she ready to love again? Can an un married woman take this trip west? Who will sign up for this long and hard trip to the west. I loved how Mona put the spiritual parts in her book. There is also a quote that I loved, "Like a quilt is made up of remnants....scraps, so is your life and mine." I loved The Quilted Heart and I know you will to. I was given a copy of this book by the author for an honest review, Which I have given

Lynda Edwards says

In this collection of three novellas by Mona Hodgson, we are introduced to a diverse group of women whose faith in God and enjoyment of quilting bind them together. The story begins in St. Charles, Missouri in 1865. I say story, despite there being three novellas included in this collection, because common themes and storylines inhabit each vignette, but each section gives us the continuing story from a different perspective. Each novella can be read separately, but the story makes more sense in order, giving us a fuller picture of life in St. Charles after the Civil War.

Each person in the quilting group has suffered loss in some way, most often due to the after-effects of the war. One of the things I really appreciate about this collection is that while the women are all experiencing difficult times, they support each other and get each other through it in community. At various points, one of the women may try to survive on her own, but they each discover that a load shared is a load lightened.

I also liked that Ms. Hodgson really seemed to know her characters and think through each of her dilemmas thoroughly and thoughtfully. She considered many angles that I did not foresee, yet it never felt forced or unrealistic in what each woman faced.

The collection dealt with many difficult issues as well, such as prejudice and spousal mistreatment. There were no easy answers provided but the problems were treated realistically. The main characters were not always immune to these failings themselves, which was refreshing in that it was sometimes her problem rather than someone else's, but neither were they irredeemable or too stubborn to see the wrong in their own

behavior, often with the help of good friends and God.

Tucked into the pages were also some very valuable lessons. One of my favorites was, “don’t chase your feelings. Make them follow you.” A sage bit of wisdom from a mother watching her son struggle against prejudice from the father of the woman he loved. I particularly appreciated that he was not told to follow his heart but to respect her father, even though it was the hardest thing he’d ever been asked to do. It was a beautiful example of Christian love, even to those who persecute you. While our society today exalts romantic love above all else, this couple did the right thing and was rewarded for it in the end—a satisfying conclusion to their love story despite the difficult journey involved in getting there.

In the final novella, there is a fair bit of mystery surrounding the hero. This mystery makes him intriguing but also provided my only source of frustration in the collection: there is no resolution to his and the heroine’s story. While I don’t like to reach the end of a story and find “to be continued,” I am comforted by the fact that their story, as well as the other one left unfinished, will be picked up on the trail in the author’s next novel, *Prairie Song*.

This novella collection was an enjoyable read, getting better with each story in the series, perhaps because we knew the characters better as the greater story arc progressed. I would recommend it to anyone interested in historical fiction, especially the post-Civil War era and on into the push westward.

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Shalini Ayre says

The Quilted Heart : Three Novellas in One - Mona Hodgson

Elsa Brantenberg hosts a quilting circle in a riverside town on the outskirts of the town St. Charles, Missouri. The ladies that attend have experienced some form of heartache relating to the Civil War. Together they offer prayers and friendship as they each contemplate God's plan for them.

Dandelions on the Wind

Maren Johnson took a job on Mrs. Brantenberg's farm not expecting to call it home. Working on the farm and looking after both Elsa's granddaughter (Gabi) and the household, she is growing to love them both. As her love grows so her eyesight slowly fades. When Gabi's father returns, Rutherford 'Wooly' Wainwright, Maren sees it as an opportunity to get a paying job, save the money and return to Denmark to her family. But it seems that her plan isn't necessarily what God has in store for her. Should she accept His way or face an uncertain future?

Bending Towards the Sun

With unswerving loyalty to her father and her education, the last thing on Emilie's mind is love. But then a childhood friend returns from serving in the War. Unexpected feelings emerge and together with his charm and smile, the young woman's heart is captured. However, PaPa has other ideas and is not keen for his daughter to get involved with Quaid - even if he is hardworking and loyal to his family. How will Emilie choose between her beloved father and a future that includes a husband and a family?

Ripples Along the Shore

With all the talk of wagons going west and her husband dead Caroline has many options open to her. She could stay with her sister; but her husband with war injuries is bitter and bad tempered. If not for the sake of the children Caroline would have told him her exact thoughts. So when Garret Cowlshaw (a Confederate soldier no less) turns up, the widow's reaction is hate. This Garret may not be the person solely responsible

for her husband's death, but he fought on the side that killed him. Tempted to join the wagons there's little stopping her. But will God's love provide the answers she's looking for or will her fate be decided by a man, namely one Garret Cowlshaw.

This collection of three novella's is a gentle story that weaves together the lives of a small community that has been torn apart by war. Yet their faith and determination to carry on is heartwarming and inspiring. With Maren's conflicting emotions to stay or leave, Emilie's unwavering loyalty and dedication, and Caroline's concerns about perception. Each woman is facing their own trials but still very aware of others plight. Their bond is the quilting circle where the ever present, ever kind Mrs. Brantenberg with her deep faith manages to quell the fears of each woman.

This historical drama is so enjoyable it was difficult to put down. There's no high drama yet the author builds tension and apprehension to a happy satisfying conclusion. Each story has a strong lead character that appear true to life as well as being completely likable. It's a collection of heartwarming stories that remind us that despite the ravages of war, faith, loyalty and love always win out. A highly recommended read.

I received a complimentary copy of this book as part of the Blogging for Books program part of WaterBrookMultnomah publishing group. The opinions expressed are my own and I am not required to give a positive critique.

Chris Buob says

As I read Mona Hodgson's "Quilted Heat" a 3 in 1 novella, I was filled with joy. It is a story of families reunited after the Civil War. Now it is time about thinking about joining a wagon train and heading west. Will all of the Ladies Quilting Circle go or will some stay behind? The Ladies Quilting Circle meets once a week for quilting and fellowship. Mrs. Brantenberg, the leader of the circle, likes to compare our life and walk with God to quilts and quilt patterns. "Life is much like quilting – a patchwork of scraps and remnants." "We all have a long list of the scraps and squares that make up our lives." "God, the Divine Quilter, has the perfect patchwork pattern for our lives. Each will be different as sunshine and snowfall." These were just a few of my favorite quotes from the second book "Bending Toward the Sun." In the third and final novella "Ripples Along the Shore," Mrs. Hodgson talks about being stuck in the mud. It really made me stop and think if I am stuck in the mud and what am I going to do about it? That is what I really like about Mrs. Hodgson writing not only is it very entertaining but it really makes you stop and think. Set aside some time and get ready for a great adventure with Maren, Emilie and Caroline just a few friends you will meet in this wonderful book.
