



Sarah's Garden

Kelly Long

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Quite by accident, Sarah King has fallen in love. But this love is forbidden, and could cost her everything she holds dear.

Tucked into the majesty of Pennsylvania's Allegheny Mountains is a garden Sarah King has been nurturing for years. She never feels more alive than when she is alone with her thoughts and her Creator among the delicate rows of plants. But then duty calls her away from her beloved garden and into a world she knows little about.

Grant Williams, a handsome young veterinarian, has left the city to open a rural practice among the Amish. Within minutes of meeting shy but feisty Sarah King, he is captivated by her.

As their feelings grow for one another, Sarah insists they can never be together. Marrying Grant would mean being uprooted from her home, her family, and her community. Throughout the cold Pennsylvania winter, with her garden tucked away until spring, Sarah begins crafting a quilt that illustrates her pain. Can anything lasting blossom from a love that's forbidden?

Sarah's Garden Details

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From Reader Review Sarah's Garden for online ebook

Melissa says

I'm a pretty big fan of Amish fiction. That being said, sometimes they can fall flat. Which is what happened with this one. A nice story to be sure, but the characters were lacking quite a bit.

Sarah has always enjoyed working in her garden, and she's fantastic at it. But then someone new moves in next door and helps to distract her from the wonderful plants she grows. But Dr. Williams is an Englisher veterinarian and loving him would mean losing her community, family, and all that makes her Amish. A sacrifice that Sarah is not willing to make. To make matters worse, the previous owners of William's farm have been coming around making trouble for Sarah and her family. All she wants to do is garden, but even there she is having trouble finding peace.

The characters, in my opinion, were very weak in this novel. Sarah was just a little too perfect and innocent, even if she was Amish. It was actually wearisome hearing how nice and calm she was all the time. Grant Williams on the other hand actually creeped me out a little bit. He too was a bit too perfect and nice, but some of the things he said actually came off as icky instead of romantic. The side characters too were a little off. Especially the one boy causing trouble and blaming it on Sarah's family, there wasn't any motive that I could see for doing this and while the author alludes to it, she never comes out and really says why.

The plot was actually good. I enjoyed reading about tending the garden and the roadside stand. It was also nice to hear about the baked goods and I wish some recipes would have been included within the book. The writing was nice and homey and described a wonderful way of looking at the Amish life. Since it is Amish fiction it could also be considered Christian fiction and this book was a bit preachy. Normally they're not so bad but this one took it a little over the top to me.

Not the best Amish fiction but it wasn't terrible. If you're a fan of the genre you might as well give it a read.

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300 pages

Review by M. Reynard 2011

More of my reviews can be found at www.ifithaswords.blogspot.com .

Kristin says

I was really excited to read this series. Kelly Long has a way of making me want to jump into a book and run away with a fictional character. I have to say—she makes an Amish man sound pretty enticing! I cannot believe how fast I'm reading through this series. I gulped down this book and moved right on to the next which I finished in one day! If you're looking for Amish romance that is a little more vivid in the romance department—Kelly Long sure has that area down pat. It's still tasteful but just a little bit sensuous!

Sarah's Garden by Kelly Long is the first book in the Patch of Heaven series and takes us into the lives of the King family. Sarah takes comfort in her garden and feels as if she doesn't really fit in with the women in her community. She isn't great at quilting fabric—instead she looks at her garden as her quilt. This makes her unique and it catches the interest of the new veterinarian in town. Problem is—he's not Amish and as much as Sarah wants to deny her feelings, she's pretty interested in the Doctor.

At the urging of her family, she tries to put the thoughts of Grant Williams out of her mind but after a stolen kiss here or there it just isn't possible. When Grant makes the decision to leave and let Sarah go so that she is not shunned from her family and taken from her faith—Sarah's world comes crashing down around her. It is then that her family tries to set her up with her best childhood friend, Jacob. Jacob has always been in love with Sarah and is determined to step in and be there for her if he can. Things aren't so easy for Sarah to accept though and while she seeks peace—Grant is seeking something else entirely. I don't want to spoil it, in fact I'd like to tease you perhaps and make you wonder...

Does Grant return and steal Sarah's heart or has she found peace in the arms of her best friend? I'll leave it for you to decide (and hopefully to read!) I think you'll love it! Just the right touches of romance to make you wish you were able to snag the heart of some handsome man out in the middle of Amish country. A delightful read that has been an absolute pleasure and honor to add to my growing collection of Amish fiction.

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Renate says

This book has the best romantic tension I have ever read (although technically I listened to it on audiobook). The author builds such an incredible attraction between the two main characters, and even though the story is really pure, you could *feel* the heat between them, the potential.

That being said, I did get a little frustrated with the male lead for what I felt was his irresponsible behavior towards the heroine. I feel that he could have been a bit more honorable and less pushy, and about halfway (maybe two thirds) through I experienced a strong desire to punch him in the gut and tell him to back off and quit leading her on and pressuring her, if you care about her, you jerk! But the ending was really satisfying, and seriously, the attraction between these two...I could *feel* it. I almost got uncomfortable during one of their private conversations and felt like I was intruding on a really intense, private moment - and then I remembered that they were fictional people. I applaud the author for her masterful ability to write such pure sexual longing.

Overall, I definitely enjoyed the book, despite wishing that someone would scold the male lead. He turns out not to be such a jerk ;)

Beth says

There is nothing like a long recovery to help distinguish in one's mind the difference between a good and bad author! I've always been an avid reader of both Christian and secular fiction; but after these last weeks, I'm

thinking I am now an expert. Sarah's Garden will top the lists. It's a great read, and I highly recommend it! For me, there are few authors who can compete at the same level as Francine Rivers, Dee Henderson, Mary Connealy, and Karen Kingsbury, but Kelly Long now places in my list of top ten Christian authors. I'm not sure what some publishers want out of their authors, but so many of the stories I've read contain one-dimensional characters who drip fake sweetness and temperaments and who lack believable challenges and personality quirks. One-thread plot lines can be juvenile, and one is reduced to feeling like a juvenile when authors continually repeat themselves. And too often, stories elevate a particular type of church to such extent Pharisees would be proud. The publishers at Thomas Nelson obviously don't put out the average cookie cutter story. They clearly allowed this author room to weave together a compelling dilemma in a setting and place where much can be learned, and where all angles of a character's struggle between perceived right and wrong can be debated. In reading Sarah's Garden, I most enjoyed the hummingbird analogy, the high-road souvenir involving a minor character, and the author's accurate handling of the Amish setting and people, without the usual posturing. In the struggle presented, I chose sides. My side lost in the end, but I was surprised to find I wasn't disappointed. Sarah's Garden passed the Martha Martha test. Was the book a complete waste of what could have been more productive hours, or did it provide inspiration, understanding, or a particularly precious reminder, like the stories told in church, small group, or Sunday School? Lastly, Kelly Long's obvious trust in her readers is refreshing.

Anna says

It was a cute innocent romance. Too bad it got boring. I love forbidden romances. They can be real and applicable or over the top and melancholy. I don't care; you put forbidden in the title and I will read it.

Grant and Sarah make an adorable couple. What Grant does for Sarah is heartbreaking and heartwarming. He actually considers her feeling. How many main guys think about the real costs of the girl being with him. If she suddenly decided to be with him, that means she has to abandon her faith, family, and life. That's asking for a lot from a young girl.

I think the garden could've been used better. It's the damn title of the book. Use it for metaphor, not an excuse for the guy to get the girl to come over to his house.

Barbara says

Sarah's Garden is the first in Kelly Long's Patch of Heaven series. When the Amish Juliet meets the English Romeo, there are fireworks. They come from two different worlds, but can they make things work? Shy Sarah King, sent to take her turn at the family's roadside stand, grows more over the summer than what can be raised in her garden. Dr. Grant Williams, the new veterinarian to the Amish community, tends to more than just the neighbors animals as the months pass. Can it work?

Having read many other Amish fiction novels, I have always been amazed by how innocent the couples are when they come to find that they are in love. I was surprised by the passion shared by Sarah King and Dr. Grant Williams. Thank you Kelly for showing us that the Amish do have more emotions than we've seen in other works.

Rachel Brand says

Sarah buries her shyness in her garden, nurturing her plants with her God-given gift and love of the land. But when her sister marries and leaves the family farm, Sarah has to step into her shoes and tend the vegetable stall. Initially scared at the prospect of having to deal with people - especially Englishers! - on a regular basis, Sarah soon finds that she's enjoying herself. Especially since Grant Williams, the local English vet and her new neighbour, continually visits the stall and becomes a close friend. It begins to feel like Grant has always been part of her life, and as Sarah spends many hours helping him plant a vegetable garden she realises that what she feels for Grant is more than she's ever felt for any Amish boy. But where can their relationship go? Sarah could never leave her community. Could Grant ever give up his sports car and join the Amish world?

Kelly really grasps the essence of the Amish way of life in this simple love story. I felt like I was working with Sarah in her garden and walking beside her and Grant in the forest. There was a true sense of peace, despite the dramas occurring in the lives of the characters. And I really got the impression that the Amish were welcoming, loving people. While some novels choose to focus on shunnings and people who find themselves pitted against the Elders in their community, this portrayal was entirely different. I loved the way in which the Amish welcomed Grant with open arms when he expressed his desire to become a vet for their community. And they freely accepted his help in emergencies, allowing him to drive them to the hospital or a friend's house if needed. This was very different to other novels where the Amish avoid anyone English at all costs.

Sarah and Grant's story isn't terribly complicated. A girl falls for a boy that she cannot be with because of societal differences, yet both yearn to be together. Sarah's parents were surprisingly accepting of their daughter's developing relationship to an outsider, and while they discouraged her they didn't actively try to stop them being together. They could have banned her from seeing him, but they let her make her own choices. And while Sarah does have another love-interest, her best friend Jacob, it is clear that Grant is the only man that she's interested in. I appreciated that Kelly showed not only the blossoming friendship between Sarah and Grant, but also their attraction to each other and the physical aspect of their relationship. While the emotional and spiritual foundations of any relationship are always the most important, a lot of authors forget about attraction and even simple hugs and kisses. I'm sure that any reader will agree that the kisses shared between Sarah and Grant were not lustful, but emphasised their love for each other and their desire to be together.

My only minor complaints about this book would have to be that Grant initially appeared to be far too forward in his flirtations, and that the situation with the Fisher farm was resolved a little too easily. Grant is, in my eyes, clearly flirting with Sarah from their first meeting at the vegetable stand. Something just didn't sit right with this, and it made me a little wary of him to begin with. I wouldn't have minded if their relationship had built up to flirtations, but it seemed a little odd to behave in such a forward manner from the start. I did warm up to him, but this niggled me for a while. As for the Fisher farm and the mystery surrounding that, all the problems were resolved in a couple of pages near the end of the novel and it just seemed a bit too fast and too easy.

I thoroughly enjoyed this story and became so involved in the lives of the characters that I even shed a tear or two over their struggles! Kelly Long is definitely an author to keep your eye on if you're interested in Amish fiction. Not only does she understand her subject inside and out, she creates characters that you'll wish you never have to say goodbye to. 9/10

Lorie says

Sarah's Garden by Kelly Long is the first book in her A Patch of Heaven series. Sarah King is a 20 year old, shy Amish woman who loves her garden. Sarah's sister, who previously ran the family's stand, got married and Sarah's parents decide that Sarah will take over the stand. Sarah can't imagine it since she is so shy and spends most of her time by herself in her garden. Her father also decides that Sarah will make her sister's soon to come baby its first quilt. Sarah can't imagine this either, because her creativity has been limited to her garden and she gave up quilting a long time ago. But Sarah decides to do her best in both. While working her first day at the stand, she meets an English man who she discovers is her new neighbor and a veterinarian. It seems to be love at first sight for her new neighbor, Grant. Sarah likes him too. As they spend more time together, they fall deeper in love, but they know the love is forbidden. She is Amish and will be shunned if she leaves the faith to marry him an Englisher. So, they must make some decisions about that love. Read the book to find out what happens.

I've had this book for awhile and can't believe I waited so long to read it. This is the first book I have read by Kelly Long and I really like her writing style. I really enjoyed the Amish details she brought to life in the story. I really enjoyed seeing Sarah go from this shy garden loving girl to a very creative woman. I thought it was awful that her parents made her run the stand with her shyness, but as usual parent's know best and it was really good for Sarah. I also loved the quilting theme in the book and how it was compared to the creative of working a garden. Sarah had used garden to help her relax and get guidance from the Lord. I think eventually that she uses quilting in the same way and learns to love it. The only thing I would have liked more was a better description of the quilt. It seemed like it was this awesome thing, but I just could not picture it in my mind. Overall I loved the book and can't wait to read the second book in the series, Lily's Wedding Quilt, which comes out in March.

Heather says

My first Kelly Long book was "Lilly's Wedding Quilt" which I received in exchange for a book review. I LOVED it. It was instantly one of my favorite books. So when I bought "Sarah's Garden" I had high expectations.

I enjoyed going back and reading the story of Sarah and Grant (as they are referenced in the second book). It helped to see the beginning of the story (though by no means do they need to be read in order). I liked this book, but didn't love it.

I had trouble accepting that a young Amish woman would let certain things happen, and go as far as they did, knowing that a relationship between an Englisher and an Amish can't work unless she is willing to give up her lifestyle. Outside of this hangup I did like the book. I enjoyed the whole King family, especially the brother Luke.

Overall "Sarah's Garden" lays before you an illustration full of imagery (I would love to be standing in Sarah's garden looking over the beautiful sanctuary she has put together), family, love, struggle, strength, and growth. The seasons of the garden are a reflection of the characters lives and the beauty that sometimes we need to imagine will be there, rather than looking at what is there in the cold of winter.

Becky Pinson says

I must say, for an Amish book, this was quite spicy! Loved it! Also my first audio book!

Brandi says

Sarah's Garden - Kelly Long

(*SPOILER ALERT!!!*) 4.5stars

So, after my mom gushing about Lilly's Wedding Quilt by Kelly Long for over a year, I finally decided to read the Patch of Heaven series (Lilly's Wedding Quilt is book two). Or, more accurately put, she finally just told me to read them. And, being the wonderfully obedient daughter that I am (not to mention I wasn't reading anything at the time and they really sounded interesting), I agreed and started reading.

I first started reading it and, I must admit, it was boring. Amish girl is nervous 'cuz she has to start working at her family's roadside stand, new Englisch vet moves to town and gets comfortable, blah, blah, blah. But then... beautiful Amish girl meets hunky Englisher and - oh, look, I see a spark!

Grant (aka, hunky Englisher) was a total sweetheart! He was so charming, and romantic, and gentlemanly. He sure started liking her fast! He was literally charming the moment they met! I really liked the part where he ate the apple butter off of Sarah. I think I must've worded that wrong, because the sweet moment suddenly sounds disgusting!

Sarah was great. Sweet, gentle, kind, and innocent. Her love for Grant and tumultuous emotions were so real and endearing. It's funny, Grant and Grossmudder (Grandmother) King (Man, that woman's got herself a tongue!) both called Sarah sassy, but she didn't seem very sassy to me, the official Queen of Sass.

I felt so sorry for poor Jacob! He's in love with Sarah, fully knowing she loves someone else. It's so sad! The poor man. He's funny too. And he's such a sweetie (page 259). Though he did make me want to slap him once or twice.

Poor Matthew. I hope his uncle can help him heal and move on. His dad was such a jerk. And his mom was so nice. I'm glad Sarah gave her the quilt.

Sarah's mamm and father were really nice, and kind, and patient.

Bishop - He was just too funny. His humor was so refreshing and silly. And the manure idea, ha!

Mr. and Mrs. Bustle were sweet. Though I thought that was kind of strange how Mrs. Bustle had been a housekeeper for ages and she was still afraid of mice. The bats were funny.

I enjoy Kelly Long's writing style. She had the romance, the quality, and the depth. I do wish she had more action though. The crop fire was exciting, but, well, let's just say I'm used to Mary Connealy. Hangings, shootouts, floods, fires, you name it.

She didn't do so well on the faith either. Oh, she had a lot of God in there, but not so much about His Son. Which was disappointing.

??Trea says

For most of you that don't know, I've recently returned to Christianity. With that return, I've noticed that my reading tastes have once again changed, as I am reading more Christian Fiction/Romance than I used to. I've even challenged myself to read 100 of these types of books by end of year and I just got started in May!

I've also signed up on netgalley.com, a website that looks for readers to review books that publishers put out to them. As this is one of the places where I said I would post a review, I'm going to practice by reviewing a couple of the books I just finished.

Sarah's Garden and Lilly's Wedding Quilt by Kelly Long are part of her A Patch of Heaven series. They are both set in the Amish Community of Pine Creek, Pennsylvania. Of the two books in the series so far, I prefer the second book, Lilly's Wedding Quilt. Both books are very well written and entertaining to read, but I was able to connect more with the characters in Lilly's Wedding Quilt than I did with the characters of Sarah's Garden.

To me, Sarah's Garden suffered from the problem of the main character being too unreachable. Sarah seemed to be very distant and unreachable from a reader's perspective. While the mysteries surrounding Grant were able to keep me interested in the book, Sarah's constant withdrawals made it difficult for me to care about what happened to her. This could have been a case of extreme shyness, but it became wearying as the book went on. However, it did allow us to see how much Sarah grew as a woman of faith, and her newfound confidence was apparent in the second book.

Lilly's Wedding Quilt tackled some tough issues for an Amish community, depression and a marriage of convenience. Lilly was easy to identify with, even as an Englisher (Amish term for anyone that is not a member of the Amish Community). Her fear of a loveless marriage is something that many of us go through. Her strength in caring for her mother during a difficult illness is also something easily identified with. Her husband, Jacob, also has some trust issues that any woman can easily identify with as well. Their story is all the more poignant for what they had to go through in order to realize the depth of their love for one another.

I would have to give the series as a whole four stars, with Sarah's Garden earning 3.5 stars and Lilly's Wedding Quilt earning 4.5 stars. I would definitely recommend this series to others and would read it again when the mood strikes.

Drebbles says

Sarah King loves nothing better than to work in her beloved garden, but duty to her family calls and she has to run the family's roadside stand. On her very first day there her world turns upside down when she meets handsome veterinarian Grant Williams. Sparks fly immediately between the two and they are falling in love. But there is a major obstacle in their way: Sarah is Amish and Grant is English and their love is forbidden.

"Sarah's Garden", the first book in the new "Patch of Heaven" series set in the Amish community, is a very sweet romance. By Amish romance novel standards this romance sizzles - meaning Sarah and Grant exchange a few forbidden kisses. The romantic tension between them is obvious from the beginning and it is fun, although at times a bit sad, to watch them fall in love, a love that seems meant to be but against all odds. Both are nicely done characters. Sarah is from a large, loving family, sure of her faith in God, a bit shy yet sure of herself at times. Grant is another strong character - orphaned at an early age, wanting to give to the Amish community, yet a little bewildered by them at times. Mixed in with the romantic elements is a great deal of humor, mostly involving the Bustles' and Grant's attempts to renovate his new house (I actually wish there was more of this in the book as there are some laugh out loud moments early in the book). One of the reasons I like Amish romances so much is the Amish setting and author Kelly Long does an excellent job of capturing it and the Amish lifestyle in this book. She shows that while many think the Amish life is simpler, the Amish work hard. Their devotion to their family is extraordinary and Long does a good job of showing not only the closeness Sarah has with her family, particularly her brother Luke, but also shows that even Amish families have problems and even they can suffer from domestic abuse. The Amish ability to make beautiful quilts is legendary and I wish this book came with pictures or illustrations so I could see some of the quilts mentioned in this book (one of my favorite scenes in the book is the quilting one).

"Sarah's Garden" is a nicely done romance set in the Amish community and I look forward to reading more books in the series.

Bluerose's Heart says

I really enjoyed Sarah's Garden. This is the first Amish book I have ever read, though, so if you've read a lot of Amish books, my review might not be the best one to go by.

I loved reading about a simpler life, and Sarah's garden and quilting adventures. It was a reminder for me not to place so much importance on worldly possessions. (I will always love my power and hot showers, though)! Quilting is something that I really want to learn more about. I love the stories that can be taken away from them.

After reading this book, I want to go plan a garden for my backyard! I never knew there was so many varieties of fruits and vegetables. I saw many names I had never heard of.

There were moments of humor sprinkled in. I absolutely loved the "snoring" scene! I thought it was so funny and kind of sad at the same time. If that were my husband, and I found out, he'd be in trouble!! I still had to laugh, though.

Grant is a veterinarian, so there's lots of scenes with animals, also. I couldn't help but cringe reading about the bats. I know that if a person was to touch a bat, they would go through some painful shots. (At least I know a family that had to go through that). The characters in the book touch the bats like baby kittens. It was interesting to read about all the different jobs and recreations of this book.

Susan says

I loved this book. Uplifting. Looking forward to hearing more by this author.
