



With a Kiss and a Prayer

Ellie Dean

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Cliffhaven, May 1944

Peggy Reilly is enjoying a rare moment alone in the garden of her Beach View Boarding House. Against the now familiar backdrop of squadrons roaring overhead and the wireless humming, it seems both impossible that war continues, and yet inconceivable that it will ever come to an end.

Meanwhile Ron Reilly is headed to his grandson's send off, ahead of the awaited Allied invasion. But when the celebrations get out of hand, Ron lands himself in hot water with his sweetheart Rosie. And this time his Irish charm won't be enough to get him off the hook.

And as much as Peggy tries to keep the peace in Cliffhaven, she can't work miracles. With family, friends and her evacuee chicks scattered across the world, the war has forever changed the lives of those she loves. It will take a strong spirit to ensure that love triumphs over the heartache around them.

With a Kiss and a Prayer Details

Date : Published January 25th 2018 by Cornerstone Digital

ISBN :

Author : Ellie Dean

Format : Kindle Edition 400 pages

Genre : War, World War II

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MRS CHRISTINE SITTON says

Brilliant

Yet again I couldn't put this down. Have read the story of Peggy right from the start and now can't wait for her next one. So full of life with its ups and downs. One minute I feel really sad and the next laughing at the antics of Ron and Harvey and now Queenie is starting to join them! Poor Danuta and what she went through to help during the war. The hours of research are incredible to tell the story of what went on to save this country from the Nazis. How Peggy copes with the rationing and her family spread out is sad and yet how true it would have been. Loved that Ethel got her just desserts and hope to read next time that Stan is happy again. Roll on August when the next instalment arrives on my kindle.

Ruth Ellis says

Really enjoyed this book took along time to read as lots to process because of the twists and turns of the character's

Suzanne says

I love these books. This one ends with some mystery when a v1 rocket blows up Doris's house with her 20 chosen aristocratic women inside. The cans of fuel that Doris had her gracefully of made the damage worse and why were some of the women found in her bedroom.

Teresa says

I've read all the books in this series and enjoyed them as I did this one, however, I didn't think it was as good as the previous books.

I loved meeting Peggy again and Ron, Harvey and Queenie are still my favorite trio up to their usual shenanigans. Once again Ron has let Rosie down and spends most of the book unsure of what's happening to their relationship. Peggy is trying to keep them all going at Beach View and still having run ins with her snooty sister Doris and with her sister-in-law Pauline in this story.

There were chapters which dealt with the war in Burma, where Jim is stationed and I enjoyed these as my Uncle fought out there at that time.

Some things irritated me in this one. Doris is just becoming wearisome at this point. Peggy would stand up to Hitler himself if any of her immediate family or girls boarding with her were in trouble, yet she lets Doris walk all over her, put her family down and treat Peggy herself like dirt. I don't think anyone would put up with this, family or not. It doesn't ring true. Here in this one we have Pauline following the same path and again Peggy says very little.

Also they're in the fourth year of the war and they still have sugar for their tea and for baking cakes. A string of sausages even appear and I think these things were well gone at this stage.

It just felt like not a lot happened in this book, other than one person insulting another and a lot of the people got on my nerves.

Gail Amendt says

It's hard to believe that I have now read fourteen books in this series. The characters and the town of Cliffhaven now feel like old friends. This installment did not disappoint, as it focused on all those old friends rather than introducing new characters. It is now the spring of 1944, and everyone can tell that the Allies are preparing for an invasion of France, but no one knows when or where it will happen. This leads to a great deal of worry and tension, as almost everyone has loved ones that will be affected. As well, people are dealing with the continuing hardships of the war, including rationing, travel restrictions, and lack of communication with loved ones. Added to all this is the fact that many complicated relationships have been formed as a result of the war. Much of the focus of this novel is the personal problems of the various characters, with the war as a backdrop and sometimes causative factor for those problems. This gives the book a bit of a soap opera feel, as there are many story lines involving relationship drama running at the same time, and a generous dose of humor and improbability. Surprisingly this approach works very well, in spite of feeling somewhat disjointed at times. The book ends with a couple of big and rather improbable turns of events, which I think will provide lots of new material for future books. The war is drawing to a close, and thus the series likely is as well, and unfortunately I am now caught up and must wait a few months to find out what happens next.

Tracey says

My latest visit to the Beach View Boarding House was brilliant as always. This is a series you can depend on, the familiar strong characters, the wonderful location and the lovely storytelling of Ellie Dean, what more could you want?

Looking forward to the next book which is out in August.

Kaye Bleek says

I began the last in the Beach View series with a feeling of sadness as it's 1944 and things are drawing to a conclusion as far as the war is heading.

I wanted to savour the story and read it slowly, but as usual I'm left wanting more.

The way the last few chapters run, I didn't think they'd go this way, but it's wartime and things happen. I'm eagerly looking forward to August and the imminent release of the next book.

I don't want to comment on the story, as spoilers can be easily dropped in, but it's up there as one of Ellie Dean's best yet

Mrs E Bennett says

With a kiss and a prayer

Once more Ellie you have surpassed your self and left me wanting more always want the story never to end you are an amazing writer and now longing for the next episode

Yvonne says

Another great book were you feel as though you are living with them

I have read all the Whitehaven books, they are by my favourite author Ellie Dean. I just get so caught up in there lives you feel part of the family. Can't wait for the next one.

moira manson says

Beach view

Another excellent book about my favourite people Peggy, Ron, Cordelia, all the young ones I feel as if they are my neighbours .
I love Ron's exploits you never know what he is getting up to . And Jim it brings home the war in Burma .
Looking forward to the next instalment 5 STARS a brilliant read .

Sandra says

Another fabulous book from Ellie Dean in the Beach View Series and i have to say i know the end is coming but will cry when it does.This series of books have followed the reilly family through the war in their every day lives.All the new faces that have been welcomed by the family and those that have not.Well worth 5* and more.

karen cox says

I really enjoyed this book, I like them all but I do like the ones that are centered in Cliff haven and About

I really enjoyed this one, it was a good and easy read! I like the ones best that are centered at the boarding house and About the family there!

claire lancaster says

Briliant

Yet another amazing book in the cliffhaven series. Couldn't wait for it to come out and catch up with Peggy and the rest of the Beach View residents. Yet again Ellie takes us right into the heart of the family allowing

us to follow the happy and sad times with them all. I feel as if I know them all and really don't know what I will do when the books finally come to an end. These stories would make a great TV series. Can't wait for the next one, I have pre ordered it already.

Karen Cole says

I only discovered the Cliffhaven series last year when I read the previous book, *The Waiting Hours* and settling into *With a Kiss and a Prayer* was like meeting up with an old friend again. New readers to the series shouldn't be concerned however, Ellie Dean ensures that enough back story is included to make it easy to catch up. I may not have had the pleasure of experiencing the long story arc in full but nevertheless the books I written in such a way that I couldn't help but become invested in the characters' lives.

It's now 1944 and as the tide finally seemed to be turning against the Nazis, families are glued to their wirelasses to hear news of the latest victories in Europe, particularly in Italy. The sense of anticipation and longing in the war weary country, desperate for news of the Allied invasion of France is almost palpable. Meanwhile though, life goes on and the day to day concerns of the inhabitants of Cliffhaven - and the residents of Beach View Boarding House in particular - become interwoven with their deeper worries for the country and their loved ones. Sagas set during the Second World War are hugely popular and I can really see why this series is so well regarded. Ellie Dean has clearly spent hours researching the period and it pays off as she authentically combines the heightened anxieties and mundane struggles of wartime living with involving and often moving domestic dramas.

As before, Peggy Reilly is the glue that holds their lives together but even she is struggling with the constant fear and uncertainty, the prolonged separation from her family, and the sheer grind of rationing and having to make do and mend. She longs for more news of her husband, Jim who is still serving in Burma. Although most of the action takes place in Cliffhaven, the gripping scenes in Burma really bring the conflict there to life and there is a genuine sense of danger in the chapters featuring Jim.

The people living in Beach View Boarding House have their own troubles though and Peggy's natural instinct to try and solve everybody's problems eventually become too much of a strain for her. *With a Kiss and a Prayer* really brings home just how hard it was for the people - and particularly the women left behind. As well as the long hours she works, in a factory, at home and as a Red Cross volunteer, Peggy has to contend with so much; anticipation for the longed-for invasion coupled with her fears for the men fighting; her yearning for her daughters and sons who are growing up without her; her concerns over the young women for whom she has become almost a second mother to; her family's various woes - from Ron's latest exploits to her sister-in-law, Pauline's intense grieving that has made her become needy and resentful, to her sister, Doris' continued pretentious selfishness. It's not surprising then that this book finally sees Peggy struggle to cope with the load on her overburdened shoulders. However, *With a Kiss and a Prayer* is still imbued with a touching warmth, there is much humour to be found here, often thanks to the antics of Ron's various animals and there is no shortage of love, wisdom and kindness too.

Obviously we have the benefit of hindsight and so know that D-Day is imminent but the steady pacing of the plot and the gradual unfolding of events gives a real sense of the frustration that must have been felt.

Towards the end there's an incident that is really quite shocking and is a reminder that although the Allied invasion of France was the beginning of the end, there were still losses and heartache to be endured. I must confess to feeling slightly conflicted as to the outcome here. I think a different result could have made for a more dramatic conclusion, although as things stand I'm looking forward to seeing how things develop - I predict fireworks! The war may be drawing to a close but no doubt there will be more secrets and problems to be uncovered and shared in the next Cliffhaven book, due to be published in August 2018. Entitled *As the Sun Breaks Through*, it does at least suggest things will be starting to look a bit brighter for Peggy and her loved ones. As a confirmed fan of the series now, I will definitely be reading it!

Beverly Solis says

Great series

This is a good light fictional story of historical events in England during World WarII. I recommend the entire 15 book series.
