Mercy, The (The Rose Trilogy) by Beverly Lewis

My Favorite Author And Still The Reigning Queen Of Amish Fiction

Rose Kauffman pines for prodigal Nick Franco, the Bishops foster son who left the Amish under a cloud of suspicion after his foster brothers death. His rebellion led to the silencing of their beloved Bishop. But is Nick really the rebel he appears to be? Roses lingering feelings for her wayward friend refuse to fade, but she is frustrated that Nick wont return and make things right with the People. Nick avowed his love for Rose--but will he ever be willing to sacrifice modern life for her?

Meanwhile, Roses older sister, Hen, is living in her parents Dawdi Haus. Her estranged English husband, injured and helpless after a car accident, has reluctantly come to live with her and their young daughter during his recovery. Can their marriage recover, as well? Is there any possible middle ground between a woman reclaiming her old-fashioned Amish lifestyle and thoroughly modern man?

I really enjoyed reading the first volume in The Rose Trilogy series. I thought (and still think) Rose was one of Beverlys best characters yet. I loved her constant dedication to the Amish faith. For a while there in Amish fiction, it seemed like every third character in a book by any author became a Mennonite or a more liberal Amish person. The Rose trilogy stayed away from that type of plot trajectory and even had a character, Roses sister Hen, who wanted to return to the Amish ways despite having married an Englisher.

All of the information above was established in the first book of the set. In the second book, I began to feel like I was reading a lot of copy that was interesting, well-written and, at times, fun or touching but that wasnt really necessary to progress the story. This was most noticeable in the multiple variations of Hen and her husband having the same argument about her wanting to return to her Amish ways. Each fight was important, I suppose,
because it escalated the situation to a critical turning point but it got tiresome. I really, really disliked Hen at the end of the second book. (I liked her again by the end of third book, but only a little bit.)

After basically dismissing much of the second book as series filler, I felt like this volume would decide my overall opinion of this trilogy. It did. I’ve ended up giving the series a mental so-so and this book a four. In the hands of a lesser author, I probably would have given the book a three, but Beverly Lewis writing deserves the extra star.

The plot flounders in this story. For those who read the first two books, you know that Rose had two boys in her life, Silas and Nick. Nick ran away, she was making plans with Silas and eventually broke them because she felt he loved someone else. You probably presumed, as I did, that the third book would finally return us to the Nick storyline. It does.

However, not before we spend several chapters with a new potential boyfriend and almost fiancee named Isaac. He came from nowhere, spends very little time talking in the book, and seems to only exist so that Rose can, yet again, be tied up with someone else when Nick rolls back into town. I would have preferred her to spend more time examining her feelings and thinking about her life than thinking about a random boy. I have always thought character introspection was what set Beverly Lewis apart, and I think that is what I missed most in this book. It seemed like the book hurried the plot along to conclude the series and little time was spent in the head of a character while they were thinking meaningful thoughts.

All of that being said, my last problem with the book was that it ended so fast that I half-expected to hear tires screeching despite the lack of rubber tires in the Amish world. After spending two whole books and 19/20 of another book waiting for the resolution of Roses problems, having the problems end so swiftly and unceremoniously was sad despite my being happy with the basic idea of the ending.

I wouldn’t not recommend this book. If you read the first two books in the series, there is no reason not to read this one, and, if you are like me, no way you weren’t reading it. I would just caution you to go into it expecting a little less than normal.

Final random thought: This book has an absolutely exquisite cover. The blue of the dress is so vivid and striking against Roses face that I would hang a larger copy of the cover image on my wall.

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