



The Happy Room

Catherine Palmer

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Drawn together by their sister's tragic illness, each of the Mossman siblings must face the truth of their past. As they reminisce about both good and bad memories of their childhood in Africa, they discover the God who never left them. This life-changing best-seller is now available in softcover.

The Happy Room Details

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Alexis says

Chapter 1,2 and 3

Julia is in the garden waiting for a phone call that tells her if she is having twins or not. Peter is on the process of having his wife leave him and Deb is in the hospital with anorexia. Peter and Julie go to see Deb and they bring her flowers at the end of chapter 3 they bring up the happy room and it's the room where they were babysat on the boat. Their parents would drop them off and pick them up all three of them did not like the happy room.

As the book developed the three children are faced with things that have affected their whole life like Peter and his sword and never truly understanding the bible in the end of the book he has let God into his life and is trying to truly understand the bible. Debbie is telling how she always feels alone and is always lost. Her body is truly giving up on her and she dies of cardiac arrest but she is truly where she belongs now and Julie confronts her parents about everything and then she gets so upset with her parents that she runs away trips and has bleeding which her baby's who are named at the end of the book are born too early but she is taking control of her life and sees that God is with her and she doesn't have to always be kind to have God love her and look after her and she can be mad and God will still accept her for who she is and will always look after her no matter what she does in the world.

Liz says

A Quick read but found it difficult to really enjoy. Covers the topic of anorexia well but the rest of the storyline is too churchy for me. Part of the siblings issues relate to their parents having put God's work before family. The dialogue lacked a lot, I didn't feel it flowed well at all or was believable conversation between siblings. I did finish the book, more so to see what happened to the sister who was ill. I have to say one of my least favorite books that I have read recently.

jimtown says

I came to read this book in a rather unusual way. I picked it up with a group of other books in the Library's book sale room because of its color. The hardcover books were five for a dollar. I was attempting to use the colorful books as decor. I started out thinking of getting an orange stack, but there weren't enough orange books, so I started picking out rainbow colored books. That worked. I chose ten books.

The Happy Room, happened to be the purple book. I read the first page of all ten to see how many of them I could actually read, and The Happy Room was the only one in that batch that caught my interest. The others didn't even remotely interest me.

I quickly realized that The Happy Room was going to be one of those 'inspirational' type books. Still the

story of Julia, Peter and Debbie was holding my interest and so I kept on reading. Julia thinks her parents and childhood were wonderful and she has an optimistic outlook on life, even when it takes a sudden turn. It's Peter that is angry and defensive and argues that their parents abandoned them as children. They grew up in Africa, the children of missionaries. Their parents loved them but were always busy with 'God's will'.

The children were desperate for the attention of their parents. Julia tried to earn it by being the good daughter. Peter rebelled and was a wild child. Debbie was the one who became lost.

Back in America as adults, the family is summoned together at Debbie's side in the hospital. She is suffering from Anorexia. As the siblings remember their different versions of their childhood, they each start to see things from a different point of view. Peter knows it's best to have Julia confront their aging parents rather than to do it himself, because he always gets so angry at them. There is a big turn of events in each of their lives as they come to grips with God's will.

Shelly Ann says

I loved it! It was well written. Fun, animated, characters!! It makes you appreciate what you have in your life! I loved how each person was able to tell their side of a situation through flashbacks of growing up. From being raised with missionary parents, who tried to make the best possible choices for their children, and the children as adults tell how they feel to their parents later in life. Its good for you to know if you are truly a Christian, and I loved how Julia explained that to her brother Peter towards the end of the book. I believe this book will give some good insights for those planning to be missionaries in Africa, and I have read and heard worse stories than what was told in this book. This is fictional, but seemed so real! I felt sorry for them being in the (The Happy Room!)...But at least they had adventures, and good up bringing considering!!!

Shari Blakey says

I read this book for my book group-Catherine Palmer is a new author for me. It was interesting to me to read what I assume is the reality of lives of missionaries. As a parent, I don't believe I could have sent my children to boarding school, especially in an environment that made them so very unhappy, although it was obvious by the end of the book that they recognized some of the value they had gained from the experience. However, they all lived with the wounds from their childhoods for much of their lives before any healing occurred.

Melody says

No hesitation this is five stars! I first read Palmers Kiss of Adventure and realized I do not like adventure books. But liked her style and her incorporation of scripture. Picked up Happy Room at the library; not wanting to spend money on another book I might not like. This book is wonderful - believable characters, interesting story line, and as one review on the book said "this book will bring healing to many people who have kept their pain secret." I totally understand one of the character's statements - how can you be full and

empty at the same time (emotionally). After my daughter's death and for many years I was so full of pain but felt drained and empty. The first 254 pages are good and kept my interest. The last 100 pages totally pulled me into the lives of the characters as they struggled with their faith, their lives and the relationships within the family. I just cried my way thru those last 100 pages taking time to wipe away the tears and to pray to God. I closed the book, came upstairs and have added it to my cart on Amazon. I want this book on my shelf for rereading. I think at different points in my life it will speak to me in different ways. Now to decide which of her books to read next!

Ann Miller says

After reading most of Palmer's books, I believe *The Happy Room* is her crowning work. Palmer draws heavily from her experience as a child of African missionaries to tell the story of siblings neglected in the name of God's ministry. Heavy with real emotion, the novel grips and doesn't let go. I was disappointed to see the book is not yet available in electronic format. It is, however, available in paper for the price of postage.

Derek Jones says

Palmer's story of three grown missionary kids confronting their past and their parents is at its best when telling their childhood stories of Africa and the missionary subculture in which they were raised. The story has trouble in the narrative present, in America, as the same children struggle with finding their own places in the world. Perhaps the story is not long enough to deal with this amount of complexity -- or perhaps we are not meeting the characters at the right point in their lives. Though the ending is not tidy, it does come across as though the characters themselves believe that their problems, and their respective solutions, are simpler than they are. When reading this book, I found myself comparing it to *The Last Year of the War*, another work of fiction which describes the evangelical Christian subculture with more particular detail and depth.

Despite its flaws, though, this book's inside view of the missionary subculture is more accurate than the one given in, for example, *The Poisonwood Bible*. As a missionary kid myself, I know and recognize people like those in *The Happy Room*; I don't recognize the ones in Kingsolver's book, whom I suspect represent an outsider's projections.

Linda Simons says

I read this wonderful book in 2 days. An interesting look at sibling dynamics, parents and faith. I think anyone who grew up in a Christian home at some point has to look at their childhood and their walk with God and decide if it their own or their parents faith passed down. Everyone has baggage from childhood. The Mossman children have to face it in the midst of a tragedy.

This book deals with hard topics without being too heavy. No tears, just touching.

Ruth says

This novel explores the adult feelings & experiences of a set of siblings who grew up in a missionary family in Africa. Of course I can identify with some of what they go through (fortunately not the boarding school part of it!), & I'm glad I read the book--in one long sitting last night.

I also appreciate the novel's focus on sibling bonds, which are hugely important in my family too--they are generally given short shrift in novels.

As literature, this work isn't hugely successful; it's not subtle or poetic. But it's worth reading for those who need to think again about their experiences growing up in a Family With a Mission & what effects those experiences might have had on their adult choices.

Elaine says

My favorite part of this book was Mr. Mossman's analogy of one particular African tribe's judicial process of fining a thief or a murderer. He took that and compared it to God's requirement for wrongdoing. While I was pondering on that, it then dawned on me that that analogy (sadly) was flawed.

While it is true that one of the character's conversion came a bit too swiftly, it really hadn't. This person had been hearing the News all his/her life. It's only after understanding it a bit more, that the conversion took place. The changes brought about immediately following, however, were too quick.

I liked it that everything wasn't happy-ever-after. That made it more realistic.

One important note I want to make because of something that was said in the book shortly after... If that person after having accepted Jesus, had gone back to questioning everything once again because of new realities, he would NOT have been eternally lost. Jesus doesn't lose any of his people. (I forget the actual bible verse but it's there.)

Reni says

This is an amazing book, it is my all time favourite and has been for a very long time. It is just so touching and you get involved with the characters. It also teaches quite a few life lessons, and I would advice everyone out there to read it! Catherine Palmer weaves together a story of healing. It is about a family who throughout childhood, weren't always together. They were always separated, but they finally got together and discovered the God who never left them. The Happy Room is a moving story and a captivating portrayal of family dynamics. Read it because it's a fascinating tale, but also because you'll walk away with a deeper understanding of the lasting memories of childhood, and the expectations, hurts, and joys of family life.

Micheila says

I really enjoyed this book. It is really well written and easily relatable. My parents aren't missionaries, but I could still relate to Peter and Julia (at different times) with their doubts and questions about God and what they believed. Also, this book helped me write a story I was working on. I can definitely see myself rereading this book some time in the future.

Jamie says

This is a really good book to help anyone who has grown up in the church - specifically those who's parents have been in ministry. It will definitely be a good conversation starter and possibly a tool for healing for anyone still needing to work through hurts coming from a religious community. And even though it's fiction, it's based on a true story and serves as a testimony that God does heal and restore His children.

Cynthia says

A special book to me, it was written by my 6th grade teacher!
