



Heart on the Line

Karen Witemeyer

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Witemeyer Returns with Her Trademark Blend of Adventure, Romance, and Humor

Grace Mallory is tired of running, of hiding. But when an old friend sends an after-hours telegraph transmission warning Grace that the man who has hunted her for nearly a year has discovered her location, she fears she has no choice. She can't let the villain she believes responsible for her father's death release his wrath in Harper's Station, the town that has sheltered her and blessed her with the dearest friends she's ever known.

Amos Bledsoe prefers bicycles to horses and private conversations over the telegraph wire to social gatherings with young ladies who see him as nothing more than an oddity. His telegraph companion, the mysterious *Miss G*, listens eagerly to his ramblings every night and delights him with tales all her own. For months, their friendship--dare he believe, courtship?--has fed his hope that he has finally found the woman God intended for him. Yet when he takes the next step to meet her in person, he discovers her life is in peril, and Amos must decide if he can shed the cocoon of his quiet nature to become the hero Grace requires.

Heart on the Line Details

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From Reader Review Heart on the Line for online ebook

Lynda Edwards says

I am a newer reader to Karen Witemeyer's work. I don't read a ton of Westerns, but the first book in her Ladies of Harper's Station series captured my interest and, after reading it, I found I enjoyed her writing very much, especially the humor infused scenes that kept me laughing.

I love her humor—she writes vivid descriptions, helping me to see the scene before me as if I'm watching a movie. I even laughed out loud in several spots, thanks to a donkey named Will. At other times, a funny scene lightens the weightier topics of abuse or serves to interrupt the tension that mounts as the book continues.

The characters are both relatable and a bit different from what I often find in the historical novels I enjoy. Amos is a loveable, well, nerd. Not weak, but also not a muscular romance-novel-cover model, his strength runs deep and he is fiercely determined. His spectacles and his habit of tugging on his vest when he gets nervous lend him just enough quirk that he is an unlikely hero, which is what he's often been told. But for the right woman, he is an amazing counterpart. And when he does speak his mind and his intentions, watch out! I love how the author plumbs the depths of this character and the swoony characteristics that remain hidden for those in his immediate sphere of influence. Until Grace.

I can relate to a lot of the Christian content in this novel, especially one character's journey of trust and surrender to God's plan; though my struggles are not the same that she faces, the decision to trust God in even the hard situations that life brings is a difficult one. I appreciate the encouragement that this novel has given me, especially because life doesn't often allow us to prepare for what lies ahead, but knowing where we stand with God beforehand helps us bear up under the weight He already knows is coming.

With humor, toe-curling romance, and a decent dose of suspense, Witemeyer crafts a story that thoroughly entertains. I highly recommend this novel not only to those who enjoy Westerns but to those who are looking for something a bit unique and even people who enjoy a well-written book regardless of time period. Witemeyer is two for two in my reading—now to search out her backlist!

I received a free copy of this book but was not required to write a positive review. The thoughts expressed are both honest and completely my own.

Amanda says

Tired of the same-old, same-old stories? You know the ones I mean, where the hero is the tallest, strongest, most handsome man in town, and the heroine is more beautiful than anyone else. For a refreshing change of pace, Karen Witemeyer gives us a hero whose brains are more important than his brawn and a heroine who's painfully shy ... unless she's tapping out Morse code on the telegraph. And, as if that weren't enough, there's a secondary romance and a bit of a mystery. If you're looking for an enjoyable story, you won't want to miss this next entry in the Harper's Station series.

Rachel McMillan says

With an unlikely hero, a soft wit and a dime-novel penchant for danger, *Heart on the Line* is a warm and funny and brilliant executed homage to the wild west. Witemeyer's research into the telegraph trade as well as the "You've Got Mail"-like romance developing between two operators is adorable.

However, the strongest is Witemeyer's winking nod to the imbalance of this genre's favour of alpha heroes and her turning it on its ear with a very self aware narrative. I love authors who can winkingly make fun of themselves and Witemeyer seems to do this---fondly--- with a smart beta in recompense for the many, many typical alpha males before.

Loved it.

Rachael says

I'm pretty sure it's because of Karen Witemeyer that several years ago I read the nearly forgotten classic *Wired Love*, a witty novel not unlike Jane Austen's writing, which became part of the inspiration for this story. The romance over the wire is surprisingly similar to today's relationships begun online--where one must simply take the other at their word they're who they say they are. I love the idea of a secret language between Grace and Amos--being telegraphers, they can communicate whatever they want while no one else can understand their tapping.

I have to say, I adored Amos. Being married to a geek myself--one without the impressive physique so common in fictional heroes--I loved seeing someone more like my husband save the day with his brains and win the heart of fair lady. Amos is well aware of all his physical shortcomings, but he doesn't let them rule him, even when in subtle competition with the Adonis-like Pinkerton agent. It's funny how someone can seem plain and unappealing at first impression, yet the more one gets to know the person, the better looking and more appealing they become.

I love how in this adventure, everyone gets a chance to take part in saving the day--sure, the brawny marshal and Pinkerton have a hand in it, but both Grace and Amos--neither a candidate for Most Likely to Save The Day--have a crucial role in bringing the bad guys to justice. Over all, it's a charming romance and adventure, with both humor and heart.

Thank you Bethany House and NetGalley for providing a free e-book; I was not required to write a positive review, and all opinions are my own.

Cara Putman says

Heart on the Line is perfection for Western loving romance readers. Two sweet romances combined in one heart-pounding mystery with a touch of suspense, and a hunky dose of cowboy. A thoroughly engaging, unputtdownable read.

Grace is on the run after her father is shot down in front of her. She thinks she's safe in Harper's Ferry, but then she gets a telegram one night, and everything changes. Amos was on the line line with her, and is ready

to see if she's the woman she seems to be when the telegram comes through and everything moves forward. There's a secondary romance that is equally sweet because of the amount of pain and risk Helen has to accept to be able to let go and trust this new man. If anyone has a reason to hate men, it's her. The mystery escalates to suspense and just when you think the story's on a smooth course, there's one more twist. Loved it!

Connie says

I liked this one better than the first, which is saying a lot since I really liked that one. There are two main plotlines in this. You have the one for Grace, and then another for one of the other women in the community. I could tell nearly instantly what was going on, so there is some predictability here. Just a heads up for anyone bothered by that sort of thing.

One thing Ms. Witemeyer is genius at is characterization. She writes such fun characters, and I felt like that was really highlighted here. She was able to make a less-than-rugged hero and a quiet heroine really shine. Grace and Amos both have such personality! And Revolver Granny... LOL!

This is a really fun story that flows nicely. It is squeaky clean with some mild Christian elements. 4.5 stars.

Olivia says

Heart on the Line...because who doesn't like a good romance ;) This was so sweet, full of laughs, and yet many sobering moments. I was hooked on the first page. The mystery is intriguing and there are elements of suspense all the way until the end.

Amos was a fantastic hero because he wasn't the cliché hero. Gotta love the spectacles ;) Oh, and the bicycle too!! The interactions of all the characters was so wonderful. Helen's struggle was amazing, and I loved how things turned out with her. Especially with a certain somebody!! The romance moved at a good pace. Content-wise there were a couple semi-detailed kisses, and because of that I would be hesitant to give to young teens.

I loved how Grace fought against evil by quoting Scripture. That was so real and amazing to me, because the Bible commands us to use His Word as a sword. I wouldn't say the spiritual content was heavy, but it was very applicable and deep.

I love this author's writing style and intriguing story-lines. It's wonderful to pick up a book and know you're going to enjoy it when you read the first page :)

I received this from Bethany House publishers in exchange for an honest review

Anne Osterlund says

Grace is running for her life. Hiding out in an (almost) all female community known as Harper's Station in order to avoid the hired gun who shot her father. For the most part, her life is on hold. Here she is quiet, shy, and alone.

Except for the silent conversations she holds every night after hours via telegraph.

Amos is not the usual hero type. A telegraph operator whose most astounding physical achievement is the ability to dismount his bicycle without using the breaks, he has long since realized that most young women aren't looking for *him*. But the young woman on the other end of the telegraph might be. *If* he can just gather the courage to suggest a face-to-face meeting.

Which becomes imperative when he realizes someone is out to kill her.

What I enjoyed the most about Karen Witemeyer's *Heart on the Line* were her nontraditional main characters. Neither Grace nor Amos is the type to plunge into danger headfirst; but that is exactly what they do in this novel. For each other.

Hannah says

What a fun story! I loved how these characters aren't your average sort of stars. None of them are drop-dead gorgeous or too strong for their own good. They deal with limitations and insecurities and learn to cast all of those on God. It's an enjoyable story with a good Christian message. Grace doesn't think herself particularly pretty, and Amos feels himself as a failure in the romance department. And then there's Helen, an endearing side character whose father's abuse turned her into a fierce man-hater.

I loved how all of them had to go beyond what they thought they could in order to get to the ending. This has got to be one of my favorite sorts of romances. Able or not, being willing to do and dare for each other is a delight to read about!

Alyssa says

What can I say, Karen Witemeyer is the Queen of Christian Western Fiction!!!

Amy says

Online dating meets 1890s Texas in this charming, spiritually deep, laugh-out-loud funny romance!

I loved Amos and the telegraphy! Nerdy, atypical heroes are among my very favorites, and I was rooting for this guy from page one. The scenes with the mule and the "grannies" had me snorting with laughter, and I

loved Grace's unique interrogation of Amos when he first arrived in Harper's Station.

However...

I didn't like how all of this story's nerdy, quirky charm faded into an OK Corral-style shootout in the end. I was hoping the bicycle-riding, bespectacled hero would find an equally nerdy way to combat the villain, but instead it was guns and shooting and ducking for cover. Granted, Amos didn't know what he was doing, which made for a couple cute moments, but overall, this book left me wishing for a bit more outsmarting and a bit less out-gunning.

Celeste says

Full review now posted!

I do believe that Karen Witemeyer is my favorite author in the Christian historical fiction genre. She has this balance of faith and humor that I just love. While I've enjoyed all of her books, I think the Ladies of Harper's Station series is my favorite of her work. The idea of a town made up entirely of women, and run by those women is an interesting concept, especially in the Wild West era of American history. Harper's Station is a safe haven for all of womankind, whether they're on the run or looking for a fresh start or are simply uncomfortable around men.

Of course, Witemeyer is a romance author, so of course the town doesn't stay completely free of men. But the men that insinuate themselves into Harper's Station are good men, morally upright and dependent on God. The community accepts them based on these attributes, and they more than pull their weight while still giving the women plenty of room to lead their own lives and run the town as they see fit.

This is the story of Grace Mallory, a telegraph operator on the run. She finds a home and a family in Harper's Station, but trouble has tracked her down. Amos Bledsoe, another telegraph operator, has fallen in love with Grace over the line, where they can chat after business hours. Amos overhears an urgent message for Grace, telling her that her pursuers have located her and are coming for her. He makes a spur of the moment decision to come to Grace's aid and to meet her in person.

This book had much to offer. It was encouraging and uplifting regarding faith. The Christian element in this book wasn't just something tacked on to story so that it fit into the genre. The faith in this book was real, something that was struggled with and leaned upon when times are tough. It permeated every aspect of life to these characters, which I appreciated. The book was also full of mystery and intrigue. Though the plot twists weren't surprising, they were always fun to read. And as with all of Witemeyer's stories, it was really funny, especially when it came to etiquette. Breaches of etiquette in stories set in this time period can be hilarious, and Witemeyer has just the right amount of tongue-in-cheek humor with these lapses.

Was the book predictable? Yes. Was it sparkling with originality? No. Was the prose rich and cerebral and deep? Nope.

But it was sweet and fun and made me laugh. It encouraged me in my faith and made me sigh at the sweetness of the love found within the pages. This book was exactly what I needed when I picked it up, and I highly recommend it to anyone who enjoys this genre!

For more of my reviews, as well as my own fiction and thoughts on life, check out my blog, Celestial Musings.

Loraine says

Grace Mallory is hiding out in Harper's Station Texas after her father was killed in Denver Colorado due to proof he had regarding the true heir to a large silver mine. Grace is the telegrapher in Harper's Station which is an unusual job for a female during the 1890's. She has become friends with Amos Bledsoe, another Texas telegrapher. Amos is not the tall, dark, and handsome fellow that most girls dream about but he has inner character and dedication that make him shine. When he hears over the "line" that Grace has been discovered by the man she's been hiding from who killed her father, he rides to her rescue (not on the newfangled bike he loves so much but rather the train).

Witemeyer's books are always filled with sweet romance, suspense, laughter and faith; and this one doesn't disappoint. I didn't realize that this was the last book in the series, but I did not have any problem with the storyline or characters. The author carefully crafted a small town filled with wonderful characters, especially lots of strong, independent women (the town was founded by a women for women). I loved the fact that Grace having developed a friendship with Amos before she ever met him could look past the external and see Amos' wonderful caring, dedication, and character. Their slow developing romance based on friendship was a nice change from "instant love" in some books. The side romance between Helen who thought she hated all men and Lee was cute. I don't know if there is another book planned in this series, but I would love to find out what happens between Helen and Lee.

Heidi Robbins (Heidi Reads...) says

It was a pleasure to revisit Harper's Station and my favorite characters there, as well as getting to know some new ones. I loved the "instant messenger" way that Grace and Amos are able to connect even though they live miles apart. They are so sweet together- Grace brings out protective instincts in Amos and he wants to show her that he can take care of her. Grace appreciates his friendship and reassuring presence, but is used to taking care of things on her own. There's an interesting conflict in Amos- he is accepting of who he is, but is very aware that he's not the strong manly man that ladies find attractive. So there's a dynamic of confidence and vulnerability that Amos finds at odds within himself repeatedly. Grace senses that in him and is thoughtful in the way she interacts with him. The addition of a tall and handsome Pinkerton agent on the scene complicates the situation as Grace must decide if he's trustworthy with critical evidence. I enjoyed the scenes from Helen's point of view, another woman living on the outskirts of the settlement who rescues a wounded man and nurses him back to health, despite her complete fear and mistrust of men. (I *really* hope there will be a novella written with more about her and Lee!) The mystery and romance was entertaining and the climax at the end kept me swiftly turning pages until the conclusion.

(I received a complimentary copy of the book; all opinions in this review are my own)

Tori says

There's a reason I pre-order all books, unread, written by Karen Witemeyer. I have yet to read a book by her

that I didn't thoroughly enjoy!! I've read No Other Will Do and the novella, Worth the Wait, both featured in the female-run town, Harper Station. This was the 2nd full length novel set in the same town. The ladies of Harper Station each have their own story of why they have searched out an all-gal town. Grace is no different. She has been in hiding since her father was murdered right in front of her. She works as the telegraph operator in Harper Station, where she has made some amazing friends. She has one chat friend, Amos, who she has never met in person, but has grown to know and admire via telegraph. (Picture "online dating" 1800's style...)

When those who have been tracking Grace find where she's been hiding, Amos drops everything to come to her rescue. Y'all, Amos is the cutest. He's not the tough, burly, hot ranchhand or lawman. He's not a big guy, not real athletic, but what he lacks in brawn, he makes up for in heart. Grace, she was brave and feisty. I admired her fight!

This book has it all: romance, mystery, wit... We also get to see Emma and Malachi, Tori and Ben, and all the ladies of Harper Station we've grown to love!! Even Helen- the biggest anti-man woman in town, does her best to help the opposite sex. <3 So, my advice to you is to pre-order this book as well. Your personal library needs it. :)
