



The Mountain Midwife

Laurie Alice Eakes

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Ashley Tolliver has tended to the women of her small Appalachian community for years. As their midwife, she thinks she has seen it all. Until a young woman gives birth at Ashley's home and is abducted just as Ashley tries to take the dangerously bleeding mother to the nearest hospital. Now Ashley is on a mission to find the woman and her newborn baby . . . before it's too late.

Hunter McDermott is on a quest—to track down his birth mother. After receiving more media attention than he could ever want for being in the right place at the right time, he receives a mysterious phone call from a woman claiming to be his mother. Hunter seeks out the aid of the local midwife in the mountain town where the phone call originated—surely she can shed some light on his own family background.

Ashley isn't prepared for the way Hunter's entrance into her world affects her heart and her future. He reignites dreams of having her own family that she has long put aside in favor of earning her medical degree and being able to do even more for her community. But is it commitment to her calling or fear of the unknown that keeps her feet firmly planted in the Appalachian soil? Or is it something more—fear of her growing feelings for Hunter—that makes her hesitant to explore the world beyond the mountains?

The Mountain Midwife Details

Date : Published December 15th 2015 by Zondervan

ISBN :

Author : Laurie Alice Eakes

Format : Kindle Edition 346 pages

Genre : Contemporary, Fiction, Christian Fiction, Romance

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From Reader Review The Mountain Midwife for online ebook

Rachael says

This was my first read by this author, and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

It follows a lady who came from a long line of midwives. She wished to become a doctor so she could better help the people in the Appalachian mountains. However, to do this she must leave her current patients. Is she really ready to do this? Are her patients really the motive?

This story was enjoyable. Hunter has a mystery to solve about his birth. He needs to track down information from a midwife to figure out his roots and family.

This book held my attention and was very entertaining. I stayed up long past my bed time to follow the mystery to the end. I truly enjoyed this author, and I hope to read more.

I received this book from the publisher for my honest opinion which I have given.

Maureen Timerman says

Ashley and Hunter paths cross in unexpected ways, and their lives and all that they have ever believed have then shaken to the core.

Ashley has put her life wish of becoming a doctor on hold as she gave up her studies and came home to help her Grandmother and in the end take over her practice. She is still saving and planning to eventually go back to school and fulfill her dream.

Hunter is an engineer and has lived a very affluent life in the Washington, D.C. area. He is the odd one in the family as the rest are all lawyers. He is on the news and seems everyone is recognizing him, and that is the catalyst to the phone call from someone claiming to be his mother. No way, he loves his mother, and doesn't have another!

The story is set in the rural Appalachian Mountains of Virginia, and we travel the back roads here, and meet a lot of the people. This place really requires a truck or four-wheel drive, and someone is trying to kill them on these dangerous gravel roads.

Why is there danger, and what is pulling these two together? A really fast pace read that will keep you page turning and wanting the answers. In the end will there be answers but will they survive? There are several sub stories and some are unanswered but most have conclusions and we have to be satisfied with the answers whether we agree or wanted what happens.

I received this book through Net Galley and Zondervan Fiction and was not required to give a positive review.

Sheila says

Light romance with decent storyline.

Carrie Schmidt (Reading is My SuperPower) says

Laurie Alice Eakes quite simply has a way with words... and with characters. I was delighted to see these strengths just as evident in The Mountain Midwife, her first contemporary novel, as in her historicals. The fact that characters in The Mountain Midwife descended from characters in two of her historical series made it just all the more thrilling for a book adorer like me.

When I read novels like this, books that wink at the author's other works, I feel a little like Anne Shirley – caught up in the felicity of the illusion that the author and I are having a moment. Laurie Alice knows she nodded at Choices of the Heart. I know she nodded at Choices of the Heart. Voila! We've bonded across the pages and are now kindred spirits.

Hunter and Ashley grabbed my heart almost at once – separately and together. Their instant attraction was adorable. The natural progression of their relationship made me feel like I was being wrapped up in a warm quilt, and every time they shared a page I found that I couldn't stop smiling. Both struggle with pride in their own way, and their journeys toward overcoming it are beautifully penned.

Speaking of "beautifully penned", I just love the way Eakes' writing voice lilts and dips, giving breath to both the characters and the Appalachian setting. Spiritual truths are woven organically into the story – with poignant grace – never straying into "preachy" or "trite" territory. The hints of mystery and suspense iced an already delicious cake, and the romance made my heart (and my face) grin.

Somebody please tell me this is the first book in a series because I'm not ready to say goodbye to the people of Brooks Ridge. There are many stories I need to hear. Like Heather's. And Mary Kate's. And still even Ashley's. I loved the ending but it only made me want more!

Bottom Line: Laurie Alice Eakes delivers a contemporary story of faith, hope, and love with the same exquisite style that make her historical novels so popular. You will be drawn in by the first paragraph, captured by the story, and swept up in the smooth cadence of Eakes' voice. If you are a fan of her Midwives series, you absolutely need to read The Mountain Midwife.

(I received a copy of this book in exchange for only my honest review.)

Stacey says

While the opening chapters pulled me in, it went downhill from there. Could not finish when I got to the part where after defending the highly educated background and training that she and her friend had completed, the main character helps her friend feel better by encouraging her to freshen up her makeup. Not for me.

Joyce says

The publisher has provided me with a complimentary copy of this book through Book Look Bloggers.

Laurie Alice Eakes ventured into the world of contemporary fiction with the writing of this book, which raises my curiosity about her previous work, which is historical in nature. This being my first read by this author, my intent is not to criticize.

While romance is not my favorite genre, nor midwifery my favorite subject, I really enjoyed reading this book. Eakes' writing is squeaky clean and the faith element is consistent. There are two points of view which sometimes alternate, and sometimes overlap, working well together in telling the story. I identified with both of them, and they stayed with me after finishing the book.

One criteria upon which I judge a book is whether there are quotable phrases within its pages. This book had several, for example this description of Heather on page 210:

".. and one could have landed a spaceship in the circles beneath her eyes."

The writing in Mountain Midwife is largely conversational and internal thoughts, which could show more depth or layering in the story, though the theme was consistent throughout. There is a moment of self-realization for Ashley, which, though I am decades older than she, I identified with and learned from.

Though there were a small number of technical questions or criticisms, I really liked this book. Well done, Laurie! I love the way the book ended, much as each chapter, with enough left hanging to make the reader want to keep reading!

The publisher has provided me with a complimentary copy of this book through BookLook Bloggers. Opinions are my own.

Angie Fehl says

Ashley Tolliver has been carrying on the tradition of Appalachian midwifery that's run through her family for centuries. Lately though, she's felt compelled to temporarily leave her community to pursue a medical degree, so that she might serve her community that much better. Her hesitation lies in the possibility of offending family or community members with her decision. Mountain midwives get plenty of flack from "city doctors" for their lack of training, it might seem to some that Ashley's moving over to the dark side.

Hunter McDermott is on a business trip in Lisbon where he ends up saving the life of a little girl who wanders into traffic. As the little girl's family rushes out to grab her from Hunter, a car bomb goes off behind them, making it appear as if Hunter saved the entire family. The story hits international news stations and Hunter is made into an overnight hero figure. When he gets back home, he is immediately bombarded with phone calls, mostly from media, but one call is from a mystery woman claiming to be his birth mother. Confused and stunned by the news, that one call sets Hunter on a journey to seek out the truth about his family roots, a journey that leads him right to Ashley Tolliver.

This novel had some intensity right out of the gate -- right in the very first chapter there's already a difficult birthing scene and a kidnapping introduced! It set me up for high hopes for the rest of the story, but alas, the action fizzled out for me pretty quick. Then I started running into issues with the plot and the writing itself. The biggest issue for me was the portrayal of the Appalachian people here. I live in Appalachian territory myself, my husband was raised here. In my experience, Appalachian folk can be some of the most humble, lovely souls you could find anywhere. Sure, there are bad seeds but that's true for anywhere in the world. It

bothered me that so much of the plot here focused so much on negative stereotypes, stereotypes that the characters verbally try to fight against, but their actions end up perpetuating the image. This story, to me, just didn't have an authentic voice that would have done the culture justice.

Another concern I had was with plot holes or plot points feeling like they were just falling to the wayside. Hunter's whole story is him on a mission to discover the truth about his birth mother, but for much of the book all that seems to take a backseat to him swooning all over Ashley. And why? I didn't quite get why they were supposed to be such a perfect fit. Hunter talks about how smitten he is with her but what does he have to go on? He mentions finding her incredibly physically attractive, he respects her work ethic and can't deny that she's educated, but aside from that they don't seem to have much common ground for long term success. Not to mention he's frequently making derogatory remarks about Appalachian culture (since he grew up with money, he tends to knock the poor mountain folk pretty easily). Some of his comments even border on slightly misogynistic. Likewise, Ashley likes Hunter's good looks but often gets annoyed with his ignorant, egotistical behavior / comments. Didn't leave me much to swoon over or root for.

A couple issues with the writing itself --- I found the dialogue to often be a little too stiff for my liking. It didn't flow like natural conversation, but more like a bad tv movie script. Almost like "I am saying this, because I think this is what someone like me would be expected to say in this generic situation". Zero personality. I was also aggravated with the ending. To me it seemed somewhat contradictory to the rest of the plot.

In the end, I found myself annoyed with this one, feeling like I got stuck with a bland romance disguised as a cultural fiction / medical drama piece.

Note To Readers: Author Laurie Eakes mentions in the beginning of this novel that some of the surnames used in this story do tie in with family names from some of her previous novels. Having never read this author before, I feel I can safely say this novel is easily readable as a stand-alone work.

FTC Disclaimer: TNZ Fiction Guild kindly provided me with a complimentary copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. The opinions above are entirely my own.

Daphne Self says

I've always find myself enjoying any historical novel by Laurie Alice Eakes. Historical novels have always been synonymous with her name. It was *Lady in the Mist* that first introduced me to her midwife series. From the start, I read each one and proceeded to other novels written by her. With *The Mountain Midwife*, Laurie Alice Eakes reintroduces her midwife line and life in the Appalachians, but this time it is a foray into a contemporary setting.

And I have to say, Laurie Alice did a very good job. This book is more than a typical romance; it delves into a bit of mystery and suspense without overshadowing the budding romance between the two characters.

As usual, this author can make the reader pause and view a situation in a new light. What would I have done in this situation? What would I have felt if I found that out? How would I have reacted when faced with

indecision or fear?

At first I didn't know what to think about Ashley and the decisions she would make or the way she would behave, but as I read more and more I came to understand the why because I could relate to the character. There's always a little bit in us that needs confirmation from others and sometimes that little bit grows into a want that is larger than we realize and it affects our actions.

Even the character Hunter will make the reader pause and consider "who do we see the world and the people in it".

Laurie Alice Eakes also has a way to bring the sounds and sights of the Appalachians to life. This is one book that I found enjoyable and another book of Laurie Alice's that I truly am glad to own.

Mandi says

As a former OB nurse, I generally adore novels that have midwifery in them. However, this novel felt like a mix of Harlequin romance and Christian fiction and was defiantly not for me. Unrealistic, cheesy at times and the ending was far too tidy for the situation.

Rebecca says

Set against the lush backdrop of the Appalachia mountains in southern Virginia, "The Mountain Midwife" traces a lineage of midwives straight to Ashley Tolliver, a young woman who is determined to pursue medical school in order to advance her skills beyond those of a trained midwife. One troubling night changes everything; a young pregnant teen delivers a baby at Ashley's in-home clinic, bleeding terribly and then mysteriously disappearing with the man who accompanied her, chased down by a speeding truck into the darkness. Who was the young woman and did she and her baby survive? Ashley is left stunned, with a myriad of unanswered questions running through her mind.

Hunter McDermott is receiving unsolicited national attention after heroically rescuing a young girl overseas. After his name and picture are splashed across national news organizations, his solitary life is bombarded with reporters, his phone ringing incessantly. Curiously, one woman calls several times claiming to be his mother; she needs his help in order to save his sister. Quizzing his affluent DC parents only adds to Hunter's confusion when he is informed that his heritage is not at all what he has previously been led to believe. Heading to southern Virginia with only a name and the fact that he was delivered by a mid-wife, Hunter and Ashley begin their travel onto intersecting paths.

There are two mysteries to solve in this engaging story, filled with mountain lore and glimpses into a culture, which in some instances remains untouched by modern conveniences and communication. Hunter and Ashley have their comfortable lives nearly planned out until they meet each other, uncovering secrets from both their pasts that will put them in the unique position to clear away the fog from their futures, if only they can muster enough courage to follow their hearts.

Shantelle says

4.5 stars! I really, really enjoyed this book! ^_^ I should probably stop saying that I don't like contemporary fiction, because I keep finding gems in this genre! I've read some of Laurie Alice Eakes's historicals, and was expecting *The Mountain Midwife* to be one also. As it turns out, it's a sort of contemporary companion novel to one of her historical series about midwives. At first I was disappointed. But that soon changed!

The story centers on Ashley Tolliver, a midwife in the Appalachian mountains. Her family has lived there for nearly 200 years ... The women in her family, and their mothers before them, had been practicing midwifery just as long. Ashley wants to go to medical school, to be able to help more, to get more respect. But for the time being, the women in her small community need her. Especially the one who was kidnapped soon after giving birth in Ashley's care ...

This is not your average boring contemporary! *grins* Kidnappings. Mountain life. Handsome heroes searching out a birth mother. It was exciting, charming, sobering, and beautiful all at once. And besides that, I really enjoy reading about midwives. A baby's birth is miraculous. And midwifery intrigues me. I love watching Ashley, as a young woman, helping out other women as they enter into the exciting, but sometimes frightening, time of bearing children. Some women, she's delivered all their babies. Some women, her mother or grandmother were the ones to "catch the baby". All in all, there's something personal and comforting about a community midwife.

And the mountain life is just quite interesting as a whole. They have this mountain accent. They've lived there all their lives. And their ancestors for almost 200 years! It's pretty crazy to think about. And just really neat. Imagine that kind of history! Very enchanting feel at times. Though there is the downside too. Instead of moonshine like the old days, illegal drugs are ruining the lives of many a person around Ashley's home. There are also the more poverty-stricken people, whose rather messy and "behind-times" lifestyle cause the general prejudices of the city folk against the mountain folk. There are some pregnant, single women who live in smoke-saturated areas and work far harder than they should at small diners with very little pay. And Ashley, with her loving heart and family ties, strives to help them all.

So yes, *The Mountain Midwife* kept my attention! I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Also, the romance was very, very sweet! ^_^ I quite enjoyed it, and how everything tied together and worked out. So cute. So gentle. Such endearing moments. Poignant moments. Ashley and her man are the sweetest couple; and I loved every bit of their journey! Eep! <3 I'm just so happy for dear Ashley! ^_^ (hehe) But truly. It was one of the loveliest contemporary romances I've read.

There was one case of adultery shown in this story ... and it was pretty gut-wrenching! :/ Really, really horrible situation. Infidelity is spoken of time and again, as a lot of Ashley's patients are single mothers. While Ashley doesn't agree with their lifestyles, she says her job is to take care of mothers and babies - not speak condemning words to the women who come to her for help. So yes, there's some more adult content and situations. But I thought it was all handled in a tasteful way. And Ashley's faith and morals come in too. There's two or three kisses and a sweet story of falling in love too. All sweet! ^_^ At this time, I can't remember how in depth the faith aspect of *The Mountain Midwife* was ... but I seem to recall some profound moments - some deep faith themes.

My final verdict ... it was great! So enjoyable! A contemporary tale set in the history-filled Appalachian mountains about one midwife's journey of discovery and love. Don't miss *The Mountain Midwife*!

Kelly says

A nice, easy story to escape into. Made the time pass quickly while waiting in the hospital

Denise says

The Mountain Midwife: A Novel is the first book I've read by Laurie Alice Eakes. The story sounded so interesting and intriguing that I wanted to pick it up and read it right away. The storyline reminded me of Jolina Petersheim's *The Midwife*, which is one of my all-time favorite books, so I went into it eagerly expecting another page turner. The front cover is absolutely gorgeous and looks super inviting. The back cover reads:

"For nearly two hundred years, women in Ashley Tolliver's family have practiced the art of midwifery in their mountain community. Now she wants to take her skills a step further, but attending medical school means abandoning those women to whom she has dedicated her life, the mountains she loves, and the awakening of her heart.

Ashley Tolliver has tended to the women of her small Appalachian community for years. As their midwife, she thinks she has seen it all. Until a young woman gives birth to a baby at Ashley's home and is abducted just as she tries to take the dangerously bleeding woman her to the nearest hospital. Now Ashley is on a mission to find the woman and her newborn baby . . . before it's too late.

Hunter McDermott is on a quest—to track down his birth mother. After receiving more media attention than he could ever want for being in the right place at the right time, he receives a mysterious phone call from a woman claiming to be his mother. Hunter seeks out the aid of the local midwife in the mountain town where the phone call originated—surely she can shed some light on his own family background.

Ashley isn't prepared for the way Hunter's entrance into her world affects her heart and her future. He reignites dreams of her own family she has long put aside in favor earning her medical degree and being able to do even more for her community. But is it commitment to her calling or fear of the unknown that keeps her feet firmly planted in the Appalachian soil? Or is it something more—fear of her growing feelings for Hunter—that make her hesitant to explore the world beyond the mountains?"

I loved Laurie Alice Eakes' engaging, easy to read writing style. I was instantly intrigued as soon as I read the first page. You're immediately thrust into a fast paced, hard to put down story. The Mountain Midwife blends mystery, suspense, and romance in a perfect mix. I don't like novels that are heavily focused on romance to the point it's cheesy, and Eakes successfully avoids that by focusing on much more than just romance. I love reading about midwives and have always been intrigued by the Appalachian Mountains, and to have a story set in modern-day Appalachia was a very unique and interesting, since most books I've seen about Appalachia are historical novels. I highly recommend this book to anyone who enjoys contemporary Christian fiction, suspense, and a touch of romance.

I received a copy of this book from BookLook Bloggers in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are my own.

Kristina says

The Mountain Midwife by Laurie Alice Eakes is a heartwarming Christian novel two mysteries in it. Ashley Tolliver is twenty-nine years old and a certified nurse midwife. Women in Ashley's family have been midwives for over two hundred years. One night she is awakened by pounding on her door. A young woman with a man are on her doorstep. The young woman is in labor and needs assistance. Ashley lets them in and delivers the baby. The young woman then starts hemorrhaging. Ashley tries to call for help on her house phone but it is not working (not a good sign). She steps outside to use her cell phone (to get coverage) and is almost run over by a big truck. When she goes back inside, the couple is gone. Who were they and why did they run away?

Hunter McDermott is returning home after working on a project overseas. He has the press hounding him (in person and on the phone) after rescuing a little girl and her family from a car bomb. Hunter receives a call from a woman named Sheila Brooks claiming to be his birth mother. Sheila Brooks claims his sister needs him. She even uses his first name (that he changed years ago). When Hunter confronts his parents, he gets unexpected revelations. This leads him to a small community in the Appalachian Mountains. Hunter has the name of the midwife that delivered him thirty-two years ago which leads him to Ashley. Can Ashley help him find his birth family?

Hunter and Ashley are in for some adventures as they both seek answers. Some people do not wish them to get the answers they seek. The Mountain Midwife was a wonderful book. It captured my attention from the very beginning. It is very well-written and has such a good flow (you do not even realize how much time is passing as you sit there and read). I liked the characters for the most part (Ashely got on my nerves sometimes), the mountains sound beautiful, lonely, and dangerous. I enjoyed the two mysteries (Ashley's mysterious guests and Hunter's search). They were intriguing (I just love mysteries as you can tell). The only thing that got on my nerves was Ashley's desire to go to medical school (wait and see). She felt she would be able to help her community more with the degree (she was wrong). I just wanted to shake her and show her what a great help she is to the people in her area. Overall, The Mountain Midwife is a book that you will not want to put down. I give The Mountain Midwife 4.5 out of 5 stars. I will definitely be reading more books by Laurie Alice Eakes.

I received a complimentary copy of The Mountain Midwife from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

<http://bibliophileandavidreader.blogs...>

Beth says

More like 3.5!

The Mountain Midwife opens with an engaging scene that pulled me immediately into Ashley Toliver's world – that of a midwife for the women of a small Appalachian community. Awakened in the night, the last

thing that Ashley expects is an abduction of her patient right after the birth. This light mystery takes off from there, pulling in another mystery of Hunter McDermott's birth mother. Both of these threads intertwine nicely as the story progresses, as well as the growing friendship between Ashley and Hunter.

There is a nice atmosphere found in this story – the feel of the small community is fully realized, and I loved the strong sense of heritage that Ashley has for her home. I enjoy when an author gives a character an authentic history that feels real to me, as this one did. The plot also flows nicely. The mystery thread is light and more my speed, since I don't like super scary, crime-based stories.

I felt like some of the ending scenes came across as a little bit anticlimactic. There are also some loose ends that I felt like weren't tied up – perhaps to leave room for a sequel? I definitely felt like there are secondary characters in this story that could have their own and would be interested in reading those. I was also bummed at how easily things wrapped up for Ashley – I thought there would be more of a compromise regarding one big issue in her life. It seemed a bit glossed over, but that's just my opinion. Other readers may not feel that way at all.

The details about midwifery really grabbed my attention; Ashely had such deep roots, and the details about her job held my interest – and for anyone worried about there being too much detail, don't be – I thought it was enough details to understand the situation and even learn from it, but not more information than was needed. I also thought it was neat how the author made Ashley and her friend Heather a descendant of characters in her historical series about midwives – I've read this first book, and this story actually makes me want to read the other two.

Overall, this is an engaging story, with a lot of compelling elements, and a light mystery at its core - and I hope it's the beginning of a series. These characters have more stories to tell, I'm sure of it.

I received a complimentary copy of this book. I was not required to do a review, and the views expressed here are my own.
