



## The Road Home

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For Las Vegas widow Naomi, memories of a Pennsylvania Dutch childhood are an ache from the distant past, a painful memory of abandoned roots and lost connections. She has long since reconciled herself to the shattered dream of what had once enticed her from her heritage--a tiny apartment thick with loneliness and regret, the sad lives of her two sons, and her sole consolation: the friendship with daughter-in-law Ruth. But when hard living claims both of Naomi's boys, she and Ruth turn Naomi's creaky Impala eastward in a desperate last-chance bid for hope and meaning. Thus begins an adventure: a cross-country odyssey that brings Naomi home to her old farm in Lancaster County--and to the values and rhythms of a life once spurned. Although never having seen the East before, Ruth finds a home here too, among the slow and authentic cadences of Pennsylvania farm country. Can two women from different backgrounds and generations, overwhelmed with life and loss, find healing for wounds once thought too deep to heal? Does life offer any real second choices and chances? Can modern paths, after leaving all that was good and true, ever truly lead home?

## **The Road Home Details**

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## From Reader Review The Road Home for online ebook

### **Heather says**

I was a little skeptical reading this as it is written by a man, from a woman's point of view, which you could tell, but...it's wasn't horribly done like some are. I loved reading about places I love and have been and being able to see in my head exactly where things actually are, like Bethlehem Steel and south Bethlehem, Hotel Bethlehem. These places are real to me, as are Moab and Vegas. Even Lancaster County...I even am PA Dutch...so it was fun for me. I also liked how it was all brought together and taught the lesson of faith. Definitely a good read.

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### **Liz says**

This. Book. Sucks.

The dialogue is unrealistic, and one of my huge peeves with it was that the author shows you, for example, that Ruth likes referencing pop culture, and then TELLS you. It got on my nerves. The information that Naomi gave about the Mennonite culture sounded as though it was lifted straight from Wikipedia. And it's so unsubtle with the mental-healing-physical-journey theme.

This is a man writing a woman's story. If they'd done it well, I wouldn't be complaining, because that's what being a novelist is about. But Tenney and Olsen have butchered one of my favourite Bible stories. Grr.

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### **Shyla says**

This is the modern retelling of the story of Ruth from the Bible. I really enjoyed this book and related to the characters and the story very well. Naomi is a bitter widow who lives in a tiny apartment in Vegas (Sin City) and only has her two sons and daughter in laws to count as blessings in her life. When both sons unexpectedly die Naomi feels she must go back to her roots and the only time of real happiness in her whole life, her childhood growing up in Amish country. Her daughter in law Ruth accompanies her. They set out in an old impala that barely runs with little to no money in their pockets and no plan as to what they will do when and if they make it to Pennsylvania since Naomi cut all ties with her family when she married and left. The book follows the women's journey across the country and the difficulties they encounter as well as their internal transformations from bitter and broken women to hopeful and faithful believers.

I'm a sucker for a good amish story and spiritual transformations so put them together and you had me at hello! But really I have several family members that these characters reminded me of and I could relate to how down and out they were. I want to believe that God has a plan for all of us and miracles really do happen like in this book. The ending was a little abrupt and rushed and some relationships develop quicker than what is likely but all in all a good read!

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## **Lisa Moreno says**

Awesome, awesome, awesome! Loved this book!

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## **Diane Holm says**

When the end comes, it is often just the beginning....

Ruth loses both her brother-in-law to a terrible disease and her husband in a fatal accident all in the same day. With no family to turn to, her mother-in-law Naomi becomes her only refuge.

The three women, Naomi and her daughter-in-laws Ruth and Orpah, were a mess. Their combined grief was heavy and burdensome long after the services passed. Money was scarce. Naomi's husband had died just three years previous and nearly all the insurance money was drained. Now widowed, Ruth and Orpah could no longer face the stress of Las Vegas life. It was time for a change and Naomi had the answer. "We are going on a journey" she announced. The next day they were on their way.

Leaving Vegas behind had a calming effect. As the glitz and glitter gave away to nature's grandeur, they felt lighter, more alive. A measure of peace settled in as they headed for Naomi's "special place." It was there, in a time past, that life had seemed perfect. Though it was just one evening beneath the stars, they had felt something completely wonderful.

The time neared to let go of the past, but their hearts were reluctant. Would they stand tall and be free or haunted with memories?

The future was not yet written, but Naomi had her own plans. She was sending Ruth and Orpah home to Las Vegas on a bus. Then she was going back east. Her people were there. How many she didn't know, but there was no question in her mind, she would return.

Ruth couldn't allow the ageing Naomi to go alone. The two unite for a perilous journey filled with struggles, danger and surprising outcomes. Will they fulfill their dream? What hidden hazards lay in store? Can true peace ever be found?

The Road Home is vividly written and full of powerful emotions. As you read it, the story of Ruth will span the centuries and touch your heart.

The best Christian Fiction I have read in a long time!

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## **Charlyn says**

A modern version of biblical Ruth's journey and her relationship with Boaz. It does bring to life the love story of both Ruth and Boaz, although it did not occur to me the perils of 2 widows travelling on their own until they reached Naomi's home town. The story brought to life the different types of ultra-conservative Christians living in modern-day USA and I'm amazed at how Tommy Tenney managed to merge biblical Ruth's story into present times. An easy read for beginners. #ireadbooksactually

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### **Amelie says**

I was so excited when I found this book and couldn't wait to read it because another book by this same author, Hadassah, is on my top ten list of favorite books. I was, however, sadly disappointed.

The author does a good job of making a modern parallel to the biblical story of Naomi and Ruth but the writing style was nowhere near in quality as Hadassah. I found the characters without substance, and mostly annoying. I really had to force myself to even finish the book in the hopes it would get better. But it took a really cheesy romance novel type of turn in section three, and I found the whole thing just unbelievable and wanted to gag on a spoon. so disappointed.

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### **Hannah Nienhuis says**

The title in this book relates to the Story because Ruth and her friends begin a journey home. The authors writing style is using flashback. Also, the story is told by Ruth, the main character. The purpose of this book is to modernize and retell the Bible story of Ruth. I really enjoyed reading this book because of the strong example Ruth shows. She had to face many challenges and she stays strong throughout it all. Personally, I would not change anything in the book. I think that Tommy Tenny and Mark Andrew Olsen wrote this book perfectly!

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### **Dyana says**

This was an interesting modern version of the biblical story of Ruth and Naomi. They live in Las Vegas, and Naomi's two sons (Mel & Lonnie) die on the same day (one to cancer and the other in a car wreck). Naomi (widow), Ruth (cocktail waitress), and Orpah (taxi dancer) travel to Moab, Utah to scatter the ashes of the two brothers at Dead Horse Point. Naomi feels the pull to go back to her Mennonite roots in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania and refuses to return to Vegas. Orpah returns to Vegas, but Ruth (who had a horror of a childhood) decides to go with Naomi as she is looking for a place to call home.

The first half of the book is the harrowing road trip they experience with very little money and in a beat-up old Impala on "its last legs". They finally arrive in Bethlehem with no money and a dead car. They take up residence in Naomi's vacant old homestead, and Ruth finds work in a farmer's market owned by Bo (Boaz) a man twice her age. There is an instant attraction between the two. Naomi is in jeopardy of losing the homestead to owed back taxes and to a dishonest uncle who is trying to acquire the land to sell to a conglomerate who wants to build a housing development.

Can you tell by the synopsis why I gave it three stars? I must admit that, altho the plot sounds "interesting", and the writing was descriptive, and the road trip scenery was well researched; don't use this story to find biblical truth - it's not there.

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## **Crystal says**

It was interesting to think of the book of Ruth in a more modern setting.

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## **Michele Minor says**

This is a modern day retelling of the book of Ruth from the Bible. Naomi and Ruth travel from Las Vegas, Nevada back to Naomi's hometown in Pennsylvania back to her Pennsylvania Dutch roots. The names of the characters that are mentioned in the Bible are either the same names are close to the same names, even Boaz. Both Ruth and Naomi find their way to God in this book. This is a good modernization of the Book of Ruth. There is even mention of Boaz's parents in the book which is similar to the story of Rahab in the Bible.

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## **Becky says**

I wanted to like this book more. I felt it was somewhat shallow, and the authors didn't know very much about Mennonites. It is a retelling of the Book of Ruth. The "far country" is Las Vegas and Moab, UT. In Utah, the only "Mormons" presented are polygamous, of course, since this is written by Evangelicals. Ruth is a cocktail waitress in Vegas and marries a son of a Naomi who abandons her Mennonite roots. Then the sons die and Ruth goes with Naomi. The authors spend 2/3 of the book recounting the road trip, complete with references to "Thelma and Louise" and "The Witness". Then they only spent 1/3 about The Mennonites and Boaz who instantly falls for Ruth, though he is more than twice her age and saves the day, saving the farm that a relative wants to sell to a land developer. Nevermind that Naomi has been gone for 30+ years! I wish they had learned about the Mennonites and Amish rather than sticking to cliches--on the one hand they are "ideal" Christians who accepts both Naomi and Ruth back without any questions and then they sort of demonize them, having Naomi flee them because of their strict rules and "works" rather than "faith" and love. The authors didn't really explain how Boaz and everyone else could just accept Ruth, a Mexican American woman who was sexually abuse when a child and then became a cocktail waitress. And Ruth was OK with no electricity and running water--just so she could marry Boaz, though most men have abused her, except her deceased husband who had only been dead for a few months. Also, the authors had that strange scene having Ruth sleep on the floor by Boaz's bed. It's strange in the Bible, though I'm sure there is a cultural reason for it. It did not translate to modern day very well--more like the Vampire Edward staying all night, every night with Bella with no sex. Whatever!!

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## **Venessa says**

### **What if?**

What if the story of Naomi, Ruth and Orpah took place today? Naomi and her husband, Eli, had to leave the land of their birth in Pennsylvania and then travel across the USA with their two young sons in order to find work, eventually landing them in Las Vegas, Nevada. Then the boys grew up and married women who would certainly NOT have been deemed acceptable to their former Mennonite family members; but were welcomed by Naomi and Eli. And, what if Eli passed away? Then, within a few short years both of their sons passed too, leaving Ruth and Orpah childless widows, what would happen to these 3 women?

The story pretty much follows the book of Ruth in scripture but, brought into today's world ... at times it is hilarious, at times it is overwhelmingly sad. However, throughout the change of time and locales it draws you in and makes the story of Naomi and Ruth timeless and the comparisons inevitable. I really enjoyed it and I think you will too. Oh, and Ruth's "love interest"? Why, Boaz aka "Bo", of course!

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### **Kristi says**

This is one of my favorite books! I love how the authors used current names and places to weave together a modern day retelling of The Book of Ruth. It brings this ancient story to life and reminds us how God works to bring His people back to Him.

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### **Rachel says**

This book started out slow then gained momentum....then throughout their driving journey I thought it was a bit too detailed at times, then when they arrived at their destination the story became very interesting and I devoured the rest of the book!

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