



McKenzie

Penny Zeller

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"Desperate times call for desperate measures" is the reasoning that prompts McKenzie Worthington, a young lady of Boston's high society, to respond to an ad for a mail-order bride for a man in the Montana Territory. McKenzie is desperate, after all, to save her beloved younger sister, Kaydie, from her evil, abusive husband, who robs banks for a living. And so, it is with reckless determination that McKenzie runs away from the comforts of home and hearth to head West and meet her new husband-whom she'll divorce, of course, after she rescues her sister. "Desperate times call for desperate measures" is the reasoning that also prompts Zachary Sawyer, a rugged rancher after God's own heart, to post an ad for a mail-order bride in various newspapers across the country. Managing a ranch and caring for his adoptive son, Davey, has become more than one man can handle alone, and Zach prays for God to send him a wife with whom to build a life and share his dreams.

When McKenzie arrives at Zach's ranch, she immediately puts her plan in motion, searching for her sister and doing all she can to keep her new husband from forming an attachment. But his persistent kindness and significant self-sacrifices begin to change her heart-and ruin her plans. God has a way of working things out to the good of those who love Him, though, as McKenzie and Kaydie will soon see.

McKenzie Details

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From Reader Review McKenzie for online ebook

Melinda Evaul says

Penny Zeller brings readers a sweet love story in this historical fiction. She weaves deep moral lessons into our hearts through her interesting cast of characters. I particularly enjoyed Zeller's underlying themes of patience and forgiveness. "McKenzie" paints an exceptional picture of God's vast love for us. McKenzie Worthington is a scheming Boston socialite with a goal to rescue her sister and head for home. She undergoes enormous changes as she learns to express love for the people of Pine Haven and the boy who calls her Ma. In turn, she finds that God loves her and has a better plan for her life. Her new husband, Zach Sawyer, displays extreme patience as he teaches McKenzie how to have a personal relationship with God. I appreciated the way Zach gradually wooed his reluctant mail-order bride into a loving marital relationship. His tenderness, understanding, and willingness to forgive, mirror God's never-ending patience and forgiveness for us.

Trinity Rose says

"McKenzie" by Penny Zeller is such a fantastic book. It's about a mail-order bride. I love stories like that for many reasons. The main reason is I sort of was a mail-order bride. McKenzie was from a Boston family who had it all, money, a fancy home, all she would ever want. So why did she become a mail order bride. Usually women who don't have anything become mail-order brides so they can get away from poverty. We find out McKenzie wants to find her sister who is in a very bad abusive marriage and is in the West. So McKenzie sacrifices many things to go west and marry a stranger. McKenzie realizes that money can't buy everything and life is happy if you love and follow the Lord. This book is full of many surprises, twists and turns. I was quite taken with the calm assurance in Zach's life. How he relied on the Lord and gave everything over to Him, as we all should. I really liked the unique names of the daughters in "McKenzie." The main characters are McKenzie, Zach, Davey, Rosemary, Asa, Kaydie, and Jonah. One of my favorite characters are Rosemary. She really is patient and kind, willing to help others. This book is the first in a series and I'm looking forward to Kaydie. I recommend this book for a keeper. It is a sweet love story of the Lord, family and friends. You will love it.

Thank you to Whitaker House for providing this book for review. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255

Phyllis Rogers says

This is a beautiful story about grace and forgiveness and how God uses all things for Good. McKenzie had her plans but God used them to accomplish his will in her life, Zach and her family. McKenzie thought she could never love again but Zach showed her the true meaning of love.

Kym McNabney says

MACKENZIE is the first book I've read by Penny Zeller. I was given the honor of receiving her second book in this series, KAYDIE. After reading what Kaydie was about and discovering it was the second book in the series, the first one about her sister's attempt to rescue her, I immediately ordered MACKENZIE.

Penny has quite a way with words. MACKENZIE is a delightful story with wonderful characters. I've always been intrigued by mail-order brides, and was pleasantly surprised by the plot. The quaint town in the Montana Territory captured my heart, as did Zach. What an amazingly sweet man.

With relatively short chapters, they read quickly. Where many books end a chapter with a hook, Penny started her chapters with one. Each time I'd finish one chapter, I'd sneak a peek at the next and quickly found myself reading the next.

As soon as I finished MACKENZIE, I started KAYDIE. I couldn't wait to read her story.

Teressa Morris says

McKenzie (Montana Skies #1) reminded me strongly of Janette Oke's Love Comes Softly series, with a little bit of Taming of the Shrew mixed in. McKenzie Worthington, at the beginning of the story, is a spoiled, entitled young woman who believes in her own goodness because she goes to church, even if, as she admits later, it is for "purely social reasons." When she marries the godly man Zach Sawyer and comes to live in the town of Pine Haven, she slowly begins to discover what it means to "walk with God."

This is a very sweet book with lots of beautiful description of the wide open spaces of Montana and what it was like to live in the 1800s. I especially liked the liberal sprinkling of prayers and Bible verses that were appropriately quoted by the characters. This is not a preachy book at all, but instead shows that none of us are perfect - we all must seek forgiveness from each other and God in order to build long lasting relationships.

I found the book to be a little predictable, and although I enjoyed the ending, I found it slightly implausible for the time period. However, this was a thoroughly enjoyable and easy read which I would recommend to any fan of the genre

Renee says

This is yet another marriage of convenience story that I really enjoyed. I enjoyed seeing McKenzie and Zach's relationship blossom along with McKenzie's growing faith in God. I was a little confused at first as to why a wealthy young woman couldn't just hire someone to find her baby sister instead of leaving the

comforts of her home for the West and life with a stranger but it ended up working in spite of that! I'm really looking forward to seeing where the next story goes and I have the feeling it's going to involve McKenzie's sister, Kaydie and a certain ranch hand. ;-) If you are a reader of sweet, Christian romance I recommend McKenzie, Book 1 in the Montana Skies series by Penny Zeller.

Review of ARC

Special thanks to Cathy Hickling of Whitaker House for sending me a review copy

Mary Findley says

"This Is Not a Small Thing!"

McKenzie Worthington is a desperate woman. She lives in a world of such wealth and privilege she has never even had to spoon food onto her own plate. She is willing to give it all up. Temporarily, at least. Someone must rescue her sister from a truly terrifying marriage in the wilds of frontier Montana, but McKenzie has no reason to hope for her family's help.

McKenzie grew up in the comfort of Boston high society but she has known heartache. The "perfect" man jilted her for her best friend. She struggles to trust and love in a world of the proper and dutiful. There's no example of open love or personal sacrifice or pain.

A mail order marriage doesn't seem "binding." Marriage is only for convenience and comfort. She travels to Montana only to find to a man who might help her find her sister. Zach Sawyer, however, teaches her the difference between her social customs and empty religion back home and the real God and His Word straight from his father's worn-out Bible. He teaches her honor, duty and real sacrifice.

This story contains gems of greatness. McKenzie's first dinner in Zach's home had stunning potential to show how ill-equipped McKenzie would be. But, while we get description of Boston life, down to the wallpaper patterns, there is little of the hardness of life in Montana. Vague references to learning to cook didn't satisfy. When Zach cries out to God about the difference between a wife's small shortcomings and the "big thing" McKenzie has done to him, it is another gem of greatness in the book.

Over all, though, it was a sweet, gentle lesson in replacing what the world teaches us about family, duty and what's "proper" with truth, honesty and love based on God and His Word.

Kathryn says

I got this one as a Kindle freebie. It's a Western Christian Romance, heavy on the Christian. It started off really good and then about a third of the way in, I realized what a selfish brat the main character is. I was just going to skim the rest of the book but for some reason I just kept reading. I'm really glad I did. McKenzie matured and I really liked the message about marriage. This made up for any deficiencies in the story.

The only thing that really bothered me about the story was that McKenzie was constantly having daydreams or memories. It was hard to tell when they started and I couldn't tell they were a deviation from the main story until they were over. Then I had to go back and check when they started. I'm not sure if this was a formatting issue with the Kindle edition but it was a little frustrating.

As annoying as that was, I am still really glad that I read the book and would recommend it to others. As I

said earlier, it was a little heavy on the Christian but it didn't really bother me. I felt like it was handled really well. The content was clean too, another plus.

Susan Hollaway says

McKenzie Worthington is a spoiled, wealthy, socialite who is on a mission to rescue her sister from the clutches of an abusive husband. Only thing is, her brother-in-law is on the run and the last place she knew her sister to be was in Montana territory. When her best friend marries the man she thought she was destined to marry, she decides to go find and bring home her sister. When a Wyoming rancher, places an advertisement in the Boston newspaper for a mail-order bride, it seems the answer to her dilemma. She'll simply answer his inquiry, marry him, enlist his help, rescue her sister, annul the marriage, and come back home.

Zach Sawyer prays to God to send him a wife. He needs a helpmate and someone to help raise his adopted son, Davey. He places an advertisement in several newspapers for a mail-order bride and receives several responses. But only one truly stands out. When this woman named McKenzie agrees to marry him, he thinks her motives are sincere.

But when McKenzie arrives, she is not prepared for what greets her. His simple ranch house and humble furnishings repel her. She's used to being spoiled and not lifting a finger to do anything, even for herself. She does not make the best of impressions, but Zach is a man like she's never met. He is a man after God's own heart, not that she'd have much experience with that. The most she'd ever done with her Bible was carry it unopened to church. Attending church was a social function for her prominent family. But Zach is patient, kind, forgiving, and teaches her about God and His Word. She falls in love with his son immediately, despite her best laid plans. Zach is making it difficult for her to avoid developing feelings for him. The ranch hands are kind and forgiving, despite how she treated them upon her arrival.

When Zach finds out about her plans to find her sister, he helps her on her quest, and she finds herself becoming more endeared to him each and every day. Guilt begins to prick her conscience and her well-laid out plans don't seem so well-thought out now. How will she be able to walk away?

When her mother suddenly shows up to rescue her based upon a letter filled with untruths she'd sent during her first few days in Montana, her original plan is disclosed to Zach and his heart is crushed. She realizes she's fallen in love with Zach, and has no desire to leave the ranch. But will he ever forgive her for what she's done? The very place that months before she couldn't wait to escape is now the only place she wants to be. Can she make her mother understand that the wealth, status, and benefits of Boston no longer hold any appeal for her? Can she win the back the heart of her husband? Will she ever find her sister?

God has a plan and He works all things together for good. But I'm not going to tell you how He goes about that. You're just going to have to read it for yourself. Believe me, you'll be grateful I didn't spoil it for you. And hold on to your bookmark, because Kaydie, Book 2 in the Montana Sky Series is already out. Plus, Hailey, Book 3, will be released in the fall. I love a good series and Penny's certain written one. I know you'll enjoy it too. Keep your eyes peeled for more of Penny Zeller's books.

Loraine says

Rich, pampered McKenzie Worthington becomes a mail order bride moving from Boston to Montana for one purpose only: to rescue her baby sister from a disastrous marriage. She plans to have her marriage annulled and go back to Boston as soon as she can find her sister, Kaydie. But things don't quite work out the way she plans. Zach Taylor is a gentle, kind, strong, hardworking, faith-filled rancher who is raising his adopted son, Davey.

I loved watching McKenzie change as she found Zach and Davey filling holes in her heart she'd never realized were there in her pampered, spoiled Boston life. As Zach reached out to her and taught her the true meaning of a personal relationship with Jesus, McKenzie grew into a different woman whose values changed drastically. I loved Davey and McKenzie's relationship and how she became a true "ma" to him. Zeller's strong faith thread was wonderfully woven throughout the story line without feeling out of place or forced. Was glad that Kaydie found them and look forward to book 2 in this series which focuses on Kaydie.

FAVORITE QUOTES:

"Time had passed so quickly that the years of her childhood seemed barely a whisper in the conversation of life."

Jim Hughes says

As a pastor, I am always intrigued how God communicates to us. He uses a wide variety of ways to teach us how we should live. "McKenzie" is one of those ways. Author, Penny Zeller, has woven together the Gospel message into a very interesting and captivating story. Stereotypes are addressed and broken down. The foundation of marriage is examined and the reader discovers what the real foundation of marriage should be. McKenzie discovers for herself what meaningful life is and learns to embrace it from her heart. If you want to learn more how the Gospel message affects real life and changes the heart of people, then I highly recommend "McKenzie" to you. I enjoyed the story as it unfolded and did not want it to end.

Wendy says

McKenzie, a wealthy Boston socialite, decides that the best way to find her sister in the Montana wilderness is to become a mail-order bride. Her intention right from the beginning is to marry and then use any means possible to find her sister, return to Boston, have her father annul the marriage and get on with life. What she doesn't expect is to be greeted with kindness and love from the man, his ranch family, and the small town. Her idea of a relationship with God is attending church on Sunday as a social obligation, she is unprepared for the serious and loving relationship that Zach has with God. As she learns more about God she is changed on the inside, changed so much that when she becomes the one rescued by her mother she has to seriously consider just exactly what it is that she does want. An excellent book to start off a series. Well written, good character development, loved the daydream vignettes, definitely a page turner.

Susan says

"McKenzie" is the first book in the Montana Series by Penny Zeller. A tender romance novel that starts you

out on McKenzie's journey of love, faith and hope. Penny pens her characters realistic and believable in this well developed novel. This is not a quick read, but one that will make you want to stay up and finish the book. Recommended for all romance, Christian readers.

This review is based on a complimentary copy which was provided for an honest review.

Carman says

While I did see room for improvements in this book, I also saw potential. I will definitely be reading the second book in this series.

Here are some things I thought could be better... The dialogue could use some work, but that was only in some areas. Occasionally it would seem a bit dramatic or over done, but that is easily fixed. It seemed to miss some opportunities to bring the reader closer to the characters and what was happening in their lives. Or a scene wasn't played out, when I think it should have been. Such as when McKenzie and Zach get back from their wedding ceremony, you never know what happens. You just know that McKenzie sleeps in her own room, but you never know if they talked about waiting or what! That seemed an odd thing to leave out of the story to me as it is a pretty big deal in the characters lives. Also, when Kaydie tells her sister that she is pregnant. I felt like you waited such a long time for the sisters to be reunited, then you don't even get to "participate" when they are really together and catching up for the first time.

The hero and heroine don't meet until 100 pages into the book, but it seemed to pass quickly for me because of the letters passing between them. McKenzie is a spoiled brat when she first comes into the book, but as the story progresses you begin to see her changing into a more loving, God-centered person.

Zach is a first-rate hero! I loved him. He is so patient and kind! Awesome. He is a hero that is truly admirable. I loved how he took his dad's advice about the "small things" and was ready and willing to please, compromise, and forgive whenever he needed to. Such a great guy!

ASC Book Reviews says

This book is as good if not better than I had hoped it would be. The story is unique and I must admit that I loved it so much that I immediately plunged into the sequel "Kaydie". Though there are times I can't relate to McKenzie I still really grew to love her character (and I also found there were times when I saw myself in her personality). But I still think she's completely insane to want to leave a man like Zach! LOL! Personally I think that every mother out there needs to buy this book for themselves and then have their sons read it! If every bachelor read this book and behaved just a little more like Zach this dark world would be a far better place and maybe I wouldn't be single! HA! But I digress. Back to the book. McKenzie is amazing! I love the way Penny writes the character's prayers and the way she weaves God's Holy word in with her own. They are both real, conversational, and flawless. Filled with twists and surprises I was shocked at times, and laughed wholeheartedly at others! My recommendation is to get the whole series, curl up on a comfy piece of furniture, and tuck in for some REALLY great reads!

Oh and you may need some music to go with that! : "Sweet Hour Of Prayer" by The Cluster Pluckers and

"Mine All Mine" by Shedaisy compliment this book well I think!

Isaiah 9;6

~ASC
