

A woman in a blue dress and black apron stands in a garden, holding a wicker basket filled with purple flowers. She is barefoot. In the background, there is a wooden fence, a shovel, a blue bird, and a white watering can. The scene is set in a garden with purple flowers and green foliage under a blue sky with clouds.

FOUR AMISH NOVELLAS

*An  
Amish Garden*

BETH WISEMAN,  
KATHLEEN FULLER  
TRICIA GOYER &  
VANNETTA CHAPMAN

*An  
Amish Garden*

## OTHER NOVELS BY THE AUTHORS

### BETH WISEMAN

The Daughters of the Promise novels

*Plain Perfect*

*Plain Pursuit*

*Plain Promise*

*Plain Paradise*

*Plain Proposal*

*Plain Peace*

The Land of Canaan novels

*Seek Me with All Your Heart*

*The Wonder of Your Love*

*His Love Endures Forever*

*Need You Now*

*The House that Love Built*

### KATHLEEN FULLER

The Hearts of Middlefield novels

*A Man of His Word*

*An Honest Love*

*A Hand to Hold*

The Middlefield Family novels

*Treasuring Emma*

*Faithful to Laura*

*Letters to Katie*

### TRICIA GOYER

The Seven Brides for Seven

Bachelors novels

*The Memory Jar*

*The Promise Box*

*The Kissing Bridge*

*A Christmas Gift for Rose*

### VANNETTA CHAPMAN

The Shipshewana Amish

Mystery novels

*Falling to Pieces*

*Perfect Square*

*Material Witness*

The Amish Village Mystery novels

*Murder Simply Brewed*

### OTHER AMISH NOVELLA COLLECTIONS

*An Amish Christmas*

*An Amish Gathering*

*An Amish Love*

*An Amish Wedding*

*An Amish Kitchen*

*An Amish Miracle*

# *An Amish Garden*

BETH WISEMAN,  
KATHLEEN FULLER,  
TRICIA GOYER, AND  
VANNETTA CHAPMAN



THOMAS NELSON  
*Since 1798*

NASHVILLE DALLAS MEXICO CITY RIO DE JANEIRO

© 2014 by Elizabeth Wiseman Mackey, Kathleen Fuller, Tricia Goyer, Vannetta Chapman

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, scanning, or other—except for brief quotations in critical reviews or articles, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published in Nashville, Tennessee, by Thomas Nelson. Thomas Nelson is a registered trademark of HarperCollins Christian Publishing, Inc.

Thomas Nelson titles may be purchased in bulk for educational, business, fund-raising, or sales promotional use. For information, please e-mail [SpecialMarkets@ThomasNelson.com](mailto:SpecialMarkets@ThomasNelson.com).

Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com).

Publisher's note: This novel is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are either products of the author's imagination or used fictitiously. All characters are fictional, and any similarity to people living or dead is purely coincidental.

#### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

An Amish Garden / Beth Wiseman, Kathleen Fuller, Tricia Goyer, and Vannetta Chapman.

pages cm

ISBN 978-1-4016-8979-7 (pbk.)

1. Amish--Fiction. 2. Christian fiction, American. I. Wiseman, Beth, 1962- II. Fuller, Kathleen. III. Goyer, Tricia. IV. Chapman, Vannetta.

PS648.A45A39 2014

813'.01083823--dc23

2013041039

*Printed in the United States of America*

14 15 16 17 18 19 RRD 6 5 4 3 2 1



# CONTENTS

*Rooted in Love* . . . . . 1

BY BETH WISEMAN

*Flowers for Rachael* . . . . . 95

BY KATHLEEN FULLER

*Seeds of Love* . . . . . 185

BY TRICIA GOYER

*Where Healing Blooms* . . . . . 287

BY VANNETTA CHAPMAN

*Recipes* . . . . . 399





# *Rooted in Love*

BETH WISEMAN



*To Jenni Newcomer Cutbirth*



## GLOSSARY OF LANCASTER COUNTY AMISH WORDS

*ach*—oh

*bruder*—brother

*daed*—dad

*danki*—thank you

*dochder*—daughter

*Englisch*—non-Amish person

*gut*—good

*haus*—house

*kaffi*—coffee

*kapp*—prayer covering or cap

*kinner*—children or grandchildren

*maedel*—girl

*mamm*—mom

*mei*—my

## *Glossary*

*mudder*—mother

*nee*—no

*Ordnung*—the written and unwritten rules of the Amish; the understood behavior by which the Amish are expected to live, passed down from generation to generation. Most Amish know the rules by heart.

*scrapple*—traditionally a mush of pork scraps and trimmings combined with cornmeal, wheat flour, and spices. The mush is formed into a semisolid congealed loaf, and slices are then panfried before serving.

*Wie bischt*—How are you?

*ya*—yes



## CHAPTER ONE

Rosemary crossed her legs, folded her arms across her chest, and tried to focus on the bishop's final prayer as he wrapped up the worship service. Saul Petersheim was making that a difficult task. She'd made it clear to Saul that she was not interested in dating him, but the man still gave it his best shot from time to time.

"He's doing it again," Rosemary whispered to Esther. "Smiling and staring at me."

Her best friend grinned. "Are you ever going to give that poor fellow a break and go out with him?"

"We've been through all this, Esther. Saul and I dated when we were sixteen. It didn't work out then, and it wouldn't work out now." Rosemary clamped her mouth closed when she realized that Bishop Glick had stopped talking and was staring at her, along with most of the congregation. She could feel the heat rising from her neck to her cheeks, so she sat taller, swallowed hard, and didn't breathe for a few seconds.

“See, Saul even gets me in trouble at worship service,” Rosemary said once the bishop had recited the final prayer and dismissed everyone. She stood up, smoothed the wrinkles from her white apron, and shook her head.

Esther chuckled. “You’re twenty-one years old. I think you’re responsible for your own actions at this point.”

Rosemary sighed as they waited for several of the older women to pass by before they eased into the line that was forming toward the kitchen. “I guess. I just wish Saul would find someone else,” she whispered as she glanced over her shoulder toward him. “Someone better suited to him.” The words stung when she said them aloud.

“Saul only has eyes for you.” Esther smiled. “And I don’t understand why you won’t give him another chance. It was five years ago.”

Rosemary bit her bottom lip, tempted to tell Esther the whole story. But every time she considered telling her friend the truth, she stopped herself. There was once a time when Rosemary couldn’t picture herself with anyone but Saul.

All the men had gone in the other direction toward the front door, most likely to gather in the barn to tell jokes and smoke cigars while the women prepared the meal. Rosemary shrugged. “It just wouldn’t work out.”

Esther picked up a stack of plates from the counter and shook her head. “I don’t understand you, Rosemary. Saul is one of the most desirable single men in our district. The fact that someone else hasn’t already snagged him is mind-boggling.” She nudged Rosemary’s shoulder. “But I really do think he is holding out for you.”

“Well, he is wasting his time.” Rosemary picked up a pitcher of tea and followed Esther out the kitchen door and onto the porch. As they made their way down the steps toward the tables that had

been set up in the yard, Rosemary commented to Esther that the Lord couldn't have blessed them with a more beautiful day. She wasn't going to let thoughts about Saul ruin it.

It seemed like spring had arrived overnight following a long winter that had seen record-low temperatures in Lancaster County. The Zooks were hosting church service today, and their flower beds were filled with colorful blooms. Rosemary glanced to her right at the freshly planted garden, then sighed, knowing how disappointed her mother would be if she were still alive. Rosemary hadn't planted a garden in four years. She'd tried to maintain the flower beds, but even that effort had failed.

She'd filled up most of the tea glasses when she saw Saul walking toward her. She swallowed hard. All these years later, Saul still made her pulse quicken.

"You look as pretty as ever, Rosie." Saul pushed back the rim of his straw hat, then looped his thumbs beneath his suspenders. There was no denying that Saul was a handsome man with his dark hair, deep-blue eyes, and boyish dimples. He had a smile that could melt any girl's heart. Aside from her father, Saul was the only other person who called her Rosie, and a warm feeling filled her when he did. But she'd never tell him that.

Rosemary looked up at him and forced a smile, wishing things were different. "*Danki*, Saul." She turned to walk away, but he was quickly in stride with her. "Can I help you with something?" she said as she continued to walk toward the house. She kept her eyes straight ahead and masked any facial expression.

"*Nee*. Just going inside." He scratched his chin. "And trying to figure out how long it's been since I asked you out. Wondering if I should try again."

Rosemary stopped midstep. She glanced around to see if

anyone was in earshot, and after waiting for one of her brothers to jet past them, she said, “I—I just don’t think it’s a *gut* idea for us to date. I’m very busy trying to run a household full of boys and take care of *mei daed*.” She locked eyes with his, knowing she’d do better to avoid looking at him altogether.

“Did I hear hesitation in your voice?” He grinned, and Rosemary’s knees went weak. Saul wasn’t just nice-looking, he was also well respected within the community and known to have a strong faith. He was sure to be a good husband and provider since he ran a successful construction company. He’d taken over his father’s business when his father never fully recovered from back surgery. But there were two reasons Rosemary wasn’t going to get involved with Saul. And one of them was walking toward them. Her five-year-old brother stopped in front of her, his face drawn into a pout.

“I can’t find Jesse or Josh.” Abner stared up at Rosemary.

“They’re around here somewhere.” Rosemary straightened her youngest brother’s hat, making a mental note to cut his blond bangs when they got home. “We’ll be eating soon, and neither Jesse nor Joshua is going to miss a meal.”

Saul squatted in front of Abner. “Anything I can help you with, buddy?”

Abner shook his head. “*Nee*.”

Rosemary looked down at her feet for a moment. Saul was born to be a father. She’d watched him with the *kinner* in their district over the years. The man was loving and kind to anyone he came in contact with. She needed to get away from him before she threw herself into his arms or said something she’d regret. She held up the empty pitcher and focused on Abner. “I’ve got to go refill this and help get lunch on the table. Don’t go far.” Then she turned to

Saul, and a sadness weighed so heavy on her heart, she couldn't even force another smile. "I have to go."



Saul scratched his chin again as he watched Rosemary walk away. Most days, he wondered why he continued to pursue her since she always turned him away. But every now and then he would see something in her beautiful brown eyes that made him think he might still have a chance. Or like today . . . he was sure he'd heard regret in her voice.

Sighing, he turned and headed back to the barn. As he pulled open the door, the stench of cigar smoke assaulted him. He'd never cared for this recreational activity that some of the men practiced. It used to be reserved for after the Sunday meal, but somewhere along the line, a few of the men began having a smoke before they ate. Saul enjoyed the jokes and company of the other fellows, but considering John Zook had already lost one barn to a fire, Saul was surprised he allowed smoking in his new one. The men were already walking toward the door, so Saul turned around, and they all made their way to the tables.

Saul took a seat at the table beneath a large oak tree, mostly because Rosemary's father, Wayne Lantz, was sitting there. Wayne was a leader, a fair man, and someone Saul had always looked up to. Saul wouldn't be surprised if he became bishop someday. He was also the first person on the scene of any emergency and available whenever a neighbor had a crisis. Saul glanced toward the Zook barn. On the day of the barn raising, Wayne had spent more time working than any of the other men. And even after his wife died four years ago, he continued to do for others.



“Any luck with that *dochter* of mine?” Wayne’s face was void of expression as he picked up his glass of tea, then took several large gulps.

Saul had never been sure if Wayne approved of his pursuing Rosemary. “*Nee*. She still won’t give me the time of day.” He reached for his own glass, took a large drink, and hoped that his answer had sounded casual enough.

One corner of Wayne’s mouth lifted into a subtle grin. Saul wasn’t sure if the man was impressed with Saul’s persistence or if he was happy that Rosemary wouldn’t have anything to do with him. Wayne was quiet.

Rosemary walked up to the table carting a full pitcher of tea. She’d stolen Saul’s heart the summer they’d both turned sixteen. That was the year she had blossomed into a woman, and the maturity fit her perfectly, both her figure and her personality. She’d been full of life, always laughing, and a bright light wherever she went. Saul was pretty sure she’d stolen a lot more hearts than just his that summer. He was blessed to have dated Rosemary for three months. But then one day after worship service, she’d broken up with him without giving him a good reason why. Through her tears, she’d mumbled something about the two of them not being right for each other, and she’d run off before Saul could get a better answer. She’d refused to talk about it in the months that followed.

Then her mother died the following year, and everything changed. She withdrew from everyone, and responsibility swallowed her up as she tended to her father and siblings. But Saul had seen the woman Rosemary was meant to be.

She walked around the table topping off glasses with iced tea, and when she got to her father, she set the pitcher on the table, then brushed lint from the arm of his black jacket. Wayne glanced

at her and smiled, and in a rare moment, Rosemary smiled back. She left the pitcher on the table before she walked away, not one time glancing in Saul's direction. The six other men at the table were deep in conversation about a new buggy maker in town, an *Englisch* man who was building the buggies cheaper than anyone else. Saul was only half-listening when Rosemary's father leaned closer to him.

"I'd tell you to give up, but I'm guessing that isn't going to happen."

Saul shook his head and grinned as they both watched Rosemary walk across the yard to the house. "*Nee*."

Wayne ran his hand the length of his dark beard that was threaded with gray. He didn't look at Saul, but kept his eyes on Rosemary as she walked up the porch steps.

"Will be a blessed man to win her heart." Wayne kept his eyes on his daughter. "She's so much like her *mudder*, though. Hard to tell what's going on in her head." He turned to Saul, and the hint of a smile formed. "But she will be well worth the time invested if you are that man."

Everyone had thought Wayne Lantz would remarry quickly after his wife died. Widowers and widows were encouraged to marry another as soon as possible. But Edna Lantz had been a fine woman. Saul figured Wayne was having a hard time finding happiness with someone else.

Even though Rosemary never did tell Saul why she broke up with him so suddenly, he couldn't imagine spending his life with anyone else. He'd tried to bring up the subject from time to time, but it had just put even more distance between them. But realistically, how long could he go on pursuing her?





## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Photograph by Saxton Creations

Award-winning, best-selling author Beth Wiseman is best known for her Amish novels, but her most recent novels, *Need You Now* and *The House That Love Built*, are contemporaries set in small Texas towns. Both have received glowing reviews. Beth's highly anticipated novel, *The Promise*, is inspired by a true story.





# *Flowers for Rachael*

KATHLEEN FULLER

*To my husband, James: love  
blooms where it's planted.*



## GLOSSARY OF MIDDLEFIELD AMISH WORDS

*ab im kopp*—crazy, not right in the head

*ach*—oh

*bruder*—brother

*buwe*—boys

*daag*—day

*daed*—dad

*danki*—thank you

*dumm*—dumb

*dummkopf*—dummy

*familye*—family

*gaarde*—garden

*geh*—go

*grienhaus*—greenhouse

*grossdochter*—granddaughter



## *Glossary*

*grossmutter*—grandmother

*grossvadder* or *grossdaadi*—grandfather

*gut*—good

*hallo*—hello

*haus*—house

*Herr*—Mr.

*kaffee*—coffee

*kapp*—prayer head covering

*kinn*—child, kid

*kumm*—come

*maedel*—girl

*mamm*—mom

*mann*—man

*mei*—my

*nee*—no

*nix*—nothing

*schwester*—sister

*ya*—yes



## CHAPTER ONE

*We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise  
and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how  
nature—trees, flowers, grass—grows in silence . . .*

*We need silence to be able to touch souls.*

—MOTHER TERESA

Rachael Bontrager let the soft, loamy soil sift through her hands. The warmth of the June morning rays warmed her skin through the thin blue material of her dress. She pushed her *kapp* strings over her shoulders and picked several stray blades of grass surrounding the violet Verbena she'd planted a few weeks ago. "There. Better, *ya*?" She glanced around to see if anyone noticed her talking to her flowers. It wouldn't be the first time she chatted to the plants in her garden, and it wouldn't be the last.

She moved to check for weeds in a thick layer of Hostas and

Coleus. Their vibrant hues of crimson, scarlet, evergreen, and emerald drew her closer, marveling at the beauty of the plants. She reached out and touched a ridged Coleus leaf, running her fingertips over the green edges to the lavender and magenta center. Her first plant, and it had returned since she planted the garden last year. A simple plant. Common. Yet to her, the most special.

The sound of heavy wheels crunching on the gravel of her grandparents' driveway drew her attention. She hurried through to the wooden gate of the garden, opened it, then made sure to latch it securely behind her. This year the deer were especially plentiful—and hungry.

She shielded her eyes from the bright sun as she looked up at the driver leading a team of huge draft horses closer to the house. The warm June breeze lifted the yellow short sleeves of his shirt, revealing wiry, yet strong, arms.

Rachael gulped, forcing her attention from her handsome neighbor, Gideon Beiler, to the load of manure in the wagon behind him.

"Halt!" His deep voice had a husky quality that tickled her ears. He looked down at her and smiled. "*Hallo*, Rachael."

"*Hallo*, Gideon." She swallowed again, cringing at the high pitch of her voice. "*Danki* for bringing this." The other day she'd asked his younger sister, Hannah Lynn, if they had any extra manure. Their family raised cows and goats to sell at auctions throughout the year. Hannah Lynn had said Gideon would bring it over. With her garden growing, Rachael needed more fertilizer than her horse could provide.

She walked to the back of the wagon as Gideon jumped down from his seat. She sniffed the air, expecting to inhale the pungent odor of manure. Instead, she barely smelled anything at all. She

examined the load in the wagon, picking up a handful. She looked at Gideon. "This is compost."

Gideon tipped back his straw hat as he neared. Rachael looked up at him, her neck craning to meet his warm brown eyes. He was at least six inches taller than her five-six height. He pushed his wire-rimmed glasses closer to his eyes but didn't look directly at her. "Ya."

"From your place?"

He nodded. "We had a little extra from our garden this year."

She glanced at the load in the wagon. "A little?"

"Uh-huh." He finally looked at her. "But . . ." He shrugged his shoulders.

When she first met him last year, after moving to Middlefield from Indiana to help care for her grandfather, he barely looked at her, much less said anything. But since he lived next door and worked at his family's farm, they couldn't avoid each other. Lately she realized she didn't want to.

She kept that to herself. Over time he'd learned not to be so shy around her, but that didn't mean he was interested in her as more than a friend.

And she had more to worry about than having a boyfriend. Focusing on the load of fresh compost, she said, "Do you mind dumping it in front of the *gaarde*?"

"Is that where you're gonna leave it?"

She shook her head. "I'll get the wheelbarrow and move it all behind the *grienhaus*." It wasn't exactly a greenhouse. Not yet. But once she finished it, she could garden year-round, focusing on fresh vegetables that were so expensive during the winter months.

"I can do that for you," he said.

His kindness didn't help keep her thoughts on an even keel. "That's all right. I know you're busy with the farm."

“They won’t miss me for a few minutes.” He grinned, displaying a deep dimple in each suntanned cheek.

She gripped the edge of the wagon and tried to get a grip on her senses too. “I’ll, uh, get the wheelbarrow.”

He nodded and leapt onto the back ledge of the wagon. She returned a few moments later.

Gideon tossed a shovelful of compost into the rusted three-wheeled barrow. “Looks like this thing has seen better days.”

She regarded the wheelbarrow. Gideon was right. The barrow was old, like everything else around her grandfather’s home. One tire kept losing air and she had to fill it using a bicycle pump at least once a week. Purchasing a new one was low on her list of priorities. Keeping food on the table and paying for gas and propane to keep the lamps lit and the stove going—that’s what mattered most. Which was why her garden was her most important possession in the world. Fortunately their community helped with her grandfather’s blood pressure and heart medications, or they wouldn’t be able to make ends meet.

When the wheelbarrow was nearly full, Gideon plunged the shovel back into the shrinking pile. He jumped down, his huge boots thudding on the gravel drive. He grabbed the handles in his large, strong hands and pushed it through the open garden gate.

Rachael brushed a few stray flecks of compost from her arm and smiled. Whoever married Gideon Beiler would be a lucky woman. Her smile faded. Too bad it wouldn’t be her.



Gideon nearly tripped on a small stone in the winding path through Rachael’s garden. *Great.* That was all he needed to do, trip over

his gigantic feet like he used to when he was a *kinn*. Although he was twenty-five, the memories of being teased for his gangly frame came up at the worst times. Like now, when he was trying to be nonchalant around Rachael. *Keep cool*, his Yankee friend would say. But he had never met Rachael Bontrager.

The partially built greenhouse was at the back of her fenced-in plot, near a large patch of perennials thriving in the shade of a huge oak tree. He'd never been this far back in her garden before. Gideon dumped the compost and stepped back, studying the structure. Although it wasn't complete and the design was crude, he could see the genius behind it. Recycled wood pallets were nailed together to make the floor, and the back wall was constructed from used, mismatched windows. More windows and two old doors were neatly stacked and leaning against the short fence, which upon further inspection, was also made of various pieces of wood.

"Obviously it's not finished yet."

He turned at her sweet, lilting voice. He glanced down, meeting her light-green eyes, which reminded him of the beach glass he'd picked up on a fishing trip to Lake Erie a few years ago. They were a stark and beautiful contrast to her dark-brown hair, which was nearly black against the white of her *kapp*. He focused on the greenhouse again, not wanting her to catch him staring.

"Ya," he said. *Ach*, he sounded *dumm*. Why couldn't God have blessed him with the gift of smooth speech? And while He was at it, coordination and decent eyesight would be nice. He shoved his glasses up the bridge of his nose for the tenth time that morning. "When did your *grossvadder* start making it?"

"Winter. And he's not building it. I am."

He looked at her. "Where did you get the materials?"

"I guess you haven't seen my *grossdaadi's* barn. It's stuffed with all kinds of spare parts, scraps of wood, nails, screws . . . all the things he picked up from odd construction jobs." She touched the back wall, running her fingers across the chipped white paint. "He can't bear to part with anything." She turned to Gideon. "So I decided to put some of it to *gut* use."

She never failed to surprise him. While most of his time was taken up working their small farm with his father, sometimes he would take a break and sit on the front porch, eating lunch or just enjoying the rest. Often he'd see her working in the garden, from dawn to dusk it seemed, except for when she went to the flea market on Mondays. Even there she was working, selling plants and flowers to both Amish and Yankee customers.

"*Mei daed* made sure I knew how to use a hammer and nails," she added. "It comes in handy. I don't have all the particulars figured out yet, but it will come together." She grinned. "I can't wait to have fresh broccoli in the winter. I love broccoli."

His gaze stayed on her, and all he could do was nod.

"Broccoli salad, broccoli and rice, chicken and broccoli—"

Did she realize how perfect she was? Resourceful, sweet, beautiful? He wished he could tell her that and so much more.

Instead he grabbed the wheelbarrow. "I'll get the rest of the compost."

"Uh, okay," she said.

He hurried away, his cheeks heating. When would he stop acting like a nervous *dummkopf* around her? And more important . . . when had he started seriously caring for her?



Rachael sighed as Gideon rushed off. Gideon Beiler, short on words, always in a hurry. Then again, why would he stick around to hear her waxing poetic about all things broccoli? Not exactly interesting conversation.

She never should have let him help her move the compost. She was capable of doing it herself. As it was, he gave it to her for free and didn't charge for delivery. She shouldn't have taken further advantage of his kindness.

Knowing he would refuse if she offered him money, she looked around the garden, desperate to find something to show her appreciation. But there wasn't much here, except for the planted perennials, and she couldn't give him a dug-up plant. Then she spied one of the flower baskets she'd made to sell at the flea market on Monday. When she heard him returning, she grabbed the hanging basket.

After he dumped the compost, he picked up the wheelbarrow by the handles. "One more trip should do it."

"Here." She thrust the basket in front of her. Pink Petunias. *Just what every man wants*. She cringed.

He stared at the basket, now inches from his chest. "Um, nice flowers."

"They're for you." With every word, she dug a deeper hole. One she wanted to disappear into. "I mean, they're for your *familye*, er, your *mamm*. She likes flowers, *ya*?"

"Ya." He took the basket from her and set it in the wagon. "She'll like them." He pushed the wheelbarrow.

"I just wanted to thank you . . ." But he was already several feet away, his long legs covering a lot of ground.

Rachael looked at the patch of violet Verbena near the gate and rolled her eyes. "I should stick to talking to plants."







## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Photograph by Sarah Debevec

Kathleen Fuller is the author of several best-selling novels, including *A Man of His Word* and *Treasuring Emma*, as well as a middle-grade Amish series, *The Mysteries of Middlefield*.





# *Seeds of Love*

TRICIA GOYER

*This book is dedicated to two great churches: Easthaven Baptist Church in Kalispell, Montana, and Mosaic Church of Central Arkansas in Little Rock. More than fellow church members, you are friends. And you've taught me what a loving community is all about!*



## GLOSSARY OF WEST KOOTENAI AMISH WORDS

*aenti*—aunt

*danke*—thank you

*dat*—dad

*Englisch*—non-Amish

*Englischman*—non-Amish man

*gut*—good

*ja*—yes

*kapp*—prayer cap

*kinder*—children

*liebbling*—darling

*mem*—mom

*ne*—no

*oma*—grandmother

*opa*—grandfather

*vell*—well

*wunderbar*—wonderful





## CHAPTER ONE

Eli Plank sipped a cup of strong coffee as he sat down to write his *Budget* report, which had to be mailed today in order to make the next printing of the paper. One of his earliest memories included watching his *dat* reading *The Budget* each night after dinner. It was a staple in Amish homes. A way for men and women from all around the country to connect, telling of the joys and hardships of their local Amish communities.

For as long as he could read *The Budget* himself, Eli had always sought out the news from the West Kootenai community first. The local scribe's column often read like an adventure novel, with elk taking down clotheslines and wild turkeys showing up in buggy sheds. The Amish families who'd traveled to West Kootenai were the adventurers among them—like modern-day Lewises and Clarks. Now he was one of them. Eli wondered if the area would live up to the expectations he'd set in his mind. And he also wondered how many days his mother could go before



writing him of his need to return to Indiana, settle down, and find himself a wife.

He sat at the small handmade wooden table. Next to him the large window was open. The cool wind carried in the scent of pine and a stirring of dust from the four-wheel-drive truck that had just rumbled down the road. Yesterday his first visitors had shown up at the cabin. A trio of Amish kids who lived just down the road. They'd brought over cinnamon rolls from their *mem* as a welcome to the area, and a note to let him know that church would be at their house this week. They'd pointed to a small yet tidy ranch house down the road.

"That's where we live, not far at all yet," the youngest one—a girl—had proclaimed. "And on the other side of that is the Carashes' house. They're *Englisch*. Sally is my best friend."

Eli had only been in the small West Kootenai community two days, but it was long enough to discover this was an Amish community unlike any other he'd been in. Three things stood out: the way the Amish and *Englisch* mingled as friends, the snow still on the mountains though it was May, and the pretty blonde Amish woman who barely glanced his way as he offered a hello in the general store. She was lovelier than most of the young women back home—yet he wouldn't tell *Mem* that. The last thing he needed was *Mem* writing to give him courting advice. She seemed overly worried that he was already twenty-four years old and had yet to find a suitable woman to pursue.

Instead of glancing his way, the young woman had been focused on bags of planting soil, asking the store clerk, Edgar, a slew of questions about hard freezes and soil content. Growing up with his family's seed business, Eli knew gardening. He now kicked himself for not stepping forward and offering her some advice. Then again,

he'd only be guessing. It wasn't as if he'd ever gardened in these parts. He was certain that planting in the high mountains had to be quite different from Indiana. And it wasn't until the woman walked out the door with her purchases that he saw the same trio of kids who had stopped by his cabin waiting for her.

"That's Sadie. She's been through quite a loss," Edgar had informed him. "Yet those kids keep her connected to real life. Otherwise I think she'd spend most of her thoughts on her garden." Edgar sighed. "Though I'm not sure if it's the one she's planting or the one of her childhood that she thinks 'bout the most."

Edgar hadn't said any more about the woman, and Eli hadn't asked. Yet he'd been pleasantly surprised to know she lived right down the road. He'd have a chance to see the woman again this morning. After all, being neighborly as he was, Eli had offered to walk the woman's younger siblings to school . . . seeing that there was a bear in these parts and all. It was the kids themselves who'd stopped by last night to tell him the news. A bear . . . now that was something to write home about!

*THE BUDGET*—West Kootenai, Montana

May—Unseasonably warm weather (or so the locals tell me) with clear skies reflecting off the mountain snow. Schoolchildren were running around barefoot during morning recess, even though the frost had barely melted. Seems to me that in Montana, if the sun is shining, that's good enough reason not to wear a coat and shoes, or so they think.

Montana is everything I imagined it to be. Arrived two days ago with three other bachelors and found the West Kootenai area to be just as lovely as everyone describes. Mountain peaks surround the high-mountain valley. Green pastures and the

songs of birds hidden in tall pine trees. Everything smells like pine . . . and dust. Very few roads around these parts are paved. If I walk fifty feet in any direction there's always something to explore—rivers, ponds, mountain trails—and words cannot describe the expansive Lake Koocanusa.

Now I know why so many bachelors come to these parts every year. I, like the rest of them, used the excuse that we must live in this area for six months in order to receive our resident hunting license in the fall. I am looking forward to hunting season, no doubt, but I'm also thankful to live here too. There are numerous bachelor cabins all over the area. I have the smallest one and don't have a roommate yet. Maybe this means that local families will take pity on me and invite me to dinner and good conversation often. One can only hope.

Spent a few days giving the bachelor's cabin a good cleaning before unpacking my things. As I washed a film of dirt off the cabin windows with a hose, I thought of the ladies back home who'd often come to help *Mem* clean before Sunday church. Wishing they could show up here for even one hour. Tomorrow I start my job at Montana Log Works. My hands are more used to tilling weeds than shaping logs, but I suppose I can just look at these pines as the big brothers of the plants *Mem* tends back home.

I just came from Pinecraft, Florida, for the season, and I haven't adjusted to the weather yet. The balmy days filled with ocean breezes are gone. Even though it's late spring, Montana's still clinging to winter. The nights get downright cold, and the cold seeps deep here. You're not going to find me without my shoes and jacket.

It's good to see some familiar faces in the area. I'd met the

Sommers family (Abe) when they still lived in Indiana. Linda Tillman (Rudy) is a cousin of my mother's too. She brought a fresh loaf of bread to my cabin and got the whole place smelling *gut*. Of course, I'm most excited to meet the bear cub that the neighbor kids are talking about. Yet we all know that when a cub is around, the mother isn't far. I'm heading out in a few minutes to walk the neighbor kids to school. The kids and I have high hopes we can spot it. One doesn't have to look far to find adventure.

This reminds me of God's Word, which says, "Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe."

Trust is a good word to cling to today for all of us. Trust that being neighborly and introducing oneself to a new friend can warm your heart even more than the Montana sun on a crisp spring day.

—Eli Plank, the bachelor scribe



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



*USA Today* best-selling author Tricia Goyer is the author of thirty-five books, including the three-book *Seven Brides for Seven Bachelors* series. She has written over five hundred articles for national publications and blogs for high-traffic sites like *TheBetterMom.com* and *MomLifeToday.com*. Tricia and her husband, John, live in Little Rock, Arkansas, where Tricia coordinates a Teen MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) group. They have six children.



A delicate, light gray illustration of a flowering branch, possibly a rose, arches across the top of the page. The branch features several small, five-petaled flowers and clusters of leaves, extending from the left edge towards the right.

# *Where Healing Blooms*

VANNETTA CHAPMAN

*For Uncle Joe,  
who still keeps a garden*

*There is a time for everything,  
and a season for every activity under the heavens.*

—ECCLESIASTES 3:1





## GLOSSARY OF SHIPSHEWANA AMISH WORDS

*ach*—oh

*boppli*—baby

*daed*—father

*dat*—dad, father

*danki*—thank you

*Englischer*—non-Amish person

*freind*—friend

*gem gschehne*—you're welcome

*Gotte's wille*—God's will

*grandkinner*—grandchildren

*gut*—good

*haus*—house

*kaffi*—coffee

*kapp*—prayer covering

## *Glossary*

*kinner*—children

*mamm*—mom

*mammi*—grandma

*nein*—no

*Rumspringa*—running around; time before an Amish young person has officially joined the church; provides a bridge between childhood and adulthood.

*schweschder*—sister

*Was iss letz?*—What's wrong?

*wilkumm*—welcome

*wunderbaar*—wonderful

*ya*—yes



## CHAPTER ONE

SHIPSHEWANA, INDIANA

MID-MAY

Emma Hochstetter stepped onto the back porch and pulled in a deep, cleansing breath. The colors of the May afternoon were so bright they almost hurt her eyes. Blue sky spread like an umbrella over her family's tidy homestead, which was dotted with green grass, three tall red maples, and an entire row of bur oak trees. And the garden—Mary Ann's garden.

Her mother-in-law could be found out among the garden's rows every morning and every afternoon. The place was a work of beauty. Emma would be the first to admit it. It was also a lot of work, especially for two old ladies living on their own. Emma wasn't in denial that she was now officially old. The popping in her

knees each time she stood attested to that. Turning fifty the past winter had seemed like a milestone. She now woke each morning grateful to see another day, which might have seemed like an over-reaction, but they'd had a hard year.

"Done with the laundry?" Mary Ann called out to Emma from her bench in the garden. She'd recently turned eighty-four, and some days it seemed to Emma that her mother-in-law was shrinking before her eyes. She was now a mere five-one, which meant she reached past Emma's chin, but barely. Her white hair reminded Emma of the white boneset that bloomed in the fall, and her eyes reflected the blue, bell-shaped flowers of the Jacob's ladder plant.

"Ya. Just folded and hung the last of it." Emma walked down the steps and out into the garden.

"Gardens will bless your soul, Emma."

"I suppose so."

"They are a place to rest, to draw near, and to heal."

"At the moment this garden looks like a place to work." Emma scanned the rows of snap beans, cabbage, and spinach. The weeds seemed to be gaining ground on the vegetables.

"Remember when the children used to follow behind me, carrying a basket and picking up the weeds I'd pulled?"

"I do." Emma squatted, knees popping, and began to pull at the crabgrass.

"The girls were cute as baby chicks. Edna leading the way with Esther and Eunice following in her steps."

"All grown now, *Mamm*."

"Indeed."

"We should probably think of cutting back on the size of this garden."

Mary Ann fell silent as Emma struggled with a particularly

well-rooted dandelion. The weed pulled free and dirt splayed from its roots. They both started laughing when two fat worms dropped from the ball of dirt and crawled back toward the warm, moist hole.

"I guess we know what Harold and Henry would do with those."

"My boys always did prefer fishing to gardening." Emma brushed at the sweat that was beading on her brow and resumed weeding. The temperature was warm for mid-May, nearly eighty. With the sun making its way west and a slight northern breeze, the late afternoon was a bit more pleasant. Perhaps the heat was why everything in the garden was growing with such enthusiasm.

Summer had barely begun, and already their vegetable plot had become a place of riotous chaos. The flowers tangled into one another in an unruly blend of scents and colors—reds, blues, yellows, oranges, and pinks. Shipshewana had experienced an early spring, bountiful rains, and mild temperatures. Emma struggled to keep up, and the garden became more a place of labor than of healing.

Still, she continued to work on the row of snap beans.

Mary Ann sat on her bench and watched.

"Gardens are a reflection of God's love for us," Mary Ann said.

"Ya, indeed they are."

"You missed a weed, dear. Back near the bean plant." Mary Ann pointed at the bunch of quack grass with her cane.

Emma smiled and reached for the grass. She no longer thought of Mary Ann as Ben's mother. After living on the same property for over thirty years, she was just *Mamm*. Sweet, dear, and at times, more work than an infant.

Emma prayed nightly that she would live forever, that she wouldn't leave her alone.

"The weeds aren't easy to find because the plants have grown

so large." She used her apron to wipe the sweat from her forehead. "Everything is running together."

"Evil can overtake good—"

"I'd hardly call a weed evil."

"Especially when you don't spend a little time each day tending to what is important." Mary Ann's eyes twinkled in the afternoon sunlight. She might have been referring to Emma's recent absence.

"I'm glad I went to Middlebury and spent the week with Edna. All three of her children suffering with the flu at the same time? *Ach!* We had our hands full with laundry and cooking and nursing."

Mary Ann moved her cane left and then right. She gazed off past the barn, and her voice softened. "Do you remember the year Harold came down with a bad case of the influenza?"

"He was nine."

"While you were tending him, I spent many an hour out here, praying for that child's soul and body—that the Lord would see fit to leave him with us a bit longer."

"Harold would call out, and his blue eyes, they'd stare up at me and nearly break my heart. The fever was dangerously high. I can still recall how hot his skin was to my touch."

"Difficult times."

Emma had reached the end of the row. She turned to the next and stifled a sigh. Most afternoons she enjoyed her time in the garden, with Mary Ann sitting on the bench and sometimes dozing in the sun. But today weariness was winning, that and a restlessness that resembled an itch she couldn't reach. Perhaps her impatience came from comparing her own life to her daughter's.

The trip to Middlebury should have been a nice reprieve from the work of the farm, but she came back nearly as tired as when she left.

Certainly it had been a delight to spend time with Edna, her husband, and the grandchildren while a neighbor had stayed with Mary Ann. But looking around her daughter's tidy farm and newer house, she found herself wondering if they should sell the old place. Perhaps it was too much for two old women to maintain. Something smaller would be good. Her daughter's place was half the size and much more manageable.

"Mamm, this garden is too big."

"No garden is too big, dear."

"We can't possibly eat all of this food."

"Which is why we share with those in need."

They'd joined a co-op several years ago. In exchange for the vegetables, they received fresh milk, eggs, and occasionally cheese. Both Emma and Mary Ann were relieved that they didn't have to look after a cow—Emma had never been good at milking, though she'd done it enough times as a child. And chickens required constant tending. She also didn't favor the idea of purchasing their dairy products from the local grocer. Fresh was best. Still, what they put into the co-op far exceeded what they received.

"Maybe it's grown past what we can manage. Instead of adding a little every year, maybe we should hack something back." Emma stood and scanned right, then left. The garden, which had once been a small vegetable patch, now took up one entire side of the yard. "We could plow up that row of flowers over there, maybe plant some grass instead. And we do not need ten tomato plants."

"Help arrives when you call."

"Yes, but—"

"Hello, Danny."

Emma had turned her attention back to the row of blooming plants and was reaching up to trim back the joe-pye weed, which

threatened to take over the Virginia bluebells that were already in bloom. Her hand froze at Danny's name. Slowly, she brushed the dirt from her fingertips by running her hands across her apron, inadvertently leaving a stain of brown slanting from right to left against the light gray material. She swiped at the hair that had escaped from her *kapp*, tugged her apron into place, and turned to face the man who had first courted her.







## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Photograph by Jay Irwin

Vannetta Chapman is author of the best-selling novel *A Simple Amish Christmas*. She has published over one hundred articles in Christian family magazines and received over two dozen awards from Romance Writers of America chapter groups. In 2012 she was awarded a Carol Award for *Falling to Pieces*. She discovered her love for the Amish while researching her grandfather's birthplace of Albion, Pennsylvania.



ENJOY THESE AMISH NOVELLAS  
FOR EVERY SEASON



VISIT [AMISHLIVING.COM](http://AMISHLIVING.COM)

Available in print and e-book