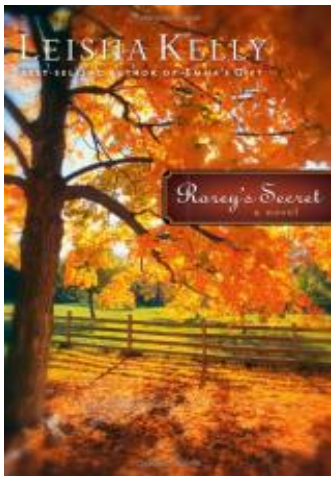
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Rorey's Secret

by Leisha Kelly



About the Book

When all seems lost, out of the ashes redemption rises...

Determination and faith have kept Samuel and Julia Wortham and their family safe through many trials. Together with their neighbors, the Hammonds, they have much to be thankful for--health, home, and happiness. But in the fall of 1938, life on their Illinois farms takes an unexpected turn.

When a raging fire breaks out and threatens to destroy the Hammond farm, the two families find themselves clinging to their faith in God. But as they face the daunting task of rebuilding what was lost, it seems that things will never be the same. Meanwhile Sarah Wortham is harboring a troubling secret that could reveal the cause of the fire, but she finds herself caught between a promise to a dear friend and the truth about what really happened.

A compelling tale of courage and community, **Rorey's Secret** continues the captivating saga of the Wortham family, who with trust and determination discover the restoring and healing power of forgiveness.

Discussion Guide

1. At the story?s beginning we are introduced to a sort of community between the Hammond and Wortham families. What does this say about them and their relationship? How is this community different from the relationship you have with your neighbors today?

2. This community is again brought to light when Sam and Thelma Hammond come to Julia for help with the delivery of their second child. What made them come to Julia? How did Julia respond? What does this say about their relationship? Does Julia have the same relationship with the other children? Why or why not?

3. Very early on we see a contrast between George Hammond and Samuel Wortham. What is different about how they relate to each other and to their families? How is this evidenced throughout the story?

4. It is suggested that Franky Hammond may have a learning disability. How is this shown in the story? How does this affect his relationships with his father and with the other children?

5. The fire sets the stage for the rest of the story, not just in plot line but in developing the characters. How do the different characters respond to the fire? Why the different reactions? Why did Rorey withdraw from the rest of the family? What does this reaction say about her?

6. Though different ages, each child has his or her own interests. But Sarah and Katie stand out as the most responsible for their age. How do their actions portray their love of the family? Do you think their maturity is typical for their age? Why or why not?

7. Throughout the book Sarah and Rorey are good friends, sharing secrets and hobbies. How does this relationship change as the events of the story unfold? What causes the change?

8. Sarah has a very apparent guilt over what she knows about the events preceding the fire. Why do you think she keeps these events from her mother? What kept her from telling the truth when she could have?

9. Exhausted from the events of the evening but distracted by her husband?s condition, Julia allows herself little sleep. At two different occasions when she does nap, she dreams first of Emma Graham and then of Samuel?s mother. How are the messages of the dreams different? What is the significance of each dream? What, if anything, do they reveal about Julia?

10. The Wortham family is a close-knit, loving family. But then we read about Samuel?s mother, Joanna, who has little to do with her son or his children. Why do you think Joanna stays so distant? Does this change in the story? Why or why not?

11. Franky has an interest is literature, but when Julia begins to read **Silas Marner**, it is Sarah who is most affected by the words. How does she react? What was it about that book that makes Sarah respond the way she does?

12. Most of the book is written in one of two perspectives: Julia?s or Sarah?s. But near the end, we are introduced to the story through Franky?s perspective. How does his perspective differ from the other two? Why do you think the author chose to include his point of view? Do you relate to one of these characters better than another? Do you think these multiple perspectives interrupt or add to the story?

13. The Hammond and Wortham children relate to each other in different ways. Near the end, we read a conversation between Rorey and Franky Hammond. What does this conversation reveal about them, their relationship to each other, and how they relate to their father? Is their sibling relationship closer than their friendships with the Wortham children? Why or why not?

14. In the last chapter, we read that Sarah thinks the fire had actually been good for the families. How so? Do you agree that something so devastating can actually be a blessing?

15. Among other key themes, the novel says a lot about faith, forgiveness, and community. How are these elements portrayed throughout the book? How do these themes play together? What other themes did you find in the book and how did they affect your reading experience?

Author Bio

Leisha Kelly was the author of several bestselling historical fiction books, including EMMA'S GIFT, JULIA'S HOPE and KATIE'S DREAM. She served many years on her local library board, bringing good reads and educational opportunities to her community. Once a waitress, cafe manager, tutor and EMT, Leisha became a novelist and speaker who remained active in the ministries of her church.

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