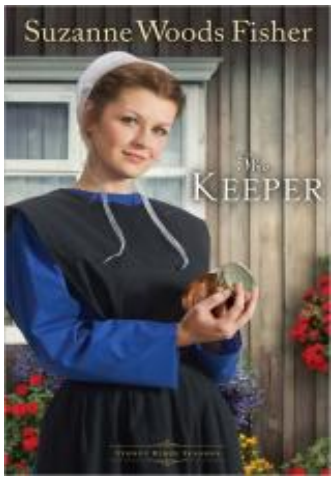
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The Keeper: Stoney Ridge Seasons, Book 1

by Suzanne Woods Fisher



About the Book

A family. A farm. A heart. All in need of repair.

Life on Windmill Farm hasn?t been the same since Julia Lapp?s father has had trouble with his heart. But that doesn?t stop Julia from hoping for a bright future. She has planned on marrying Paul Fisher since she was a girl. Now 21, she looks forward to their wedding with giddy anticipation. But when Paul tells her he wants to postpone the wedding --- again --- she is determined to change his mind. She knows who is to blame for Paul?s sudden reluctance to wed: the Bee Man.

Roman Troyer, the Bee Man, travels through the Amish communities of Ohio and Pennsylvania with his hives full of bees, renting them out to farmers in need of pollinators. A mysterious man who relishes his nomadic life, Roman especially enjoys bringing his bees to Stoney Ridge each year. But with Julia seriously at odds with him, Windmill Farm is looking decidedly less appealing.

Can Julia secure the future she?s always dreamed of? Or does God have something else in mind?

Discussion Guide

1. You might have found your feelings about a character changing throughout the story. Consider Julia. Did you pity her after Paul called off the wedding? How did you feel about her later, when she told Paul she wouldn?t marry him?

2. Take Fern. You might have assumed you had her pegged early on, only to discover there was more to Stern Fern than you first thought. Have you ever found yourself changing your opinion about someone? What lesson is there in that?

3. There were a lot of opinions floating around about the Bee Man before he finally appeared at dawn at Windmill Farm.

Was Roman Troyer how you expected him to be? Why or why not?

4. Despite his famous independent streak, Rome lived his life cautiously. At one point, he says, ?Things could go wrong. So many things could go wrong.? How did that one comment speak volumes about Rome?s reluctance to form attachments of any kind?

5. Avoidance was Rome?s method to cope with grief over the death of his parents and younger sisters. Julia tells him that grief is the price of love. ?But hearts are meant to mend,? she said. ?Christ can do wonders with a broken heart, if given all the pieces.? What is your response to that?

6. Have you lost anyone close to you? How do you deal with grief in your own life? How do you comfort others who are grieving?

7. Julia was so busy telling God that Paul was the man for her that she forgot to ask if God agreed. She had to learn to give God a chance to ?chime in.? Have you ever had a similar circumstance in your life?

8. What incident(s) do you think brought about the most change in Rome? Why?

9. Who was your favorite character in this book? Why? What part of that character?s personality, if any, can you relate to?

10. The struggle for control was a constant theme for characters in this novel: Julia struggled with it over Paul, Rome wrestled with it over letting himself feel too much, Amos battled with accepting a heart transplant. What lessons did the characters learn about relinquishing control to God?

11. As Amos was being wheeled out to prepare for the heart transplant, he said to his family, ?I will have joy in the morning.? What did he mean? What does that perspective say to you?

12. What?s your personal attitude toward organ donation? Could you understand Amos?s point of view? Did your perspective change toward the end of the book, with Menno?s death and gift of life to his father? If you want to learn more about organ donation, here?s a place to start: www.organdonor.gov.

Author Bio

Suzanne Woods Fisher is the bestselling author of THE LETTERS, THE CALLING, the *Lancaster County Secrets* series, and the *Stoney Ridge Seasons* series, as well as nonfiction books about the Amish, including AMISH PEACE. She is also the co-author of an Amish children's series, *The Adventures of Lily Lapp*. Suzanne is a Carol Award winner for THE SEARCH, a Carol Award finalist for THE CHOICE, and a Christy Award finalist for THE WAITING. She is also a columnist for *Christian Post* and *Cooking & Such* magazines. She lives in California.

Critical Praise

"THE KEEPER is a keeper. From a fabric of likable and original characters, Suzanne has crafted a moving story of faith and loyalty, a story of hope shining out of the darkest places. A captivating read."

--- Dale Cramer, bestselling author of LEVI'S WILL

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Publication Date: January 2, 2012

Genres: Christian, Christian Fiction, Fiction, Romance

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Revell

ISBN-10: 0800719875

ISBN-13: 9780800719876