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Daughter Of Twin Oaks: A Secret Refuge, Book 1



Synopsis

Seeking to fulfill the promise she made to her dying father, 18-year-old Jesselynn Highwood determines to take her little brother and the family's remaining thoroughbreds from the Twin Oaks plantation in Kentucky to her uncle's farm in Missouri, where they will be safe for the remainder of the Civil War. Dodging Confederate and Union troops, they ride at night and hide during the day. Finally, after encountering hunger, sickness, and the devastation of war, they arrive in Missouri only to discover that the situation there puts them in even greater danger. But Jesselynn will stop at nothing to save her family, the horses, and whatever remains of Twin Oaks.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This has been on my Kindle for a while and I didn't bother to read the most recent reviews. Had I known it would have such a dreadful ending, I would have passed. Until the end, I found it a captivating story. The characters were realistic, it had great Civil War depictions and the heroine was a decent person and could stand on her own two feet. Some of the parts I found a little unbelievable or predictable, but nothing crazy. Then I got to the end. Oh, wait. There was no ending. The book stopped. Two things that drive me to not read an author again are ridiculous grammar/spelling issues and forcing a reader to get another book to finish a story. I enjoy series books but don't want to have to purchase another book to know how the story ends. Individual books should be stand alone or at least it should be clearly indicated you have to buy subsequent books in the series to see how things end.

Having thoroughly enjoyed Snelling's Red River of the North series, I couldn't wait to read Daughter of Twin Oaks. In this book, the setting is a thoroughbred horse farm in Kentucky in the midst of the Civil War. Jesselyn's father and brothers are away in battle and she sends her younger sisters away to an aunt's home for safety. After her father comes home to die from his battle wounds, she realizes that she needs to get her horses away from Kentucky if she will have anything left to start over with after the war. Taking her little brother and her few now-freed slaves with her, they embark on a perilous journey where danger and adventure await them on every corner. A devout Christian, Jesselyn finds that her faith gradually slips away as they encounter pitfall after pitfall. By the end of the book, she has quit praying altogether and is blaming God for the war. Meanwhile, her sisters in Richmond find love and happiness with soldiers that they meet and reunite with their long-lost brother, now wounded from battle. Unlike Jesselyn, they retain their faith in God, even when Louisa's soldier is declared missing and probably dead. This book was good and kept me reading, and I want to read the second one because so many loose ends were left. Will Jesselyn ever get all of them to safety? Will she ever give her heart back to God? Will Louisa's true love return? Will Twin Oaks still remain when they get back home? Anyone who enjoys historical Christian fiction will like this book.

I'm usually disappointed in a lot of books, since usually the story itself would be excellent except the characters are undeveloped and the plot isn't good with a bad ending. This book was excellent, and will be one of my favorites for a long time. "Jesse" and Louisa are two lovable characters, and their stories keep you reading. Since one chapter would be about "Jesse" and the next about Louisa, I couldn't stop reading so that I could find out what happened to each of them! :o)

Great story set in the civil war period. Love the characters and suspense! Be forewarned that it doesn't have a true ending, you'll want the 2nd and 3rd in the series waiting to see what happens.

Daughter of Twin Oaks was one of the first historical fiction books I read as a young teen, and I loved. When I saw that it was getting reprinted, I knew I had to get them to add to my library of books. After finishing this first book in the Secret Refuge series, it still remains one of my favorite historicals of all time. I am a BIG lover of history and, more specifically, the War Between the States. For such a controversy subject, I thought Lauraine Snelling handles it well, showing both sides of things. While both the main characters in Daughter of Twin Oaks--Jesselynn and Louisa--have their

father and brothers fighting for the Confederacy, Lauraine gives the gritty facts of that war between brothers and shows how, for many people, it didn't matter what uniform they wore. Jesselynn tries to keep her pure-breed horses out of the hands of both armies--North and South--and Louisa is desperate to give aid to any wounded man in uniform--blue or gray. The writing style drew me into the book, as it felt so real. The expressions, descriptions, and slang that Snelling uses was so "in period", I was impressed and completely immersed in Jesselynn and Louisa's world. There was nothing questionable in the book, save for once a black woman has her shirt ripped open by a ruffian with ill intent, but he doesn't get farther than that. And the romance wasn't the main drive of the book (which, for all you non-romance readers out there, will appreciate). As I said, after rereading Daughter of Twin Oaks, it still remains my favorite historical book set during the 1860s. I would recommend this book to readers of all ages. Especially those who have a love for the War Between the States. I reviewed this book for Bethany House Publishers. Thanks to Jim for sending me a review copy. It was not required that I give a positive review, but solely to express my own thoughts and opinions of this book, which I have done.

Unique story line that is telling two related stories but a rushed ending with no closure leaves you wondering what was the point of the story.

I really did want to love this story but couldn't for several reasons. #1 It is very predictable in places which is fine to a point. #2 The book has several different plots to follow which again is fine, but this book gave no clear climatic event, therefore no resolution which brings me to #3 There is no closure whatsoever. Again series books are fine, but personally I do not want to purchase one book only to be required to purchase two more just to know how one plot ends. Individual books should have individual story lines and not be so dependent on the rest of the series so I feel I've read a "book" not just the first "section" in a larger book. So I would recommend this book to anyone the above does not bother :) because otherwise it is a good story. So all-in-all I give "Daughter of Twin Oaks" three stars because its "fine".

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