



The Gifted

Ann H. Gabhart

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By 1849, Jessamine Brady has been in the Shaker Village for half her life, but in spite of how she loves her sisters there, she struggles to conform to the strict rules. Instead she entertains dreams of the world outside. When Tristan Cooper seems to step out of those dreams to entice her into the forbidden realm beyond the Shaker Village, her life turns upside down. Will Jessamine be able to survive the storms of the world? Or will she retreat back to the peace of Harmony Hill?

The thousands of loyal fans of Gabhart's Shaker novels will love this entrancing story of learning to trust the gifts God gives us and let him guide us through life.

The Gifted Details

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Author : Ann H. Gabhart

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From Reader Review The Gifted for online ebook

Christy Lockstein says

The Gifted by Ann Gabhart is the fifth book in her popular Shaker series about the unusual religious group of the 19th century. Jessamine Brady is a true innocent in the world. The first half of her life was spent living with her granny, isolated in the woods and listening to the old woman's fairy tales and stories about the Lord. The last half of her life has been spent among the Shakers. When Jessamine was just ten, her granny died, leaving her alone in the world, so she was taken in by the community. She loves working with her hands and worshiping the Lord, but poor Jessamine has never been able to completely follow all of the rules as set forth by the Shakers. She has stories and songs that fill her heart, but are forbidden as sinful, and she has a deep curiosity about the outside world, especially on this one day, parasols, which leads her deeper and deeper into the woods, hoping to encounter White Oak Springs, a fashionable spa where the ladies are known to carry them. Instead of seeing a parasol, Jessamine finds a man who appears to have fallen off of his horse after being shot at. He claims to have no memory of who he is, and Jessamine can't quite seem to keep her hand from touching his face and enjoying the feel of the stubble on his face. Tristan Cooper did indeed lose his memory at first and thought he had been discovered by an angel. Later when his memory returns, he decides to keep that knowledge hidden while he recovers in the Shaker community in order to find out just who would be shooting at him and why. Tristan and Jessamine can't seem to stop thinking about each other, so she is soon in trouble with the elders for breaking too many rules, and he is sent on his way back to the world. Gabhart is terrific at recreating the mysterious world and religion of the Shakers, and she manages to do so without being overly negative about some of their stranger practices. Jessamine is such an innocent that everyone (including readers) who meet her can't help but be drawn to her sweet nature and love of life. Tristan is more of a cipher, despite Gabhart's attempts, I couldn't quite get a grasp of just who he was, and I felt the same way about Sheldon Brady. Because I couldn't relate to either of them, this book didn't have the power for me of previous books in this series. Something was missing just a bit in this volume, so it isn't up the five star status of the other books, but it's still a fascinating read.

Pathway Midland says

Jessamine Brady was brought to the Shaker village of Harmony Hill in central Kentucky at ten years of age when her grandmother died. The Shakers lived celibate lives and adhered to strict rules to keep them from worldly influences. In their village, she received love and care but struggled against the constraints on her free spirit and the squelching of her love of writing. Now in the year 1849 at age 20, she is approaching the time when she must decide if she will stay and take the covenant to join them for the rest of her life, giving up her dreams of the promised prince coming for her that she remembers from her grandmother's tales.

While looking for berries in the woods, she and a Shaker friend rescue a "man of the world," Travis Cooper, who has been shot and has lost his memory. They take him back to the village for medical treatment. Jessamine's simple life is thrown into turmoil as she experiences feelings and longings forbidden in her Shaker world.

Her mentor, Sister Sophrena, recalls and finds a letter that was delivered for young Jessamine soon after she arrived at their village that was held for her until she was older. It further confuses her as she learns of her real father, who had left her in her granny's care until she would reach age 12. At that time she was to be

given the choice to join him in his life of adventure and storytelling. How was she now to find him, these many years later? And if she did, what should she choose – her father, her prince, or her Shaker life?

Ann Gabhart wove a captivating story, with the adventures, heartaches, and spiritual insights Jessamine experienced as she tried to discover her purpose in life. The interesting twists in the plot made it a hard book to put down. I was also intrigued as I learned much about the Shaker culture, along with some Kentucky history and geography of an area where I have family members living. The characters and story line were nicely developed and I highly recommend this book.

Suanne Shidler

Leesi says

Six out of five stars! Couldn't put it down!

Paula-O says

"The Gifted" by Ann Gabhart

This is the last book if the Shakers, a group that chose to close the world out and live a celibate life- Hands to work and Hearts to God...

I loved the character Jessamine who always seem to be wanting to find out things and had not completely accepted the Shaker world. She had been brought to the community when just a young girl under 12 yrs of age. Granny had died and she had no family so a preacher man took her to the Shakers that lived nearby knowing she would have food and shelter and folks who would care about her...

The life of a Shaker was busyness from daybreak to nightfall. They had many duties and were expected to spend their day toiling. Silence at meals, silence as they walked from one duty to another -no frivolous chatting.

Jessamine and another young sister went berry picking far into the woods one day and heard a shot that began many days ahead that would be confusing to say the least. The sisters found a young man laying wounded on the ground and Jessamine felt the need to help although she knew her community would not like for these young girls to be in the company of a worldly man wounded or not. They took him back with them and the healer in their group worked to heal his wounds and he stayed with them some days because he did not know who he was "at first".

Jessamine was drawn to his difference and her thoughts strayed from her Shaker ways...

The Shakers had a letter that had been given to them not long after Jessamine had came to them but because she was so young they kept it many years -waiting till she was older-before it was opened and she was told that she had a worldly father who had loved her and wanted to share his life with her. Now she must make decisions...

Would she stay in her safe little world or open the door to another world by accepting this Father she had not known she had?

Reading the story of Jessamine -you will "feel" her thoughts tumbling one after another and the confusion she must pull into "order".

I am thankful Ann Gabhart chose to tell us the story of "The Shakers" , you will learn much from reading this story.

Angelic says

4.5 Stars

I always enjoy Ann H. Gabhart's Shaker novels, and this one is no exception. I may have liked this one even more than the others that I have read previously.

Jessamine was a great heroine, she definitely had her own mind even though she lived in the restricted Shaker community. I think this was very realistic because the Shaker lifestyle did have a lot of positives and benefits, which Jessamine acknowledged and appreciated. The Shakers took her in when she was only 10 and her grandmother passed away. Since then, she always had a great home, a roof over her head, and meals on the table. However, there were many drawbacks and restrictions to their lifestyle which she felt stifled her personal freedom. I think Jessamine's story could be a lot of real-life Shaker's stories.

I feel like the author explained the Shaker beliefs a lot more in this book than in her other novels. I liked reading the sayings and teachings that Jessamine had heard over the years, some good and some not so good. It really enriched the setting and helped me learn more about the Shakers and how they lived.

Overall, another great Shaker novel by this author.

book sent by publisher in exchange for honest review

reviewed for <http://inthehammockblog.blogspot.com>

Vera Godley says

This is my first encounter with a novel based on Shaker life. The Shakers like the Amish hold a fascination with folks today because their beliefs and life styles are so vastly different from that which we are accustomed. I was vaguely familiar with the beliefs of the Shakers and their strict separation of men and women. But this book with its authentically researched storyline was a true eye opener.

I found it difficult to read because of my feelings that it was just so wrong for people to give themselves so completely and without reservation to the Shaker belief system and life. It is little wonder to me that the Shaker beliefs and communities have died out. Now about this book.....

Jessamine Brady was taken to the Shaker village of Harmony Hill when she was but 10 years old because there was no where else for her to go and no one to care for her. She was well cared for and taught the

Shaker religious beliefs and way of life by the senior Sisters. She struggled with memories of stories (make believe) that her Grandmother had told her and dreams of life outside of the Shaker village. However, make believe was a sin as was any thought of the outside world. Shaker community life consisted of work, prayer, food (in silence), sleep, and worship. Nothing else was allowed.

Their worship consisted of learned dance steps that they did as a group basically separated - men on one side of the room and women on the other. Stomping, fainting, whirling.

Jessamine was out in the woods with another Sister picking berries when they heard a gun and investigated. They found a man from the outside world unconscious and with a head wound. They took him back to Harmony Hill for care. Thus Tristan Cooper enters the scene. This opens the door to Jessamine to the outside world and the dreams from her past.

The book is lengthy (431 pages) and the internal struggles of Jessamine and descriptions of Shaker life are extensive. To me it was sad. I appreciated the dedication of the Shakers to their faith, but it was depressive to see such repression of thinking, expression, care. There was actually evil contention (in my opinion) by Sisters against Jessamine for perceived sins.

Jessamine does get a taste of the world and the impact on her is difficult. She sees worldly beauty, but she also gets to thoroughly enjoy the birds singing and the beauty of flowers and woods and clouds and sky - a sin to enjoy such in the Shaker community.

Her heart is touched with emotions for Tristan that in Shaker life she must repress, but in the world she does not need to repress as a sin. Will she be able to conform for a lifetime of Shaker life and its separation from the world or will she embrace her heart's feelings and be able to live in the World?

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I enjoyed the book and the tender story. I would recommend the book to anyone who desires a sweet story, an authentically research insight into Shaker life and beliefs, and a well-written book.

Information about Shakers: <http://www.shakerworkshops.com/resour...>

About the author: Ann H. Gabhart lived near a restored Shaker village in Kentucky and has thoroughly research the material for this book in her Shaker life series.

DISCLOSURE: I was provide a complimentary copy of "The Gift" by Ann H. Gabart and Revell a division of Baker Publishing Group for the purpose of rendering my honest review and opinion. No compensation was given.

TAMMY CUEVAS says

Jessamine was left with Granny when her mother died soon after childbirth. Raised the first ten years of her life in a secluded cabin in the woods, she was taken to the Shakers at Harmony Hill when Granny stopped breathing one day. At the beginning of the novel, she has been with them for nine years absorbing their

teaching, but as she approaches the time to sign her Covenant, she has more questions of which the Shakers do not approve.

When she finds an injured man and brings him back to Harmony Hill for his wounds to be treated, she can't stop thinking about the handsome stranger. His presence only adds to her confusion regarding the teachings she has received. When he leaves the community, she thinks she will never see him again. But when Sister Sophrena finds the letter that was meant to be given to Jessamine on her 12th birthday, everything begins to change. Soon, Jessamine has to make a choice between the quiet, simple Shaker community and the world in which she has never lived.

When this novel came up for review, I practically jumped through the laptop trying to get it. I have been fascinated by the Shakers ever since my childhood in Kentucky when we visited the Shaker Village at South Union. The market has not been flooded with fictional novels about the Shakers as it has been with the Amish, so this was exciting news. This was the first of Ms. Gabhart's novels that I have had the chance to read, but I loved it. Her knowledge of the Shakers is phenomenal. Occasionally the dialogue seemed a little uneven and stilted, but then again, 9 years with the Shakers might have caused a person to sound like that. It was a very well written novel and I wholeheartedly recommend it to anyone who enjoys historical fiction or has enjoyed the Amish fiction but needs a break from that subject.

4 very happy stars

"Available July 2012 at your favorite bookseller from Revell, a division of Baker Publishing Group."

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from Revell. 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: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising.

Lisa Johnson says

Title: The Gifted

Author: Ann Gabhart

Pages: 426

Year: 2012

Publisher: Revell

Note: I received a complimentary copy in exchange for an honest review. Follow my other reviews at <http://seekingwithallyourheart.blogspot.com> and on twitter @lcjohnson1988

In the beginning of the book, the author gives the reader a brief history of a group that existed in the 18th century known as the Shakers. Basically, there was a woman who believed that she was Christ at his second

coming in female form. Throughout the novel, the author shares different beliefs and practices the Shakers incorporated in their lives in 19th century in Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio.

Jessamine is a young woman who was brought to the Shaker community when her great-grandmother died. Throughout her years with her “granny”, she knew she was loved by granny as well as God. Granny encourages Jessamine’s gifts of storytelling as well as tells her that she has the gift in her veins. As Jessamine grows older she wants to know more about her mother and father, but before she learns anything granny dies and Jessamine is taken to the community by the local preacher.

During one of her times of picking berries, Jessamine’s desire to know the world gets the better of her as she tries to sneak a peek through the forest. One of her sisters is with her and tries to continually pull Jessamine back away from the world when they stumble upon a young man lying on the ground. As they approach him it is evident he is badly hurt with a broken arm as well as an injury to the head he may have received from a gunshot they heard previously.

During his time in the village receiving care, Tristan is treated well though at first has problems remembering who he is. Why is Tristan anywhere near a community of Shakers anyway and who shot him? Tristan is finally well enough to leave, but he is torn because he is in love with Jessamine. Is that all there is to the story?

Laura is a well-bred southern lady who receives the attention of all gentlemen at a place made with all the comforts and beauty of the area. Mr. Green wants to have Laura all to himself. Laura’s father is set on having Tristan marry his daughter though they are not in love with each other. Is this a marriage of convenience or is there more to this arrangement than meets the eye? What do a buggy business and a lawyer have to do with the arrangement? Tristan feels the pull of love he feels for Jessamine and trying to meet the demands of his mother.

Sheldon Brady is a well known writer of romance who lost his wife during childbirth, but gave his daughter to his grandmother to raise. He leaves a letter for his daughter to read when she turns 12 years old. How does Jessamine get to read the letter while living with the Shakers? Where does she decide to live her life, with the Shakers or her father? Does she indeed have the gift of writing stories like her father or some other gift? There is more to this novel for readers to enjoy, so grab a copy a cold drink and enjoy!

My rating for this work of fiction is four stars.

Rachel says

This is the fifth volume of Ann H. Gabhart's Shaker series, and I liked it just as much as I like the first four books. As I expected, this novel was well written, and the characters were well drawn and interesting. The historical setting among this short lived cult was also intriguing as well because I believe that if a novel also makes you think of what you believe and why as well as entertains, it is a bonus to a well written story.

Louise says

Story Description:

Baker Publishing Group|July 1, 2012|Trade Paperback|ISBN: 978-0-8007-3455-8

By 1849, Jessamine Brady has been in the Shaker Village for half her life, but in spite of how she loves her

sisters there, she struggles to conform to the strict rules. Instead she entertains dreams of the world outside. When Tristan Cooper seems to step out of those dreams to entice her into the forbidden realm beyond the Shaker Village, her life turns upside down. Will Jessamine be able to survive the storms of the world? Or will she retreat back to the peace of Harmony Hill? The thousands of loyal fans of Gabhart's Shaker novels will love this entrancing story of learning to trust the gifts God gives us and let him guide us through life.

My Review:

Nineteen-year-old, Jessamine Brady has been part of the Shaker Village at Harmony Hill since she was ten-years-old after her grandmother died and there was no one left to care for her. Jessamine has difficulty conforming to the rules and regulations of the village and often dreams of the 'outside' world which gets her into trouble with the older sisters. She is known for not being the most sensible sister in their village.

Sister Jessamine and Sister Annie were given the task of berry picking in the woods. Of course, with Jessamine's natural propensity for seeing the more curious and unknown things in life, wanders further and further into the woods. Sister Anne is beside herself with worry for she knew they'd wandered too far. Suddenly they heard gunshots and something crashing through the bushes. Frightened, they hid behind a tree expecting to see a bear and a man coming after it shooting. Jessamine peeks out and sees a horse with a saddle but no rider. She strokes the horse's face and begins to walk back behind the horse where she finds an injured man with a large bleeding gash in his head and one of his arms is bent at an unusual angle, obviously broken. Sister Anne is terrified and now knows they are going to be in a heap of trouble when Sister Sophrena finds out how far they wandered and what they've stumbled upon. Sister Anne is so mad that she tells Jessamine she is never going berry picking in the woods with her again.

The two sisters struggle to get the stranger up onto his horse with Sister Jessamine riding in the saddle in front of him for support and they set off to find help at Harmony Hill. However, Sister Jessamine is going to be in a heap of trouble for the sins she has committed this day, especially sitting in a saddle with a man!

Back at Harmony Hill the man is doctored and bandaged and given medication to help him sleep in order to aid with his pain. Over the course of the three days he spends there, he and Jessamine realize they have a connection? A connection that is more than just friendly.

Will Jessamine, with her curiousness for the outside world leave this stranger for a whole new world, or will her teachings of God and the strict upbringing she's had force her to stay at Harmony Hill?

Ann Gabhart's *THE GIFTED* is a beautiful story of growing up, innocence, and learning to trust God and appreciating the gifts He gives to us. You won't be able to put this one down.

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Megan says

The Gifted is full of a lot of detail about the Shaker lifestyle and I found that very interesting. I learned quite a lot about it and that was very nice! However, the story seemed too long and drawn out. I think the book

would have been more enjoyable to me had it been about 100 pages shorter. Some books can be over 400 pages and just fly by leaving you wanting more, while other ones can take forever to get through. This book definitely falls into the latter category, as it took me over a month and a half to read! I would start it and within about 15 pages or so begin to get so bored with it that I had to stop reading it. When this happened over the course of a week, I decided to set it aside for awhile and come back to it later, thinking that maybe reading a different book and then going back would make a difference - it didn't. So I kept reading it in 10-20 page increments (if I hadn't, my rating would have probably been lower and that would have been unfair to the author because the book is well written - it just was not connecting with me). After reaching the halfway point, I was able to read the rest almost straight through. The last 100 or so pages were very enjoyable, but the ending was just eh.

I enjoyed the way the story would switch from Jessamine's POV to Tristan's POV and then the occasional journal entry by Sister Sophrena - I loved those!

I liked Jessamine, she was such a lovable character. She reminded me a lot of Tammy from the movie *Tammy and the Bachelor*. Just like Tammy, Jessamine was very innocent/naive and trusting of people because she had led a very sheltered life - first being raised by her grandmother for the first 10 or so years of her life and then by the Shakers.

Tristan, on the other hand, I found very annoying because he seemed so weak willed. His mother wanted him to marry a woman from a wealthy family to help save the family's troubled business, but he wanted to marry for love. Instead of being firm about what he wanted, he kowtowed to his mother's wishes and courted Laura, while at the same time pining for Jessamine.

The people who lived in Harmony Hill were quite different from each other. Sister Sophrena was caring, she always seemed to want the best for Jessamine. Even when she had to bring up things that Jessamine did that were against their code, she did it with love and kindness. Sister Edna, on the other hand, was always quick to harp about every little thing she perceived Jessamine did wrong, while at times she was guilty of some of the same. Sometimes I just wanted to shake that Shaker! Edna was SO annoying!

The story seemed way too predictable to me. Even though the story tries to be vague about several things, I had a strong inkling who was behind the trouble and what the final outcome of the book was going to be (and I don't just mean what Jessamine was going to choose) - and for the most part I was correct. This might not have been such a big deal to me had it not seemed as though these things were supposed to be a surprise (or in some cases, a shock).

Though this book did not do it for me, I think people who love Shaker novels (and maybe even those that LOVE Amish books) will probably enjoy it.

“Available July 2012 at your favorite bookseller from Revell, a division of Baker Publishing Group.”

I received a complimentary copy of this book to review. I was asked to give my honest opinion of the book - which I have done.

Faye says

A book that comes with food for thought.

Jessamine is a young Shaker woman, who has seen little of the world outside the Shaker's little sect. She cannot help but question the many rules that she is forced to obey. Her thirst for knowledge of the world grows, and one day she happens upon a wounded young man in the forest. Will Jessamine stay with the gentle Shakers, or will she go into the outside world?

The Gifted is a fascinating tale, from which I learned so much about the Shakers. I had thought I knew a little about them when I began this book, but as I kept reading, I found out how little I actually knew! Though this was a sort of gentle story, it really gave me things to think about, and I couldn't help but feel terribly sad for the Shakers because they honestly believed that what they ascribed to, was the truth.

This book had a gentle pace to it, which I think was great to really get a feel for the simple Shaker way of life. Jessamine was a delightful character, and I loved watching her grow, and her curious spirit was refreshing. I really enjoyed being able to read about what was going on with Tristan and getting to see his side of his entanglement. I think the characters were well developed, but in a way different than I am used to which was actually really nice, because I felt more like I was watching them and I wasn't as able to make snap judgements about the characters, which I liked :)

Overall, this book had a nice gentle pace to it, that at times felt like it could have been faster, but definitely gave me things to think about! This is my first time reading anything from Ms. Gabhart's Shaker series, (and this one was quite stand-alone) and I can tell you that I will definitely be reading more! I enjoyed reading about Jessamine's journey, which could be described as Jessamine finding where she belonged, and also finding bits of herself. A lovely read.

I received this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!

Ann says

“Torn between duty and desire” is a hackneyed phrase, but there’s nothing hackneyed about Ann Gabhart’s newest Shaker novel, *The Gifted*. The compelling plot had me reading until I could no longer hold my eyes open.

Jessamine Brady has lived in a Shaker village since she was ten years old. She embraces their beliefs and

ways of love, but as she approaches twenty-one, the age of decision, she longs to learn more about the world before she turns her back on it forever. Shakers believe in duty to God and one another, with no room for imagining or flights of fancy. Unfortunately, Jessamine's mind is often filled with both.

When she and another Shaker sister find Tristan Cooper wounded in the woods near their village, Jessamine helps him onto his horse and the two girls take him to a doctor in the village. As he recuperates, Tristan is intrigued by Jessamine, the beautiful girl with the cornflower blue eyes. However, the time comes for him to return to his obligations in the world.

The conflict that fills both Jessamine and Tristan's hearts makes for an absorbing story. They both have good reasons to remain apart forever. To say more would spoil the plot.

I enjoyed all the details about life in a Shaker village. Ann Gabhart is respectful and accurate in her recounting of a religious group that flowered in the mid-nineteenth century.

The Gifted is a book I'm happy to recommend.

My thanks to Revell for providing my review copy.

Barb says

I love to read novels about the Amish and Mennonites. I think it brings a sense of peace to me to share in the simple way of life that these two communities of people live. I had not read anything about the Shakers, however, until I read "The Gifted" by Ann H. Gabhart. My husband and I had visited Pleasant Hill, Kentucky for a week one night. Yes, that's what I said and I meant it. The sidewalks rolled up at 6:00 pm. It wasn't the most exciting trip we'd ever taken. I couldn't wait to leave the place. I guess that was when I was much younger. Now I would relish spending some time in a simple, peaceful place such as Jessamine did in Harmony Hill.

"The Gift" is the story of a Shaker community. The Shakers were a people who simply wanted a very peaceful way of life. However their founder, Sister Ann Lee, evidently thought that everything worldly was a sin. Men and women were entirely separated, never to touch or to have any sort of relationship. The eyes of those bidden to watch for evil were everywhere. Young girls and young men were especially watched so that there was no fraternization at all. You might wonder how they thought to grow their community if there were no babies born. Orphaned children were often brought to the Shakers to raise and whole families often joined and in that way their communities grew, at least for a time. Their existence was only to labor for God and Sister Ann. Any transgressions of speech or actions were expected to be confessed to another Shaker. Sister Jessamine had been brought to the Shaker community upon the death of her great-grandmother. Her mother was dead; her father had left and not returned for her. Sister Jessamine enjoyed God's beautiful things on earth, which was frowned upon. One day, she and another Sister were out gathering berries when they happened upon a young man who had been shot and thrown from his horse. Against the Shaker way, instead of going for help, they brought the young man, Tristan Cooper, to their village to be tended to. Sister Jessamine was quite taken by this fair young man and could not help wondering what was so wrong about a love between a man and woman, which was forbidden by the community of Believers. This is the story of Jessamine, her desire to experience the world and her guilt in sinning against the Shaker rules by doing so.

I really enjoyed reading this book. I saw that it is possible that people who have been disillusioned or hurt by circumstances in their lives might want to live a peaceful existence such as the Shakers. Being the type of person that I am, I would never have been able to exist in such a rigid atmosphere. One was constantly being criticized and watched for signs that they were not fully attentive to the Shaker rules of Sister Ann and the

Ministry. However, someone who is so desiring of a peaceful life might see the merit in living as a Shaker. You really need to read this book. It gives so much to think about even in the times in which we live today. I found myself trying to determine how I could make my life more peaceful and simple. 'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free.

I received a free Kindle copy of this book for my honest review from the publisher. The opinions expressed here are my own.

You can find my review on my blog:

<http://imhookedonbooks.wordpress.com/...>

Lynne Young says

There is only one word to describe this book. Rich. Rich in history, rich in description, rich in story line. I have always been a fan of Ms. Gabhart's Shaker books but this one was especially outstanding. I love how she moved the story from the Shaker world to the outside world with such ease. I truly enjoyed this story. It kept me reading long into the night.

Jessamine Brady was taken to the Shakers upon the death of her Grandmother when she was 10 years old. She doesn't remember much of the outside world but she does remember her Grandmother and how she encouraged Jessamine to follow her dreams. Something very hard to do among the Shakers. Then one day an incident happens that changes everything. It comes in the form of Tristan Cooper. But that is just the beginning. There is another bigger surprise waiting for Jessamine just around the corner and the conflicting feelings and emotions she has make this a wonderful story. Comfortable in her Shaker world but wanting to experience the outside world, Jessamine has trouble living in both worlds. Will she experience everything her Grandmother told her about? Will she be able to exist outside the Shaker world if she has to?

This book, as with all Ms. Gabhart's Shaker books, was so well researched the reader gets a history lesson they didn't expect that is gently woven into a wonderfully realistic story. Although I love all of her Shaker books, this one is at the top of the list. Not to be missed and highly recommended.
