

An Adventure with Abba Father: The Call to Pickings

Daisy Ruth Oñate Sohne

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In the faith-filled novel An Adventure with Abba Father, an exuberant girl brings a small town together.

In Daisy Ruth Oñate Sohne's Christian novel *An Adventure with Abba Father*, a family moves to a new town and discovers the meaning of community.

The Darby family moves to Pickings, a rural town in Texas. William is eager to start his first pastoral position after resigning from the police force. Evangeline, his wife, is supportive, though she's concerned about his decision to switch careers. Still, she doesn't mind the change of scenery.

The most excited member of the Darby family is Tiara Joy, a ten-year-old with aspirations of investigating a new place...and maybe talking her dad into getting a dog. As she follows her father through his ministerial work and spends time talking with the people of her new town, Tiara Joy's perspective evolves.

Pickings might be small, but its community brims with colorful personalities who are in intricate relationship with one another. The Darbys settle in and work to earn the town's trust, though they also learn that darkness lurks at Pickings' core, and that someone is willing to commit murder to hide the truth.

While the Darby family is the novel's central focus, everyone in town becomes major actors in their own right. The most reclusive townsfolk have the deepest, most heartbreaking stories of all. These come out as Tiara Joy connects with each person, leading to earnest resolutions. Tiara Joy and her family help everyone they spend time with, either by drawing them back to the church, or by pushing them to right past wrongs.

The novel ambles along, its speed matching that of life in Pickings, where time moves at its own pace. Tiara Joy celebrates one birthday by the story's end, but she experiences several life-altering moments in that time, including an amateur investigation of possible foul play. She also struggles with her senses of morality and faith and befriends star-crossed lovers who deepen her understandings of love and loss.

Though at first glance, the story seems to be most about William, it's Tiara Joy who stands out most. She impacts everyone in town. New relationships are formed, old ones are mended, and Pickings ends up brighter and more full of love than ever before by the conclusion of the novel *An Adventure with Abba Father*, in which exuberant Tiara Joy brings a small town together and discovers what true faith means to her and her family.

JOHN M. MURRAY (April 27, 2021)

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