



★ The Orchard

Beverly Lewis

Bethany House (Sep 6, 2022)

Softcover \$17.99 (352pp)

978-0-7642-3753-9

An unassuming fruit orchard holds the promise of a peaceful future for a hardworking Amish family in Beverly Lewis's novel *The Orchard*.

Ellie values her faith and her family, but tending to a generations-old peach and apple orchard brings her the most happiness. Her twin brother, Evan, is poised to take over the orchard from their father, while Ellie seeks a husband and a future away from home. All of that comes into doubt when Evan questions his place among the Amish and agrees to be registered for the Vietnam draft. His number is called, and he decides to serve alongside those whom he's come to regard as friends.

While Evan is overseas, Ellie tries to adjust to a potential future in which she'll marry and move away from her beloved orchard. She begins an unexpected courtship with a family friend; it could lead to him taking over the orchard's guardianship if anything were to happen to Evan. She's torn between wanting to stay with the orchard and wanting to build a loving family—both of which hinge on Evan's fate. Her inner turmoil is one that her faith is unable to assuage. Still, she continues to rely on her community and her church. Her struggles and burgeoning romance are beautiful, tender, and heartwarming, even under their circumstances.

Relationships intertwine in this intricate book as Ellie's entire family deals with Evan's service, all understanding why he wants to serve but wishing he'd honor their religious tenets. The book treats faith and family as its core elements. They anchor Ellie's endearing romance as she works to find her footing in the face of uncertainty.

The Orchard is a peaceful, heartwarming romance novel set amid the quiet solitude of an Amish family's orchard during the Vietnam War.

JOHN M. MURRAY (September / October 2022)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.