FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

The Storekeeper's Daughter
Wanda E. Brunstetter
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Little did Naomi Fisher imagine what changes a simple promise to her mother would wreak upon her life. Immediately after her mother's terrible accident, Naomi vowed to care for her younger siblings, especially two-month-old Zach. The burden of her obligation soon begins to take its toll on the nineteen-year-old, especially considering her work at her Amish family's store and her customary chores, including cooking and cleaning, which leave no time for socializing or courting—not that her strict father, Abraham, would allow it anyway. A careless moment presents a terrible opportunity, and the guilt Naomi feels, compounded by the blame her family lays upon her after baby Zach's disappearance, is oppressive.

Taking matters into her own hands, Naomi hopes the dramatic decision she makes will allow her family to find closure in their shared tragedy. But will the Fisher family ever come to terms with Zach's loss? Can Abraham find it in his heart to forgive his daughter?

A widely published writer, the author holds a long time interest in the Amish community, which shines through this Christian fiction novel, first in the three-book "Daughters of Lancaster County" series. Her first novel in the series is "Lancaster Brides"; "The Quilters Daughter" is next.. Brunstetter is clearly knowledgeable about Amish phrases and customs, and weaves them into the story in a way that English readers will absorb easily; these add a richness and authenticity to *The Storekeeper's Daughter* that make the book even more memorable.

By her compassionate pen, Abraham's grief, anger, and despair in losing children while the death of his wife is still so fresh, are palpable: "He lifted his head as hot tears streamed down his face and dripped onto his beard. *Dear Lord in heaven, I've lost them all. Oh, God, help me! What have I done?*" Overwhelmed by responsibility and distraught as she realizes the consequence of one irresponsible moment, Naomi is someone the reader wants to reach out to: "Naomi's stomach clenched as a wisp of fear curled around her heart."

Readers may be put off by the one glaring plot thread that is left unresolved, save for the faith that God's will be done; some may find this a perfectly acceptable outcome, but given the emotional power of some passages in the book, that this punch was pulled can leave the reader

at a loss. Still, believing that something will work out for the best doesn't provide the same satisfaction as having it actually happen in the book.

In Brunstetter's capable hands, Naomi Fisher rises to the challenges inherent in the vow she made to her dying mother, and the Fisher family, guided by their firm faith, grows to see the storekeeper's daughter in a new light.

Amy Brozio-Andrews