



## Can I Get an Amen?

*Sarah Healy*

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*When the last thing you want is the one thing you need, you've got to have a little faith....*

Growing up, Ellen Carlisle was a Christian: She went to Jesus camp, downed stale Nilla Wafers at Sunday school, and never, ever played with Ouija boards. Now, years later, when infertility prevents her from giving her ambitious attorney husband a family, she finds herself on the brink of divorce, unemployed, and living with her right-wing, born-again Christian parents in her suburban New Jersey hometown. There the schools are private, the past is public, and blessings come in lump sums.

Then Ellen meets a man to whom she believes she can open her heart, and she begins to think that maybe it's true that everything happens for a reason—until all that was going well starts going very badly and Ellen is finally forced to dig deep to find her own brand of faith.

## Can I Get an Amen? Details

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Author : Sarah Healy

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## **From Reader Review Can I Get an Amen? for online ebook**

### **Beth says**

Unedited book loan from a friend. Not yet published until June. Don't let the title scare you away. Cute, quirky, funny story about this girl who found herself moving back home after a divorce because she could not conceive. It deals with family relationships, love, loss, and forgiveness. It does deal with Christianity but in almost a parody itself by the way certain people respond to religion. Perfect chick lit to read by the pool or on the beach!

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### **Sheryl says**

Sarah Healy's first novel was difficult to put down. Ellen was endearing and although I didn't grow up in a born-again family, I could relate to some of her ways of coping. She's a mess at times and the novel plays out in unexpected directions. Really funny and at times, quite poignant.

Looking forward to Sarah Healy's next book!

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### **Dawn says**

Loved this book. This author has a straight-forward voice and writing style and her character development was awesome. The layers of complexity of the family and life issues that were presented kept my interest and the climax brought tears to my eyes.

It has been a long time since I sat engrossed in a book rather than doing the myriad other things I should have been doing. Looking forward to reading more from this author.

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### **Anna says**

This book was incredibly compelling. I didn't expect to like it, but as it turned out, I couldn't put it down. It's a funny and frank look at family relationships and faith. The main character, Ellen, gets left by her husband and loses her job, so she has to move back home with her parents. She commences behaving in a very un-Christian way, and her mother harps on her mercilessly. It turns out there's a lot more going on in the Carlisle family than meets the eye. Not far into the book, Ellen meets Mark, and he, for the most part, is what kept me reading obsessively. There was something strange about Mark, and I couldn't stop until I knew what it was. Trust me, it was worth it.

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### **Matty says**

I SO enjoyed Can I Get An Amen. It's wickedly funny, a little dark, and by the end I was unutterably moved. It's very cinematic, and seems destined to be adapted into a movie or TV show. Don't miss this fantastic

debut...

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### **Sheila says**

When I'm reading a novel I really want to care about the characters and I want to feel the story is believable. The main character is Ellen who moves home after an unsuccessful marriage. Ellen is a modern woman in with her Christian fundamental parents. The plot thickens..I think the book was cleverly written with twists and turns I didn't predict. I hope this author continues with more novels with characters I want to spend my time with.

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### **Jacqueline says**

This was better than I expected. I liked that even though Christianity and religion was woven through this, it wasn't preachy. I did find it predictable and in fact I lost half of my interest as soon as I guessed that the cool new love interest that the heroine ran into was going to turn out to be a preacher. I felt like there were a couple of missing scenes that should have been included at the end to make the whole thing more satisfying. For example such a big big deal had been made out of the fact that the heroine's mother was someone who used constant attendance at several churches as a crutch and that the heroine had no patience with her fanaticism I felt that this issue should have been discussed between the heroine and the hero. I also felt that the scene where the heroine apologizes to the hero for turning away from him when he admitted that he was a preacher was short changed. There needed to be a lot more discussion between someone who was so anti established religion and someone who led a church when they were considering marriage.

Still it was a fairly interesting read.

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### **Carolyn E says**

I have just finished reading *Can I Get An Amen?* by Sarah Healy. I understand this is Healy's debut novel, and I loved it.

I don't want to say too much about it because I don't want to give away the story. But it is a wonderful story about family relationships and some seriously flawed characters. Kat's story is particularly poignant, and I could certainly sympathize with her. But I could also see her mother's side of the story because of her strong religious beliefs and her (Kat's mother's) previous history. Unfortunately, Kat's mother most definitely added to Kat's pain and suffering by the way in which she grossly mishandled Kat's situation.

This is not the kind of story I usually read, but I noticed the good reviews it has gotten, and the title of the book intrigued me. Also, the book has a wonderful cover.

I am looking forward to Healy's next novel, "God Save the Queen," which will be available in the summer of 2013. It might also be fun to have a sequel to "Can I Get an Amen?" Healy has introduced a lot of interesting characters; I would like to read about what happens to them next.

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### **Monika says**

This book really got my hopes up. All the tension and the crap this woman was going through kept building up and up, and just when it seems like things will turn out, they hastily throw another curve ball and wrap it up in 3 pages. All in all, very disappointing.

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### **Cousin says**

OK. I wasn't sure about the title or the cover - but now that I've read the book I get it. It's pretty smart, pretty funny, definitely quirky, and I liked the characters and the plot enough that it made me stay up WAY too late. My kids were late for school because I overslept, and then even later because I was reading it at every red light!

I actually didn't want to like this book because I have a little bias against reading books that deal with religion. But a friend whose reading tastes I respect had recommended it, so I gave it a go. It really deals with morality and spirituality, rather than religion, per se. When "church style religion" actually shows up in the book, it's sometimes to show how flawed it can be. That's not to say that it totally dogs church-y religion, just shows its fair share of flaws.

I don't want to give anything away, so I'll just say that the one plot theme I thought I saw coming, did in fact come. But I didn't mind because it was such a satisfying idea, that if it hadn't happened that way I would have put the book down.

The ending might have been my favorite part of the book. Once in a while, there's a last sentence that so perfectly ties up a book, that it just sings and resounds in my brain and sticks there forever. One book that had a last line like that was "Mudbound" by Hillary Jordan. This was another. This last line pretty much sums up my entire existence. What a surprise to know that there are kindred spirits out there, people that think the way I do, and that one of them wrote a book about it.

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### **Annie says**

I loved this book. I didn't know exactly what to expect and I was pleasantly surprised. I think we can all relate to Ellen in one way or another. This book was very well written, descriptive and I felt like I was watching it on the big screen as I was reading it. I read it in 4 days and it would have been sooner if I didn't have 3 kids to take care of. Don't miss this one!!

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### **Louise Behrendt Miller says**

The literary equivalent of Cheetos.

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### **Margie aka The Bumble Girl says**

This book was so funny, witty and candid - I couldn't put it down! While I was laughing out loud and shaking my head, it was also thought provoking and relatable.

You definitely need to have a good heart full of sense of humor to read this book.

Ellen's life falls apart in a matter of what feels like mere minutes - her husband wants a divorce, she loses her job and has to move back home to live with her overbearing Christian parents.

Ellen goes through some entertaining and sometimes scary ups and downs while trying to figure out who she is and what she wants to do.

And then she meets Mark - a handsome mysterious stranger who saves her one night and left quite an impression on her.

Will she find get her answer?

Totally unpredictable, it was such an enjoyable read!

It is definitely worth the quick read to find out!

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### **Bobbe says**

Sarah Healy was the first author I have read who represented an evangelical Christian home without obvious mockery. As a Christian, I have grown over the years in my own thinking about how I raised my children. If I could go back in time, I would do things differently. I loved that Ellen Carlisle was challenged, in this book, not to reject faith, but to seek her own--as I think we all are. I thoroughly enjoyed this book and look forward to reading Healy's next one.

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### **Deanna Sletten says**

I won this book from a Goodreads Giveaway and am so happy that I did.

Ellen Carlisle has had her share of crosses to bear. She is unable to have children, her husband has left her, she has lost her job and she finds herself living at home with her parents. Her mother, the daughter of a preacher, believes prayer is the answer to Ellen's problems, which only makes Ellen roll her eyes and shake her head. She finds herself spending her days shopping and her nights bar-hopping, hoping to find the answer to her mother's prayers in the bottom of a glass. One night she does, when she meets courageous, handsome Mark, but problems soon arise. Between going through a divorce, dealing with her over-zealous mother, problems her parents are facing and a new job that brings back old rivalries, Ellen is brought to a breaking point that she is sure prayer cannot fix.

"Can I Get An Amen?" is a funny, irreverent and original novel. While some dyed-in-wool Christians may find it hard to digest, the rest of us nod our heads and smile because we've all known people in our lives who are exactly like the characters in this book. Sarah Healy has done an excellent job with this debut novel of

creating flawed but likable characters who we want to root for even when they have hit rock bottom. I enjoyed this novel and look forward to Ms. Healy's next novel.

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