



Borrowed Light

Carla Kelly

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Julia Darling never expected to cook for some cowboys in Wyoming, but when she breaks off her engagement in Salt Lake City, it's the perfect opportunity for her to escape. Determined to stick the job out, Julia faces her biggest challenge yet letting go of borrowed light to find her own testimony. Set in the early 1900s, this is one romantic adventure you'll never forget!

Borrowed Light Details

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From Reader Review Borrowed Light for online ebook

Heather says

<http://fireandicephoto.blogspot.com/2...>

Oh my heavens. THIS is why I love "my job." I received this book in the mail from Cedar Fort for review and it was a huge step out of my ordinary reads, but what a book! Borrowed Light is the first novel I've read by Carla Kelly, who is a well established regency romance author for Harlequin and recently stepped foot into the LDS market. Apparently her past readers are unhappy about the switch, but I for one could not be happier. I will be purchasing and passing on anything else this author has to offer from Cedar Fort in the future. Her writing is so full of detail, her characters alive and the historical setting spot on. Carla knows her stuff. She has researched and stepped into the lives of her heroes. Borrowed Light easily garnered 5 stars.

Julia Darling is an engaged woman living in Salt Lake City, new graduate of the Fannie Farmer cooking school in Boston. Her fiance Ezra is the perfect gentleman and just what everyone thinks she needs, but Julia just isn't feeling the fire with him. On a whim, she decides to break the bad news and answer a newspaper ad from a "desperate rancher" in Wyoming who needs a full-time cook. Darling has no idea what she is getting her self into when she steps off the train into the rugged land of cattle ranching and rough conditions. Her new boss, Mr. Otto has a strange and highly rumored past which involves a dead man and carefully guarded secrets. Does Darling have what it takes to survive the experience? And can she find her footing and faith in the Wild West?

There is danger, romance, and answers to prayer packed away in a tightly wrapped, swift moving adventure. Fans of Hattie Big Sky will enjoy the flip side to the Homesteading experience. I could kiss this book and you'll soon find out why everyone in Wyoming wants to kiss the cook! To enter to win a copy of your own, enter here on Goodreads and be sure to head over to author Carla Kelly's website for more details! No content warnings..this is a squeaky clean read.

Erin says

Carla Kelly absolutely nailed the ending. The bulk of the book was interesting and kept me engaged, but it was a slow-cook-romance book. One where the romance develops in a "comfortable" way versus an exciting, passionate way. It was still cute, and I'd definitely recommended it. It just lacked a level of chemistry and flirtation that I usually like to have in a romance. This was a line in the last page or so, "They kissed." Carla Kelly isn't one to elaborate I guess! Haha! I wish she would have added little touches here and there, little flirty exchanges or something, to build some chemistry or current between them. He was a little too reserved/undemonstrative for me. The pacing was fine throughout, but it really picked up the last 100 pages and the last 50 pages had a sense of urgency that lasted through the end, and there was no way I could stop reading! The ending was absolutely fantastic!

My favorite part of all was when (don't read this spoiler if you haven't read the book) (view spoiler) That was one of the most romantic, gut wrenching scenes in any romance I have read. It reminded me of a similar scene in the movie Australia, with Hugh Jackman and Nicole Kidman, which is equally poignant. Wow,

wow, wow.

I have to admit that I have never fully enjoyed a book that tried to incorporate LDS religion into it, but this book defied all my experience and was outstanding! The spirituality in the book did NOT feel forced and awkward, or off-putting in any way. I loved it! And that's incredibly surprising- it is quite the feat. On the contrary, it actually really added to the storyline. Shocker!

On a side note, I enjoyed looking at the religion from their perspective. I wanted to delve into the Book of Mormon with the same sincerity that they had. It was inspiring.

Jacob Proffitt says

While I like romances and have enjoyed a couple of Kelly's books before, I still hesitated to pick this one up. I am *so* glad I finally got over that. Set in 1909 (an era I know little about and have little interest in) and explicitly LDS, I worried that this book would be less rigorous or careful than Kelly's other work--that Kelly, writing to a (probably) smaller audience, might let her standards slip or rely on the fellow-feeling of people who share her faith to carry her through rough patches (published through Bonneville--an imprint of Cedar Fort--it explicitly targets an LDS audience). In short that she might not try as hard or her professional standards might slip.

Well shame on me for my doubt. Not only is this fully up to her already outstanding professional standards, in many ways it outstrips her other work for sheer beauty and integration of plot, character, and emotional resonance.

The heroine, Julia Darling, starts off a little emotionally and spiritually immature for her 27 years. She has let her life drift on the inertia of her upbringing and finds herself engaged to someone who is "perfect for her". She has enough of a moment of clarity to avert disaster and call off the wedding and just *barely* enough self awareness to know she needs to change her situation to get some distance from where she is to get to who she wants to become--or at least to find out who she wants to become.

This leads her to Paul Otto. Paul is a Wyoming rancher who just wants a decent cook for a change. When Julia shows up in answer to his advertisement, he rolls with it (she isn't quite what he was looking for, having designated "mature" as one of the criteria). This turns out to be a strong part of his character--a willingness to give people a shot to see if they can do what they claim to want to do. Kelly portrays this aspect of Paul extremely well and then broadens it to illustrate his inherent kindness and rough-handed nobility. It also makes him an *extremely* attractive protagonist as he is truly, deeply kind without losing any of the strength required of a successful rancher. I tell you, if Paul is typical of cowboy romances, I may have to expand my horizons...

The plot moves crisply and held my attention with both hands. Paul and Julia work towards their own relationship even as each works at their relationship with God. This is *incredibly* hard to do without making it sound all preachy or letting one set of relationships overwhelm the others. It takes real talent to keep you engaged with each aspect of the characters' growth without making the others feel sidelined or perfunctory. There *are* some dramatic events that move the story along, but they don't feel manipulative or crafted solely for the convenience of the author or story. Again, Kelly shows her talent in making these events real, with all the impact they deserve . . . and no more.

So yeah, lovely book. You probably need to be LDS to buy fully into the faith and testimony aspects of the story, but if you can take the faith for given and not let that get your back up, there's no reason others can't

enjoy this incredibly gripping tale told by an artist of no mean skill.

DeAnna says

This Mormon-inspirational romance was a better book than Kelly's last Regency Romance, *The Admiral's Penniless Bride*. Interesting characters and a lot of fun, historical detail. (Although I find it hard to believe that, even back in 1909, someone might think that warm liver salad was worth cooking!) The end of the book is going to be a lot more meaningful for someone who is Mormon, I think, but the book is full of Kelly's usual warmth, humor and historical detail and is definitely worth reading.

Lisa (Bookworm Lisa) says

I recently read the book that follows this one and realized that I was missing pieces of the story. I purchased this as a kindle edition, I am glad that I did. All of my questions were answered and I feel comfy and cozy with the second story now! :0)

Julia is in an engagement that she is not excited about. She finds an add placed in the paper for a cook. The rancher is desperate. She packs her bags and heads to the frontier of Wyoming. Happily breaking her engagement in the process.

She discovers a rough and motley crew in Wyoming. It is obvious that the men has been lacking a feminine touch for a long time. She is awkward and makes several blunders until she begins to feel at peace and at home with all of the guys.

Romance does bloom, fortunately for us, it takes awhile into the story. It is wonderful to see relationships and trust grow before romance comes in.

Melissa says

I just enjoyed this book soooo much! I couldn't believe it! This is LDS historical fiction but anyone could read and enjoy this book. I have almost stopped reading all LDS novels because the writing is so poor in many of them, but this was nothing like that! It does talk about the Book of Mormon and the early beginnings of the church. The main character grows in her knowledge and testimony through out the book and it was so fun to read! This was just a funny book. I had to hold in my laughter in the middle of the night cause I didn't want to wake anyone up. The way the main characters talk to eat other was great! The flow of the book was perfect for me nothing happened to quickly or too slow. The people in this book came alive for me and I fell in love with all of them! And the LOVE story was awesome! I think after reading so many teen (look at each other and fall madly in love) books. I was ripe for a good old fashioned love story! Thank you Carla.

Lisa Kay says

I've only ever read one Carla Kelly book prior to this one, and it was very good. This one is wonderful. Every once in a while I like to read an inspirational love story or one about a person of faith. I adore a good historical-western-romance and this seemed right up my alley. I naively started this book not realizing that it is a LDS (Latter Day Saints) book. Once I realized that, I had to put it down for awhile, for personally reasons I don't wish go into here. However, I am **glad** I picked it back up.

I am not an expert on the Mormon religion; however, being a history buff that loves the Oregon Trail period, I've read a little of their history and can't help hearing the current news about the fundamentalists sect. Nevertheless, this is a book involving a **regular** LDS heroine and Ms. Kelly lets us know LDS folks are just normal people; in 1909 they put their pantaloons on one leg at a time like the rest of the world. Some of them wonder how they will explain or justify their religion to people who are simply inquisitive and others who are judgmental. Maybe CK made a point of setting Julia up to show she has 'free-will' – which is our greatest gift and the reason we are on the Earth (IMHO). I don't know. I still liked the story.

As the back of the book says, this is a story about a young woman who answers an ad for a cook in Wyoming. I love books about cooking, and our delightful heroine is in for a delicious surprise. (I probably would have reacted the same way!) Of note, I especially enjoyed the relationship Julia Darling had with her parents throughout the book. Also, the fact that Paul Otto, the hero, calls everyone by their last name; hence, he calls Julia "Darling" through most of the book, except toward the end when he calls her "darling Darling". Cute. CK has the talent of being able to set a scene and let it tell the tale with stirring dialogue. I found fun, humor and depth of emotion in this book. I got a wonderful sense of time and place and was pulled into the pages. There is a rich caste of multi-dimensional secondary characters. There is growth all around and an ability to heal even the deepest of emotional wounds. All things I like! Plus, the type of danger Julia has to face was a surprise and very well written.

I had to think hard about the end before I wrote my review. Julia is in love with Paul and admits it, and visa versa. (view spoiler)

The upshot of it all was that I liked the book and am glad I read it. Will I continue to read Ms. Kelly's books by Cedar Fort, Inc.? I don't know. She sure writes an excellent story, although I have all her previous books to plow through first.

This book was sent to me free of charge by Cedar Fort, Inc. and, by doing so, had no effect of my rating.

Tal says

I'm not a religious person at all but I love Carla Kelly so much I decided to give it a shot.

Kelly's writing is brilliant and her characters are still amazing so I'm definitely liking this book. But if I'm being honest, the religious part was a little annoying.

I certainly felt Kelly's unique style and that is what kept me going, but I could not relate to the spiritual parts :/

Basically I have nothing to complain about since it IS a Lds Fiction...

It is still a well written and a heart warming story.

Susan says

I enjoy this authors writing but can't recomend all her books as I have learned that it depends on the publisher as to the amount of sexual content. I'm really glad to have her writing for a publisher that I can comfortably read and enjoy. Her heroines talk to themselves and have a sense of humor.

Now this book. A young woman breaks her engagement and answers an add to be a cook (after all she had attended the Fannie Farmer Boston School of Cookery) on a ranch in Wyoming. Facing her trials there she has to find her own testimony.

Lisa says

Man, Carla Kelly can write! She's a master of showing the story rather than telling it. You'll fall in love with Julia and especially with Paul. I'm thrilled that she's now writing for the LDS market. She talks about things with the same sort of subtlety with which the Spirit speaks. Well done, Sister Kelly!

I just finished reading this again and loved it just as much the second time through. It was as wonderful if not more so as the first time. (June 24-26, 2011) Enduring Light, a sequel, is soon to be published. Whoo-hoo!

Well, I've read it for the third time and my goodness it wears well. The sequel is delightful as well. But, I'm still not ready to leave these characters behind. There are adventures yet to be had. I so hope C. K. continues to tell their story.

Colette says

From what I have read in reviews, this book is a departure from what Ms. Kelly used to write for Harlequin and I think that has garnered some criticism from her former fans...BUT now that she's writing for an LDS audience (according to her "About the Author" info at the end) I think I may become a big fan! Usually LDS fiction makes me squirm. I always feel a little uncomfortable with the "commercialization" of religion but this story of self-discovery and of the main character discovering her own beliefs and convictions felt so true that I finished feeling uplifted. I loved the realistic feeling of the early 1900s and enjoyed reading about life on a ranch during that period. The characters were believable, flawed and deep. I will definitely be looking forward to more from Carla Kelly under the Cedar Fort Publishing banner!

Dorothea says

I am not exactly in the target audience for inspirational romances, but I was curious to see how Carla Kelly would write one. My conclusion -- well!

The good:

+ Very, very funny.

+ The characters are *so competent*. I love stories that get into the details of what the characters are good at; *Borrowed Light* does this very, very well, especially for the heroine, Julia. She is a graduate of a Boston cooking school and cooking is basically her superpower. She's also excellent at all kinds of housekeeping, barely fazed by the difficulties of life on a ranch [n.b.: it helps that her employer seems to have an endless supply of money], and Kelly describes Julia's work in ways that make it clear how badass Julia is -- rather than treating housework as insignificant because it is feminine.

+ This is a story in which the Latter-Day Saint heroine temporarily leaves her LDS family and community in order to work on an isolated ranch where *no one* is LDS, including the ranch owner, who is obviously the hero. One of the major threads of the plot, therefore, is: how will the hero convert to the church so that he can marry Julia? It shouldn't be only for her sake, or it won't be a very good conversion; there needs to be something else that drives him. Since I have read so few inspirational romances, I don't know what the conventions and cliches are, but to me, Kelly's way of solving this problem was nearly perfect (except for the rather hasty winding-up in the end).

+ Actual stakes! I get tired of romances in which the only dangers the protagonists face are miscommunication and scandal. In *Borrowed Light*, apart from working out their religious beliefs, the hero and heroine have to cope with death of loved ones and natural disaster, not to mention a monumentally filthy kitchen.

The bad:

+ Awkward, at best, handling of a mentally-ill character. (view spoiler)

+ Occasional awkward moments about race. One of the hero's parents was Indian and so are some minor characters. I think that Carla Kelly knows a lot more than I do about the tribes in question in this part of history, though that really doesn't mean she hasn't done anything wrong. Given that caveat, I was *overall* faintly impressed; however, that should be measured against my expectations for the quality of writing by white historical romance authors about characters of color, which are to be found somewhere down in the Mariana Trench.

Mindy says

This is an LDS romance set in Wyoming in the early 1900s. It is a predictable romance, but I am finding something out about myself. I don't mind predictable endings if the story is good. And *Borrowed Light* was a feel good, sweet love story. I rated it four stars because it was a great escape read. I could pick the story apart in a lot of ways if I wanted to, but I don't. If you are looking for a deep story line or basically anything other

than a happy, good old romance, I wouldn't read this. But I really am looking forward to reading the next one.

Cindy says

This was such a darling story (hehe) it really was with a lot of spunk. Julia Darling lives in Salt Lake City, and is engaged to a man she is coming to find out she does not love. She finally gets up the nerve to call it off and at the same time answers and add for a cook in Wyoming. She meets her boss Mr. Otto, and the ranch hands, they are all a little surprised at their new cook. From here there is one adventure after another on the cattle ranch. Whether with the the ranch hands, stock, weather, or matters of the heart concerning Julia and Mr. Otto.

Julia was such a wonderful character, she is out there in the middle of no-where Wyoming in an environment completely different from the way she was raised. She does amazingly well! She is trying to figure out who she is and what she believes in and why. She is also smitten with her boss Mr. Otto. She has some wonderful disasters with cooking moments that were quite funny. She is very determined, witty, spunky, has a big heart, and is very kind, and flawed. Mr. Otto I think is wondering what he got himself into, and sure glad he did. He is a quite giant, has integrity, solid, no nonsense, intimidating, and under it all gentle and kind. He is one of those hero's you just love to pieces! There are several secondary characters with all the ranch hands and friends that are just as wonderful, and I came to love them all. I loved the romance it is nice and slow, which is nice we get to see them become friends and trust each other first. This story is so well rounded and interesting, kept me glued to the pages and wanting more. The writing seems effortless and flows wonderfully. I can't wait to read her next Enduring Light.

Clean language

Clean romance

Monica says

My Aunt is the author of this book. I found it at Deseret Book in Pocatello. I am really into it & can't wait to see what happens to Julia because of the choice she made to work as a ranchers cook in Wyoming!

This was so great. I'm usually not into LDS novels, but this didn't read like your standard, predictable LDS novel. Carla is such a great writer. I could visualize the whole book. I can't wait to see if she writes a sequel. I could just ask her... she is my aunt. :)

SheLove2Read says

This is a tremendously hard book for me to review.

I'm such a fan of Carla Kelly and when I found out she was writing a western I was immediately on board and just knew I would love it. I loved certain aspects of the story, but others completely turned me off and made it hard for me to enjoy. Very hard.

If you don't already know, this book is an inspirational romance written for the LDS (Mormon) market. I don't personally hold with the LDS belief system but I'm not a bigot, and I do not judge anyone for their beliefs. That being said, the message that I got when reading this was that all other Christians are somehow "not quite as good as" the LDS population. Being a Christian woman myself, it was hard for me not to take offense at some of the statements made by the heroine in this book, but I continued reading.

The story itself, minus the religious overtone, is a very good one. A young woman answers an ad for a cook on a cattle ranch in Wyoming. Coming out of a disastrous engagement, she felt that the time away from home and everything she knew would give her perspective and help her to decide exactly what she wanted out of life. The rugged rancher she works for is quite the enigma: both closed off emotionally at times, yet chock full of tender sentiment when he thinks no one is looking. They both got more than they bargained for in this arrangement. I loved the hero. I love the secondary characters. I even liked the heroine, despite my earlier statement. Combined as a whole, however, I just wasn't able to enjoy the book like I wanted to.

After reading the story, I did a little research and discovered that Ms. Kelly is no longer going to write mainstream romance. She has decided to write exclusively for the LDS market, and I wish her well. While I will certainly seek out her previous catalog of regency romance, I won't be wishlisting any new ventures she undertakes, and for someone who truly enjoys her writing, that's a sad thing.

Gaile says

Unlike Carla Kelly's other books, this one is not her usual regency romances.

It starts out in Salt Lake City in 1909. Julia is uncertain about her engagement that she went to Boston to the Fannie Farmer School Of cookery. Home again after completing the course and still uncertain about her impending marriage, she runs across an ad asking for a cook on a Wyoming ranch. She answers the ad, breaks her engagement and takes the train to Cheyenne where she meets the love of her life. At first religion seems to divide her and Paul Otto as Julia is a Mormon.

This is the first inspirational romance I ever read about the Latter-Day Saints as a background religion. I was not sure I liked that part but the romance part was very good and worth reading.

Joy says

I've always liked Kelly's regencies, so when I heard she had written an inspirational romance, I was naturally curious as how that would work. Now, I'm not Mormon, so the Mormon-y bits of this book were a bit over my head, but the underlying spiritual development of the characters in the book is probably common in any religion.

This is the story of Julia Darling of Salt Lake City, graduate of the Fannie Farmer cooking school of Boston,

who dumps her calculating fiancé and goes to Wyoming to be a cook on a ranch. Her new employer, Paul Otto, has a somewhat mysterious past, and Julia is the only ranch employee who doesn't seem to be an outcast or misfit of some sort. As her contracted year of employment goes on, Julia will experience the dangers of frontier life: the cold, the isolation, the lack of respect for fancy cooking, the brutal range wars between the ranchers and homesteaders, and the prejudices local people have against Mormons. But she will also experience unexpected friendship and love.

This book was very good. There was a theme of children left alone to wander in the wilderness that probably came either from the Bible or the Book of Mormon. There is also crypto-Mormonism in this book, which is kind of weirdly neat. Kelly has always been meticulous in her research, and I discovered some lesser-known things about the settlement of the West. I'm not sure all Kelly's fans are going to be willing to follow her into inspirational territory, but since this book was well-written, non-preachy, and had compelling characters and an interesting storyline, I suspect she'll be picking up quite a few new ones.

TJ says

This was a very sweet Christian read with a Mormon twist! Kelly has become a beloved author through her mainstream romances so this, her switch to inspirational, will either be a delight or disappointment depending on one's point of view.

Her easy, engaging style, lovable, believable characters and down to earth warmth are wonderfully present in this Western romance. The character of Julia Darling is a graduate of Fannie Farmer's school of cooking in Boston and prides herself in being able to cook culinary masterpieces, so when she accepts a job cooking for a large ranch full of men in Wyoming, one can imagine the plethora of predicaments she gets herself into while trying to heighten the cowhand's palettes. Her relationship to Mr. Otto, her employer is absolutely dear. In fact this whole book reads like a warm fuzzy on a cold night.

If there are drawbacks it would be in two areas. First, Kelly's attempt at incorporating everyday "Mormonism" into the storyline seems somewhat clumsy in the beginning, almost as if Ms. Kelly is trying a little too hard. It does level out as the book progresses and develops into a more subtle yet integral part of the development. Second, with a "sweet" romance, (NO sexual graphics whatsoever) the emotions of the relationship become paramount to the believability of the romance. When we finally work up to that first kiss, we really want to know how it felt! What was it like? Unfortunately here, there was little more than a mention, then on to cooking dinner.

Still, for a wonderfully clean, delightfully engaging, sweet romance, "Borrowed Light" goes to the top of the list!

Katie W says

I really enjoyed this story about a lady, Julia Darling, who passes on an engagement to a respectable LDS man to go cook for a rancher in wild, desolate Wyoming in 1909. After graduating from cooking school in Boston, Julia is raring to get cooking on that wonderful, albeit greasy, Queen Atlantic stove. I love all the talk of the delicious things she cooked up. I loved her spunk, determination, and her decision to really study and come to know her religion. My only problem was that this book is labeled romance and is a finalist for

the Whitney Awards in the romance category, but there wasn't very much romance--hardly any at all. Still, I really did enjoy the story and can't wait for the next book to come out.
