



A Bond Never Broken

Judith McCoy Miller

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For many years, Ilsa Redlich has helped her parents run a hotel in South Amana, but as the United States enters the Great War, she can feel her world changing. The residents of the towns surrounding the Amana Colonies used to be accepting of their quiet, peaceful neighbors, but with anti-German sentiment running high, the Amana villages are now plagued by vandalism, threats, and insults. Things get even worse when Ilsa finds out her family won't be allowed to speak German in public--and that Garon, the childhood friend she's long been smitten with, has decided to join the army.

Jutta Schmidt is shocked when several members of the Council of National Defense show up on her family's doorstep. Sure, the Schmidts once lived in the Amana Colonies, but that was years ago. She's even more surprised when the council demands that she travel to Amana and report back on any un-American activities. Not daring to disobey the government agents, Jutta takes a job at the South Amana hotel, befriends the daughter of the owners, and begins to eavesdrop every chance she gets.

When Jutta hears Ilsa making antiwar remarks and observes Garon assisting a suspicious outsider, she is torn at the prospect of betraying her new friends. But what choice does she have? And when Garon is accused of something far worse than Jutta could imagine, can the Amana community come to his aid in time?

A Bond Never Broken Details

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From Reader Review A Bond Never Broken for online ebook

Christy Lockstein says

A Bond Never Broken by Judith Miller is the third book in the Daughters of Amana series, but each book is a stand alone, so you don't need to have read the previous two to enjoy this one. Jutta Schmidt is put into an impossible situation when she is forced to spy on the people of the Amana colony looking for signs of treason in the heated days of World War I when German ancestry was enough to create suspicion. If she refuses, the family bakery will be destroyed, her parents thrown into jail, and a worse fate awaits Jutta. She goes to work in a hotel run by the Redlich family in South Amana. Their daughter Ilsa is angry that her brother Albert has been forced to join the military and is fearful that her boyfriend Garon may follow him. Ilsa had prayed again and again for Albert to be able to remain home, and when her prayers go unanswered, she starts to question God. Jutta feels as though her prayers have also been ignored, so the two women quickly bond, but when pressure is placed on Jutta to provide some information, she has to decide what matters to her more: her parents and their livelihood or the Redlichs who have treated her like a daughter. Miller's Amana series gives readers a wonderful look into this enigmatic religious group who was known for their quality goods and communal property. But during WWI when sauerkraut became "liberty cabbage" and German measles "liberty measles", people began wondering about this unusual group who spoke a form of German and refused to serve in the military. Miller really brings to life the horror of people using power and suspicion to attack others during wartime. It took a bit of doing for me to swallow my disbelief at the Iowa Council of National Defense's blackmail of Jutta, but once I did, I was sucked completely into the story. Readers can't help but be outraged at the unfairness and humiliation the Amanan people face. Jutta and Ilsa's friendship is natural and the foundation of the book. This story of bravery and friendship is a terrific read for fans of historical fiction or Christian fiction.

Christine Roberts says

It is 1917 and sentiment against people of German descent runs high among the citizens surrounding the Amana colony. Those sworn to uphold the safety of American citizens misuse their power to intimidate, scare, and abuse anyone who is German, of German heritage, or a German sympathizer. How will the people of Amana survive such treatment, protect their loved ones, and prove their patriotism? Well, you must read Judith Miller's Daughters of Amana trilogy! Book eight for this year was the final book in this trilogy entitled A Bond Never Broken. It was a great book and really brings to light the fact that a war is not always fought overseas, but sometimes in our own backyard.

Jan Donahue-StClair says

Awesome book, awesome series of life in Amana

I enjoyed learning of the Amana colony and a glimpse into their lifestyle. Judith Miller manages to pull off very smoothly the stories of different characters. I usually do not enjoy books like that mainly because they are difficult to keep up with. Not this author!! Very well written and easy to imagine yourself there! Read this book and the first and second in this series, you won't be sorry you did!

Janna Ryan says

This Amana Colonies series by Judith Miller has been one of the most enjoyable series that I have read lately and definitely my favorite among what I would consider in the Amish line. I am fascinated by the history that she has brought alive in these three books. Each book takes place in a different Amana town and each one has totally different characters, but that is great. This book has a really interesting twist. There are two main characters - Ilsa and Jutta - one who lives happily in an Amana town and one who left the Amana colonies with her parents a few years back. But now it is WWI and Jutta's family is experiencing lots of anger towards them just because they are German. They are basically forced to send Jutta back to the Amanas to spy on the good people there and report back on all the unpatriotic things they do. Needless to say her deception weighs heavy on her and things get complicated. Judith has done it again - absolutely fantastic! The only negative thing I have to say is that as much as I like the cover - the darling three little girls on the front had nothing to do with the story... seemed a little odd to me. Overall a total winner.

Mayda says

Wars' affects are like ripples in the water. They affect the soldiers who fight in them, but they also change society and our social structure, even when they are fought on foreign soil. Such was the case for German-Americans during the Great War, as illustrated in this story of rural America in the early twentieth century. Anti-German sentiments are running high, and what had been a peaceful existence is no longer possible for these Americans of German ancestry. Even worse, some are "recruited" to spy on their friends and neighbors, forced by misguided members of the Council of National Defense. As the story unfolds, we learn how the lives of two families are nearly torn apart by these bullies hiding behind the law and how the families struggle to overcome prejudices. An interesting tale of a time in American history that is sometimes overlooked.

April says

Storyline is a little bit contrived but did get more interesting towards the end.

Heather Zuber-Harshman says

I loved this book for so many reasons. First, the story is about part of my heritage - the Amana Colonies in Iowa. It even mostly took place in the village where my grandparents lived.

Second, the characters were fun and great yet had flaws. Their interaction was also well-written.

Third, Judy sprinkled unanswered questions throughout the book that kept me wondering what would happen in the next chapter.

Fourth, it was just the right length. There are so many books I read where I think, "Gee, this would have been a lot better if it were X pages shorter." Not the case with this book.

Fifth, the Christian aspects got me thinking about my faith walk and comforted me with some concerns I have in my life.

Finally, she is effective with words. Her description, actions, etc. were great and she's not wordy - hallelujah!

Now on to the next Judy Miller book.

Liz Collins says

For many years, Ilsa Redlich has helped her parents run a hotel in South Amana, but as the United States enters the Great War, she can feel her world changing. The residents of the towns surrounding the Amana Colonies used to be accepting of their quiet, peaceful neighbors, but with anti-German sentiment running high, the Amana villages are now plagued by vandalism, threats, and insults. Things get even worse when Ilsa finds out her family won't be allowed to speak German in public--and that Garon, the childhood friend she's long been smitten with, has decided to join the army.

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Marnie says

Set in an unfortunate period of history. It was a very good book. The best of the Amana series, i think. It helped me understand the colonies, though, to have read the two prior books. I think the series is over, but I saw foreshadowing in there for possible new storylines and the Spanish influenza.

Cheryl says

a sweet little story about a "not-so-sweet" topic....the treatment of Germans during the war and the prejudice shown to those who objected to the war because of their beliefs. Tucked inside all that is a story about the relationships that tried to survive being separated by war. this is a book in a series called "Daughters of Amana". I haven't read any of the other, but I would

Barb says

Another book by Judith Miller about the Amish. Again I thought that it was very good. This one takes place at the time of the War and some of the threats against the Amish because they were of German heritage. It would be curious to know how much of the book is based on fact. Takes place in the Amana Colonies in Iowa.

Carly says

I have become a huge fan of Judith Miller's books and I have loved the Daughters of Amana series so far. I could not wait to read A Bond Never Broken. I just want to get this out of the way right now. Unfortunately I was just a little disappointed with this book, which really surprised me because I have never been disappointed with a single word Judith has written.

I think my disappointment comes from the fact that the story had a lot of slow spots. Now, the story itself was very interesting and when I first read the description of the story, I saw a lot of potential for this book to be very tense. Too tense, in fact. But, it actually had a fairly comfortable feel to it despite the intensity of the story. I think that is where the slowness of the book turned into an asset. There is a lot of normal everyday life in this story. It is not non-stop tension and fear. We still get a very good look at life in the Amana Colonies and this book still retains that simple feel that I have come to love about this series. It actually ended up as a fairly well-balanced story that was a relaxing experience. So, despite some minor disappointment, I can say that this was still a good book and a worthwhile read. I didn't love it like I thought I would, but I didn't dislike it either.

Judith Miller is an author with an amazing talent and an eye for detail that makes her stories come alive. I will miss spending time in the Amanas and I am already looking forward to Judith's next book.

Holly says

I absolutely loved the Daughters of Amana books, I am a little sad that there are only three of them.

The US had entered the great war and those of German ancestry were suspected of supporting Germany in the war. Members of the American Protective League showed up at Jutta's parents bakery and gave Jutta a "choice", either go back to the Amana colonies (which her and her parents had left 10 years before) and spy on the residents, or they would destroy her parents bakery, be thrown in jail, hurt and most likely killed. In order to protect her parents and the bakery she went back to the colonies to live and spy on the residents there.

During a visit home to visit her parents they showed up to interrogate her, but were not pleased when she had nothing to report, and said that they had nothing to fear from those living in the colonies as they were doing their part to support the US in the war. After this visit her parents ended up disappearing (unknown to Jutta until she went back to visit and discovered the bakery destroyed and her parents missing).

During the course of the story she becomes close to Ilsa, the daughter of the family who owns the hotel she works at in Amana, and a possible match for her Ilsa's brother, Albert. They are all confused by a couple

who is staying at the hotel for the winter, Mr. and Mrs. Young. They exhibit strange and confusing behavior. Ilsa and Jutta try to unravel the mystery surrounding them and are able to do so at the end of the book when Garon, Ilsa's betrothed, is arrested for treason. Garon is exonerated while the Youngs disappear.

Ilsa is a little naive and is forced to grow up and understand that life is different outside of the colonies and she can't force others to believe what is the truth.

Ilsa is put in an impossible situation. Does she protect her family and spy on those that have become her friends, or does she tell the truth and risk her family going to jail and having their life destroyed?

I was pleased with this book, and angry with the going-ons with most (almost all) of the members of the American Protective League and how they treated those with German ancestry at this time. I was pleased with the outcome, no matter how much I wanted to yell at Jutta to come clean with the elders sooner, it couldn't have ended any other way. Everything ended up working out in the end, and hopefully the Youngs were found.

April Suter says

This historical peek into the Amana Colonies is during the WWI when America went a little over the line of being cautious and harassed many German Americans. Ilsa and Jutta's lives are changed. Ilsa's brother is drafted and Jutta must return to Amana to help protect her parents. Discrimination is a horrible thing that makes people ugly because they are scared.

Quote from book: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it--George Santayana"

376 pages

Victor Gentile says

Judith Miller in her new book, "A Bond Never Broken" Book Three in the Daughters Of Amana series published by Bethany House brings us to Iowa in 1917.

World War One or The Great War began in 1914 and ended in November of 1918. When "A Bond Never Broken" begins it is October of 1917 so there is slightly more than a year to go before this war ends though at the time no one knows this. War always causes great stress on those that are in it whether they are fighting where the battles are or are left at home and America was under a great deal of stress here at home. Anything or anyone German was under careful scrutiny whether they deserved it or not as "German" became a distasteful word during this war.

Jutta Schmidt left the Amana Colonies with her family who started a bakery. Now the Council of National Defense wants her to return to Amana and report back to them anything or anyone that Jutta may find suspicious. If she does not then the family bakery will be destroyed. Fearing for her family Jutta does what she is told, returns to Amana and takes a job in the hotel run by the family of Ilsa Redlich.

Ilsa Redlich is angry that her brother, Albert, has been forced to join the military and is fearful that her boyfriend, Garon, may follow him. So it is no wonder that Ilsa has disparaging remarks to say about the U. S. Government. Now it falls upon Jutta to make a decision to break the "Bond" that has developed between her and Ilsa or report what she has overheard.

"A Bond Never Broken" will cause all your emotions to rise up. You will get angry with the actions and inactions of certain characters. You will be sitting on the edge of your seat as the tension mounts with Jutta and her decisions. You will be outraged by the things that the anti-German sentiment causes individuals to do by and against their will. Judith Miller weaves in all emotion she can muster in this historical novel. "A Bond Never Broken" is a great ending to a series that no one really wants to see end. I recommend this book and, as always, look forward to whatever Ms. Miller writes next.

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