



Hidden Truths

Jae

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Lesbian Fiction: Historical Fiction - Sequel to Backwards to Oregon - Commuter Novel - 19 hours reading - "Luke" Hamilton has been living as a husband and father for the past seventeen years. No one but her wife, Nora, knows she is not the man she appears to be. They have raised their daughters to become honest and hard-working young women. But even with their loving foundation, a few fears and insecurities have Amy and Nattie hiding their own secrets. Just as Luke sets out on a dangerous trip to Fort Boise, a newcomer arrives on the ranch - Rika Aaldenberg, who traveled to Oregon as a mail-order bride, hiding that she's not the woman in the letters. When hidden truths are revealed, will their lives and their family fall apart or will love keep them together?

Hidden Truths Details

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Author : Jae

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From Reader Review Hidden Truths for online ebook

Bethany says

Man I wish this series hadn't ended! I loved this book just as much as the first, *Backwards to Oregon*.

These two books are going to wear out my re-read shelves!

Jessica Nguyen says

This second book is not at the same level with the first one, but that is only because the first had set the bar too high. This sequel is still 5 stars to me. The more I read, the more I like Jae's writing style. I know I can trust her to deliver a logical, believable and reasonable story that is well-balanced, not overly depressed and not overly dreamy at the same time. As this sequel is another slow burn, we certainly don't get lovemaking scenes every two pages but when it did happen, it was ??. I really appreciate Jae's talent to build each character distinguishedly from one another. There's Luke who lives her life like a man because it feels most comfortable that way. Then there's Frankie who can seemlessly switch between man and women styles because she is naturally capable of both and had comfortably used this to her advantange. And then there's Amy who's one level softer from Frankie's. At some point, I feel like Jae was writing about those who are like me character-wise. Then I felt myself jealous with them for having understandable sweethearts like Nora, Tess, and Rika :D (this is silly I know).

Book Worm says

I loved this just as much as I loved the first book.

I loved to see Luke and Nora's relationship through their children's eyes. I loved to see Amy's and Netty's development and I loved how the theme (given in the title) permeated every part of the plot. It was the conflict and the answer.

Before we are even starting to read the story, in the dedication, we read:

"Good stories will tell you that facing the lie is the worst terror of all."

I couldn't sum it up any better. So q.e.d. this is a really good story.

Jane Shambler says

Excellent

This book has a bit of everything. It has romance, humour, adventure, love and self discovery. But more to the point it's a great book. I read it twice. Not for any other reason than I really enjoyed it. Jae has excellent writing skills and her style is an exhilarating experience. She involves you with her characters and allows you to participate in their journeys. I'll read this again. That's how much I loved this book and author.

Tara says

Hidden Truths is very well written. It's longer than most lesfic books, but I appreciated what that meant for both the plotting and the thorough, satisfying character development for Rika and Amy.

Full joint review with Brooklyn here: <http://www.thelesbianreview.com/hidde...>

Velvet Lounger says

Life is brutal for the young women who work the mills in mid nineteenth century Boston. The owners treat them like slaves, the conditions are killing them and the poverty is weighing them down. Rika tries to care for her friend Jo, but the harsh hours and poor living standards are clearly taking their toll. Jo has the dreadful cough that signifies brown lung, but she only has a week to go before she will be off West to marry a man who is a stranger.

Fate has other plans and when Jo succumbs, Rika, who uses her savings to pay for her friend's funeral, and who has lost her job and her home, has very little choice but to use Jo's ticket west and take her place as a mail order bride.

Luke Hamilton and his wife Nora have built a successful horse ranch and raised two independent and strong daughters, Amy and Nattie. As Luke sets out to deliver horses to Fort Boise he leaves Amy in charge to test her management of the ranch and her desire to take the reigns. Amy's first task is to collect ranch foreman Phin's bride to be.

As Rika takes Jo's name and place in the Hamilton extended family she will spark a series of revelations which show that every one of them has a secret. From fear of exposure or rejection Luke and Nora, Amy and Nattie and even Phin have hidden something that could change their lives and how the people they love feel about them.

Will the family survive the disclosures or will the dramatic realignment of who they are tear them apart?

You know you are reading a good book when you can't put it down, but don't want to rush, and cannot bare the thought of finishing. This is a decent sized novel at 525 pages and half way through at 1am I had to force myself to stop and not read through the night.

This is the second installment in the lives of Luke and Nora and while I wouldn't put anybody off reading it if they haven't yet read 'Backwards to Oregon' I think it is fair to say that the two novels build a life and a history which is better read together. Certainly the whole history of the Hamilton marriage and of Tess's part in it is better understood after reading the first novel of the series.

Jae is a master at creating a scene and an atmosphere. The early chapters construct for us the harsh reality of life for the poor in 1860's Boston. Violence, hunger, fear and desperation surround the young women whose lives are threatened by husbands, fathers, employers and the very mills they work in. No spark of light seems to penetrate their desperate struggles to survive. From this Jo has agreed to escape into the unknown world of

a ranch in Oregon and the unknown arms of an arranged marriage.

When Rika takes her place we are transported to another world, equally hard work, but filled with sunshine and hope, friendship and love. The ranch has been built from nothing by Luke and Nora, and they break the normal mold by having a real partnership, obvious love, and a life founded on respect that extends to their ranch hands and their stock.

Jae has created a wonderful tableau of a family that on the surface seems to be solid and open, trustworthy and reliable. But underneath the surface swirls secrets large and small, spanning their personal histories, their relationships, who they are and most of all, who they love.

As a reader we can see each persons secrets building in intensity long before they erupt, often long before the character is even fully aware of themselves. We can anticipate the effects and feel the tension build. As Nora says "With every day, with every lie, the fear becomes stronger". And this is, more than anything else, a story about how secrets and lies can start out as the best of intentions but build to become potentially destructive to all we hold most dear.

Jae's books always feel immaculately researched and authentic. The world she creates has an integrity that draws you in. Her characters are real, their actions and dialogue feel genuine. Their desire to live an honest life in an era where that was not possible, their soul searching, their compromises and their love, resonates with us now despite the vast changes to our world in the years between.

These are women I respect and would like to meet. In that age old game. 'if you could go back in time..' I would be more than happy to be transported back to the Hamilton Horse Ranch to live and work alongside these powerful yet loving women.

(Publishers review copy received)

MD says

I loved it

I adore Backwards to Oregon and this one too.

We get to see more of Luke and Nora and the development of the girls. The scenery, every character was great (Love to see more of Tess and Frankie).

A nice story that I will surely re-read.

lov2laf says

If you've read "Backwards to Oregon" (which was spectacular), this is the follow up story with the family years later. There's some solid storytelling here and I enjoyed the book but it started feeling long towards the end. Still a good read, though, and would recommend it.

Lissa says

Set seventeen years later, Luke and Nora live on a horse ranch with their two daughters, Amy and Nattie, in Oregon. Their ranch foreman, Phineas (Phin - who was introduced in one of the short stories in the series), sends away for a mail order bride - but the woman who shows up, Rika, isn't who Phin expects. Rika's presence on the ranch ultimately threatens the idyllic life Nora and Luke have built for themselves and their children.

I could see where the author was going with this a mile away, (view spoiler) but I didn't really care. I enjoyed the story contained in the book - Amy's struggle with her feelings and coming to terms with them (something I can identify with very intensely, except without the supportive family), Luke's attempt to keep her family together, and Rika striving for her own happiness.

Amy and Rika's relationship is a slow burn/build, but it was worth it. I am not a huge fan of insta-love stories, especially those that are set in other time periods, and I liked how the author made the characters kind of bumble around and rather stumble onto love. And I'm always a huge fan of angst, so Amy's was great. ;)

It's really interesting to see how Amy and Rika's relationship is both similar to and quite different from Nora and Luke's relationship. There weren't a lot of options if you were a woman who loved women not so long ago, and to see how Amy and Rika (and Tess and Frankie) had to hide their relationships is sad but understandable.

Also, I'd really recommend reading the *Beyond the Trail* short story collection before reading this book, because every one of those stories was referenced in some way in this book.

Arien says

3.8 stars. Not as good as the first one but still pretty good.

A.W. says

I thought that this was a good sequel to Backwards to Oregon. Seventeen years later, we get to see the girls, Amy and Nattie, grown up and the continuation of Luke and Nora's love story.

I enjoyed the slow-burn romance between Rika and Amy.

I also thought that Jae did a good job of describing life as a rancher as well as Amy's inner turmoil regarding her sexuality.

Review also posted here: <https://wp.me/p4Pp9O-KM>

A says

Liked this perhaps more than Backwards. Basically, a coming-of-age story for Luke and Nora's eldest daughter, Amy. Family secrets may have to be revealed in order for Amy to find her place in the family business and in love.

M says

Bombig!!

Great book, just finished it in a rush. Has been approx 36 hours since I downloaded from the L-Books website and I absolutely loved this book.

A real page turner, some great characters, particularly loved Tess and Frenchie.

If we were to force me, I would still pick "Backwards to Oregon" as my favourite, but every time I read one of Jae's books, I always find myself wanting to stay in her world just that little bit longer.

Great sequel, now off to read the free prequel and spin-off short stories on the L-Books website.

For those with an interest in this genre, you have to read this pair of books.

Val says

So good

I loved this book as much as I loved Backwards to Oregon. I'm typically not much of a historical fiction reader, but a friend told me these were her favorite Jae books so I gave them a try. Obviously, I'm very happy I did. And while I've said this before, I think it bears repeating. I'm grateful for strong women in the past who had the courage to pave the way for us today.

Cheri says

*Original post - Loved this book. Can't wait to talk to Jae about it. Really enjoyed having The whole Hamilton family involved in the story. So well done.

I wasn't sure about how I would respond to a story focused on Amy but the way Jae wrote it, and included Luke and Nora, I don't think it could have been done any better. *

****Reread it and still loved it.****

I read the new, revised version and enjoyed it more than the last time. The new scenes are really seamless.

1/29/16 - finished a reread of Backwards to Oregon yesterday and immediately started a reread of this one. How could I not?
