



## Where the River Once Flowed

*Jennie Hansen*

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New Mexico, 1879---The Sebastian Hacienda is a lucrative and coveted ranch deep in the fertile wilderness of New Mexico, a property held for generations by the powerful Sebastian family. After the death of his son and heir, proud and formidable Don Sebastian has only one hope for the preservation of his land: his beautiful young granddaughter, Iliana. Desperate, he makes a shocking deal---the property will be sold to Ross Adams, an American cowboy, on the condition that he marry the stunning young Iliana and bequeath the land to her sons. A bargain is struck, but not everyone is pleased with the outcome. Neighboring rancher Ben Purdy has his eye on pretty Iliana--and on ownership of the Sebastian Ranch. In his ruthlessness, Purdy is willing to go to terrible lengths to acquire them both. Even if it means destroying everything in his path . . .

Utah Territory, 1891---Travis Telford was born to be a cowboy. He left his family to chase the dream of someday owning his own ranch, but years of nomadic living as a ranch hand have proven taxing. After several seasons of horse-trading with the American owner of the Sebastian Ranch, Travis finds his life dramatically altered by a routine stop at the property. He finds the ranch in chaos and the rancher's beautiful widow, Iliana, in the midst of a turbulent land battle. His instinct to protect Iliana is undeniable, and as the danger mounts, only their reliance upon each other has the power to save them.

## Where the River Once Flowed Details

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## **From Reader Review Where the River Once Flowed for online ebook**

### **Kelly says**

Here is a review done my Shauna Wheelright about this book:

Trust and Betrayal!

Hopes and Fears!

Longing for a Home and Loving to go Home!

Iliana Teresa Angelica Medina Sebastian has just turned 15 and it falls upon her to produce an heir for her grandfathers ranch.

She will marry to keep her families honorable heritage.

Ross Adams know that the ranch belonging to the Spanish aristocrat is everything he has ever dreamed about owning and has contracted to run the ranch and marry Don Sebastians granddaughter.

Ben's ranch boarders the Sebastian ranch and he will do anything to acquire both the ranch and the granddaughter.

Travis Telford is a horse runner and is looking forward to the day he can settle down with a wife and a ranch of his own.

Wait until you see how the author entwines the lives of these 4 people together...SO GOOD!

A hard book to put down :)

LOVED IT!

<http://ilovetoreadandreviewbooks.blog...>

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### **Kristyn says**

The cowboy on the cover does not fit the time period in the story. As a photo editor, that really bothers me because it can be fixed! Easily.

Anyway, pretty good story in an interesting Southwest location. But with most Jennie Hansen books, every time she reveals that a female character is pregnant, it's like "Huh?" She always seems to go WAY out of her way to make it seem like nothing is happening between married characters, so when you find out something did, it's a little surprising. So, needless to say, her books are VERY clean. :)

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### **Angie says**

This book was something unexpected but a nice change. still liked it. ;)

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### **Lynette says**

I had a hard time caring about this book. The first half had no real emotion. It felt like a narrative--this person went there, that person did this, etc. When things happened, I didn't really care because I didn't really know any of the characters or how they felt. About half way through, emotion finally made an appearance and I enjoyed the book until the end when it went back to the unfeeling narrative.

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### **Tiffany says**

This was a fun story to hear on CD. It had a lot of elements within it that made it intriguing to listen to and to let myself be carried away by the story. The narrator was fun to hear his accents and to feel the emotion that he placed in the characters.

I enjoyed this story about love and life. It was a fun read dealing with life in early American history and how "the west was won" one ranch at a time. It was fun to see the interactions between the characters. It was interesting how the antagonist in the story was truly a wolf in sheep clothing. Yes, the character did some outright bad things, but mostly the character did what could be done to prey on fears and weaknesses. I liked that element of the story a lot because to me it brought a lot of the real world element to the story.

This story was in a lot of ways about one main character, but it truly followed the story of a few different ones. It was fun to read how all the characters were connected. I know that I truly enjoyed the interaction, the cleanliness of the story. I would suggest this book to those that like historical fiction, that like a touch of romance and like a well written clean book.

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### **Annissa says**

I thought that this book had a good story concept. However, I wish the ending was more elaborate and gave more details about their journey back to their homestead and starting their lives together. Did they merge all the family lands together. Did they ever find out what happened to her maternal grandparents who were missing? I felt like there was a lot of loose ends that could of enhanced the story line.

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### **Katie W says**

Iliana does what she's told and what's expected of her. When her grandfather wants an heir to pass his New Mexico ranch on to, she marries the man he has an agreement with and does her duty. Her life is full of twists and unexpected turns and leaves her wondering what to do next. Travis is a horse trader and often trades with Iliana's family. He comes to their rescue on more than one occasion. It's through him that the limited amount of LDS references come in to play.

I like how strong Iliana found herself to be. She was almost like a puppet at first, but when it was demanded of her, she stepped up and discovered qualities about herself that she never knew existed. My heart broke just

a little bit with all the tragedies she encountered, but those things make her stronger.

I liked the setting (late 1800s New Mexico, at first) and the descriptions about how life very well could have been there at this time.

Content: some violence due to a crazy man; some sad situations. Clean!

\*\*I hope there's another book coming because it did kind of leave me hanging just a little bit.

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### **Shauna says**

What a WONDERFUL tale this story weaves!

Trust and Betrayal!

Hopes and Fears!

Longing for a Home and Loving to go Home!

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LOVED IT!

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### **Jen Jenson says**

It was pretty good. I haven't read an LDS Novel in quite a while. Nonetheless, I remembered liking Jennie Hansen more than the others from years ago. Thought I'd give this one a chance. Overall I really liked it. It was an interesting time to learn about. Made me so grateful women can own property now. What a headache they had to go through before! I liked the different setting. The author did a great job at story telling. One seriously shocking event that made me walk away for a while. But the curiosity got the best of me. (about a boy and his horse) Then the fact that at one point she was conveniently pregnant and had forgot about it for the past 2 -3 months. Really? Other than that, the story was pretty good, and was very smooth, and engaging.

I was grateful that things didn't magically just work out for being faithful. Life's not that easy. I liked that there were mention of good Mormon people, or church-going type but that it was just as a side note, not shoved down your throat. It was interesting to learn more about the Mexican LDS Ranchers too. It was a very good blend. (Yes, I've been a member my whole life... still...) Thank you Ms. Hansen.

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### **Lu Ann says**

The setting of this historical novel is in the late 1800s, after the Mexican/American War. Unrest still existed and flare-ups by the Mexicans and by Indians occasionally occurred. There was often much resentment by the Mexicans toward the Americans, but this was not the case in a small New Mexico town where the Sebastian Hacienda was located. Therefore, it was upsetting to some when Don Sebastian sold the land to an American - Ross Adams - with a stipulation he marry Don's granddaughter, Lliana, and their son become heir. The bordering neighbor - Ben Purdy - was especially angry..He must have that land or be destroyed!

Travis Telford was a cowboy who headed round-ups of horses to sell to the Americans. He discovered the Sebastian ranch to have some of the finest horses he often included in the round-up. He soon became friends with Mr. & Mrs Adams and soon after, he became more involved in their family than he ever dreamed possible.

This tale has a lot of action and suspense. The author effectively intertwines the lives and individual situations in her usual well-written, smooth manner. This book will not disappoint the reader!

The Title has a definite connection to the plot. The book cover is "fitting" except too dark to be eye-catching. If it were lighter and more defined it would be much more effective in attracting readers. The characterizations were very well create and realistic. The background scenes were described in a clear way so the reader could easily visualize them.

My review of this books offers a Four and a Half Stars rating.

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### **Patti says**

What first intrigued me about "Where the River Once Flowed" was the cover. I saw it high on the shelf of the bookstore and decided to take a look at the synopsis. I put it back 'cause cowboy stories are not my thing, and besides the time frame, the southwest in the late 19th century can be a tough read; (in my vast experience of just one other similar story!) Therefore I put it back on the high shelf – but the picture and title never left my memory.

Glad it didn't - because several months later I bought it real cheap and decided to give it a go.

The beautiful picture on the cover is just the start of an exciting, and very suspenseful story! It is the story of beautiful young Iliana Sebastian living at her grandfather's ranch in the wilderness of New Mexico. Her powerful grandfather, Don Sebastian, is determined to leave his ranch to the male heirs of their family; only problem is that there are none. Women cannot own land so plans for young Iliana to marry are laid out before her grandfather's death, thus assuring the survival of the vast Sebastian ranch. The bad guy owns the ranch adjacent and he has made his own plans. There are many good guys, but the hero is cowboy and horse

trader that finds his way into the story.

Every character is developed well enough that I truly had concern for their welfare and survival; except the bad guy who becomes increasingly hate-able! The whole story is dramatic, tender, suspenseful and exciting. I think I read the last several chapters without breathing! It was the dark, quiet of my morning so the pictures running through my mind were vivid. Considering this cowboy adventure isn't anywhere even close to my usual favorite genre rut, I have to admit - I really liked "Where the River Once Flowed"!

Author Jennie Hansen hooked me once - I may just check out more...

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### **Julie says**

This book isn't just a quick cup of water, it's something to be leisurely savored like a tall glass of lemonade. It is a lush historical fiction set in New Mexico and follows the Sebastian family from 1879 to 1891. We learn of the struggles of these proud Spanish people as they sacrifice everything to build a life on their ranch. The Sebastian rancho and its well-being becomes almost a metaphor for the relationships that revolve around it---as it fluctuates from a land that is flourishing and rich to one with barren soil and hard times.

This ranch is a perfect hub for the characters, but Iliana Sebastian is the impetus that drives them all. The men that surround her are connected by the land and who controls it---and each man has their own impact on Iliana and her life. Her beloved grandfather, her husband, the trusted ranch hands, difficult neighbors and a heroic horse trader all have an interest. I loved the growth in Iliana as she journeys from an unsure, but obedient young woman who does what her grandfather asks, to a wife and mother who will do anything to protect her family. As the story progresses, Iliana is forced to face some hard realities related to her life and the ranch, yet she digs deep to find herself and her own happiness. By the end of the story, it felt as though I had experienced every emotion imaginable right along with Iliana. She is a heroine every woman can relate to in balancing duty and loyalty with independence and love.

The time period, the ranch, and the characters intertwined to make a beautifully written and detailed story. It was easy to soak in the atmosphere and really immerse myself in the characters and their lives. There was a few times where I found phrases repeated on the same page, but the book was well-edited. The beauty and culture of the Spanish people was expertly handled, as well as the prejudice they suffered during this time in history. Where the River Once Flowed is a grand story of a bygone era, where one woman and one ranch brought together men as opposite as the water they needed and the land they loved.

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### **Jennie says**

I tried to add the cover and synopsis, but it didn't work. I wrote it so I have to give it high marks. Actually I do like it--a lot.

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### **Kathryn says**

I was a little disappointed with the ending to this book. It seemed Hansen did a hurried finish and there could

have been a lot more of a conclusion.

Overall, it was an okay read.

This book is all about a Mexican girl who loses her father and mother in an Indian attack and is raised by her abuelo, or grandfather in New Mexico on the Sebastian hacienda, a ranch that their ancestors settled. The grandfather is looking for Iliana to marry and produce a male heir to inherit the ranch and continue on the family's ranch. The neighboring ranch belongs to a dishonest skunk who tries to take the ranch and Iliana by force many times. He misses his chance when Ross Adams, a 30ish strong man comes in and makes a deal with abuela to manage the ranch and in a year marry Iliana who is 15 at the time. There is no love on Iliana's part, but feels it her duty to do as her elders ask and for the sake of the family ranch. She does develop feelings for Ross but not the love she always hoped for. They have a son, Gabe. He is to inherit the ranch by the agreement between Abuelo and Ross when he is older. However, Ben, the evil greedy neighbor poisons Ross slowly and then has one of his outlaw gun for hire shoot the 7 year old Gabe and the horse caring him. Now Ben is in a position to get to Iliana and own the ranch he has always coveted. Ben doesn't expect Travis Telford to come into the picture. He is the "Mormon horse seller" who buys horses and then delivers them to the buyers for a profit. He has always wanted a ranch of his own to raise horses, but never found the right time or woman. He was immediately drawn to Iliana, but didn't pursue because of her married status. All that has changed and he is helping her escape Ben with her unborn baby, Ross' baby until Ben is no longer a threat. He marries her after they escape the horse bandits on their last delivery out of New Mexico. Iliana shows strength in the situation and in helping with the wounded and keeping her head. She marries Travis thinking he will be able to provide for her, but doesn't realize that he also is marrying her for love. She develops that love for him and he does protect her when Ben comes not once but twice for her. They finally can stop running and go back to the hacienda in New Mexico, but their real home is with each other.

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### **Michael-Ann says**

Okay, this is a negative review, but I had to communicate my frustration and HOPE maybe Jennie Hansen herself will see it. By page 70, I still had no connection to any of the characters. As a matter-of-fact, I stopped reading then and read another book in between. I felt like I should finish though, just in case it got better, so my review would be fair. Well, it didn't really get better! The book has no character development. We don't even get to know the main character, Iliana, until near the end. She suffers terribly but I had so little connection to her I barely cared. I can be moved to tears over many things, but horrific things happened to Iliana and she suffered incredible losses and I didn't shed a tear! Why? Because there was no emotional investment! The book wasn't written well enough for an attachment to be formed. The author tells us about tons of events spanning many years (way too many years?!) with so much detachment and so little insight into the characters the book was a waste of time. Sorry, Jennie, but this book is not good!

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