



Dreaming of a Father's Love: A Tale From the Ohio Valley

Sharon A. Lavy

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Dreaming of a Father's Love: A Tale From the Ohio Valley Sharon A. Lavy **Dysfunctional Families? Family Secrets? Not in Our Church!**

How many times do we think it can't happen to us? Whatever "it" is. We often go into deep denial. And truthfully, in the rich backdrop of the farming cradle in the Ohio Valley, a peaceful lifestyle seems possible. Highly likely even. At least on the surface.

It's 1973, and you can feel the tension of the women's liberation movement, that is infiltrating the church, as three young women choose different routes to survive in their male dominated world.

Work is Roberta "Birdie" Alexander's inspiration. She wants to work along side of her father in Alexander's Greenhouse and Nursery.

Birdie also has a dream: She's heard the men in her family talking about the falling Dow. But in spite of the economic slowdown, she's determined that their family business will both survive and thrive. If she has her way, her dad's foliage will become the standard for all of Ohio. And she'll back up that promise with hard work.

Work faster and harder was Birdie's motto. She knew it was the only way to get ahead in this male-dominated world called Alexander's. Because, if she works long enough, hard enough, and fast enough, her father will love her as much as he loves her older twin brothers.

Birdie approaches her Christian walk and relationship with her heavenly father in the same way. Hard work allows her to feel secure in her church membership, but so far, her earthly father seems bent on marrying her off. And she doesn't see Romance in her future.

How much will she risk ... to hold onto her own will and self-righteousness?

Will losing her job wake her up? Losing a lifelong friend? A brother? Or will it take losing the very presence of God?

Next we have **Sara Brubaker**, the secretary for Alexander's Nursery and Greenhouse. She's torn between two worlds. Two-years-old when an Old Order German Baptist couple adopted her, she has become a beautiful woman and enjoys the normal world of fun and fashion.

Should she give all it up and join the Dunkards to truly belong with her adoptive family? Then again, the Anabaptist people dress so old fashioned. Does she really want to look ... Amish?

When she discusses her decision with Birdie, Sara doesn't get the support she expected.

Another blow comes when Sara learns her parents have been keeping something from her, and her father side-steps her questions about the family secret. Was the deception deliberate?

Then there's Irene West, Birdie's lifelong Sunday school friend. Irene misses having a father figure around

... where is he anyway.

In her search for acceptance her skirts get tighter and shorter, which causes Birdie to struggle with the friendship and decide it's her job to shame Irene into acting more like a "Christian." When her tactics don't work on Irene, Birdie decides maybe her Dunkard friend isn't so weird after all.

Will Birdie overcome her self-righteous nature before it's too late--for Irene?

As these young women struggle to find their true identity, and paths in Christ, can they reconcile with each other and their parents? Can they find the courage to grab hold of a new dream and find the love and acceptance they seek?

Inspirational Fiction at its finest, Dreaming of a Father's Love, is written for a woman's encouragement that her opinions are worthwhile. Her dreams are worthwhile. She is worthwhile, and worthy of love.

*Includes Bonus reader group questions.

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