



The Returning

Ann Tatlock

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Andrea knew when she married John Sheldon that her love was not returned, but they both stayed in the marriage for their own reasons. Now John is returning home from a five-year stint in prison. Can John and Andrea mend the rifts that have torn their family apart?

The Returning Details

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Author : Ann Tatlock

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From Reader Review The Returning for online ebook

C. says

I enjoyed this story but felt that the characters could have been developed a bit more. If they had been, it would have been much better.

Karen & Gerard says

The Returning by Ann Tatlock is contemporary fiction about a family of five: Andrea and John who have three children: Phoebe-5, “Rebellious” Rebekah-16 and Billy-17 with Down Syndrome. The story starts with John returning from prison after being gone five years for manslaughter. At first, he feels like a stranger in his own home and is frustrated with himself for not being able to find a decent job to support his family and accepts a busboy job from his brother-in-law. His son, Billy, is really the only one who gives him a good welcome and encourages the others to accept him too. Phoebe is afraid of her dad and Rebekah hates him. Andrea hopes they can put their family back together again and longs for his love but John holds back and falls into adultery once again. I liked how John didn’t give up on his family and worked at rebuilding his relationship with each of them.

I liked this book a lot because I found myself caring for all the characters and was glad it has a happy ending. Second chances and forgiveness is the theme of this novel. I’d say this is Christian fiction at its best! I highly recommend this one if you like stories about realistic family struggles with happy endings.

(Karen's review)

Sonya says

Tatlock presents real life, when romance isn't there and life goes on where love is one sided. You can feel the struggle of all, yet know the answer won't be instantly found at the end of the book.

Her scenes suggesting a fall from grace are not described only implied. They allow the reader to know sin happened without delving into all the details. Thank you.

Billy, their child with Down Syndrome, becomes my hero from the beginning. He seeks to make others happy even when he can feel their sadness. He easily worms into everyones heart and brings a side to life that reminds that today is a gift.

Joy Martin says

This is the second book of Ann’s I’ve read. This one was okay, not as good as traveler’s rest. This is a story of second chances.

Jessie says

A fast read that kept me intrigued. I couldn't put it down. The ending threw me for a loop.

Holly says

This story had much potential but left me very disappointed. I was expecting a husband changed by grace, trying to make up with his wife and kids. What I got was a lying, cheating selfish jerk who didn't love his wife and cheated on her and treated her badly from the beginning of their teenage relationship to present day. The wife was sad, unloved and a doormat for this jerk.

Lisa says

I usually like Ann Tatlock's books but I couldn't get interested in this one. Maybe I've read too many stories just like it.

David Rough says

This story of redemption and transformation was set in a realistic situation involving and struggling teenagers, a prison experience, and a son with Down Syndrome. I enjoyed the author's style and her skill of telling the story. This is a good read with a spiritual covering that is not over the top but still communicates the grace of God. For a Christ-follower, it is easy to fill in between the lines with the truth of the gospel.

Joyce says

Public library copy. Looking forward to reading another of Ann's fine books.

What a powerful story! Here's the blurb from the back cover:

"He would be home soon. The waiting was over. She'd had five long years of it, had felt every minute of it ticking by. At first his coming back had seemed impossibly far off, something that would never really happen. But here it was, the day she'd been waiting for, and not it was almost too much to believe. Maybe there was such a thing as second chances."

The characters in this book are one extended family and a couple of friends of one girl. The five immediate family members are all strong characters in the book, all the way through, though it focuses more on the older sister and the father.

If you like reading about flawed characters you will enjoy this story. Alcoholism, infidelity, teen drinking, Down syndrome, spiritism, and felony/imprisonment -- seems like I'm leaving something out. The author realistically portrays the setting, the characters, and the story so the reader sees, hears, smells, tastes, and feels it unfolding.

Compelling read -- I couldn't put it down. I highly recommend Ann Tatlock's books. They will not disappoint. This book is appropriate for teen readers. It deals nicely with teen/parent relationships, although that's only part of the story.

Paula Phillips says

The Returning - Ann Tatlock -2009

Five years has passed and John -sent to prison on a manslaughter charge which occurred one night when drunk driving is on his way home. However when he arrives home , alot has changed over the years and not just the outward appearances either. Can the Family work out the differences and become a family once again ?. Daughter Beka is starting to mix with the wrong crowd -drinking, drugs and witchcraft , when a terrible accident occurs and Beka becomes drawn into it , Can John help is once daddys little girl into choosing the right decision or will they both end up in Peru ? (An insiders joke , when you read the book). Little Phoebe is afraid of everything , when her dad arrives home all she sees is a stranger , can Phoebe learn to love her dad and become her mother and her fathers daughter ?. Andrea , has always loved John , but has her feelings changed since he's been locked up or will his being home amongst the family re-ignite their passion and love for one another or will this once and for all be the start of a lengthy divorce process - one thats long overdue ?. Bang smack in the story , is our little bright light shining Billy , a god-fearing busboy who suffers from Down Syndrome . Billy is overjoyed at the thought of having his dad back , when Billy and John attend church can Billy together with God's help and prayers answered save his family from falling apart. This story is an amazing tale of how one family can overcome obstacles so great that if one should not pull their weight and play their part it can tear them apart as easy. Can this Family join forces and learn to re-love one another or will it be the end for all , Find out in Ann Tatlock's book "The Returning".

Michelle Robinson says

This was an interesting premise for a novel. However I was a little disappointed in the actual novel All the issues were either too easily resolved or completely glossed over. The novelist left too many issues totally unresolved or ignored.

Alicia says

Give me a break. Every single event is expected, including the plot "twist" and the final scene. "Let's feel good about flawed people trying to be better." Bleah.

Kathy Mizell says

Daddy's Home

John and Andrea had been through a lot, from the time they were each very young. Their families owned vacation cabins just down the shore from each other. That's where the first half of their lives started and where the second half of their lives with many mistakes, three children, a jail sentence of five years, affairs, alcoholism began with much forgiveness, love and a happy family. This is a book for teenagers, middle age and older people. Many lessons can be learned and much about the grace of our Savior.

Linda Hart says

easy read, Christian book. will review later

Joyce says

In this book, John Sheldon comes back home to his family after spending 5 years in prison. He ended up in prison as a result of driving while drunk and killing another person in a car accident. Before going to prison, he had problems with alcoholism and being unfaithful to his wife in a series of affairs. However, while in prison he finds faith in God and his life is changed. Once he comes home, the only person in his family happy to see him is his 17 year old son, Billy, who has Down syndrome. His 16 year old daughter has become very rebellious and has gotten involved in drinking and witchcraft. His 6 year old daughter is terrified of him and his wife is distant because of the problems they have had all along in their marriage. He struggles to cope with rebuilding relationships with his family and getting caught up in weaknesses from his past. I thought the author did a good job of portraying the 16 year old daughter's struggles and John's struggles to make his Christian faith work in the midst of the problems. However, I felt the story was weak in regard to the relationship between him and his wife Andrea. I did like the book but have read better novels by Ann Tatlock.
