



# The Last Mile Home

*Di Morrissey*

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## **The Last Mile Home** Di Morrissey

It is 1953 in a small country town in Australia, a time of postwar prosperity and hope.

The Holtons are wealthy austere graziers who have lived on the land for generations. The McBrides are a large and loving shearer's family who are new arrivals to the district. When the McBrides' eldest daughter falls in love with the Holtons' only son and heir, the barriers to their love seem overwhelming.

But in the end, their love triumphs even over tragedy...and hope and joy are their legacy.

## **The Last Mile Home Details**

Date : Published 2008 by Pan Macmillan (first published January 1st 1994)

ISBN : 9780330424530

Author : Di Morrissey

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## From Reader Review The Last Mile Home for online ebook

### Bookish Enchantment (Katherine Quirke) says

Loved this story. So loving and heartfelt. All about the love of family and the respect of the decisions people make. Fast paced and never a boring moment. Visually rich.

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### Annie says

Short, sweet and just what i needed.

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### Sheryl Rhodes says

Be ready to cry!

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### Jennifer (JC-S) says

‘The last mile home, it often seems the longest, doesn’t it?’

This novel is set in the New England district of Australia, in 1953 and 1958. The story opens in 1958, with Richie Holten getting into trouble with his grandfather Phillip for touching books in a room he is forbidden to enter. There’s a story here surely: what is it? And where are Richie’s parents?

‘Interesting how the past influences the present.’

The next chapter returns us to 1953, where postwar Australia is optimistic and relatively prosperous. In New England, the Holtens are a family of wealthy graziers who’ve been on their land for generations. Conservative and Presbyterian – the Holtens have their own sense of place and social station. The McBrides are newcomers to the area: a large Catholic family, frequently moving to wherever Bob can find work as a shearer or handyman. The McBrides are nowhere near equal to the Holtens. So, when the eldest McBride daughter Abby falls in love with the Holten son and heir Barney, there are plenty of barriers to overcome if true love is to triumph.

‘Thinking is one thing, finding answers is another thing altogether.’

I read most of this novel while travelling by car on New Year’s Day. While elements of the story were predictable, and the timing of visits by the inestimable Mr Richards was just too good to be true, I enjoyed the story. Some parts made me sad, some aspects made me happy and certain elements of coincidence (or timing) caused me to remember that while in fiction, anything is possible, it doesn’t have to be probable.

An enjoyable escapist read.

Jennifer Cameron-Smith

### **Leanne Hunt says**

Once I got into this book, it was a beautiful and touching read. Although I almost gave up reading some distance in, I'm glad I didn't. The uninspiring opening chapter made little sense until I neared the end, and the other early chapters only hooked my attention when the romance truly got going. After that, though, I looked forward to picking up the book each time I had a chance to read.

What appealed to me most about the novel were its characters. The author has a lovely way of portraying ordinary people as heroic and special in their own right. The family, with its odd little foibles and deep concerns, were a pleasure to get to know. Likewise, the romance itself was tenderly handled, so that the reader really wanted things to work out for the couple. I appreciated that the book was more than a straightforward love story and delved into the issues of personal choice and consequences. In the end, I felt richer for having gone through the journey with the characters and felt their pain.

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### **Ns says**

After this story, I am going to find my own special star.

The love story is so tender, touching and heartbreaking. There is a solemn beginning with a bittersweet ending. Despite facing so many obstacles, Abby and Barney's love is an inspiring one. I fell in love with Abby's huge, loving family whose love is unconditional, expressive and supportive. The beliefs and values that stems from this have definitely shaped her. Barney comes from an opposite family, one who is remote and adverse to showing affection, and yet he is full of life, is endearing and so earnest. Abby and Barney fought for love and their love evokes hope and happiness in others. It's a story about love, family and hope. It makes me appreciate and cherish every moment with my family.

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### **Jen Gibbs says**

A good book for the beach - quick, easy, no thought required. Although I wasn't emotionally involved with the characters I still shed a tear despite myself.

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### **Jan says**

I love this author, I find her books very easy to read and enjoy her books

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### **Annie says**

I enjoyed this book so much, would you believe I had tears down my face after the last parts of the novel.

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### **Lee says**

I picked this up for free and I'm thankful. Di Morrissey is crazy popular, and she writes well, but the plot was... so tired and boring. I didn't finish it, but I suppose if I was in a better mood I could have. However, I know I can finish it in my head anyway. The 3/4 I read stuck to a very strict 'best seller' formula, so I'm guessing nothing much changed. Every character is so predictable. I can even picture which Australian actor should play them. \*yawn\* I might have been willing to keep ploughing through it if I had enjoyed the hero of the piece a little more too. Barney is... Well, he doesn't make me swoon, that's for sure. He's rather nondescript actually. Morrissey writes the heroine, Abby, with a little more feeling, but she's also quite a Mary-Sue. I give it two stars for the way Morrissey at least keeps the Australian parts true blue. Set in 1953, there's no hint of any Americanisms coming into the language of the book at all. This makes me happy, but it would probably mean the market for the book would be narrowed to Australians or people from overseas willing to google some of the sayings the characters toss around.

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### **Alison Forrest says**

An easy read about farming family traditions, romance and love. Enjoyable

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### **Jennifer says**

I thoroughly enjoyed this sweet "love triumphs over tragedy" story. I listened to the CDs on my way to and from work and I found myself pulling into the garage and just sitting there listening to the story because I didn't want to let a silly thing like getting home or getting to work stop me from finding out what was going to happen next. The narrator of the audio version I listened to was excellent -- I think the Australian accent gave me a good feel for the characters.

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### **Chiro Pipashito T H says**

Very simple story- boy meets girl, fall in love...but it is not always what the story is but how the story is told that makes a book worth reading. And for this reason, this book is certainly very rewarding.

Thanks for the glimpse into Australian traditional society in the 1950s. And I agree with the author, "The last mile home is always the longest".

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### **Melissa Burt says**

another great read with real Australian characters. I continue to enjoy Di Morrissey's writing and this tale of young love is no exception!

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## Lorraine Cobcroft says

My mother suggested I read this and remarked that she didn't really like Di Morrissey much but loved this story. Said it made her cry.

I agree it's a real tear-jerker, and it contains some lovely description and good philosophy, but I found the plot far too contrived and unbelievable. Abby's family were just too good to be true, and the repeated appearances of Mr Richards were as incredible as his character. Barney's mother turning when Abby went to church and exposing that she'd been a Catholic in a past life just added to a string of seemingly contrived plot elements. Abby and Barney dying days after their wedding while baby Richie was save was all too convenient, and the ending - though certainly it might draw a tear - was totally predictable.

Maybe studying writing is making me too critical, but I didn't particularly enjoy this and I found myself constantly wanting to tell the author which rules she was breaking inappropriately and what she might have done better.

None-the-less, a quick read and probably one from which the incurable romantics among us will derive some pleasure.

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