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With the loss of her first true love, Carolina Adams finds life at the family plantation nearly unbearable. Desperate to escape, she moves to Baltimore to become a nanny to Victoria, a little girl whose mother has died.

After breaking his wedding engagement with Virginia Adams, Carolina's older sister, James Baldwin immerses himself in work for the B&O Railroad, the other passion in his life besides Carolina. But when a shocking business proposal is given to Carolina, James and Carolina seem destined to be apart. Can they dare to dream their aspirations for love might come true?

A Hope Beyond Details

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Carol says

This is book 2 in the "Ribbons of Steel" series. In the First book, "Distant Dreams" Carolina Adams is introduced as a young woman who led a pampered life at her family's plantation outside Falls Church, Virginia. Her father, Joseph Adams, hires a tutor for her, James Baldwin, and they fall in love with each other. However, James is committed to marrying Virginia, Carolina's older sister. When James breaks the engagement and leaves, Carolina's father tells her of the hope that can be had through Jesus.

This story starts with Carolina was choosing Christmas gifts from the "American Railroad Journal." a gift from James Baldwin. One of the ladies hats advertised might make a good gift for Virginia. The death of their baby sister, Maryland, had put a damper on holiday spirit, and Virginia had barely spoken civilly to her since her engagement had been dissolved. Margaret Adams, their mother, was calling for her baby again! Carolina went to see if she could help. Maryland's death was hard on everyone, but especially her mother! Penny, another daughter, was still ill from the Yellow Fever. Virginia told everyone that she had broken the engagement with James to stay with her mother after the baby's death. Everyone respected her for putting the family ahead of her own interests. Penny asked for a story about the railroad that was going to cross America. Carolina explained the difficulty in doing this. Penny fell asleep, but Carolina considered her weakened condition. The doctor didn't expect her to live much longer, so Carolina prayed for Penny's life.

Andrea Norton says

It's been a long time since a book has captivated my attention the way this book has. I received the first book in the series "Distant Dreams" free and was spellbound. I couldn't wait to discover the rest of the story of James Baldwin and Carolina Adams. I loved that President Andrew Jackson was included in the book and my curiosity led me to research and learn more about his Presidency as well as his personal life. This series is wonderful. I enjoyed the pace of the story because I feel that too many modern novels are rushed and leave out the richness that comes from taking ample time to develop the characters and plot of the story. The authors weave a very interesting story that has no slow or boring sections. I can't wait to read the last book in this series!

Priscilla says

Really enjoyed another trilogy by Judith Pella. (Also co-authored with Tracie Peterson) I recognize the style from 'The Stonewycke Trilogy' which she co-authored with Michael Phillips. So I think a lot of the crazy twists and turns and the never ending plots are probably Pella's influence. These traits are particularly evident in 'The Stonewycke Trilogy' but also surface a fair bit in this series. I have really enjoyed it! Great series!

Mary says

A fairly good Book 2 for the series. I liked the first one the best, but I did appreciate a good ending and the fact that the rest of the story showed that God/Christ surely looks over people as they make decisions for the right reasons and how He can change what they feel the future might bring. I do like Judith Pella and Michael Phillips whom she learned from.

Debbie says

This was a pretty good book. It was Christian based and had a lot of historical facts included as well. I think I liked slightly better than the first because it actually wraps things up nicely whereas the first one ends and doesn't wrap up anything. There were parts that dragged and a few times I found myself very annoyed at the characters but overall a decent read. I will probably read the third one.

Margaret Chind says

Barbara says

This is very enjoyable historical fiction set in the 1830's and early 1840's. Carolina was a very endearing character, and it was interesting to see the results of her choices in life, both good and questionable. I found Virginia was a very sad character to me; her priorities seemed so misplaced. Her troubles help the reader consider what is truly important in life. There was one event that happened near the end of the story that seemed a little bit too contrived; I don't think it would have happened with the perfect timing needed for the novel's plot to work, but this was still a worthwhile and delightful book.

Jodi says

Enjoyed this one more than the first book in the series. I was a little bored with it until Lucy Alexander came into the story and then really enjoyed it a lot more. Some of the railroad descriptions are really dry and completely over my head but there aren't as many as the first book.

Rachel Pulsipher says

The first book I gave four stars because I really liked the story, the characters, time period and train stuff even though sometimes it dragged a little. This second book I started out thinking it would be different than the first. By the time I finished I was so frustrated and angry it was hard to be happy. The author literally

took the same story as the first book and dragged it on until it was dying at the end and then to make the readers happy finally ended the stupid story. I have no desire to read the third book at all! I gave it two stars because she actually gave us a freaking ending!

Lauren Paris says

This book was so slow moving that I ended up just skimming the whole book

Kari Metzger says

Wow - skimmed most of this book, partly because it is so HEAVY on preaching (which may be a good thing for some readers, so don't let that deter you!) and the story line just didn't move fast enough for me at all. I found both Carolina and James to be insufferably cowardly with their feelings, resulting in agony in each chapter while I waited for the plot to resolve.

WHO THIS BOOK IS FOR: Religious teens, absolutely. They probably will love the struggle of decisions around fate as a woman, and they might learn a bit about the American railroads as well. :)

Vanda says

What i learned from this book is that this book is all about HOPE, in every sense of the word. Here's my case with HOPE, bear with me:

i read this book ages ago :) back in 1998 and last night i re-read it to refresh the memory about the storyline and all, guess what...it felt like i have traveled back in time remembering how difficult it was to find Christian books, moreover christian fiction, back then, yet i found this one in Immanuel Bookstore, one fated afternoon...

I liked it very much and went back the next day to find the rest of the series only to get my hope plummeted. The Lady who was sitting next to the cashier said it was the only one they had. I remember asking her if it would be possible for me to place an order for the next shipment for the rest of the series or any similar books (while saying that my brain had wandered in different direction calculating the conversion, how much would that be in Rupiah? would it be affordable?).

that lady (happened to be one of the owners, fact i only found out later) just shrugged her shoulders, and smiled slightly(she always sit at the cashier beside the cashier girl and never smile, but this time she smiled...how wonderful was that). She only smiled and didnt say a word. The girl at the cashier translated her smile to me, she said right out: 'dont give too much hope' (jangan terlalu berharap) thus the smile was either softening the blow or expressing something that means impossible to get.

So i went back home thinking: i shouldnt give too much hope, or i may hope a little teeny weeny hope, nah, must not hope and naturally the hope was forgotten in time...such a hopeless case for a book about hope...

i would have rated it ***** back then, but now after encountering so many books which they said made one

wiser i would have given it *** but gave it ***** for old time sake...

ps. that lady is now very old, i saw her when i went to Immanuel Bookstore last christmas to buy stuff for Christmas candlelight service...if only she knew what happened to me back in 1998...for people with obsessive compulsive streak, not being able to get it meant only one thing: sleepless nights to think of ways to get it...hopeless case!

Melissa says

I really enjoyed this second book in the Ribbons of Steel series. This is a Christian romance set in the 1830's in the East. The story revolves around the Adams family who are wealthy plantation owners in Virginia. The family has passed through numerous tragedies including the death of the youngest child.

At the end of book 1, Carolina who is 16 has fallen in love with the railroad and her tutor. She is fascinated by the railroad and wants to learn everything about it. Her tutor James was sent to the family plantation to not only teach Carolina but court her older sister Virginia. James is tricked into proposing to Virginia even though he is really in love with Carolina. He decides to go work for the railroad instead of his banker father and breaks his engagement with Virginia. Not knowing how Carolina really feels about him, he leaves without saying goodbye and mourns the loss of Carolina.

Book 2 picks up here and follows Carolina and James as they try to make their way without each other. This book like the first book has lots of twists and turns and one wonders if they will ever find each other again. For some reason while I was reading this, I kept picturing Gone With the Wind. Virginia gave off a bit of the Scarlett O'Hara vibe. While this book resolves some of the issues with Carolina and James, there are still many questions. Can't wait to read the third book in the series.

Angela says

Second in a trilogy. Follows same info as "Distant Dreams" however a very "convenient" plot twist early on that is not likely to happen in real life. But after that still a great read if you like historical romance.

Sharon says

Interesting novel about the beginnings of the railroads in America. Follow the struggle of Carolina as she wants more than society's standards for the day, she wants to learn about railroads, considered a masculine pursuit. But above what each wants, the Lord is working in their hearts to bring him home to them. Underlying theme of mental health issues and slavery.
