



Be Still My Soul: The Cadence of Grace, Book 1

By Joanne Bischof

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Night's chill tickled her skin. Lonnie pressed her hands together and glanced up. He was even more handsome up close. Having grown up the shy, awkward daughter of Joel Sawyer, she'd hardly spoken to any boy, let alone the one who had mothers whispering warnings in their daughter's ears and fathers loading shotguns.

Pretty Lonnie Sawyer is shy and innocent, used to fading into the background within her family, and among the creeks and hollows of the Appalachian hills. Though her family is poor and her father abusive, she clings to a quiet faith. But when handsome ladies' man and bluegrass musician Gideon O'Riley steals a kiss, that one action seals her fate.

Her father forces her into a hasty marriage with Gideon—a man she barely knows and does not love. Equally frustrated and confused by his new responsibilities, Gideon yearns for a fresh start, forcing Lonnie on an arduous journey away from her home in Rocky Knob.

Her distant groom can't seem to surrender his rage at the injustice of the forced matrimony or give Lonnie any claim in his life. What will it take for Gideon to give up his past, embrace Lonnie's God, and discover a hope that can heal their two fractured hearts?

Gideon only ever cared about himself. Now that Lonnie is his wife, will he ever be worthy of her heart?

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Editorial Review

Review

“The rugged charm of Appalachia is the perfect backdrop to mirror the hardship and beauty of Joanne Bischof’s tender, heart-tugging debut. The author’s lyrical voice drew me in; the rich detail and authentic emotion kept me turning the pages. Lovers of historical fiction and topsy-turvy romance will find much to rejoice about in this lovely story. *Be Still My Soul* is a delight from start to finish!”

—Carla Stewart award-winning author of *Chasing Lilacs* and *Stardust*

“*Be Still My Soul* is a rare gem: a powerful and compelling story for every woman who's known love's real ups and downs. Author Joanne Bischof draws a poignant picture of a forced marriage and its challenges and heartache, followed by the healing and joy of transformative love. A refreshingly honest new voice makes a memorable debut!”

—Rosslyn Elliott award-winning author of *Fairer than Morning* and *Sweeter than Birdsong*

“*Be Still My Soul* is a wonderful debut from newcomer Joanne Bischof. If you grew up loving Janette Oke, you’ll want to read this tender tale of grace, forgiveness, and redemption.”

—Susan Meissner author of *A Sound Among the Trees*

“Beautifully set in the Appalachian Mountains, Joanne Bischof’s debut novel is one of those rare finds that will keep you up burning the midnight oil. I literally couldn’t put it down! Her characters are engaging from the moment they walk onto the stage of your heart and so real you’ll remember them long after you turn the last page. As an author of two historical novels set in the Appalachian Mountains, I was enchanted by the setting and Joanne’s deft descriptions. I can’t wait to read book two of the series.”

—Diane Noble Bestselling Author

“*Be Still My Soul* gives readers a refreshing dip into nineteenth-century American Appalachian life, with a story that bubbles into the heart like a clear mountain spring. Ms. Bischof’s uplifting tale hits the palate as sweetly as the pancakes and honey her characters enjoy for breakfast. You’ll leave the book feeling you’ve made new friends, whom you won’t want to forget.”

—Linore Rose Burkard author of *Before the Season Ends* and *The Country House Courtship*

“A moving debut! More than just a love story, *Be Still My Soul* takes compelling characters on a journey of redemption in the dangerous beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Joanne Bischof’s masterful and compassionate insight into human nature won me over. I can’t wait for the second book in the Cadence of Grace series!”

—Sarah Sundin award-winning author of the *Wings of Glory* series

“Joanne Bischof offers a heart rendering tale set in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains, where two young souls must put away their past and accept life together as man and wife. While sometimes gut-wrenching, the young couple must endure difficult trials that lead them to seek and find answers in the everlasting arms of Jesus. *Be Still My Soul*, will stir your soul and will leave you thinking about the characters long after you’ve turned the last page.”

—Deborah Vogts author of *Snow Melts in Spring* and *Seeds of Summer*

About the Author

Married to her first sweetheart, **Joanne Bischof** lives in the mountains of Southern California where she keeps busy making messes with their home-schooled children. When she's not weaving Appalachian romance, she's blogging about faith, writing, and the adventures of country living that bring her stories to life. *Be Still My Soul* is her first novel.

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The night air brushed her arms, and Lonnie prayed autumn's cool breath could whisper her off—carry her into another life. *Lord, help me.* She looked up at her pa and forced a tight smile. With his broad back to the moonlit sky, his scruffy face was hidden beneath the shadow of a floppy hat. Chestnut hair swirled against her cheeks, and she blinked, willing the breeze to calm her nerves.

Joel Sawyer arched a bushy eyebrow. "Don't see what's gotten ya so shaken up all a sudden."

She lifted her chin. "I ain't shaken." Her eyes dared him to say otherwise. "I just don't see why..." She bit her tongue at the tremble in her voice. Her thumb traced the fresh bruises on her wrist—each small dent the same size as her pa's fingers.

"Because your ma's got a headache." Her pa's growl was for her ears alone. His eyes bored into hers, even through the lie. "Can't go lettin' Samson down." Sour breath hit her face. "Now get on up there and sing for these people."

Lonnie swallowed and eyed the crowd that had gathered for an evening of dancing. With the first autumn leaves blanketing the forest floor, it was sure to be the last of the summer. She'd never sung for a crowd before and, at seventeen, felt foolish when her heart pounded in her ears and her skin tingled with fear. If only Samson hadn't asked that her ma sing this night.

Her pa had made it clear. No wife of his was gonna snuggle up that close to Samson Brown. Over his dead body, or so he'd said. Lonnie watched her pa descend the steps, shoulders hunched.

"Sorry about your mama's headache," Samson whispered. He smiled and his eyes crinkled.

Lonnie nodded, certain he knew the truth, yet fighting the urge to make a liar out of the man who'd just deposited her at the stage as if she were no more than a pawn.

Lonnie glanced to the sky, and even as night's chill crept past her faded gingham dress, she prayed for a peace from the One who could help her through this. Her ma was the songbird. Not her. Folks were always going on about how Maggie Sawyer had the prettiest voice on any Sunday morning.

A gray spotted dog tipped his ears when Lonnie stepped over him onto the makeshift stage. Her bare feet skirted around a pair of lanterns at the stage edge. Samson Brown, eyes twinkling, raised a banjo onto his lap. Lonnie took her place beside the trio's mandolin player, Gideon O'Riley, and when their shoulders touched, she stepped sideways, nearly tripping as she did.

Gideon glanced at her, his expression unreadable until amusement flitted through his green eyes. Lonnie chided herself for blushing so easily. The fiddler tilted his instrument to his chin. The creases in his blacksmith hands were stained dark as coal. He nodded and waited, bow poised. Reluctantly, Lonnie returned the nod.

The hollow sound of his tapping boot echoed through the cracks of the porch. The bow slid across the strings slower than a cat stretching after a good, long nap. Gideon struck the strings of his mandolin, and Samson's banjo twanged, rambling as free as a holler. Lonnie watched in awe, bewildered by their confidence.

She clung to the shadows from the eaves overhead, but when her pa motioned for her to step into the moonlight, she scooted forward. Her bare toes reached the edge of the porch, and she glanced away from her pa's smug stare. When the fiddle's strings thickened in harmonies, Lonnie sang out the words. Her heart quickened, stunned by the sound of her own voice belting out a song she'd learned at her ma's knee. She stared into the blur of faces as feet stomped and calico skirts swirled, revealing dozens of homemade petticoats and faded stockings. She forced her foot to tap in rhythm as men spun their girls around. Those

without girls jigged up enough dust to make a body need a good bath.

About to round into the third verse, the words snagged in her throat. She blinked, her mind suddenly blank. Lonnie, you know this! With his shoulders hunched, Gideon's hands flew over the fret board, and the fiddler played louder than ever. After clearing her throat, Lonnie readied herself for the last verse.

But Gideon sped up, leaving the rest of the band behind.

When the crowd bellowed and cheered, Lonnie bit her lip. Gideon played faster, an impish grin lighting his face. She clapped trembling hands and glanced to the musician beside her. Shaking his head, Samson rose slowly from his chair and, still plucking the strings of his banjo, crossed the porch. He flashed a twisted smile.

Cheers swarmed from the crowd. With slow movements, Samson reached out his boot and kicked Gideon's stool so hard it flew out from under him. Gideon stumbled but did not fall. His hand fell from the fret board, and after throwing a glare at Samson, he grabbed the stool and sat.

"C'mon, Gid! Lighten up a bit, would ya?" Samson yelled over the noise.

Gideon rushed in with a few last strums until only his vibrations remained, bouncing through the woods. Folks whistled and cheered so loudly Lonnie could no longer hear the pounding of her heart. Clapping along, she stepped back. Never again would her pa talk her into singing in front of folks. No sir. Her place was in the back of the crowd.

Gideon held his mandolin over his head and bowed. As cocky as he was, Lonnie couldn't help but smile. He walked toward her and, without hesitation, draped an arm over her shoulders. He smelled of smoke and cedar. Heat grew in the back of her neck and tingled into her cheeks. She needn't look down to see the flame in her pa's face as well— she knew it was there.

When the applause mellowed, she slid away and scurried down the steps, her legs weak and head light with relief. She brushed past a nuzzling couple and ducked under a thick arm that clutched a pint of cider, finally spotting her aunt Sarah beneath a scarlet maple. Enough moonlight danced through the leaves to make the woman's ginger bun shine. Rushing over, Lonnie clasped her cool hands, the rough skin worn and familiar.

"Why, you're tremblin' som'n awful." Sarah squeezed her hand. "Don't think for one moment you don't belong up there. You'da made your ma proud."

Lonnie fought to catch her breath. "That was the most terrifying thing I've ever done in my life."

She felt a shadow behind her. Lonnie didn't need to glance over her shoulder when rough fingertips clutched her elbow. "We'll be leaving now." Her pa's voice was gruff.

She glanced at her aunt, then peered up at him. "Mind if I stay a bit longer?"

His eyes flinched, but then he sighed. The smell of moonshine hung thick. "Walk home with Oliver. He's stayin' too."

"Yessir. Thank you, Pa." Her words seemed to fall on nothing but the breeze as he strode from the clearing. Lonnie knew her ma would be up waiting, the littlest ones already tucked into bed. With a sigh, she let the last of her worry melt into the cool night air and turned to her aunt, pleased to have her company for at least a little while longer.

"So..." Sarah's whimsical voice nearly sang the single word.

"Don't say it." Lonnie wagged a finger with little authority, knowing full well what her aunt was itching to say. Sarah sobered, the lines around her eyes smoothing.

But Lonnie knew her mother's sister well. "I blush too easily," she blurted.

A smile lifted her aunt's round cheeks. Twice Lonnie's age and with skin a shade paler, she was as dear a friend as Lonnie had ever had. When Sarah's gaze moved past her, Lonnie tossed a glance over her shoulder and saw the blacksmith run a cloth over his fiddle. Samson lowered his banjo into a sack. Gideon had moved on. His shoulder was pressed to the bark of a hundred-year-old chestnut, and his arms lay folded over his chest. The girl he was wooing looked more than willing to have his undivided attention.

"Seems like every girl in Rocky Knob wants to steal that boy's heart." Sarah shook her head. "Don't you pay it no never mind."

Forcing a shrug, Lonnie tugged at a pinch of her faded dress. The fabric, different shades of blue, had seen better days. She suddenly wished she hadn't been so eager to stay behind.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

James Fletcher:

This Be Still My Soul: The Cadence of Grace, Book 1 book is simply not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is usually information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get data which is getting deeper a person read a lot of information you will get. That Be Still My Soul: The Cadence of Grace, Book 1 without we understand teach the one who reading through it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't end up being worry Be Still My Soul: The Cadence of Grace, Book 1 can bring when you are and not make your tote space or bookshelves' turn out to be full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even phone. This Be Still My Soul: The Cadence of Grace, Book 1 having excellent arrangement in word and layout, so you will not sense uninterested in reading.

Johnnie McCormick:

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them family or their friend. Did you know? Many a lot of people spent they free time just watching TV, as well as playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity this is look different you can read some sort of book. It is really fun for you personally. If you enjoy the book you read you can spent all day long to reading a e-book. The book Be Still My Soul: The Cadence of Grace, Book 1 it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of those who recommended this book. These were enjoying reading this book. If you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book from the smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book has high quality.

Linda Soto:

In this era globalization it is important to someone to find information. The information will make a professional understand the condition of the world. The fitness of the world makes the information better to share. You can find a lot of sources to get information example: internet, newspaper, book, and soon. You can see that now, a lot of publisher this print many kinds of book. The particular book that recommended to you personally is Be Still My Soul: The Cadence of Grace, Book 1 this guide consist a lot of the information in the condition of this world now. This particular book was represented just how can the world has grown up. The dialect styles that writer make usage of to explain it is easy to understand. Often the writer made some exploration when he makes this book. Here is why this book appropriate all of you.

Carmine Caulfield:

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