

Amish Greenhouse Mystery

Book 3

THE
ROBIN'S
GREETING

WANDA &
BRUNSTETTER

SHILOH RUN  PRESS

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Belinda's Savory Baked Beans

1 pound dry navy beans
2 bay leaves
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup ketchup
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup molasses

1 tablespoon dry mustard
1 medium onion, chopped
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups cut-up cooked ham
or ham lunch meat

Combine navy beans and bay leaves in large bowl. Cover with water and let soak overnight. Drain and place in large kettle, cover with water, and boil. Cook 45 minutes or until tender. Drain beans, reserving liquid. In a bowl combine ketchup, brown sugar, molasses, dry mustard, onion, and ham. Place beans in uncovered roasting pan, stir ketchup mix in and add reserved liquid. Bake at 350 degrees for 3 hours. Add more liquid if contents in roasting pan become too dry.

Discussion Questions

1. Virginia felt uncomfortable around her Amish neighbors because their way of living was different from hers. Is it possible to have a friendship with someone whose lifestyle is not the same as yours? How should we treat our neighbors?
2. After Belinda's husband died, she never expected to fall in love again or to be courted by two very different men. Do you think it was right for her to see both men socially? How did it help her decide which one to choose?
3. Belinda's son Henry was determined to find out who was behind the vandalism and threatening messages his family had received since his father, brother, and brother-in-law died. Do you think his motive for wanting to do this was only because he was concerned for the safety of his family? Or did Henry believe that if he could learn the person's identity, it would prove to his mother and siblings that, although still a teenager, he could behave as a responsible adult?
4. Amy tried her hand at matchmaking because she was convinced that Herschel was the best man for her mother. Have you ever become a matchmaker? If so, how did it turn out?
5. Sylvia postponed her wedding to Dennis for a few months in order to help her mother in the greenhouse. Do you think it was necessary for her to do that, or should Belinda have insisted that her daughter keep her original plans? Have you ever set an important plan or event aside to help someone else? If so, how did it make you feel?

6. Monroe had been interested in Belinda since they were teenagers and was disappointed when she married someone else. When Belinda became a widow, Monroe felt he was given a second chance. Do you think Monroe did the right thing by pressuring Belinda to marry him? Have you ever been in a similar situation? If so, what did you do about it?
7. Herschel had been a widower for some time and spent many years pining for his wife. Until he met Belinda, he never thought he would fall in love again. But Herschel felt inferior to Belinda's other suitor because he was less successful than Monroe in material things. Should a person ever let their lack of success keep them from establishing a relationship with someone they love? How can we rise beyond our insecurities when others are more successful?
8. Belinda was kindhearted and giving, even to an elderly woman who had stolen things from her. What verses in the Bible teach us how we should respond to people who have been unkind or used us? How are we supposed to treat widows and those who are poor?
9. Virginia had kept her past hidden from others because she felt ashamed of how she had treated her children. Is there something in your past that you have shared with only a few people, or perhaps no one, because you were afraid of people's reactions? Is it important to share past mistakes with others, or would it be better to keep quiet about our mistakes, even if someone could benefit from knowing?
10. When Michelle met her mother for the first time after many years, did she respond the way most people would? Was Michelle's willingness to forgive her mother something she had to force herself to do, or did it come naturally because of her faith in God? What does the Bible say about forgiveness?

11. When the truth was revealed about who had been doing the vandalism to the Kings' property, how did you feel about the way Belinda reacted? Should she have let the sheriff know, even though the one who'd done it apologized? How would you have dealt with such a situation?
12. How did forgiveness play into this story? Does forgiveness mean we don't have to hold people accountable for their actions?
13. Why are some people able to forgive someone who has wronged them, while others harbor anger and resentment toward those who have hurt them or their loved ones? How can we learn from Christ's example to forgive others?
14. Henry loved his father very much and became upset when his mother decided to marry another man. He was worried that her new husband might try to act as though he was his father. Were Henry's fears legitimate? Did the man Belinda planned to marry handle things well with Henry? Have you or someone you know faced a similar situation—either as a child whose parent decided to remarry, or as the parent who felt concerned about the children when he or she decided to marry again? What can a parent say to a child who feels anxious about a new person coming into their lives?
15. By reading this book, did you learn anything about the Amish way of life that you didn't already know? Did it help you understand why the Plain people adhere to their traditions?
16. Were there any scriptures mentioned in this book that spoke to your heart or helped you in some way?