

Book of the Week

***One for the Blackbird, One for the Crow* by Olivia Hawker**

Book Review by Maureen Lang

One of the most memorable novels that I have read this fall is *One for the Blackbird, One for the Crow* by Olivia Hawker. The story takes place in Wyoming in 1876 and really delves into the many facets of living as a woman and a mother so far removed from much civilization.

Nettie Mae and Cora, neighbors in the prairie, are victims of their own human frailty and all the emotions that are intertwined between them. Due to circumstances that are really a result of their own weaknesses, basic survival is at stake. Both husbands suddenly are taken from them. Though they regard each other with distrust and misgivings, they are forced to depend on each other so their families will survive the long, approaching winter.

Two more different women would be hard to find, but each in her own way brings strength that the other needs. What is so interesting is that many of the very same personality traits we experience in ourselves, are strongly shown in these women. Boredom, resourcefulness, disappointment, self-righteousness, jealousy, and fear affect them both, but in different ways. Later when their oldest children fall in love, will they put aside their own feelings and justifications for the greater good of their families? Before the story finishes, each woman comes to appreciate her neighbor in ways never thought possible.

I especially liked this story as the characters showed depth in both strength and weakness. It also turned out to be based on the true story of the author's family. This story brought back the truth that people are not that different; they just learn to live with a different set of challenges. I encourage you to pick up this book. It is not a quick read, but it is one you will not easily forget.

