



Q & A with Eva Marie Everson

Author of *The One True Love of Alice-Ann*



Eva Marie Everson is an award-winning, bestselling author of over 30 fiction and nonfiction titles, including *Five Brides*, *The Road to Testament*, the Cedar Key series, the Potluck Club series (with Linda Evans Shepherd), *God Bless Us Every One*, *Reflections of God's Holy Land* (with Miriam Feinberg Vamosh), and others. She is the president of Word Weavers International, the director of Florida Christian Writers Conference, and a member of a number of writers' organizations. Eva Marie and her husband make their home in central Florida, where they are owned by a small black doxie.

1. What inspired you to write *The One True Love of Alice-Ann*?

This whole story started with the title. I was working on another project when the title *The One True Love of Alice-Ann* popped into my head. I thought, "That's a cool title . . .," and I wrote it down. I went back to my project, but I kept looking over at the title. Then, as if inspiration just sprang up, I remembered a story our neighbors (both of whom have been deceased for a while) told my husband and me—their love story from World War II. I took that story, changed it slightly, wrote it down, ran it past my critique partner—she loved it—so I sent it to my editor at Tyndale . . . and then I got back to work!

2. How do you expect this story to resonate with your audience? What are you most excited for your readers to experience through reading this novel?

We have all had to make life choices. I heard a line in a movie (just this morning) that went like this: Every time you make a decision, you take a gamble. Maybe it's the right choice. Maybe it's not. How do you know? This is Alice-Ann's dilemma. Does she have one true love . . . or two?

We've all been there. We've all made decisions and then wondered if we made the right one. Sometimes those choices follow us for years. Sometimes we know the answer right away.

I'm most excited for readers to experience life in the States during WWII. So often we read of what happened in Europe or in the Pacific, but we don't usually read about how our citizens who stayed back home sacrificed for the greater good. I'm also excited for them to experience Alice-Ann's love story and maturity as she grows from a starry-eyed 16-year-old to a grown woman.

3. What role does faith play in the story?

Alice-Ann has a major life decision to make, and she can only make it with God's help. But also, I think faith was much more of a natural reality in the '40s. People *went* to



church. Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night . . . They *prayed* for the troops. Actively. Sincerely. This was a different time in America (and one I wouldn't mind seeing us go back to—as far as faith is concerned!).

4. What lessons or truths do you hope readers will take away from *The One True Love of Alice-Ann*?

That when we take our distresses to God, he not only hears our cries, but he and he alone can wrap us up in his great big arms and show us the right path to take. He alone can ease our pain. You know, he loves us so much . . . he sent his Son to die for us. He won't let us down now.

5. As an author, what did you particularly enjoy about crafting this story?

The entire thing! I love this story so much. I loved researching the era. I loved creating Alice-Ann and Carlton and their love story. I just loved it!

6. How did writing this story influence your perspective on the stateside effects of WWII, and more specifically on women's roles during the war?

During the writing, I went to see a friend of mine who is in a veterans' home in South Carolina. As I arrived, a hearse pulled in. After I met my friend in the cafeteria, I learned that one of the veterans living there had passed away. I accompanied my friend to the "graduation" ceremony. I have to tell you . . . since I'd researched the era and I was in the midst of writing the book, I started crying and couldn't stop!

As far as women's roles, I learned that *everyone* stepped up to the plate. Everyone. Young. Old. Women. Men. Children. Everyone.

My mother used to tell me stories of rolling up yarn and waving to the soldiers who were coming out of Camp Stewart (which is in the book!) and heading down 301. She was only about six to ten years old during the war, but even she had a part in the effort.

7. Please describe how you portrayed the US labor camps for European POWs and why you included that perspective in the story.

My grandmother used to talk about the POWs who worked the fields with them. She said only the nicest things about them. Then, as I was writing, Bulloch County, Georgia, marked the site of the camp—ceremony and all. I read the (long) article printed in the paper and discovered that the woman they interviewed was the wife of one of my relatives! So I dug a little deeper.

The fact is, the POWs helped keep the farms going. The men were at war. The women and children and farmers left behind did what they could, but they needed help.

My uncle told me that one day a week, the children were let out of school to go work the farms.

That's all just so amazing to me! See what I mean about a different era?



8. What is the best advice or encouragement you have received either personally or professionally?

Robert Benson said to me, “The only person who knows what God has whispered into your heart is you . . . but you won’t hear him if you don’t hush.”

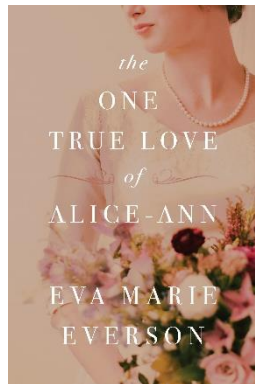
9. What are you most proud of in your writing career?

So, so much . . . truly. But—and I don’t want this to sound cliché—I’ve got the awards and all that . . . but the truth is, when I get an e-mail or a letter and someone tells me that my work changed their life or helped them in some major way . . . really, that is more than enough.

10. What are some future projects you’re working on?

I just finished writing a biography on Eric Liddell with Rev. Eric Eichinger for Tyndale. Amazing, amazing, amazing story!

I’m very active as the president of Word Weavers, as the director of Florida Christian Writers Conference, and with my work with new writers. And somewhere in all that, I’ve got another “based on a true story” popping around in my head. ☺



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