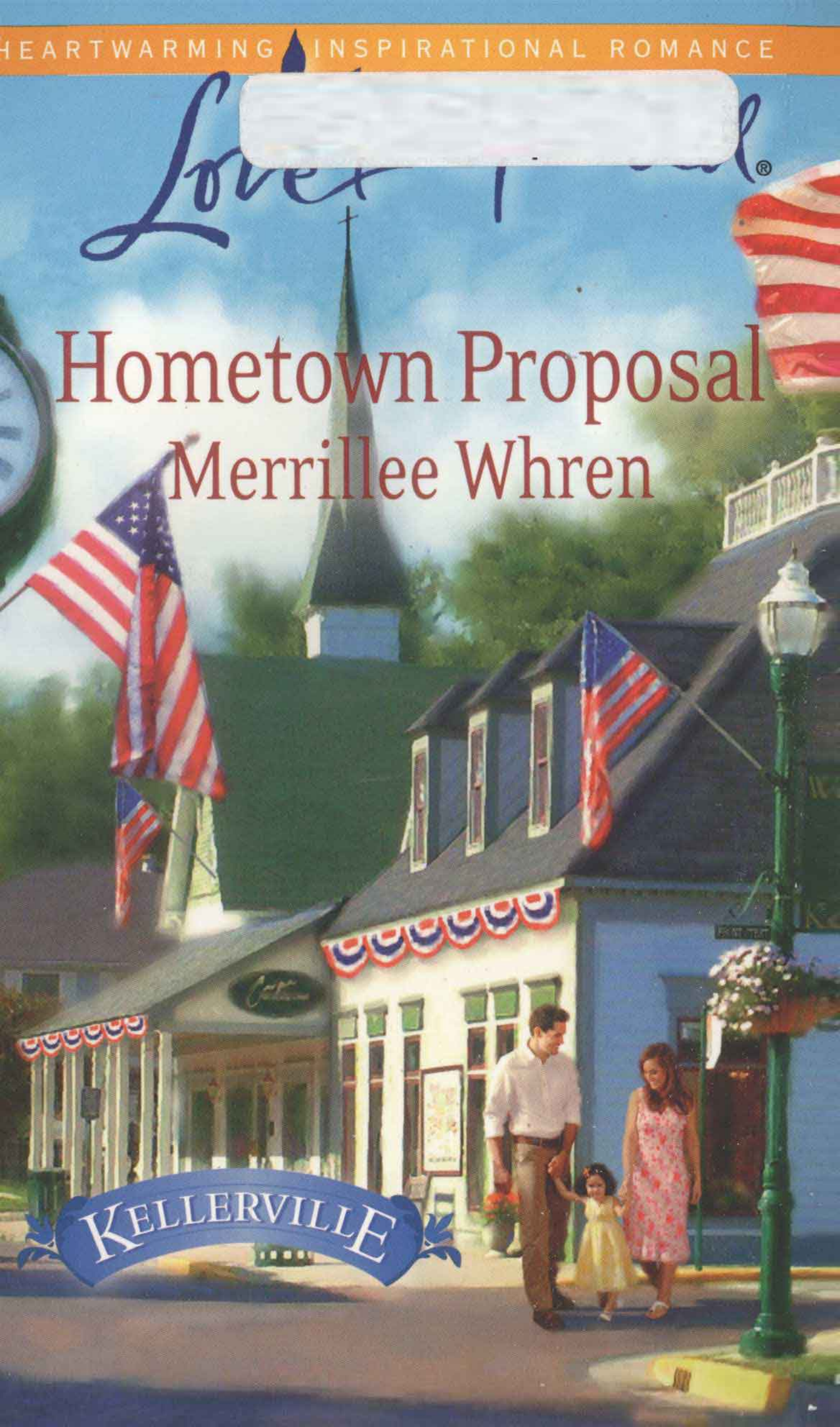


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Harlequin Superromance miniseries,
THE NOTORIOUS O'NEILLS, with
TYLER O'NEILL'S REDEMPTION,
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Police chief Juliette Tremblant recognized the shape of the man strolling down the street—in as calm and leisurely fashion as if it were the middle of the day rather than midnight. She slowed her car, convinced her eyes were playing tricks on her. It had been a long time since Tyler O'Neill had been seen in this town.

As she pulled to a stop at the curb, he turned toward her, and her heart about stopped.

“What the hell are you doing here, Tyler?”

“Well, if it isn't Juliette Tremblant.” He made his way over to her, then leaned down so he could look her in the eye. He was close enough to touch.

Juliette was not, repeat, *not* going to touch Tyler O'Neill. Not with her fingers. Not with a ten-foot pole. There would be no touching. Which was too bad, since it was the only way she was ever going to convince herself the man standing in front of her—as rumpled and heart-stoppingly handsome now as he'd been at sixteen—was real.

And not a figment of all her furious revenge dreams.

“What are you doing back in Bonne Terre?” she asked.

“The manor is sitting empty,” Tyler said and shrugged, as though his arriving out of the blue after ten years was casual. “Seems like someone should be watching over the family home.”

“You?” She laughed at the very notion of him being here for any unselfish reason. “Please.”

He stared at her for a second, then smiled. Her heart fluttered against her chest—a small mechanical bird powered by that smile.

“You’re right.” But that cryptic comment was all he offered.

Juliette bit her lip against the other questions.

Why did you go?

Why didn’t you write? Call?

What did I do?

But what would be the point? Ten years of silence were all the answer she really needed.

She had sworn off feeling anything for this man long ago. Yet one look at him and all the old hurt and rage resurfaced as though they’d been waiting for the chance. That made her mad.

She put the car in gear, determined not to waste another minute thinking about Tyler O’Neill. “Have a good night, Tyler,” she said, liking all the cool “go screw yourself” she managed to fit into those words.

It seems Juliette has an old score to settle with Tyler.

Pick up TYLER O’NEILL’S REDEMPTION

to see how he makes it up to her.

Available September 2010,

only from Harlequin Superromance.

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HSREXP0910



TANYA MICHAELS

Texas Baby



Instant parenthood is turning Addie Caine's life upside down. Caring for her young nephew and infant niece is rewarding—but exhausting! So when a gorgeous man named Giff Baker starts a short-term assignment at her office, Addie knows there's no time for romance. Yet Giff seems to be in hot pursuit....

Is this part of his job, or can he really be falling for her? And her chaotic, ready-made family!

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HAR75325

Dear Reader,

Thank you for choosing to read *Hometown Proposal*. I hope you enjoyed another story set in Kellerville. The journey that Elise and Seth took to reconciliation is a lesson in forgiveness and mercy. Sometimes forgiveness is hard because the hurt is so deep, but God can give us the strength to forgive and show mercy. When I don't feel very merciful, I like to remind myself of the story that Jesus told Matthew in 18:21-35.

I love to hear from readers. I enjoy your letters and e-mails so much. You can write to me at P.O. Box 16461, Fernandina Beach, Florida 32035, or through my Web site:
www.merrilleewhren.com.

May God bless you,

Merrilee Whren

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. At the beginning of the story Elise is upset with her sister, Julianne, because she kept information about Seth a secret. Do you think Elise had justification for being upset? Has something like this happened to you? If so, how did you handle it?
2. Seth is worried about seeing Elise because he doesn't know how she will react to his having Olivia. How would you feel if you were in Elise's place?
3. The sudden death of Seth's father made him examine his life and make changes. Have you or someone you know had a tragic event precipitate a life-changing examination? Explain.
4. Although Elise doesn't want to be drawn into Seth's life, she feels the pressure from those around her to do the "right" thing when it comes to helping him. As Christians, we are often called to help those in need. Discuss the feelings that can accompany this call.
5. Elise thinks about how God wants her to treat Seth. How might the message in Luke 6:27-36 help her? Discuss the difficulties with following God's directives in these verses.
6. Seth is prompted by his faith to seek forgiveness from those he has hurt. Do you think asking for forgiveness can be as difficult as the forgiving? Why or why not?

7. Seth became a Christian, in part, because he saw how the church members gave his mother support when her husband died. Matthew 6:2-4 and John 13:35 are two scriptures that shed light on this subject. What do they say about how we should treat one another?
8. Both Elise and Seth have problems forgiving themselves for their past mistakes. Do you ever have problems forgiving yourself? How could these verses help? Psalm 103:11-13; Romans 4:7-8; 1 John 1:9
9. Seth wants desperately to reconcile with Elise, but he fears that God may have other plans for his life. How do the verses in Isaiah 55:8-9 relate to the lives of the characters in this story? How do they relate to your life?
10. Both Elise and Seth know that God has a plan for their lives, but often they are afraid to let God have complete control. Do you wonder about God's plan for your life? What do the following scriptures say about God's plans? Job 42:2; Proverbs 16:19; Proverbs 19:21; Jeremiah 28:11
11. Elise tells Seth that she believes God can use our lives even when we don't make a good decision. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
12. Seth is haunted by the mistakes from his past. He fears that those mistakes will always be a barrier between Elise and him. Why do past wrongs often keep people apart? What can be done to prevent that from happening?
13. Father's Day creates mixed feelings for Seth. The day makes him remember his dad's death, but it also reminds

Seth what a blessing he has as Olivia's father. Holidays can be difficult times when we have lost loved ones. What steps can a person take to deal with those difficult times? What can a person do to remember the blessings?

14. Elise is hurt and confused by Sophie's reappearance in Seth's life. Do you think her reaction was reasonable? Why or why not? Have you or someone you know had to deal with a similar situation? If so, how did you handle it? How does the story of the unmerciful servant in Matthew 18:21-35 apply to the characters in this story?

Elise stepped closer, but she still appeared tense and wary, staring at him with those brandy-colored eyes.

They made him remember the love that used to radiate from them. Could that ever happen again?

Elise looked as if she wanted to bolt. "Your mom told me you wanted to talk to me."

Seth's heart took a nosedive. Elise wasn't here because she wanted to see him. She was here again because his mother had probably badgered her into coming.

He'd better start talking, or Elise would probably decide to leave. He might as well get right to the point. "I suppose you're wondering how I came to have my daughter, Olivia. I guess I should start there."

Wide-eyed, she nodded. "That would be good."

Telling Elise about Olivia had been his idea, but now that he had a chance to explain, his mind was numb. The words wouldn't form in his mouth.

"I've changed."

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The Heart's Forgiveness

Four Little Blessings

Mommy's Hometown Hero

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**Hometown Promise*

**Hometown Proposal*

**Kellerville*

MERRILLEE WHREN

is the winner of the 2003 Golden Heart Award for best inspirational romance manuscript presented by Romance Writers of America. In 2004, she made her first sale to Steeple Hill Books. She is married to her own personal hero, her husband of thirty plus years, and has two grown daughters. She has lived in Atlanta, Boston, Dallas and Chicago, but now makes her home on one of God's most beautiful creations, an island off the east coast of Florida. When she's not writing or working for her husband's recruiting firm, she spends her free time playing tennis or walking the beach, where she does the plotting for her novels. Please visit her Web site at www.merrilleewhren.com.

Hometown Proposal

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HOMETOWN PROPOSAL

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Blessed are the merciful, for they will be
shown mercy.

—*Matthew 5:7*



I would like to dedicate this book to my daughter
Danielle, who is my first reader,
and her husband, Paul.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank Rachel Daubenmire for giving me
information about physical therapy.

All mistakes are mine.

Chapter One



“Juliane, tell me you’re not serious. Tell me Seth Finlay is *not* joining us for dinner tonight.” Staring across the kitchen table at her sister, Juliane, Elise Keller gripped the top of the Windsor back chair until her knuckles turned white. She gritted her teeth as a crushing sensation took her breath away.

“I’m sorry, Elise, but it’s true. He’ll be meeting us at Mom and Dad’s.”

Elise counted to ten with the hope that her words would come out in a calm cadence rather than in a shriek. “How could Dad have invited Seth? For that matter, how could he have hired him in the first place? What was he thinking?”

Juliane, dressed in the navy blue suit she’d worn to work, took a step back. “We’ve been over this. Dad didn’t do the hiring. Nathan did. Dad was only on the committee. And just like he told you, he thought Seth was the best man for the job, along with all the other committee members. After all, his experience as a cruise director makes him very qualified to run the new recreation facility. Even you had to admit he was good at his job. And since you won’t talk about the problems you two had other than to say they were personal and not job related, the committee made the only logical choice.”