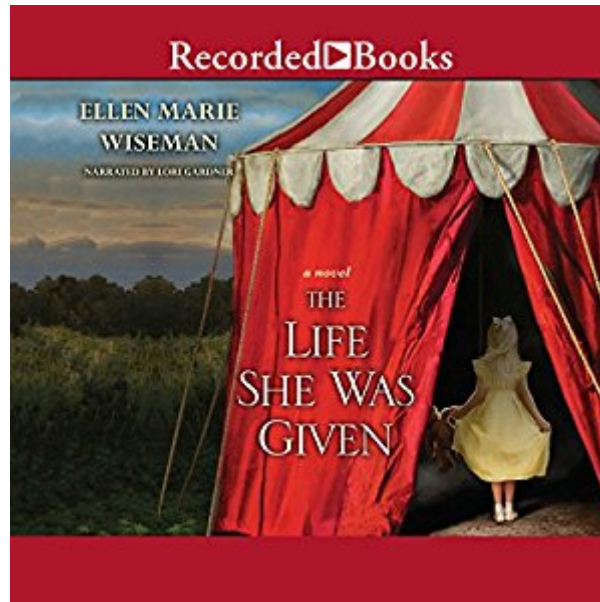




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# The Life She Was Given



## Synopsis

From acclaimed author Ellen Marie Wiseman comes a vivid, daring novel about the devastating power of family secrets - beginning in the poignant, lurid world of a Depression-era traveling circus and coming full circle in the transformative 1950s. On a summer evening in 1931, Lilly Blackwood glimpses circus lights from the grimy window of her attic bedroom. Lilly isn't allowed to explore the meadows around Blackwood Manor. She's never even ventured beyond her narrow room. Momma insists it's for Lilly's own protection, that people would be afraid if they saw her. But on this unforgettable night, Lilly is taken outside for the first time - and sold to the circus sideshow. More than two decades later, 19-year-old Julia Blackwood has inherited her parents' estate and horse farm. For Julia, home was an unhappy place full of strict rules and forbidden rooms, and she hopes that returning might erase those painful memories. Instead, she becomes immersed in a mystery involving a hidden attic room and photos of circus scenes featuring a striking young girl. At first The Barlow Brothers' Circus is just another prison for Lilly. But in this ragtag, sometimes brutal world, Lilly discovers strength, friendship, and a rare affinity for animals. Soon, thanks to elephants Pepper and JoJo and their handler, Cole, Lilly is no longer a sideshow spectacle but the circus' biggest attraction...until tragedy and cruelty collide. It will fall to Julia to learn the truth about Lilly's fate and her family's shocking betrayal and find a way to make Blackwood Manor into a place of healing at last. Moving between Julia's and Lilly's stories, Ellen Marie Wiseman portrays two extraordinary, very different women in a novel that, while tender and heartbreaking, offers moments of joy and indomitable hope.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have become such a fan of Ellen Marie Wiseman's books. She pulls you in from the first page and doesn't let go. I'm not telling you anything about the story because it hate it when a review spoils the story for me, the same thing when your at the movies and they run trailers of new movies & by the time their through why see the movie. I can only say I loved this book and highly recommend it. If you have not read her other books your missing out on this author's talent for telling heartfelt and wonderful stories, I myself can't wait for her next book.

All of her books have such interesting characters, and the story takes you to some very interesting times and placed in history. She had me with The Plum Tree, and I look forward to continue enjoying her writing and stories.

Great book, but definitely not for the faint of heart.

I would highly recommend this book. I was sad that it had to end, I could have read it forever.

I loved this book.

Reminded me of Water for Elephants. TOTALLY different story, but the feel and the pace of the book were the same. Interesting period piece, love story and flawed family secrets. Quick read- really enjoyed it.

Great story - was a enjoyable reminder of the traveling circuses we saw years ago and a delightful look at people's emotions

I would recommend this book to anyone who wants to get lost in a story! I couldn't put this book down kept me interested at every turn! Enjoy!

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