



I Am Hutterite

by Mary-Ann Kirkby

the fascinating true story of one woman's journey to reclaim her heritage

In 1969, Mary-Ann Kirkby's parents did the unthinkable. They left a Hutterite colony near Portage la Prairie, Manitoba with seven children and little else, to start a new life. Overnight, the family was thrust into a society they did not understand and which knew little of their unique culture. The transition was overwhelming.

More than 40,000 Hutterites live on 400 colonies throughout Canada's prairie provinces and the United States. Spiritual cousins to the Mennonites and the Amish, this five hundred year old culture with European roots has been in North America since the late 1800s, yet few outsiders know anything about its customs or traditions.

I Am Hutterite takes us inside Fairholme Colony where the author spent the first ten years of her life. Her detailed portrait of Hutterian people opens a window on a closed community and reveals a way of life that seems extraordinary to the outside world.

When Mary-Ann leaves Fairholme, she embarks on a mission to reinvent herself. She is put in the awkward position of denying her heritage in order to fit in with her peers. Her book details her painful and often humorous attempts to adapt to popular culture as she comes to terms with the heart-breaking circumstances that led her family to leave community life.

As a television reporter, Mary-Ann Kirkby spent years telling the stories of others. Now she is ready to share her own. **I Am Hutterite** layers the rich traditions of colony life with the stark realities of intolerance and mistrust, weaving a gripping tale that tests the power of forgiveness.

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