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# Notes From A Spinning Planet--Ireland



## Synopsis

It's pretty humiliating to admit, but I've never flown in a plane before today. So wouldn't you think that I'd be feeling pretty jazzed right now? Instead I keep grabbing onto these armrests as I ask myself why on earth I ever agreed to come on this frightening trip. Affectionately teased as a "country bumpkin," nineteen year-old Maddie has never been one to explore new territory. Her first trip outside of the country with her Aunt Sid and Sid's godson, Ryan, promises an exhilarating adventure. Northern Ireland is more captivating than she even imagined and Ryan is offering plenty of intrigue himself. As Aunt Sid researches peace camps, Maddie and Ryan explore Ireland's rich landscape. During the journey, Maddie begins to discover more about what she wants from life, while developing a deeper friendship with her irresistible traveling companion. When Maddie and Ryan dig for the truth about the IRA car bomb that killed Ryan's father years ago, questions about the past accumulate. Unable to let go of growing suspicions in this mysterious country, Maddie finds herself on a dangerous journey, a journey that will lead her to the greatest discovery of all.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Melody Carlson is the award-winning author of over one hundred books for adults, children, and

teens, including Finding Alice, Crystal Lies, and the Diary of a Teenage Girl series. The mother of two grown sons, Carlson lives in a "cabin in the woods" near the Cascade Mountains in central Oregon with her husband and a chocolate lab retriever. She is a full-time writer and an avid gardener, biker, skier, and hiker.

Received as described. Delivered in the timeframe promised.

I had read this series in high school, and just recently remembered how much I loved them. I cannot wait to own the whole series - the first book is a thrilling ride, and I quite enjoy the lessons.

I actually thought this was going to be a romantic Christian tale, but instead it was surprisingly not, and was interesting (in a good way). Maddie is going on a trip to Ireland with her aunt and her aunt's God-son. Her aunt is a journalist and the God-son is tracing his family links, as his father was born in Ireland and he never knew him. She wants to help out both of them as she also tries to renew her faith in God. At the start of the book I couldn't take Maddie's character but she did develop really well and just wanted to help figure things out as she started to learn about the IRA and RIRA in Ireland's political struggles as well as religious struggles. The story was actually pretty interesting and well done

I read this book as a library challenge. It was very well written. I even learned a thing or 2 about the IRA and RIRA. Now I want to go to Ireland to see some of the sights described in the book. Well done!

After reading this book I actually felt as if I had visited Ireland too! (I even miss Clifton) It was funny, adventurous, and intriguing. I mean, seriously, I had no idea what is going on in Ireland right now and the constant battles between Northern Ireland (English government) and the rest of Ireland. It's sad really, the IRA started out simply fighting for freedom from the British government, but this new generation of the IRA (who now call themselves the RIRA, the Real Irish Republic Army) are just nuts with their car bombs and subway bombings. In my opinion, both sides are missing the point nowadays. I really love Carlson's books. They have layers. The surface layer is the main idea or event in the story, the second is the complexity of the characters and what's going on with the characters besides the main event, and the third is a tinsy bit of Carlson's own Christian beliefs. Once all those layers are put together, you get a wonderful story and a colorful dash of characters.

Maddie's personality was really well developed and I just love her sense of humor. I'll really miss all the characters and places.....but hey! there's two more books! Melody Carlson has written over a hundred books for adults, teens, and children. She is the author of The Diary of a Teenage Girl series and countless other books for teens.[...]Genre: Realistic/Contemporary, Chick LitAge Group: YA, ages [...]Recommend? YesRating: 5/5

Nineteen year old Maddie is traveling to Ireland with her Aunt Sid and Ryan, her aunt's godson. Her aunt is researching the peace camps affected by the Irish conflict with the Protestants and the Catholics. Meanwhile Maddie and Ryan explore the Irish countryside and discover the beautiful country while learning about the people and the culture. While there Ryan discovers his Irish roots and the story about his father and mother. Maddie and him then discover the truth about the IRA bomb that killed his father and what really happened to the man Sid loved. I have always wanted to visit Ireland. I really want to see the green hills and listen to bagpipes and see the sheep. In fact I've already made plans to go to Ireland for my honeymoon one day. Heh. Reading this book was like taking the trip from my armchair. I learned lots about the culture and the people from reading. Little tidbits like stores not having bottled water or biking tours made the book more authentic like a guidebook. I learned quite a bit from reading this book about the IRA. I always used to get them confused with the IRS. This book made me understand more about what the conflict is going on in that country and how religion is a big factor in the fighting. It was sad to read about all those affected by the fighting. I also appreciated how the situation with drinking was portrayed. I understand how Maddie felt about seeing Ryan and her aunt drinking and being uncomfortable. But I also liked it how Maddie had to struggle with trying to explain why just having one drink is wrong. No one ever forced her to drink a beer, she did it on her own and then found out she didn't like it. I could have told Maddie that Guinness is horrible tasting, exactly how she described it! Drinking is not promoted in this book at all, it just gives a view that maybe as Christians we should find out why we say no to something before condemning others. I really enjoyed reading this book. It definitely makes me want to go to Ireland now more than ever. Teens will really enjoy reading this series.

Review by Jill Williamson Farm girl Maddie Chase has never gone anywhere. That's why she jumps at the chance to travel to Ireland with her aunt Sid and Aunt Sid's godson, Ryan. Aunt Sid worked at the peace camps in Ireland back when she was in college and is working on an article about where some of those kids she counseled years ago are today. Ryan's mother--Aunt Sid's best friend--recently passed away. Ryan's father was from Ireland and he's hoping to piece together

some clues to his past. Maddie helps her new friend look into the IRA car bomb that killed his dad. This was a fun book. I liked the idea of traveling to a new place only to find out how truly small our world is. Maddie and Ryan find his distant relatives, and Maddie stumbles onto a secret about Aunt Sid's past. The mystery of it was exciting, the history and current issues with the IRA was fascinating, and the characters were fun. Maddie also comes to discover that sometimes Christians judge people without even realizing that's what they're doing. I highly recommend this book.

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