

Genre: Historical Fiction

Title: **Now My Life Begins**

Author: Shirley A. Roe

Life can seem so unchanging in a small village. Some people can remain content with this their whole lives, while others thirst for change and want to broaden their horizons. Can true love overcome this need for change and keep you rooted? In *Now My Life Begins*, this is the dilemma faced by Jenny Barstow, who has grown up in Watsworth, England watching her mother live out her adult years as a servant at Watsworth Mansion. She vows to break family tradition and climb up the ladder to a better position in life. The problem is, her childhood friend and true love, Tim McKitterek, is chained to Watsworth, supporting his mother and family after the disappearance of his father. Now their dream of leaving Watsworth and building a new life together is destroyed, and it is up to Jenny to live the dream alone and give herself the future that she has always strived for. Jenny is a brave, intelligent young woman, and when opportunity knocks on her door after the death of her mother, she jumps at the chance, breaking her heart and Tim's in the process, and makes the journey to Edinburgh, Scotland to take up employment in the City offices. Unfortunately, only shock and disappointment greet her in the big city, but through the kindness of strangers, Jenny picks herself up off the ground and follows her dream on the rollercoaster of life and its ups and downs. She encounters truly beautiful souls along the way as well as others she would rather forget, and through it all Jenny grows and transforms into a truly beautiful person and a force to be reckoned with, never giving up! In the meantime, life goes on for Tim in Watsworth, but Jenny always remains at the centre of his heart.

Shirley A. Roe has hit the jackpot once again with this rich family saga full of love and loss, success and tragedy, and war and peace through three generations of two families, with bribery, scheming, and lying irreversibly changing the course of so many lives along the way, until one simple coincidence brings two lives full circle to a heart-warming and satisfying conclusion.

Roe has a talent for descriptive writing and creating characters that the reader is drawn to immediately, so much so that I felt Tim's heart break as Jenny's train pulls out of the station, my heart rate increased and I felt overwhelmed as Jenny stepped off the train into the hustle and bustle and strange sounds and smells of Edinburgh, and I felt Jenny's pain and anguish right through to my core when she found out her new job had been ripped out from underneath her feet. I love how Roe awakens our emotions and draws them out through the experiences of the characters. She makes it so easy to love the main characters, especially when she provides people from the opposite end of the spectrum as antagonists in the story whose actions provide many conflicts throughout. The contrast makes the plot very intriguing, and there were many a time while reading this book that I wanted to jump into the pages and reveal the truths that Jenny had yet to uncover because I yearned for her to find the success and happiness that she deserved.

Shirley A. Roe is an accomplished author and has received several awards for both poetry and business articles. Her novel, *Dreams and Nightmares* was given 5 out of 5 stars, by Readers Favorite Review. *The Whittaker Family Reunion*, was nominated for the National Indie Excellence Award in 2004. As a freelance writer, she spends time between Canada, the USA and the UK, and loves to travel, using her trips as research for future books. She is quickly gaining international recognition.

I was captured by the simple beauty of this story, and I was left feeling fulfilled that everything ended up as it should because your destiny will find you one way or the other, even if it's a long and turbulent ride to get there. This was a wonderful read which I would **highly recommend**.

Reviewer: Cindy Taylor, www.allbooksreviewint.com

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