

Stealing Home, Sherryl Woods

Maddie Townsend might live in a town called Serenity but there's been nothing calm or peaceful about her life since her marriage broke up. This stay-at-home mom has no job skills, an out-of-control sixteen-year-old son, a talkative fourteen-year-old who's suddenly gone silent, a six-year-old daughter whose heart is broken, an ex-husband whose younger girlfriend is expecting their baby and two best friends who think she's somehow qualified to help them open a fitness spa for women.

Sometimes revisiting a favorite book series is like spending vacation with friends- you know you'll have a great time and be comfortable, no matter what happens. The Sweet Magnolia series by Sherryl Woods is a lot like for me. I hadn't read these books in years, but it just seemed like a good summer reading series, so starting with *Stealing Home* was like booking a week at a beach condo!

The Sweet Magnolias are three friends –Maddie, Helen, and Dana Sue, all living in Serenity and facing the challenges life sends their way with the help of each other. *Stealing Home* centers on Maddie's life as she finds herself the cast-off wife of a prominent local doctor. Three heartbroken children and no up-to-date career skills could mean a difficult road, but Maddie isn't one to bow to the pain. When Helen and Dan Sue come up with a new business plan, the entire community starts to buzz. The only problem is the buzz also includes a handsome coach who has begun to showing frequently around Maddie.

Stealing Home is the first of 11 Sweet Magnolia books. It has recently been re-released, since Woods' Sweet Magnolia series is now a Netflix original series. The books stay based in Serenity and many of the characters will appear in all the books, but Woods does a great job of expanding this circle of friends.