



Herons Landing

JoAnn Ross

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There's no place to fall in love like the place you left your heart

Welcome to Honeymoon Harbor, the brand-new, long-awaited series by beloved *New York Times* bestselling author JoAnn Ross, where unforgettable characters come face-to-face with the kind of love that grabs your heart and never lets go.

Working as a Las Vegas concierge, Brianna Mannion is an expert at making other people's wishes come true. It's satisfying work, but a visit home to scenic Honeymoon Harbor turns into a permanent stay when she's reminded of everything she's missing: the idyllic small-town charm; the old Victorian house she'd always coveted; and Seth Harper, her best friend's widower and the neighborhood boy she once crushed on—hard. After years spent serving others, maybe Brianna's finally ready to chase dreams of her own.

Since losing his wife, Seth has kept busy running the Harper family's renovation business and flying way under the social radar. But when Brianna hires him to convert her aging dream home into a romantic B and B, working together presents a heart-stopping temptation Seth never saw coming. With guilt and grief his only companions for so long, he'll have to step out of the past long enough to recognize the beautiful life Brianna and he could build together.

Herons Landing Details

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From Reader Review Herons Landing for online ebook

Kathleen says

This first book in JoAnn Ross's new series Honeymoon Harbor was a great read. You are introduced to the Harper and Mannion families and a whole cast of characters that inhabit the town. I liked how the story evolved around Brianna Mannion and Seth Harper from their days as children to their adulthood. I found myself wishing the author had got to the romance sooner, but in the telling you could experience the sexual chemistry between the two and when it hit them, it was the romance and heat you wanted for them. JoAnn also gives you a look at the past and present of secondary characters who will be I'm sure, scattered throughout this series.

Seth Harper has been coming out of morning his wife Zoe, who was his childhood sweetheart and also best friends with Brianna Mannion. Brianna has travelled the world and come home to Honeymoon Harbor to open up a B&B in the house she always wanted, Heron Landing. It was her dream come true when leaving Las Vegas, and the hotel where she was a concierge, that the house was up for sale. When she finds out that none other than Seth Harper owns this wonderful home in need of a lot of tender loving care, she knows fate was working her way. Seth is also a contractor and together they transform this beautiful stately old home into everything it should be. In doing so, the feelings that Brianna has had for Seth come into reality, and has Seth moves forward after his loss, they can't deny the chemistry that has been building between them and their "friends with Benefits" relationship can only have one outcome...Love.

I have always been a big fan of JoAnn Ross's books and I am going to be waiting for the next books to come out in this series, and wonder who will be next.

Dawn says

JoAnn Ross introduces readers to the small town of Honeymoon Harbor and the residents that make up this lovely town. When Brianna Mannion decides to quit her high-profile job as a concierge in Las Vegas, she falls in love with this big old Victorian house that she loved as a child in her hometown of Honeymoon Harbor. But when she returns home, she finds her childhood friend Seth Harper grieving for the loss of his wife (and Brianna's best friend) and she is determined to make her dream a reality, even if it means working closely with the one man she had a crush on as a kid and teenager.

Seth Harper is enjoying running his family construction business but after the loss of his wife, Seth has just put one foot in front of the other and tried to just live each day even as he missed her terribly. But now that Brianna is back in town, Seth finds himself seeing her in a new light, one that has his frozen heart and emotions ready to thaw. But what happens when the sparks that fly between these two cause a flame to burn out of control and Seth will have to take the leap to the future that includes Brianna and a life filled with love once again?

JoAnn Ross delivers her introduction to her new series, Honeymoon Harbor, with a delightful tale of childhood friends, loss and more in HERONS LANDING. I got to admit, I was hesitant in trying this out but after reading just one chapter I couldn't put it down. I love the history between Brianna and Seth as well as how the author weaves the past of the town into the storyline. I don't want to give too much away so please

note if you haven't read one of this author's books, then this is a perfect introduction story to get your feet wet. The story starts off slow as the author sets up Honeymoon Harbor and the main players in the HERONS LANDING. Just make sure to keep reading as it does pick up the pace after a few chapters in. I loved how this author incorporates the past of how the town became in with the present. The characters, though, are where this author just shines. I love how diverse the population of Honeymoon Harbor is and we got a glimpse into characters that may pop in future books as well. The characters are what makes this story so enjoyable and entertaining in my opinion. You got the colorful characters such as these two 90-year-old twins who run a dress shop and then you got the ones who follow the rules and don't take risks. Each resident we are introduced to in this first book makes the story more real to me. It could be any small town in any part of the world. This is an author who shines in creating entertaining yet diverse characters that readers can fall in love with.

HERONS LANDING is a delightful entertaining read that will lead the reader on an adventure as two friends find they have more in common than they thought and as hearts reach out to one another, it takes a measure of risk to let yourself fall in love again after the death of a loved one. If you are looking for a feel-good story that will charm you, then try Honeymoon Harbor and settle in for the perfect beach read this summer. I can't wait to read book two, Snowfall on Lighthouse Lane and return to this charming seaside town.

DJ Sakata says

Favorite Quotes:

"On our first date, she cited all this damn research claiming vegans lived nine years longer than meat eaters." Jarle's teeth flashed in a grin in his flaming red beard. "After a week of grazing, I decided that her statistics might be true, but that extra time would be nine horrible baconless years."

Dottie's going to love dressing you. I swear to the Goddess that woman's goal in life is to get every Northwesterner looking like a unicorn vomited out rainbows.

Jarle tends to fall in love with every good-looking single woman who comes into the pub. I think it's the Viking in him. So far he hasn't carried any off, and doesn't harass them, just admires from afar, so I figure putting all that emotion into his cooking helps improve business.

You make him work for it, sweetheart. A woman's gotta let her man know from the beginning that he's going to have to do his share in a marriage. We women shouldn't have to do all the heavy lifting.

My Review:

I was a bit conflicted on how to rate this slowly developing and character-driven small-town tale of second chances. Being the first in a series there were lots of characters to introduce and considerable background and history to cover about the quaint little community and a long-standing feud between two of the early families that continued to inhabit both ends of the social ladder. The premise was relevant and interesting, and the storylines were meticulously detailed with the tones alternating between amusing, heartbreak, and realistic with a few hot licks of sizzling sensuality to take some of the edge off the over-serve of sorrow and angst. The characters were likable, endearing, and admirable, but the story tended to stall on occasion due to

the rather repetitive and tiresome retreading the young widower's grief and inability to move on. Despite my personal pet peeve toward angst, I look forward to returning to the characters living in this unique little enclave while hoping for a lighter beat in the next installment.

Scott Rhee says

The Pacific Northwest is apparently a popular setting for romance novels. I have only been to the Seattle, WA area once in my life, and it was for only a few days, but I will admit that it is beautiful country. I saw primarily forests and mountains on my stay, mainly because I tent-camped overnight at Mt. Rainier National Park, so I didn't get to spend a lot of time in the city proper or in the trendy little towns scattered around Seattle.

Based on what I have read, the place is full of romantic bed-and-breakfasts and little towns with shopfronts that sell local artisan stuff (pottery, paintings, furniture, pastries, etc.) and have clever names for independent book shops like *Page Turners* or *Off the Shelf*.

There's also the microbrews, wineries, and farm-to-table vegetarian restaurants that are extremely popular. Basically, the Pacific Northwest is like a millennial/hipster paradise.

(If that sounds like the snarkily judgmental statement that a typical Midwesterner might make, it's because it is.)

Places like the aforementioned annoy me, mainly because I hate to shop (unless it's a bookstore) and I'd rather spend a vacation resting, enjoying Nature, or catching up on my reading. The last thing I want to do is spend money on clothes or trinkets that will end up in a drawer and never be worn or used. (Seriously, I have, like, one pair of shorts that I wear for three months straight, and I pretty much live in an assortment of tie-dye t-shirts or t-shirts with "Star Wars" shit on them.)

But since I am a good husband, I will endure the endless shopping in little towns throughout America, mainly because I do, actually, love my wife, and I know that I do, occasionally, have to give some to get some, if you know what I mean wink wink nudge nudge...

JoAnn Ross, according to her bio, has written over a hundred novels and is a best-selling romance novelist. I'm going to hazard a guess that a majority of those novels are set in the Pacific Northwest, which, also according to her bio, she calls home with her husband, "her high school sweetheart". (This is where you go "Ahhhhhhh...")

"Hurons Landing" is apparently the first in a new series set in the small (presumably fictional) town of Honeymoon Harbor, situated on the Olympic Peninsula.

Everyone in Honeymoon Harbor is extremely good-looking. I mean, like, ridiculously gorgeous. They're also happy as shit. And rich. And annoying.

(Sorry. My Midwesterner is showing...)

Okay, so Seth Harper isn't happy. It's been several years now since his wife, Zoey, an Army nurse, was

killed in Afghanistan. He's still trying to pick up the pieces of his broken life he was planning with her. Mostly, he just tries to bury himself in work as the town's most prominent building contractor.

Brianna Mannion was Seth and Zoey's best friend since middle school. She's had a crush on Seth since she was a little girl, when they were neighbors and played together in the old abandoned haunted house down the road. She's been living and working in Las Vegas as an extremely sought-after party planner, but the job has grown tiresome, and she decides to go back home.

When she arrives home to Honeymoon Harbor, she impulsively decides to buy that old abandoned haunted house and resurrect it as a glorious b-&-b. Of course, she hires Seth to do the designs and reno, mainly because he's apparently the only contractor in town.

You can see where this is going...

Okay, so I was expecting not to like this book. It is fairly predictable (as all romance novels are, let's be honest) and melodramatic at times, and the plot is basically a paint-by-numbers Lifetime or Hallmark movie of the week.

Nevertheless, I was, by the end, rooting for Seth and Brianna (along with everyone else in the town) to end up together. And Ross didn't disappoint. I don't think it's much of a spoiler to say that they do end up together.

Ross is a bit sparse with the sex scenes, but the few she includes are fairly steamy and hot. No ass-play, but nobody's perfect.

There's a lot of other stuff that goes on in the book, including side stories involving Seth's mom and dad going through marital problems, as well as a cutesy same-sex couple planning their wedding and adoption of a child. All well and good, but we all know that the money shot is Seth and Brianna hooking up.

Honeymoon Harbor seems like an annoyingly cute little town, and one that I may want to go back to someday. As long as Ross keeps writing those hot, steamy sex scenes...

Amy ~ Love At 1st Read says

I read a lot of Jo Ann Ross in the past. Her Shelter Bay series was one of my favorites. I don't know why I hadn't read her in a while. I had forgotten how wonderful her books are. What a treat to return to her books just in time for the start of a new series. After reading Herons Landing, I'd say her Honeymoon Harbor series promises to be just as addicting as Shelter Bay. And with her vivid descriptions of the Pacific Northwest, like Shelter Bay, Honeymoon Harbor is a place I plan to visit again.

Brianna Mannion was living what she'd thought was her dream job as concierge at a glamorous Las Vegas resort. She'd worked long and hard to get there. But each step up the ladder only brought more responsibility and stress. She wasn't happy any more. When she sees her favorite old Victorian, Herons Landing, is up for sale in her home town, she knows it's time to head home. As a child, it had been her dream house. She'd always envisioned opening up a B&B there. Now she could restore it to the grand home it had once been. Only problem was, she'd need the expertise of the one man she'd been in love with since childhood. A man who'd never seen her as anything more than a friend. A man who had married her best friend, Zoe. She

hadn't seen him since Zoe's funeral two years ago.

Seth Harper was known for his family's construction business and their work in restoring the Victorian buildings in his hometown of Honeymoon Harbor. Rebuilding other people's houses was what was left of what had once been his life. Even after two years, he was still struggling with the death of his wife, Zoe. He felt numb, holding on to a dream that would never happen. When he and Zoe's childhood friend, Brianna, returns home to restore Herons Landing, Seth is eager to take on the work. Two old friends embarking on a joint project that would prove equally fulfilling and profitable is just what he needs to keep him from losing himself in the funk he'd been living in. But when Brianna Harper returns, Seth notices things about her he'd never noticed before. And the feelings he starts to have for her are too close to desire for comfort.

I loved Seth and Bri's story. I ached for both of them. Brianna had loved Seth her whole life but he'd never seen her as more than his best friends' sister. When he'd married Zoe, Brianna had moved from town to city never looking back. She'd stayed in touch with Zoe but didn't think she could live in the same town watching them live the life she'd dreamed of. She'd thought she could continue to be just Seth's friend when she returned but the attraction was still there and it was even harder to hide now that they were working side by side. Seth lived with constant reminders of Zoe. Even seeing her parents weekly to reminisce over old photos He was lost in grief and didn't know how to let go. Working together on the B&B, Seth felt an enthusiasm he hadn't felt for a long time. He liked spending time with Bri. Because of her, the anger and pain he'd been mired in were disappearing. But he was afraid to feel more and that fear of ever losing someone he loved again could keep him from having the future he deserved and so desperately wanted. I love the small town dynamic of this series. Where people are like family. And like family, they can drive you crazy but they're also there to support you when needed. There was so much more to this book than just Bri and Seth's story. There were side stories going on with friends and family. I was every bit as intrigued by those stories as I was by the romance. This was so much more than a second chance love story. It was a story of family, life, passion, disappointment, fears, and loss. And most importantly, it was a story of daring to love again in spite of those fears and loss. I'm so glad I found Jo Ann Ross again. I can't wait for more of this series. There are so many secondary characters I'm anxious to know more about that I'm eager for a return visit to Honeymoon Harbor.

Linda Smatzny says

Modern day romance that features Brianna Mannion and Seth Harper as the main characters. Brianna has returned home to Honeymoon Harbor to purchase a Victorian and turn it into a bed and breakfast. Seth is the contractor that she hires to do the work. They have been friends forever. Seth is still brooding over the death of wife two years earlier. The book also includes a novella set in 1985 featuring John Mannion and Sarah Harper as the main characters. These two are Brianna's parents. The book was a quick easy read.¹

Lee says

A slow and sweet, emotionally charged read. While it lacked in heat and intensity, I still thought it was an enjoyable tale and would definitely recommend to readers who enjoy a second-chance-at-love romance.

Miriam says

I feel like a second chance at love is harder emotionally when love has already come and gone. Regardless of it left, the person a story focuses on is weighed down with feelings that don't exist in other types of romance stories. Grief and guilt are usually at the forefront. Grief colors their life in darkness. Guilt pokes holes in their attempts to move forward/on. I believe that patience is needed when entering a relationship with someone who's dealing daily with these emotions, and that it takes an incredible person to help the other see that life isn't over and a happy future is still possible.

Brianna's decision to leave Honeymoon Harbor years ago made sense, as did her decision to stay away after returning for Zoe's funeral. Her childhood friendship with Seth and Zoe was easy until she fell in love with Seth, only to watch him fall in love with Zoe. She cared about their happiness so she didn't get in their way, but it was a constant reminder of what she could not have with Seth anymore. Now she's home to build a future for herself, one that's focused on her own happiness instead of others, one that will hopefully include Seth.

Seth has struggled with grief and guilt since Zoe died. Daily reminders keep him from moving forward with his life. The love and happiness he shared with Zoe were torn apart in a heartbeat, and dreams of a family were buried with her. Or were they? Brianna's return and proposal to work on her venture opens his eyes to the possibility of happiness and forever and love once again. But is it wrong?

Their relationship was a bit reluctant at first, but it gained momentum as they spent time together. For Brianna, her feelings for Seth never diminished. For Seth, his feelings for Brianna shifted from friendship to more. The weight of his grief needed to be handled first or their relationship won't go anywhere. It's slow getting there but it was perfect for them. It wouldn't have made sense to rush right into love with all that baggage Seth carried.

Underneath the emotional turmoil, this is a pretty cut and dry story. It's an easy read, a heartfelt romance about learning to move forward, letting go, and letting yourself be happy again. It's a learning experience for both Seth and Brianna. Zoe's memory hung between them but, for me, it wasn't like a barrier. It was bridge. The one thing they had in common was the one thing they needed to deal with together. They did and it turned out beautifully for them.

Received from publisher for an honest review

Gail says

This is a wonderful start to the new series. A heartwarming story that will melt your heart. It will make you laugh and cry. A great cast of characters that interact so well together. I hated to see the story end.

Dawn says

JoAnn Ross introduces readers to the small town of Honeymoon Harbor and the residents that make up this lovely town. When Brianna Mannion decides to quit her high-profile job as a concierge in Las Vegas, she falls in love with this big old Victorian house that she loved as a child in her hometown of Honeymoon

Harbor. But when she returns home, she finds her childhood friend Seth Harper grieving for the loss of his wife (and Brianna's best friend) and she is determined to make her dream a reality, even if it means working closely with the one man she had a crush on as a kid and teenager.

Seth Harper is enjoying running his family construction business but after the loss of his wife, Seth has just put one foot in front of the other and tried to just live each day even as he missed her terribly. But now that Brianna is back in town, Seth finds himself seeing her in a new light, one that has his frozen heart and emotions ready to thaw. But what happens when the sparks that fly between these two cause a flame to burn out of control and Seth will have to take the leap to the future that includes Brianna and a life filled with love once again?

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Michelle says

Heron's Landing is the first book I've read by JoAnn Ross in a long, long time. It immediately brought back all of the "down home" small town romance feelings her books are known for. Admittedly I'm not a fan of a hero being in love with someone else first, as is the case in this book. Seth Harper tragically lost his wife, and for two years he's just been going through the motions. Then his childhood friend, and one of his wife's best friends, returns to town and shakes his world upside down.

For all of her life, Brianna Mannion has wanted Heron's Landing. Even when her career took her all over the

country, all over the world, she never gave up on the dream of turning the abandoned old house into a showpiece B&B. When she moves back home with that goal in mind, she knows there is nobody she'd rather hire to do the work than Seth Harper. Not only is he a childhood friend, but he, and his company, are known for doing exceptional work, especially when it comes to historical restoration.

Brianna knows that Seth's heart is closed off, but that doesn't change the fact that her old feelings for him are brought right back up to the surface. Seeing him every day, sharing her dreams and plans for the house with him, she soon falls head over heels in love with him.

It surprised me how easily Seth gave in to the attraction to Brianna. I expected him to struggle with guilt or feeling like he was betraying his wife, so I was relieved the author didn't really go there.

While I loved the secondary characters, including the secondary romance between Seth's parents, I feel like the pacing of the story was a bit slow. Nothing really happened in the romance department until about 2/3 of the way through the book.

I'm usually have trouble relating to independent, strong women, but Brianna had enough softness inside and was just vulnerable enough that I ended up liking her a lot.

While this book lacked a little bit of heat and sexual intensity, but it was a sweet, emotional romance.

Shirley Penick says

Loved this first book in the new series. Looking forward to more! It was fun to see mentions of other favorite characters from Cold Water Cove.

Gmr says

This is a story about love and friendship, heartbreak and healing, loss and second chances. This is a story that will have falling in love with the lead characters, only to feel like one of the family as you let all those that surround them into your heart. This is a story by a new-to-me author that opens a new series that will have a home on my wish list as long as it's being written. Yes, my friends, I fell that hard for this book.

Brianna is SUCH a great leading lady, though she'd never steal the spotlight from anyone else. She's kind yet strong, talented in so many ways, and a romantic through and through, though her heart has always belonged to the one that got away. Well, okay...honestly, he didn't so much get away as fall for another before actually being "got" in any sense of the word, but despite that obstacle, their friendship remained (all three of them actually!), and that connection from days gone by will show its strength through the years, good times and bad, and when the time is right shine for all its worth to reveal what was there all along.

Seth, on the other hand, is...okay, he's a great lead as well, and SO easy on the eyes, but the trauma he's faced has frozen his heart like the Washington landscape in winter. Don't get me wrong, he still cares for others, takes in stray dogs, and lends a helping hand, but he's done away with any of those niceties towards himself, making him a bit of a miser. (Sorry, Seth...it's true though!) Lucky for him, Brianna's unexpected arrival and life plan is about to tempt him to thaw out the icebox he calls a heart...and while she's teaching him the finer points of actually LIVING, he may find that second chances are well worth the risk.

Like I said, I fell hard for this one, from cover to cover. I adored the leads, but their friends and families were JUST as wonderful as the two of them. The backstory's for everyone were both fitting and realistic...I can totally vouch for Bri's "acting" abilities as anyone can that has made it in the customer service or hospitality

industries...and the potential futures were tinged with just enough hope to make you hold on til the end to see just how things worked out. So yes, I'm recommending this one to adult Contemporary Romance fans (some steamy scenes!), and suggesting you make room on your wish list for future installments because it has the potential to REALLY make a splash!

**copy received for review

Chris Conley says

I love JoAnn Ross's books. There is such a strong blend of characters you want to know, a community where you want to live and back stories that give all of those things dimension.

Asheley says

Herons Landing features Brianna Mannion and Seth Harper, who end up working together on a restoration project for a historical home in the area.

There are several things about this book that make me enjoy it: the small-town setting by the water and the family relationships being the major ones. But I also loved that the coming-together of Brianna and Seth was the result of the pair working together on a home restoration. I've read several books in the past where restoration or building was a major plot point, and I've always loved them. Every time.

Brianna comes back home to Honeymoon Harbor after working for a few years out-of-state in the hospitality/hotel industry. This is prompted, in part, by realizing the home she has loved her entire life is up for sale. Brianna decides to buy the house and relocate, and she also decides that a few changes need to be made to the home to make it worthy of her dreams. This is where Seth Harper enters the story. The Harper family has been in the business of building and restoring properties for generations, and Seth is probably the best in the entire state of Washington. It's a no-brainer to Brianna that she wants him to work on her home. The complication is that Seth used to be married to Brianna's best friend Zoe, who was tragically killed while serving military time overseas.

While this could have been awkward and had the potential to make the slow-burn romance between Brianna and Seth a problem, I think it was written into the story really well. Seth, from the beginning, has some issues with his grief (and understandably so!) but it is clear from the story that the entire community and his family are supportive and hoping that he will be able to move on with his life eventually. When Brianna returns, most of the town ends up nearly pushing the two together because they knew she had feelings for him before he ever partnered with Zoe. Brianna also grieves the loss of her best friend, but it was nice to see these two able to work through this together. I haven't personally experienced this situation, but it felt plausible and real to me as I read.

I love stories that are descriptive of the small-town atmosphere and the residents with their sometimes-nosiness and gossip. Herons Landing fit into that category exactly. I loved the backstory of the Harper and

Mannion families and the feud that was between their families prior to the start of the book (which is covered well in the prequel novella *Home to Honeymoon Harbor*), and I love where both of these families are with that situation today. In the prequel story, I learned about Sarah Harper and John Mannion – set back in the 1980's – and their second-chance romance, so it was nice to see that *Herons Landing* is picking up the story with the generation that came after them.

I feel like I have a lot to look forward to with this series

, particularly with the secondary cast consisting of some great family members. In particular, I hope to see more from Brianna's brothers – perhaps they'll be featured in books to come. It's just always nice to be able to start out with a series as it is published. I love the anticipation between book releases, even though sometimes the wait can be excruciatingly long. It looks like the second novel in this series will be out later this year (October 2018, to be exact) and even though I don't really know who will be featured in that story yet, I'm already ready for it.

Literally, these types of small-town stories are high on my list of favorites, so I'll be on the watch to snag a copy of the next installment in the *Honeymoon Harbor* series as soon as I can.

I received this book for free from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review. Thank you, Harlequin Books!

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