



## Echoes of the Heart

*Stacey A. Purcell*

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**GOING UNDER** For Dr. Calista Montgomery, losing her soldier husband was like diving into a cold dark sea, and the events at his funeral swept her farther from shore. Crushed by the lies, Cali crawls into a bottle and flees all she knows. Inebriated and drifting aimlessly, she winds up in Esterloch, New York, where she's arrested and hits bottom. Offered a chance to expunge her record, she accepts the conditions...but the real challenge is keeping herself safe from the arrogant, gorgeous and commanding sheriff. **FOR THE LAST TIME** Sheriff Jack Benfield hates drunks. They're selfish, manipulative, and they break hearts, and his is no exception. He saw the damage inflicted upon his family, so he has no patience for any of them, not even the beautiful Dr. Montgomery. His body, however, has different ideas, and soon two desperate souls will discover that some breaks make us stronger-and sometimes we must drown before we learn how to breathe.

## **Echoes of the Heart Details**

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Author : Stacey A. Purcell

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## From Reader Review Echoes of the Heart for online ebook

### Terry Smith says

Echoes of the Heart is an entertaining read from beginning to waiting on the next novel from Mrs. Purcell. I will admit I am not the typical Romance novel guy. John Wayne characters and blood-n-guts action adventure is more my taste, so I grudgingly accepted the challenge to read a 'Modern Day' romance. I can honestly say I am pleased I did. I dove into the novel saddled with my denial of what I thought romance reading should be. The authors' story line includes the harsh reality that is alcoholism and all that it consumes. She writes brilliantly with empathy, understanding, the misunderstandings and tough love on the topic. A love story and success story all in one. Read it tough guys, and you may learn a thing or twenty. Ladies? Sorry, I'm already taken. Enjoy this book!

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### Will Graham says

I was able to buy a copy of ECHOES OF THE HEART at the author's Book Launch.

Calista (Cali) Montgomery is a woman who has suffered a heart crushing loss, and it only gets worse from there. She seeks solace in alcohol, quickly reaching the point where she loses everything and everyone she holds dear. Jack Banfield is the Sheriff of the small town of Esterloch who finds Cali passed-out drunk in her car one evening. With a bit of family history haunting him, Jack has \*no\* tolerance for drunks. None. Yet something about Cali affects him in ways he cannot imagine.

Stacey Purcell has written a beautiful story of two lost, destroyed, and barely functioning people finding not only redemption but healing with each other. By no means is the path a smooth one, but Cali and Jack recognize something in the other they are missing in themselves.

Ms. Purcell has subtitled this "Esterloch Volume I", and one can only hope the 2nd volume will be available soon!

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### Sherry Cole says

So enjoyed reading this

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### Marsha Spohn says

Reviewed at Keeper Bookshelf

It's often been said that once you hit rock bottom there's nowhere left to go but up – that's not necessarily true. You can hit rock bottom and tunnel a bit further down if you're determined enough or simply do not care about anything anymore.

Cali thought her world ended when her husband died. Actually the web of lies that was revealed at his funeral totally crushed her world – and all she wanted from that point onward was escape. Her escape route was the bottle, and it took her on a spiraling journey into darkness, depression and pain. She lost everything she once valued, her husband, her marriage and her profession. All lost. And the truth is she simply no longer cares. Cali is about to get a wake up call.

Jack is a man in a position of power. As the local sheriff, it's his job to deal with the unpleasant aspects of human behavior. Yet, if there is one single trigger for him it would be those that take the safety of others into their own careless hands by drinking to the point of stupid and reckless. He has personal reasons for those demons on his shoulders, but they never, ever let him go easy on a drunk. When he discovers Cali deep into her bottle he is about to toss the book at her, lock her up and throw away the key. But the judge sees something in Cali that he does not and offers Cali a chance at redemption, even a new life if she is brave enough to take it. It will not be easy, but the ending results would be worth the pain – if she is strong enough to see it through. The choice is hers.

*Echoes of the Heart* is a gripping and gritty story of addiction, alcoholism, pain beyond bearing and the one shot chance that we sometimes get to make it right again.. or as challenging as being a recovering alcoholic will ever be. As Cali works to revise the old clinic in Esterloch, and stay far away from anything resembling a strong drink in a bottle, she begins to see the beauty in this small town in upper New York. And in its townsfolk as well, actually one person seems to never find it possible to give her a break on anything and that person is her personal overseer-er for this project. Sheriff Jack Benfield.

Jack is fighting his attraction for Cali. And their journey to a relationship that will work is going to be a difficult, long road. While I could empathize with Cali's reactions, her choices would not have been my own, I still "got" how she ended up where she did. Jack, well, Jack I often didn't like very much at all. Oh, I also "got" where his attitude comes from in his past. And even how he had to be the way he was for the story to work as it did. That doesn't mean that I didn't see him as an arrogant jerk who needed an attitude adjustment on life and Cali. Yes, all worked out in the end. So I have to give kudos to Cali for not only cleaning up her own act, but overlooking a lot of the crap that Jack tossed at her along the way. *Echoes of the Heart* is a love story, but it's also a look at how alcoholism affects not only the person trying to remain sober, but how those around them also play a huge part in recovery. There were several times when Jack's actions could have tipped Cali over into returning to her old ways – she was strong enough not to but it was close. I think that is why Jack was the more difficult character for me to root for, even though I knew he had his own demons to chase – if he loved her, his kind of tough love was harmful. (and that's the beauty of different readers finding different views on the same story)

I enjoyed *Echoes of the Heart* and would recommend it to any Romance reader who is willing to go a bit deeper into a complicated relationship. Although this is a romance it is far from a lighthearted, fluffy one – this one will make you think, have you feel and tug at your heart for both of the characters to get their act together and love one another. I am definitely looking forward to returning to Esterloch one day.

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### **Diane Nielson says**

This debut novel by Ms. Purcell is both heartfelt and uplifting. Even though Dr. Calista Montgomery is filled with pain over past hurts and has turned to drinking to cope, her strength of character and deeply caring nature shine through. Sheriff Jack Benfield meets her when she has reached her lowest point, a time when she feels she can endure no more. Unknowingly, he challenges her to do better and ultimately challenges his

own perceptions of alcoholism and human nature.

This story takes you on a journey, rooting for the heroine and hero and chuckling over their verbal exchanges. The writing is both fast-paced and thoughtful, developing the characters so well that you are transported into their lives. This novel also mixes in some steamy interactions between the two lead characters that make you want to put a “brown-paper wrapper” around it and NOT put it down!! I truly enjoyed reading this novel and look forward to future adventures and escapades in Esterloch!

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### **Jennifer says**

After finding out her deceased husband had betrayed her with another woman, functioning alcoholic Dr. Cali Montgomery wallows in misery at the bottom of the bottle. She runs hard and fast from her life, waking up in jail across the country, arrested on multiple charges.

Sheriff Jack Benfield is hardwired against addicts. He’s had firsthand experience with its destruction and blames himself for not being able to save his mother and sister from their vices. He refuses to be a part of that again and can’t wait to rid himself of Cali. The feeling is mutual. Cali wants nothing more than to be on her way, leaving the small town and its arrogant sheriff far behind.

But the exceedingly wise, if not quirky, Judge Sinclair has other ideas, ideas that continually throw Cali and Jack together. Cali must revive a defunct clinic to erase her record and Jack, bitter and resentful, must accept Cali into the community and help oversee her success.

The road to finding themselves is rocky—Cali with a precarious hold on her sobriety and sense of belonging and Jack’s guilt and failure eating at his soul. Despite neither wanting to accept their heated growing attraction, they find they need each other to overcome their demons, especially in the face of a gut-wrenching loss which sets them both back. And opening their hearts just a little can go a long, long way.

Stacey A. Purcell delivers an emotional punch with her debut *Echoes of the Heart*. She tackles the tough subject of alcoholism and weaves together a story of loss, personal atonement, trust, strength and above all that love can see us through.

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### **Melissa says**

Ms. Purcell has written a riveting story from beginning to end. One dealing with an addiction tough to deal with and understand for all involved. But she has done an amazing job here, giving us an inside look to both the alcoholic’s view as well as those around her who care and want to help. Cali and Jack are great characters that will make you smile and then tug at your heart as you watch them struggle on their way to find redemption and love. A Wonderful read! I can’t wait to read more from this author.

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### **Judy McDonough says**

I started reading this at 11:00 a.m. and finished it at 10:38 p.m. I could not put it down. Cali is everyone we

are and pretend not to be. Jack is everyone we dream about having but are scared of actually getting. This love story of flawed but lovable characters fills you with curiosity, intrigue, sympathy, cringe-worthy chuckles, passion, grief, and happiness. I loved it so much, and the beautifully crafted writing pulled me into the story so deeply that I genuinely felt like I was in snowy Esterloch, NY...or at least want to visit the quaint, scenic town. Stacey Purcell is a master storyteller who makes you taste, see, hear, feel, and experience her character's journey, and I can't wait to read more of her work. Read this book. You won't be disappointed!

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### **B Musgrave says**

As a first novel, this book was a page-turner! Great romance, some mystery and a good ending. Well written. Waiting for the next one!

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### **Lynn Welborn says**

Just couldn't put this book down! The sexual tension between the two main characters kept me wanting more.

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### **Jessica's Totally Over The Top Book Obsession says**

#### **2 Just not for me Stars**

##### **\*There will be Spoilers\***

This book was so not for me. I almost DNF'd this book like 4 times and though OCD won out again(I have yet to DNF a book in the years I have been reading) this was the closest I've gotten to an DNF to date. I sat here for hours after finishing this book trying to think of the nicest way to write a review on a book I totally disliked while being honest. So I guess I will start by saying that my hate for this book had nothing to do with the author or her writing talent, but my personal taste. That being said. I didn't like anything about this book. I didn't like the hero Jack. I didn't like the heroine Cali. I didn't like the way the story plot played out. I didn't like their relationship and I didn't like their HEA. Not one thing did I like.

Jack was a jerk the whole book. He was vicious to the heroine Cali over her being a alcoholic. He treated her with scorn, disgust and mockery. Yes I understand that his mom and twin sister where alcoholic's that hurt him and he lost them both, but he took out all his past pain on Cali. And he didn't change his ways til the 97% mark of the book. That's right 97%. Then he sees the light. Well it was too late for me Jack. After he pushed her down on the ground cutting up her leg. Accused her of drinking, when she told him she didn't he called her a liar. Told another man he could have her that he didn't want her no more. All this when she needed him the most. A close friend had just died and she was hurting. So what did he do for the final icing on the cake? He brings his ex girlfriend to the funeral where she is touching all over him in front of Cali.

Then later that night he finds Cali jogging and tells her he is leaving town. She tells him she loves him and they can work it out and he still leaves her. For 4 months.... Then he comes back at the last 2% of the book says he was an ass and all is forgiven. NOPE!!!!

Cali I didn't care for either, although I didn't hate her like I did Jack. I more felt just meh with her and a touch of pity. A widow Cali found out at her soldier husband's grave that he was cheating on her and had a baby with another woman. So she takes to drinking her pain away. I may have liked her better if she was paired with a better hero maybe.

Another issue I had with this book was I didn't get their relationship at all. I didn't understand how they could fall in love. There wasn't any sweet moments. Just him being a jerk to her when they were around each other. Them not being around each other and then bam they kiss and have sex. How did we get from point A to point B? I didn't buy their love. Also Janie the friend that died in the book, that part of the plot (and it was a big part of the plot) was so depressing. Us readers got to read as she slowly dies scared and struggling to breathe. Which just made me have flash backs of my papa dying of lung Cancer. I was a CNA for 9 years, became one just because of my papa and wanting to take care of him. So to say that it hit close to home was a understatement. Truthfully I found almost all the book depressing. I felt like I needed antidepressants to get through the story. There was no happy moments. No fun. Just sad stuff and Jack making me mad. I do just think it was me. Me and this book just didn't Jive. I think it was more of a personal taste problem. So don't just take my word for it. What works for some doesn't work for others and vise versa .

<http://jessicasoverthetopbookobsessio...>

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### **Erica Thompson says**

Echoes of the Heart is a thought-provoking tale centered around alcoholism. One of the characters is struggling with its demons. The other character has been scarred by family members stricken with the addiction. Ms. Purcell creates a town, with strong supporting characters, that allows our characters to grow while they deal with these issues. The pacing of the story is stellar. She brings her characters down into the depths of despair, but never wallows there. There is laughter, tears and joy. I highly recommend this book, and I look forward to more stories in the town of Esterloch.

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### **poppy says**

A great first book just loved it couldnt put it down cant wait to see what she comes up with next. Recommended go get it

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### **Sharon Mignerey says**

If you like stories of redemption, you're going to love ECHOES OF THE HEART. The heroine, Calli Montgomery, is an alcoholic in the early stages of her recovery. There's no sugar coating the disease within this uplifting story, and her struggles are on the page for readers to experience with her—the lows, the fears, and the triumphs. The hero, Jack Benfield, has plenty of reasons to hate drunks because of his own family history, and like so many family members of alcoholics, does not see how his world view is impacted by this family disease. Now ... is this a story consumed with the disease of alcoholism? No! It's a story about two deeply flawed people struggling to make sense of their lives while they fall in love with each other. They each know the relationship is a mistake, but they also are drawn to qualities of honor and loyalty within each other even though their happily-ever-after seems impossible to achieve—my absolute favorite kind of romance. This story will make you cheer, make you shed a tear, and make you sigh with satisfaction after you close the very last page.

This novel is so well crafted a reader would never guess this is Stacey Purcell's first published novel. Based on the outstanding story within this one, this debut writer is one to keep your eye on—her books will end up on your keeper shelf. That's where ECHOES OF THE HEART is going.

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### **Carla Rossi says**

Stacey A. Purcell has written a thoughtful and emotional story with a deeply flawed main character. The author's brilliance is that she made me care about the heroine and even root for her to effectively deal with her issues. I appreciate the authenticity of Cali Montgomery's struggle with alcoholism, just as I appreciate Sheriff Jack Benfield's equally difficult struggle to deal with the alcoholic Cali.

This is an impressive debut novel, and I look forward to more books from this talented author.

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