



A Song for Josh

Susan Rodgers

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RONE (Romance Novels of Excellence) 2014 Award Winner!

Best Contemporary Cover Design - Alanna Munro

Music has the power to heal. Discovered while busking on the streets of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, Jessie Wheeler -- once a teen runaway from Prince Edward Island - is now a popular singer-songwriter and actor. On the day her boyfriend Charlie proposes, he kicks an estranged friend - actor Josh Sawyer - out of his Club. Jessie sees something of herself reflected in Josh's sorrowful chocolate brown eyes -- a deep loneliness and angst. When a part on Josh's new television series Drifters becomes available, Jessie can't resist the temptation, despite the fact that taking the part threatens her engagement to Charlie. When a past nemesis, Deuce McCall, makes a tragic appearance in the city, Jessie's turbulent past catches up with her, threatening any chance she has at a true and sustainable love. *A Song For Josh* is a simple sweet story about hope and love, and the power of music to heal. Through Josh and Jessie's story we learn that all of us damaged souls are indeed lovable, even when we are quite certain we are not.

A Song for Josh Details

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Author : Susan Rodgers

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From Reader Review A Song for Josh for online ebook

Liisa Carbone says

An enjoyable read! Author Susan Rodgers imbues her characters with depth, tenacity, and a tangible sense of emotional intimacy. Look forward to getting to know Jessie, Josh, and even Deuce McCall better in the second offering in the series.

Jennifer Seay says

I was so excited to get a copy of this book and have to say that it was an amazing read!

This was a really well written novel. The characters were complex and each were described in such a way that you could picture in detail where they lived, what they looked like, their pasts and their presents.

Jessie was a shell of a person that just existed in the world without feeling, attaching to or becoming truly involved with anyone for years. She suffered so much heartache for so long and at such a young age that she could not allow herself to feel anything but numb. Her character lived through so much heart break that it was hard not to be emotional to read her story. It was great to read how her current life played out to open up her heart and allow her barriers to break down. It was great to read a story of a strong woman who learns to find herself and is able to look at her life and make choices for the better.

I am so excited to finish reading this series and only hope that Jessie is able to overcome her past and has an amazing future!

April says

*****ARC/R4R given by author for honest review*****

Ok, it's hard to know where to begin with reviews. I literally just finished this book. The first thing is that it's a really long book. I'm not sure that I liked the ending but I definitely have to read the 2nd book. It's not really an ending but a beginning of sorts; it's a cliffhanger really. I was conflicted while reading. It was not what I expected. It took me through many emotions, as I found myself identifying with Jessie in too many ways. It seems her life paralleled mine in some ways that it's saddening. I rooted for Jessie and Josh the entire time. I never really liked Charlie for his ways, but was happy with the way their relationship ended. I felt it was a long time coming. I gave the book four stars because I was so enthralled and invested in the characters but I found one thing I really didn't like. Besides the length, the POV bothered me. The narrative/omniscient POV is too confusing. I usually prefer for one or two characters to be the speaker. I'm not a fan of third person nor narrative. Personally, there are just too many people to keep track of. And some of them I really don't care to know their thoughts or feelings. They just don't matter. Josh and Jessie I definitely needed to hear. It was interesting to know how some of the other characters felt, but overall it was too much and didn't really lend a whole lot to the story. I will definitely read the 2nd book, and may re-read this one in the future. AND I DON'T THINK I FOUND ANY TYPOS...YEA!

Kathy M says

#ARR from Fifty Shades Support Group#

This book was so amazing. It made me shudder, gasp, cry and laugh. It is a page turner and actually barely let it down. I read it in 3 days and the emotion cocktail from it put a paw print into my soul. Congrats to the author for the AMAZING book.

Jacqueline says

3/5 stars

Video Review: Coming Soon

This book is told in third person omniscient, but mostly follows Jessie and of course Josh. Both characters have a troubled past and the amount of emotion that comes off the pages is unreal. The story was short and with this being the first book apart of the Drifters series and my first book from Susan Rodgers I'm interested in seeing what else she comes out with.

was sent an ebook in exchange for an honest review

Kay LaLone says

A light hearted story of a gift a father gave to his daughter. A gift of music that Jessie learns can heal the past and give her hope for the future. I really enjoyed this book.

Marisa says

The premise of the story is a good one, but I was so disappointed. None of the story lines were resolved so I was left hanging on all fronts. They were all teasers with no ending because you were given some background but not enough. Why was Sandy killed? What happened between McCall and Jessie? Jessie and Josh's love was so much in their heads that it was surreal. They never seem to share their feelings out loud only through looks & gestures. Everywhere else the descriptors were too flowery and went on forever losing the importance of what was happening. I want to read the next one if only to get closure. I didn't like the ending because it was so abrupt and vague. They should have come together so they could face hope together to face the next phase of their life. It was nothing but loose ends everywhere.

Michelle Poirier says

Have your tissues ready! This beautiful story about Jessie, Josh, and the healing power of music will bring both a smile and tears to your eyes. This book has lovely flow to it, and I can't wait to start reading book 2.

deb22luvsbooks says

This was a fantastic book with a story that will grab you from the start. It was a little hard to read in the beginning because of the style of writing...very poetic, but once you get used to that it is much easier to understand. Being written in such a fashion makes the book unique and the depth of emotion from the characters is very pronounced because of it. I enjoyed following Jessie's story, following her tragic life and struggle to overcome the wrongs that have been done to her over the years. I like that she has stayed true to herself and is uniquely a beautiful soul despite her past. I also fell in love with Josh, and see how he completes her because of the struggle that he has faced and continues to face. This story took hold the more I read and the bad things that appear to be coming back to haunt her in the next book leave me a little worried for her....I will definately be off to read the next installment to see what happens next! Great story told in a bold new fashion!

Connie says

Thanks to Susan Rodgers for a free copy of this book in exchange for honest review. I give it a 3.5 Stars.

This book is well-written with good plots. The writing style is different than other books I read. However, I think this book is too long. All of the characters are well developed. I am rooting for Jessie and Josh.

Jessie was a run away girl with talents in music and acting, who became famous. Her journey was hard to read at time b/c it was so heart breaking. She endured so much wrong in the life. Then she met Charlie, famous actor who cheated on her the whole time in their relationship. This is hard for me take in but I understand why she put up with him. Toward the end of their relationship, Charlie realized that he wanted Jessie and learned to love her but it was too late.

Josh was a broken individual, tormented/abused by his father, who turned to drug. He finally cleaned up and got a break to act in a TV series. He loved Jessie and thought that she was his only hope. Their love and connection were out of this world. This was where I struggled with Jessie's choices while reading this book. If she loved Josh so much, then why did she not dump Charlie for Josh? Her reason was that she did not want to throw away an 8 years relationship. I think this was BS b/c for a person who suffered so much, I would think that she would grab Josh with both hands and hold on to him.

All in all, this was a good read with an unexpected twist. This is a series so there are book 2 and book 3. I am not sure if I want to keep going.

Philisha Stephens says

Rating more of 2.5 but not quite 3. I struggle with this rating because I believe this is more of Women's Fiction versus Romance. Yes, there are some romantic elements but that doesn't necessarily make it romance. This is about the physical and emotional journey of a young lady with all the struggles and some that entails. The author's writing style is not one that I find easy to read, but someone else might. There are two types of books: those that "show" you what is happening and those that "tell" you what is happening.

This is a "tell" me book. There is so much data on all the setting and characters that it is easy to loose sight of actually who's thoughts at the moment you are reading. I found myself skimming pages to get to the dialog (this is the show me part of books) and found that I was missing a lot of the unnecessary parts of the book thus making it more enjoyable to read. It is very wordy and a lot of the words have no bearing on the real plot of the story. However, the dialog is very slim and the author mixes the show and tell during the dialog. I'm not sure if this book is intended to be a series or not because there are a lot of open ended struggles and dangers. The book abruptly ends when it appear that people are getting close to solving a murder which is one of the climatic threads in the book thus leaving the reader hanging because the climax was a dud. It also does not show the main characters ending up together but thousands of miles apart, yet they share a phone call.

This book was free from the author and the gift of the book has had no bearing on my rating. This review is strictly my opinion and you know what they say about opinions, "Opinions are like butt-holes, everyone has them and they all stink."

Lisa says

ARC received

After reading several ARC of new books recently with disappointing results, I was delighted by this story. The characters are at once love able and draw you into their sphere with a genuine desire to know more. I found it interesting that the author changed the perspective of the narrative so frequently and included perspective of secondary characters, which I felt gave the book depth and personality.

I felt like the development of the plot matched the pensive nature of the story. The story seems to take a gentle meandering line even in moments of crisis for the characters.

The narrative itself was somewhat choppy at points, particularly in the last quarter of the book. This, combined with very long run on sentences required me to do several read throughs of a few passages to fully understand and also, I'm not sure if this is a formatting issue, but there were quite a few unfinished sentences at the end of pages. A .mobi file problem perhaps? I unfortunately don't know enough about epublishing to know if this was an editing or formatting error.

All in all a delightful story and I am eager to read book 2 and experience more of Josh and Jessie's poignant love story.

Hazel *Craves the Angst Reviews* says

Find This and Other Reviews At Craves The Angst.

A Song For Josh is the first book in the *Drifters* series and is a Drama/Contemporary Romance written by *Susan Rodgers*. I read this as a R2R with *Fifty Shades Support Group* As always, a special thank you to the mods and author for allowing me to participate.

4 Heartfelt Aching Stars!

The Review:

A Song For Josh is a remarkable yet sorrowful story of one girl's incredible sojourn in a hostile world of grief and sorrow and her skillful attempt to free herself through the gift of music and second chances. I completely enjoyed this read with all its angsty emotions, well-crafted imagery and noteworthy characters.

Characters...

Jessie's Story...

Jessie is an accomplished singer-songwriter and actress with a tumultuous past. At age seven, her father introduces her to the joys of music as he shares his talents and knowledge. He is her only confidant in a house with a jealous and miserly mother. After her father died when she was twelve, her life spiraled down a dark and gritty path as she tried to survive a childhood unprotected by the one person who should have given everything to keep her safe. Escaping home at age fourteen, she embarks on a desolate journey that takes her into the seedy world of prostitution, homelessness, and though she doesn't succumb to the addiction herself, she is surrounded by drugs that seem to evade the life choices of those around her. At age sixteen, she meets two likeminded people, Sandy and Rachel, and collectively, they forge the roads of friendship, banding together to survive. Sandy is her first true love but after a short respite, something twisted and insidious happens, sending Jessie fleeing once again to the lonely streets she once called home.

One day while busking on the streets, she's happened upon by what would become her future family and is introduced to an inspired life as she tours down the road of discovery, her music and acting career taking hold. But loneliness and tragedy are difficult things to leave behind and they always seem to be lurking behind hidden corners.

In her current day, she's famous but still stuck in a past that longs to resurface. She devotes her life to helping those escape the life she struggled through and is in a convenient relationship that is unattached, just the way she likes it, as she has no intentions of revealing her past to those who have come to love her.

Josh's Story...

Josh has a frightening past of his own that is wrought with pain and suffering at the hands of an abusive father that cared little for him. As if this wasn't bad enough, fate deals him yet another tragic blow when an accident and a death send his life spiraling into darkness, drug addiction and hopelessness until one night, a chance meeting with Jessie would change his world forever. Showing compassion and encouraging a *hope* he thought long since gone, he gets himself straightened out and in a position to actually live once again. Haunted by the incredibly beautiful and mysterious woman he met one night amongst the garbage he's shocked when fate intervenes once more and brings him face to face with his would-be savior for an HBO series. Sparks fly, attraction is rampant and two hearts who thought life had sucked them dry, find a glimmer and a hope of something more.

Story...

This story was beautiful and sad and poignant. I really enjoyed watching Jessie discover a life outside of the pain she was trapped in. Though she lived in the public eye, she was down to earth, shy and quiet. She was also strong, formidable and a complete survivor. She was a character to admire. But through all her tragedies, she's shut herself off from emotions and feelings, leaving a hole she never thought could be filled again.

That is, until he came along.

Josh was a walking, hot mess. He was perceived as "...a loser, a druggie, a young man with seemingly no hope left in the world." But her parting words to him gave him the courage to try harder and to be better. "There's always hope, Josh. Never give up."

The romance between these two was tender and sweet yet complicated and I took pleasure in watching them blossom despite the pressures and strains of life.

Downside...

I do have to say, though I enjoyed this story, I really struggled with some of the writing. It was poetic and brilliantly written but it was filled, and I do mean FILLED, with descriptive, flowery sentences that distracted greatly from the story itself. Every page, every paragraph and every sentence was wordy in the extreme. It was tough finding this amazing story behind all the flamboyant writing. The author would go off on obscure tangents with inconsequential characters in a scene that had me racing through to get to the meat of the story. One scene would lead into another and then into another only to be back at the original scene. It wasn't really hard to keep up but it was distracting and I just wanted so bad to get back to the scene at hand and find out what was going to happen. It was frustrating.

The Wrap Up:

This story is far from finished as this book ends with a slight cliffy and tons of unanswered questions. It encompassed me enough that I'll definitely be moving on to *Promises (Drifters #2)*. I can't wait to see what happens next and what's in store for Jessie and Josh and the rest of the cast from this incredible series.

Kara says

A Song For Josh was a highly emotional read that's filled with heartache, loss, despair, helplessness – essentially any emotion one would experience after suffering years of malevolence. Yet, it's equally heartwarming and truly inspirational. It demonstrated that even if imprisoned by unrelenting darkness, one could still find redemption and truly live again through the powers of music, friendship, love, and simple acts of kindness.

The story began with a young Jessie and her loving, musician father. He taught his young daughter—his passion, escape, and salvation from the hardships of the world—the guitar. Music.

“Music is the salve to our souls in this bitter world.”

After his death, the twelve-year-old Jessie found herself with a new reality. It was full of depravity, loss, and destitution, so the young girl sought refuge in her music whenever possible.

Eight-years after her father's death, the now hardened, twenty year-old Jessie was living on the Downtown Eastside in Vancouver where she performed on the streets. It was here that the philanthropic, famous actor Jack Deacon discovered her. He saw something in the young homeless girl. Through him, Jessie met Deidre and Charles Keating. Dee was a manager and Charles, a music producer. The power couple made Jessie into an Oscar winning superstar and loved her as if she were their own. Yet, Jessie was still numb. A shell of a girl, who only lived through her music. However, she didn't truly live at all, at least not in any real sense of the word. That was until she met a kindred soul...

“Lost souls attract other lost souls.”

Since Jessie's first encounter with Josh Sawyer, she noticed the haunted look in his eyes. It was the same

look she saw whenever looking at herself in the mirror. She knew his pain; and therefore, instantly felt a connection. Jessie wanted to help him. She couldn't explain it, but he evoked feelings in her that she'd thought were long gone and this terrified her. She never wanted to love again. She was afraid to lose another person that she cared deeply for. That's why she'd always kept herself distant from everyone and why she didn't really care about her fiancé Charlie's philandering ways or his narcissistic behavior. She was detached and therefore safe. Her instincts told her to run, but an irrefutable pull made her want to surrender. You'll have to read the book in order to see what happens ;-)

This was not an ordinary Hollywood'ish romance. It was seriously unlike any that I'd ever read before. Yes, it dealt with the typical angst that accompanies many famous relationships, but expect SO MUCH MORE! The subject matter was dark and both the primary and secondary characters were great. Now, I'm off to read book two, *Promises!*

"Here's to secrets, and love, and all that bullshit."

4—KINDRED STARS!!!

**I was provided with an ARR from the author in exchange for an honest review.*

Nook Worm says

I received this as an ARR from the author.

Actual rating is 4 1/2 stars, but it was so close to 5 that I went with it.

This was a seriously intense book that I had difficulty putting down. The reason I didn't give it a full 5 stars was that, for me, it was very difficult at first to follow the story the way it was written. As I went along I started to get more familiar with the style and it wasn't so bad. The story is written as if the person writing it already knows what happened, almost reflective, but with intimate knowledge of all the characters feelings. I would call it a narrative with lots of flashbacks that can get you lost easily. Even with the sometimes confusing writing, the story is moving. Be prepared to be floored and brought to tears over the emotional roller coaster that is Jessie's life.

This is a truly moving story of survival of the greatest kind, and a great love story as well. I look forward to following Jessie and Josh's story to see if they are able to find the love they deserve in each other. I definitely recommend this book.
