



All Summer Long

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Can a summer fling turn into love that lasts a lifetime? Former underwear model turned entrepreneur Clay Stryker has loved, tragically lost and vowed that he'll never risk his heart again. After making his fortune, the youngest of the rugged Stryker brothers returns to Fool's Gold, California, to put down roots on a ranch of his own. But he's frustrated to discover that even in his hometown, people see him only for his world-famous...assets.

Firefighter Chantal (Charlie) Dixon grew up an ugly duckling beside her delicately beautiful mother, a feeling reinforced long ago by a man who left soul-deep scars. Now she has good friends, a solid job and the itch to start a family...yet she can't move toward the future while she's haunted by painful memories.

Clay finds an unexpected ally, and unexpected temptation, in tomboyish Charlie, the only person who sees beyond his dazzling good looks to the real man beneath. But when Charlie comes to him with an indecent proposal, will they be able to overcome their pasts and find a love that lasts beyond one incredible summer?

All Summer Long Details

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From Reader Review All Summer Long for online ebook

Kristen says

ARC provided by Netgalley

Charlie Dixon is a firefighter in Fools Gold. She discovered the small town on vacation and fell in love with the beautiful, welcoming town and stayed for good. Charlie carries demons from her past and she is finally ready to confront them and heal so she can move forward towards her dream of having a family.

Clay Stryker is a retired model. He's come home and plans to stay for good. He has a dream to enrich his and his family's way of life by putting his own mark on his family's rich involvement with the Fools Gold community. He wants to give back and one way is to dedicate his time as a volunteer firefighter, but first he will have to pass Charlie's rigorous training. Clay is also still carrying scars on his heart.

Clay has always been misjudged and valued for his looks alone. Charlie knows the feeling and is drawn to Clay, as a friend, from his arrival in town. The two can relate and appreciate each other's personalities. When Charlie bares her soul to him and asks him to help heal her, he agrees but will they be able to heal each other's broken hearts or will they do more damage to each other?

Let me count the ways in which I loved All Summer Long. I was immediately drawn into Charlie and Clay's story. They are both rich, multi-layered characters and easily lovable. Aside from the stark masculinity of Clay, he is also vulnerable and isn't afraid to let Charlie see what he perceives as his weaknesses.

Charlie had a bad experience in her youth that damaged her for a long time but she is now ready to face her fears and she opens herself up to Clay, trusts him with more than herself and although she is scared, Clay is patient and takes his time healing her. The dedication and desire he showed Charlie from the beginning was so incredibly sweet and endearing. I loved Charlie, she was scared of being hurt but she was determined and when she decided to stop running from her fears, she gave herself whole-heartedly. She was tough, sweet, loyal and courageous.

The chemistry between Charlie and Clay jumps off the page and springs to life, both of them open themselves up to intimacy that leaves nothing left to hide and both are strong enough to revel in it instead of hiding from it.

There are also family issues when Charlie's estranged mother, Dominique comes to Fools Gold, hoping to forge a closer relationship with her daughter. Dominique was a really hard character to like, she was the most selfish and self-centered character I have had the displeasure of reading in a long time. But though she makes tons of mistakes, by the end of the book, she had grown on me. Mallory did a brilliant job when she created that character, as she was able to write a hugely flawed, egotistical character and develop her well enough to eventually be a semi-redeemable character. I imagine with more time spent in Fools Gold, she may turn into a decent character.

What I've discovered and love about Susan Mallory is her ability to deliver not only complex and well-drawn characters, but to give the readers a story with heart and soul. The book is character driven, but the issues are relatable and realistic, making the book that much more enjoyable.

I just started reading Susan Mallory with her last release, Summer Nights and I loved that as well. I'm late to

the scene as the Fools Gold series is now up to the ninth book with the release of All Summer Long, but I think Mallory has a new lifelong fan in me. I can't wait to see what she comes up with next, I don't know if she will be able to top Charlie and Clay, who are now up there in my favorites, but I do hope she tries.

JoAnne says

This is the last of this summer's trilogy in Fool's Gold that had the Stryker family at its center. There was so much depth and reality to this story - especially the layers that we peeled away from many of the characters to see the real them. Clay and Charlie stole my heart. Clay was more than a pretty face who made his fortune as an underwear model. He had heart. He was so caring in the way he treated Charlie until the end but that resolved itself in a great way but I wanted more. The chemistry built slowly but they connected and knew the others thoughts and feelings just by a look or a touch many times. There were some laugh out loud moments, tears, friends, family, romance and love. There were a couple of happily ever afters and others we hope will be resolved in a future book i.e. Evie. I think this is my favorite Fool's Gold story so far - sorry Annabelle - just because you could feel yourself a part of the story - happy when the characters were happy, sad when they were, etc. We also saw facets of characters we've met before that we hadn't seen before. Give Susan and the Fool's Gold series a try. You'll be glad you did.

Juuli says

Actually, I was kind of hoping it to be a boring story, so I could stop reading the series. It wasn't. Although *All Summer Long* was an easy read, it was unbelievably good.

I enjoyed the storyline. The main characters, Charlie and Clay, were smart, independent, and interesting. The book had enough romance, family drama, and also some wonderfully hilarious moments. The ending was very similar to all the other endings in this series, but I didn't care. Charlie and Clay were amazing. I fell in love with this couple. I wanted them to have their happily ever after.

Now I just have to read the next story and hope it is as good as this one. :)

I also think Fool's Gold would be a great TV series.

Amy says

I can say what I want about this book since I was not given a copy of it in exchange for regurgitating the plot as printed on the back cover. Sorry, I just prefer to read reviews where people express their opinions about the plot, characters, etc and not give a synopsis that is available on goodreads.

That being said, I really liked this book. There was a moment when the cheese factor threatened to overwhelm me, but I came back from it enjoying the main characters immensely. Charlie and Clay were likable people. You wanted them to be happy because of all they had been through, but they weren't damaged and bitter. They were open to finding happiness and willing to let go of their painful pasts. I liked the overall message of love developing over time and not judging a person by what is on the outside. Too many romance novels focus on love at first sight between gorgeous people. It was a nice change of pace to see love come from friendship and respect.

The only slightly annoying thing about this series is the description of how friendly the town people act.

They behave like they had one too many kool-aid red bull cocktails. It seems moderately Stepford/cultish. I could do without the detailed descriptions of all the casseroles they make or what the lunch specials (available grilled or fried) are at the local bar. At least we didn't have a girlfriend margarita party in this book, but there was a football party with a complete menu description. Gee, people serve nachos at football parties? Regardless of the lifetime movie networkness of the town, I did enjoy this installment better than the previous two and will wait patiently (???) for the next one.

mirada says

3'5 estrellas. Pero pongo tres porque no he visto equilibrio entre los protagonistas. Me ha gustado mucho más Charlie que Clay, me he resultado más verosímil.

Brianna (The Book Vixen) says

Review copy provided via NetGalley

Why I Read this Book: I think we all know by now that I enjoy reading this series. It's a cozy contemporary romance with a small town setting.

What I Liked: Unfortunately, there wasn't a lot I liked about *All Summer Long*. It wasn't so bad that I had to DNF it but I was a bit disappointed. That said, here's what I did like.

Charlie is honest and speaks her mind. I like that about her. There's no guessing work; she just lays her cards right on the table.

The tender moments between Charlie and Clay. All things considered, Charlie is pretty much a virgin. Clay did very well during the moments when Charlie was experiencing something for the first time. He was patient and very considerate. Which leads me to the smut. The smut was pretty good.

What I Didn't Like: I didn't feel the chemistry between Charlie and Clay. It's not whom I thought Charlie would end up with and it's not whom I thought Clay would end up with. Whereas in the other Fool's Gold books, the hero and heroine are usually a perfect match for one another.

I don't like the way the date rape topic was handled. Charlie had avoided men for the past 10 years, when the date rape happened, and thought sleeping with Clay would "cure" her. No therapy for Charlie. It felt like Charlie overcame the repercussions from her date rape ordeal too easily.

Another skeleton from Charlie's closet was her mother, Dominique. The two never had a mother-daughter bond because Dominique was too narcissistic. The ultimate conclusion regarding this relationship wasn't convincing to me.

One thing that puzzled me was when Clay put "get a house in town" on his to-do list. He just bought some land next to his mom's ranch. Why not build a house for himself on that land, like Rafe and Shane are doing? Maybe I missed something but it seems a whole lot more convenient for him to live on the land, and be closer to work, than to live offsite.

I didn't like the Nate story arc being used as a plot device to create friction for Clay's business. Clay had enough working against him in regards to his alfalfa farm that I don't feel Nate needed to be in the story at all. And Clay consequently beating himself up because he went against his gut in regards whom he hired as the farm manager (Nate) was unreasonable. Anyone would have gone with Nate. He had more experience in farming, whereas the other candidate had NONE, and his background check came back clean.

And while I'm on the topic of Nate, why is it that when Clay fired him, Clay told Nate he was going to pay him what he was owed *plus* an additional two weeks pay on top of that? What warrants the added two weeks pay to a slim ball like Nate?

The book ended at the 80% mark for me. There was some unnecessary drama thrown in at the very end to shake things up. I suppose to warrant the BIG finale of an ending. Aside from that, nothing much really happened except for some clues on who'll be in the next few books. (Just exactly how does Justice know Patience? Is Justice related to Lillie? Who's Evangeline going to hook up with? And who's going to hook up with the new guy in town that recently bought the radio station?)

Overall Impression: Unfortunately, *All Summer Long* fell flat for me. It was definitely my least favorite of the 'Summer' books and it rates right along next to Ethan's book. Yet I'm still going to keep reading this series because I love the small town dynamic. Hopefully I'll find the characters and storylines in the next trio of books more interesting and entertaining than what I found in *All Summer Long*.

Minna says

Did NOT enjoy this. Why oh why oh why did I finish it? I am cursed with the kind of disposition that hates not finishing books, I guess.

Clay is a former underwear model, who now wants to do other stuff with his life. Clay is also the male epitome of my good friend, Mary Sue, and can do no wrong. He never acts in anger, his temper never rises, he can take heaps of bad behavior and abuse from strangers, acquaintances and his quasi-lover with equanimity, he is the world's best lover, a grieving widower who looooooooooves monogamy (he just doesn't have that itch [to the point that he doesn't even glance up]), isn't stuck up, is nice, loves animals, wants to be a farmer and a volunteer firefighter, is nice to old people and mothers, blahblahblahblahblah gag me.

CHARLIE on the other hand is no such saint. Rude, abrasive, and bossy, Charlie has put her emotions away on the shelf following being raped in college, her father's death, and poor parenting from her mother. Charlie has decided she would like to be a mother, and so to prepare herself for this, should find some poor schmuck to teach her to like to have sex again (as she calls it, "heal her"). You know, like a SEX THERAPIST might. But why do anything the logical way? No, Charlie selects poor sweet Clay to "heal" her. Clay agrees to this inane proposal and they get underway extremely quickly for someone with such serious issues.

Meanwhile, the rest of the town - which, improbably, is almost all women - can't stop slobbering over Clay. I found it hard to believe that an entire town full of women would continually catcall a man in that fashion and he would continue to find it funny without at least speaking up about it. Whatevs. Anyway, into the mix comes Charlie's **evil** mom Dominique, who never believed Charlie's story of her rape and disapproves of everything Charlie does and has ever done. Dominique was a truly annoying character, in that the author made her say the most heinous, hideous things (so you hated her) but then gave her this sad, pathetic, regretful, wistful, poor-me inner voice to make you feel sorry for her. I felt like, as a character, Dominique

was extremely unsubtle and I disliked both her and Charlie more for being such dummies. Neither one of them had very good people skills.

Charlie, during the course of her "therapy" sessions (*trying not to snicker*), is an absolute jackass to Clay. She constantly threatens to hit him or beat him up, she judges every thing he says, she tries to dump him repeatedly, she is embarrassed to be seen with him, and she makes him jump through every possible hoop. What a treat, right? I get she had legitimate issues, but I didn't buy into her "treatment method" and I thought she seemed kind of humorless and rude in general.

So where's the appeal? What is Clay crazy about her? What exactly does Charlie offer to Clay? She never was affectionate or even kind towards Clay once (her method of showing affection? Talking to other people on his behalf. Be still, my heart). Fine, she was good with animals and kids. But she wasn't dating animals or kids, she was dating Clay, and not once was she particularly loving towards him.

This book was a blatant set up for the next in the series. I will not bother backtracking, and I am sure not going to keep reading. This just did nothing for me, and I have better things to read.

Kimberly says

Review written for www.books-n-kisses.com

This is the ninth in the Fool's Gold series. And the last of the Stryker Brother trilogy. And I think Mallory saved the best brother for last. This is the story of Clay and Charlie. We met Charlie a few books back. She is a Fool's Gold firefighter and Clay is a NYC underwear model.

I will be honest, I could not imagine these two together. I imagined Charlie something like Kristen Johnston from "3rd Rock from the Sun" tv show. And Clay something like Matthew McConaughey. Just not a couple that would look good together but something about them just meshes really well once you start reading. Not only does Charlie believe she is far from feminine she was raped years ago and has never gotten beyond the trauma of the incident and trusting in a man. When she befriends Clay she feels he might be the one to help her get beyond her past. Clay just wants to move past his reputation of being a model and being dumb, spoiled and stand-offish. The interesting thing is both of them just want to be "normal".

Any woman who has had trauma in her life, even if it was not a rape, can relate to Charlie. She is written so strong physically and will do anything for her friends but when it comes to men there is a vulnerability that any woman can relate to. Then Clay comes into her life. I loved the way he was written. He is so sensitive to her mind, body and heart. He is willing to take it slow with Charlie even when she doesn't think that is what she wants. Every woman who has been through a trauma should have a man like Clay.

While I would suggest reading the entire series, this book really can stand alone. But I would strongly recommend the entire series. Mallory has a way of bringing you right into her world of Fool's Gold and you never want to leave.

Disclaimer:

I received a complimentary copy of the book in exchange for an honest review.

Cynthia D'Alba says

ALL SUMMER LONG brings together Charlie Dixon, a muscular, tough, firewoman, with underwear model and movie butt double Clay Stryker. Talk about opposites.

Charlie is tough—physically and mentally—because she thinks she has to be. When her biological clock alarm begins ringing, she realizes that she has some issues from her past that must be dealt with before she can raise a mentally healthy child (i.e. not pass on her own fears and phobias to her child.)

Clay is a pretty face...or at least that's what everybody sees but he wants more. He's retired from his butt double work (that's a young man's game, says the 30 y/o hero!). He holds a college degree and has some ideas of what he'd like to do next. One is moving to Fool's Gold to be near his family (mother and two brothers, heroes of books 7 (Summer Days) and 8 (Summer Nights).) The next is starting a vacation business based in Fool's Gold, if he can get the town council (all women) to stop looking at his butt and take him serious. And third, he wants to join the volunteer fire department.

Clay has the assets necessary to help Charlie get past her traumatic history. Charlie has the connections, not to mention does the training for, the volunteer firemen recruits. Tit for tat, so to speak. A simple trade of favors that of course finds each of them falling for the other.

I have to also mention Charlie's mother, Dominique Guerin. Maybe one of the most selfish, self-centered, egotistical characters I've read in a while. I figure some readers will complain that Mallory went over the top with Dominique but no. I've known women like Dominique. Mallory does a brilliant job getting into the character's head, into her thoughts... really understanding how women like Dominique think. Kudos. That fact that Dominique's daughter, Charlie, is nothing like her galls Dominique. Where Dominique is petite, Charlie is tall and muscular. Where Dominique is very feminine in appearance, Charlie prefers pants, boots and chopped hair. There has been a mother-daughter split for all of Charlie's life, something else that has to be dealt with before Charlie can really take solid hold of her mothering reins.

A very good book.

willful says

I went into this book pretty dubious. I haven't been that crazy about the series, I didn't really like the heroine from previous books, the hero sounded improbable, and I tend to get put off by the "abused heroine must be gently coaxed into liking sex" plot. To my surprise, I liked almost everything about it.

I just loved the characters. Charlie (she eschews her birth name, Chantel) is a tall, strong woman who's always felt oversized and unfeminine, especially next to her tiny ballerina mom. The one time she tried to be "feminine" it backfired in the worst possible way, so now she's just given up on the whole idea. Here's a typical thought:

"He was taller than her. Stronger. Masculine enough to make her feel feminine. Sort of."

But Charlie wants to be a mom, and she knows that her hangups aren't a good thing to put onto a child. So

she asks Clay to help her get over her fear of sex, hoping she'll then be able to find some nice normal shlub to be with.

Clay, a famous former underwear model, is far from ordinary and he gives new meaning to "not just a pretty face." He's worked hard to stay grounded and down to earth, helped by his late wife; her death has left him sad, without being all emo about it. At 31, he's ready to begin a new career -- and when he meets Charlie, he thinks he might also be ready to feel something special for a woman again. Here's how he sees her:

"They were at eye level with each other. He liked that. He liked how she was strong and very much his equal."

The two pair up surprisingly well, with Clay's self-confidence a good match for Charlie's awkward standoffishness. The love scenes between them are not just tender -- Clay, thorough as always, has read up on how best to help women in this situation -- but sweet and funny:

"Don't do that."

"Don't do what?"

"Face me. I'm not ready."

"It's just a penis. You've seen them before."

"The last one attacked me."

"Mine is more well mannered." His voice sounded as if he were amused.

She glared at his back. "Are you laughing? This isn't funny."

"It's a little funny."

The story succeeds so wonderfully because these two seemingly disparate people are alike in many ways. Both have trouble being taken seriously: everyone assumes Clay is too pretty to be smart or reliable, and no one believed that a girl like Charlie could have been raped, not even her own mother. And they have so much to offer each other. Clay appreciates Charlie for being strong and real, and for seeing more in him than a great butt; unlike virtually everyone else in his life, she takes his plans and ambitions seriously. And Charlie desperately needs someone who recognizes her beauty and likes her just the way she is.

There's a bit of sequel baiting -- how many books does this series need? On the other hand, it hit one out of the park on the 9th book so never mind -- and near the end they both get stupid, Clay more forgivably than Charlie. (view spoiler) Even so, I loved this pair so much, and it was such a delightful surprise, I have to give it 5 stars.

Jessica's Totally Over The Top Book Obsession says

Well like always I am loving this book then right towards the end the hero freaks out like a coward and runs, hurting the heroine. God it just pisses me off so bad. The books have so much potential but always ruin it for me with some cowardly ass bullshit at the end.

Not only did Clay do the

After he broke up with Charlie ripping out her heart he tells his brother that if his dead wife was still alive he wouldn't be with Charlie. So you know a coward and Charlie was the runner up prize

Dee says

Review Now Posted

4.5/5 stars

Clay, who made his money by modeling underwear and being a butt double, decided it was time to get out of the business and come home to be surrounded by family. As well as coming up with a great idea for a new business that would also bring extra revenue to the town, he wants to become a volunteer firefighter to help his community. However he constantly has to face peoples prejudice and they wrongly assume he is just a 'pretty boy' and therefore cannot possibly be committed to anything responsible.

Charlie, who was very deeply scarred as a teenager, is a firefighter and stables her horse on the Stryker property. She is a very blunt, honest and forward person that has been hiding herself away for years but now desperately wants a child. She has a choice in that she gets over her emotional problems by visiting a psychiatrist or just tackles the problem head on. As is the norm with Charlie, she decides just to tackle the problem and asks Clay for help. I really loved the way that Clay was with Charlie, he really is a nice and genuine guy who despite being an exceptionally good looking man Clay wanted to be known and treated as more than just a 'piece of ass'. It was actually nice to read that it was the man who was suffering from the classic stereotyping and not the woman!

I thought this was a great story from Susan Mallery and a great addition to the series. I am looking forward to reading Evie's story and reading more about the Stryker family and the Fool's Gold community.

ARC kindly provided by Harlequin via Netgalley.

-r- says

My library had a ton of Susan Malleey books available for the Kindle, so I thought I'd try one. The story was predictable, unrealistic, and dumb. There was foreshadowing that never led to anything, I'm guessing because the "clues" were setting up things in the next book. The sex scenes were fine, not too much for my prudish sensibilities.

I give this book 1 out of 5 boners.

Manda Collins says

I think this is my favorite Fools Gold book ever. Yep, you heard that right. This is what? Number 12? I've enjoyed almost all of the FG series, but this is by far the best. Why? Two words: Opposites Attract! (An alternate title for this one might have been The Firefighter and the Underwear Model.) What I liked most about this one was the fact that Clay (former butt-double/underwear model) was not your typical Susan Mallery hero. I love her books, but dang her heroes can be total a-holes sometimes. But Clay, from beginning to end (with one tiny exception) was a genuinely nice guy. From their first appearance on the page together, he and Charlie (Fool's Gold's favorite female firefighter) just sparked. And I loved how gentle and sweet he was with Charlie in his quest to show her that sex isn't something to be afraid of. Charlie had good reasons to be afraid of getting intimate with a man, and it was wonderful to see her slowly relax into her relationship with Clay. Most of the conflict in this one was internal (Charlie reconciling with her mother, and getting over her fear of men; Clay learning to trust his instincts, and getting over his fear of falling in love again), and that was just fine with me. I enjoyed the secondary characters and just hanging out in Fool's Gold again. When the final conflict came, it was not entirely unexpected, and as romantic gestures go, Clay's was pretty darn good.

Jacob Proffitt says

What a relief to find myself liking this book. This one is way into the series by this point so you should know what you're getting by now. And yeah, you really don't want to read this one without the others first (at least the other Stryker brothers ones).

Charlie really made this book. Her combination of naiveté and courage was captivating from the start. I particularly liked that Mallery didn't have her go all girlie to be with Clay. She changed, yes, but became more herself rather than becoming like everybody else. I loved that about her and loved even more that it was the same thing that drew Clay to her.

And Clay is nine kinds of awesome, as well. It was really easy to fall for him as the attractive, successful guy who rolled with the bad and emphasized the good. I particularly liked that he had had such a strong relationship in his past and how it shaped his present in some very strong ways (by giving him a foundation of confidence and appreciation for intimacy that was beyond mere sex). (view spoiler)

Anyway, this was a great read and a fun story. I loved both Clay and Charlie and the side character bits with Dominique were charming as well. Good feels all around. So much so that I think I'm going to leave Mallery for a bit. Some of her stories are good, some are even great, but there are some pretty low lows as well and I'm not liking the ratio so far. I may come back but only with a ton more caution.

A note about Steamy: While there are the standard two explicit sex scenes, there are an additional couple of "intimacy practice" scenes that were as steamy on their own. That puts this on the high side of my mid range for steam. All appropriate, I hasten to add. Charlie's difficulties were mentioned in prior books so it makes sense going in that we'd get what we got.
