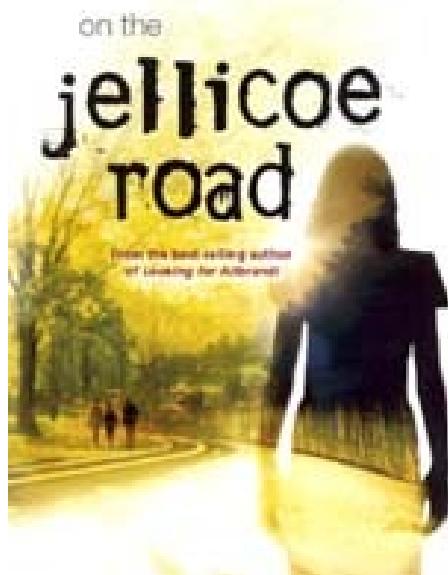


MELINA MARCHETTA



On the Jellicoe Road

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On the Jellicoe Road Melina Marchetta

I'm dreaming of the boy in the tree. I tell him stories. About the Jellicoe School and the Townies and the Cadets from a school in Sydney. I tell him about the war between us for territory. And I tell him about Hannah, who lives in the unfinished house by the river. Hannah, who is too young to be hiding away from the world. Hannah, who found me on the Jellicoe Road six years ago.

Taylor is leader of the boarders at the Jellicoe School. She has to keep the upper hand in the territory wars and deal with Jonah Griggs—the enigmatic leader of the cadets, and someone she thought she would never see again.

And now Hannah, the person Taylor had come to rely on, has disappeared. Taylor's only clue is a manuscript about five kids who lived in Jellicoe eighteen years ago. She needs to find out more, but this means confronting her own story, making sense of her strange, recurring dream, and finding her mother—who abandoned her on the Jellicoe Road.

The moving, joyous and brilliantly compelling new novel from the best-selling, multi-award-winning author of *Looking for Alibrandi* and *Saving Francesca*.

On the Jellicoe Road Details

Date : Published August 28th 2006 by Penguin Australia (first published 2006)

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Author : Melina Marchetta

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From Reader Review On the Jellicoe Road for online ebook

Sana says

had to rewrite the roast bc gr is a fucking shitface and deleted it so I apologize if it is sucky. I tried kids.

And that's basically me after reading this ^

My brain cells are ded. I want to cry and drown in my own tears, not because of the feels this book gave me, but the *lack* of fucking *everything* this book failed to give me. I want my time back that was wasted reading this book.

You know you should dnf a book when you:

1. Can't even pronounce the fucking title correctly.
2. Find it hidden under your bed like that glass of milk your mom gave you years ago.
3. Can't even remember the MC's name.

I would dnf this, but then PEOPLE.

~~nOW how the fuck did Sana manage to hate a book with an overall 4.14 rating from about 38,500 people, you ask? :)~~

?What is the fucking story? -A five star read by Sana Khalid

What the fuck was going on in this book? WHAT THE HELL WAS HAPPENING? Did I miss out on something bc I seriously don't even know what the fuck was the point? What the fuck happened like??

WHAT THE FUCKITY FUCK DID I MISS??? All I know is that *insert MC's name here bc I forgot lmao* is left on Jelis road by her mother and she goes to fucking Jelis school and she cries too much and who the fuck is Fritz?? Like I'm sorry, actually I'm not, but like I didn't even understand what was going on??? Honestly what was even happening.

?You know when you read something you have a *sense* of what going on?? Well imagine reading a book in a totally different language? You wouldn't know what the MC's fucking name is right? You wouldn't know what the fucking plot is, right? You wouldn't know what the fuck is going on , right? YOU WOULDN'T FUCKING KNOW WHO FRITZ IS RIGHT? YOU WOULDN'T KNOW ANYTHING. **THAT WAS BASICALLY ME AND I 130% ASSURE YOU, I KNOW MY FUCKING ENGLISH.**

This book was torture. It physically became hard for me to turn another page. I was in **pain** and may no other reader ever suffer what I have went through reading this book. I wanted to cry bc I was reading *this* book. It was so fucking awful ugh. I want to cri now.

?This was hella fucking long and boring and I hated it all. I didn't connect with anything, bc 14/15 of this book made 0 sense to me.

AND WHO THE FUCK IS FRITZ?

Aly (Fantasy4eva) says

“He’s the most beautiful creature I have ever seen and it’s not about his face, but the life force I can see in him. It’s the smile and the pure promise of everything he has to offer. Like he’s saying, ‘Here I am world, are you ready for so much passion and beauty and goodness and love and every other word that should be in the dictionary under the word life?’”

Sometimes, guys, simply reading a book once is not enough.

You find that reading it a second time offers you a whole other reading experience.

Those once slow 100 pages now whiz you by, and you realise it was not the pace that was at fault, but your confusion.

You savour it so much more. Make sense of certain references - crush on the plot, characters and writing, and fall in love with Jonah Griggs all over again.

It frustrates me so much to know that I can never do this book justice. That so many readers out there have yet to read this beauty.

The thing is, somehow, even though I knew what was going to happen, I choked up and laughed like a mad woman at the exact same scenes I did the first time around. What made me smile at times was how the little tissues were still there. So many times I would be about to bookmark a certain moment only to realise that it was already bookmarked. I suppose I know myself too well ;)

When I approached the last 100 pages I decided to read them outside in the garden. I have never had that urge before, but It was dark outside, silent and soothing in a way that I couldn't imagine it being inside. It felt right to read those last pages alone - in a peaceful surrounding. Yet, like last time, I dreaded that last page, and when it had ended - I closed the book and just allowed my thoughts to take over and savour them, because I knew it would be a long time before any other book would ever make me feel like this again. I took that moment to mourn characters and a world I genuinely felt I had lost - taking some solace in the fact that I would return to them when the feeling of loss became close to unbearable.

You know, I can see myself reading this every year, discovering something new every time, loving the characters even more - if that's even possible.

Once again I was left with this undeniable ache that made me want to be a part of these characters lives, but I think what bothered me the most, and what really made me feel somewhat of a loss, was knowing that I will never know a Tate, Hannah, Webb, Jude, Fitz, Jonah, Ben, Raffy, Chaz, Jessa, and Taylor.

I feel like I'm saying goodbye to something personal every time I turn over that last page, but now I know that's hardly the case.

LOVE does not even come close to describing what I feel for this book

Treasure it guys

And then read it all over again <3

Kat Kennedy says

You gut me, Marchetta. Absolutely gut me.

Stacia (the 2010 club) says

Simply incredible. I cried way too much, but it was so worth it. Will review tomorrow when I can wrap my head around what to write.

moves ahead a day in time

After sleeping on it, I'm still struggling with how to write a proper review. There are some books which are virtually impossible to explain, and this is one of them. The GR book summary gives no indication what the book is really about, and truth be told, I'm not sure you'd want to know what the book is about before reading it.

The first 150 pages or so are completely frustrating and confusing. I knew this ahead of time, but I also knew that just about every single person who has read this has said the *exact* same thing, yet still gave the book 5 stars. There is a reason for this. The first part of the book is only giving you glimpses of the player's lives and their world. It almost reminded me of one of those movies that you watch in reverse, where the ending is the beginning and the beginning is the end - yet not quite.

All I can do is echo the voices of those who prodded me to read the book - DON'T GIVE UP. You will not forget this book. You will not regret reading. It is so worth the read. Keep some tissues handy.

As the story unfolds, the author starts giving us a crumb of information, then another, then another. Slowly the pieces of a broken story come together as one revelation follows another in a wave - a very emotional wave at that. Just when you think you've heard it all, more starts to come. Then more, then more.

Pay attention to every single character. Just about every person's life is intertwined with the other characters in this story.

I'm done trying to prod you to read this. Just read it. You will not be sorry for making the effort. Please, I beg you...battle through the first part of the book (which is confusing) until you get to the part that starts to get into your soul. Let's call this a dare. I have yet to find one person who did not love this book.

Lora says

There's a reason why books like Twilight don't receive those. They don't give those to just any book, and when you factor in *excellence* . . . well, a lot of titles just don't make the cut. But it is clear to me why Melina Marchetta's third tribute to YA literature received a Printz award back in 2009. It is because it *is* excellent, to

the very meaning of the word.

If all YA contemporary writers wrote like Marchetta, I doubt I'd play in any other genre playground very often. She writes these beautifully inspirational, relatable, and emotionally-charged novels that seem to affect me in an undescribable way.

Some of the passages in *Jellicoe Road* seem to beat with their own heart:

"These people have history and I crave history. I crave someone knowing me so well that they can tell what I'm thinking."

"What do you want from me?" he asks. What I want from every person in my life, I want to tell him. More."

I've always believed that an exceptionally good writer can take you places emotionally that others can't, and, for me, Melina Marchetta is one of those writers.

I'm going to end this review here for two reasons: 1) I believe this is the type of book that should be experienced first hand, without much knowledge of the story going in. So, go read it and remember, the beginning is confusing, but plow through it and I promise you won't regret it; 2) I'm tearing up thinking about this story and its characters, so all you'll be getting from me is the aforesaid and this: I love this book and I'm anticipating the day when I can read it again. I highly recommend *Jellicoe Road* to everyone.

Oh, and one more thing: I ❤️ Jonah Griggs.

Vinaya says

This book is so fucked up. Completely, totally fucked up. Everybody in it is fucked up, and living their lives is fucked up, and by the time you're done with it, you're fucked up, but you can't tell because your head is cloudy from all the tears you've shed getting through this fucked-up book.

I hate *On The Jellicoe Road*. I hate books that make me cry, and this book made me want to weep tears of blood for all that lost youth and promise, and the pain of loss and the promise of the future. If somebody had told me how mixed-up and emotional this book was going to make me feel, I would have abandoned it in a corner and floated off to the simple uncomplicated world of supernatural ass-kicking, where nobody dies and even if they do, they rarely stay dead.

In the big debate of *Saving Francesca* versus *Jellicoe Road*, I would have to pick *Jellicoe Road*. I liked *Francesca* better, but that's because it made me laugh and think and smile mistily, but it never, ever, shoved me into the wringer and brought me out feeling like a limp dishcloth. It never made me feel that piercing tender pain you get when you think of things long past that can never be regained. It never made me feel like I was drowning in the lives of people who are so real, it's hard to believe they don't exist and haven't consumed your life. *Jellicoe Road* is a harsher, deeper read, the sandpaper to *Francesca*'s paint peeler.

Undeniably, the writing is brilliant. It's evocative and tender, it makes the emotions in each page almost tangible. The characters are drawn brilliantly too, and despite the fact that over half of the main cast wants to kill themselves at one point or the other, you cannot help but be drawn to them. I loved Taylor and Griggs and Santangelo and Raffy, but my heart got well and truly tangled up with Narnie and Webb and Judd and

Tate and Fitz. It's for them that my heart broke, and shattered into a million pieces. The story is told largely from the perspective of Taylor, but it is the ghosts that predominate, that breathe life into the story, ironic as that sounds.

This is not a book for people who want a straightforward love story with a dash of drama. This is for people who want to appreciate good writing, and don't mind losing a little bit of themselves between the covers of a book in the process. Oh man, this book is just so seriously Fucked. Up. And I would so totally KILL anyone who dissed it. Ever.

Claudia Ramírez says

4.5 stars.

Saania Zee Jamal ? says

GUYS.

I JUST READ THIS AGAIN ON A WHIM AND MY HEART. I AM A MESS. ALL OVER AGAIN.

HOW IS THIS EVEN POSSIBLE BECAUSE EVERYTHING HURTS *JUST AS MUCH* BUT ALSO EVERYTHING HURTS *JUST AS GOOD* OR MAYBE EVEN INFINITELY MORE SO AND I CANNOT EVEN BEGIN TO FATHOM THE FUCKING BEAUTY THAT IS THIS STORY AND THIS PROSE AND OFFICIALLY MY MOST CHERISHED BOOK OF ALL TIME.

Thank you for existing.

(21.10.16)

This is the kind of book that slowly sucks you in, and at first, you may be unsure if you want to go on but before you know it, it's already swallowed you whole.

And I'm not sure I ever want to get out of the abyss of emotions and just plain *rawness* this book snared out of me.

And it's not like there's some blatant, profound message here that's changed my life. It's not like I hadn't already started to pin the pieces of the puzzle early on for myself. It's the sheer **beauty** and **mastery** with which Miss Marchetta constructs this tiny little world and its complex characters who don't feel like characters at all because that's how deep in you are. It's that constant air of **enigma and enchantment**, that underlying presence of **hope mixed with tragedy** that draws you in so very thoroughly; all presented without the need for tasteless dramatics, maudlin behavior or overattention to romance.

When you can manage making my heart feel so *passionately* for a person who only exists in wisps of memories throughout the entire course of a novel, I salute you.

To me, reading this book felt like a **journey**. An experience in and of itself. And quite frankly, the first

time, in a long time, that I've been taken away to that far away place we all go to with the simple power of words.

Word of advice— suitably apt mood music will make reading this endlessly more exhilarating. Do it. Trust me. Here's mine: *The Takedown* by Koda & Dabin.

(19.10.15)

karen says

i have got to stop being surprised when teen fiction is good. printz-award winning fiction (you know, the award for literary teen fiction that all the grown-ups read and say "this is for *teens*??"). australian teen fiction. complicated, multi-layered teen fiction.

this book is all of the above, and it is remarkable.

it has sex and drugs and rock and roll, it has violence and terrible crimes, it has shock and awe and guilt and terrible secrets and it opens with a death. this is my kind of teen fiction. it is mostly about loss and *being* lost, and being so close to redemption but frustratingly denied. it is about the teen-girl default position of lashing out like a wild animal and of the deepest regrets.

it howls.

it is astonishing - *jellicoe road* is sophisticated both in its subject matter and the way in which the story is told. it actually took me a little while to get into the swing of things - whose story is italicized? what is their relationship to the rest of the story?? but it was a good kind of lost - the kind of lost where you are in an interesting part of town with attractive people and cute little knickknack shops, not the kind of lost where you are late to a job interview in the wrong goddamned borough.

and toward the middle, the plot became a little predictable, but that didn't even matter, because by that point i was so enmeshed in these characters' lives - i just wanted everything to work out for them, even though i knew this was not going to be the kind of book with a tidy-sweet ending.

she created powerfully three-dimensional characters that i cared about and hated to close the book on. truly - it has been a while since i have fought sleep. i love sleep - i neeeeed sleep. but i forced myself awake to keep reading this, and when i finally had to give in, it was with the deepest resentment.

this is a rich and emotionally complicated tale, and when i go to that panel next week, i may have to throw myself on her a little bit and beg her to take me with her and tell me bedtime stories every night.

for posterity, i will announce here that i did not cry. but this is definitely a crying-type of book for those of you that way inclined. i got that throat-thing that happens before a good cry, which is unusual enough for me, but i expect you people will cry like when a puppy dies on your birthday.

and you will love every minute of it.

(view spoiler)

come to my blog!

Nataliya says

"I never had any friends later on like the ones I had when I was 12 - Jesus, did you?" This quote belongs to Stephen King, but it describes the soul of Melina Marchetta's *Jellicoe Road* perfectly.

Jellicoe Road is the story of **friendships that form your world**, friendships so wonderful that it's easy to fall to pieces when they break. It is the story of **abandonment and loss and learning to deal with it**. It is the story of **love**, intense to the extreme with the generous helping of teen angst. In short, it is **an excellent example of a good quality YA book**, emotional, intense, and lyrical.

"I remember love. It's what I have to keep on reminding myself. It's funny how you can forget everything except people loving you. Maybe that's why humans find it so hard getting over love affairs. It's not the pain they're getting over, it's the love."

Here's a short spoiler-free synopsis: Taylor Markham was abandoned by her drug-addicted mother at age eleven. She is now 17, living in Jellicoe School, a boarding school full of state wards and troubled children. She is in charge of her House (50 girls) and is expected to lead a sixteen-year-old 'territory war' between the Jellicoe School kids, the 'Townies' and the Cadets who camp out in the area for a couple of months each year. All while having strange dreams and feeling abandoned by her caretaker Hannah. All while reading Hannah's unfinished novel about five teenagers in the 1980s who form very intense friendship bonds after the horrific car accident on Jellicoe Road when they were 11-12 years old.

Now, I have to say that **not once did I look at this book as a mystery** even though it's marketed as such. The central mystery of the story - well, I easily figured it out only a few chapters in, and the rest of the details easily came into light as the story developed. Not much took me by surprise; **it was quite predictable, actually.** But since the mystery was not why I enjoyed the story, the reading experience was perfectly fine. **To use the book's own language, the whole mystery setup was not a trip but a journey.** It was never about the resolution but about the emotional journey it took to get there.

"I remember asking, "What is the difference between a trip and a journey?" and my father said, "Narnie, my love, when we get there, you'll understand," and that was the last thing he ever said."

What I loved was the friendships that the 'old five' and the 'new five' have developed throughout the course of their respective stories. My favorite by far was between Taylor and Raffaela, with the developing friendship with annoying but adorable Jessa as a close second. **Even though there was a romantic story threatening to take the foreground, it never overshadowed the rest of the story and the friendships,** and I'm thankful for that.

"This is the best night of my life," Raffy says, crying.

"Raffy, half our House has burnt down," I say wearily. "We don't have a kitchen."

"Why do you always have to be so pessimistic?" she asks. "We can double up in our rooms and

have a barbecue every night like the Cadets."

Silently I vow to keep Raffy around for the rest of my life."

I was quite emotionally affected (I'd say 'manipulated' if not for the negative connotation of that word) by the **nostalgic atmosphere Marchetta creates here**. The nostalgia for the beauty of childhood and adolescence, for the friendships of the kind that you can only have before you reach adulthood, for the safety of childhood (no matter how messed up it can be), for the safe haven of Jellicoe School for the lost and messed up children.

I also loved Marchetta's excellent characterization. Her characters are well-developed and multi-dimensional, and feel quite real. That is not to say that there's no stereotyping or clichés, but those are kept to the minimum.

"These people have history and I crave history. I crave someone knowing me so well that they can tell what I'm thinking."

As for the voice of the novel - it is very emotional. **Please be warned - it is emotional with the generous helping of teen angst. Oh, teen angst!** It's on every page, in every sentence - just like it was so overwhelming when you were 16-17. Everything is intense, the tension is palpable, emotions are right on the surface. Reading this book is like experiencing being a teenager you once were. I found it to be a bit of eye-rolling experience initially (thankfully, I'm way out of the adolescence) but eventually the style grew on me and started to feel quite organic. But if you'd rather not deal with overexaggerated raw teenage emotions - well, be warned and stay away from this story.

"What do you want from me?" he asks.

What I want from every person in my life, I want to tell him.

More."

Now, here are the issues that I had with this book that forced me to knock off a star:

- **The Territory wars.** I thought that storyline was limping on both feet. Why all the intensity if the whole thing only takes place for about 2 months each year? Why the whole issue with the Club House when it's only a few weeks when it becomes relevant? Honestly, just setting up a rivalry between the 'factions' would have been enough for the story. (view spoiler).
- **Sometimes the emotional intensity slips into a blatant melodrama.** I mean, there was actually a remark on (view spoiler).
- **The adults in this book** (even Taylor remarks on it!). Seriously, what the hell is going on with the adults? (view spoiler)
- Taylor and Jonah: (view spoiler)

And yet, despite my adulthood, despite a few eye-rolls, despite the issues that I describe above, **I STILL teared up at the end. I think admitting that will *TOTALLY* ruin my street cred**, but oh well. All the above taken into consideration, **4 easy stars**.

"And life goes on, which seems kind of strange and cruel when you're watching someone die. But there's a joy and an abundance of everything, like information and laughter and summer weather and so many stories."

Tatiana says

As seen on The Readventurer

I don't often give books 5-star ratings. Normally these are the books that either horrify me (Unwind, The Handmaid's Tale) or delight me with superb writing (The Queen of Attolia, The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks) or awe me with imaginative world building (The Left Hand of Darkness) or make me cry (Before I Die). Jellicoe Road definitely falls into this last "made-me-weep" category.

Jellicoe Road is the location of a boarding school for kids that are often neglected or with criminal tendencies. Taylor Markham is residing in the school because her mother had abandoned her at the age of 11 at a nearby 7-Eleven. Now Taylor is 17 and unexpectedly selected to be the school's leader in the game of territory wars with the Townies (locals from a tiny neighboring town) and Cadets (who spend several weeks a year in the Australian wilderness). Taylor is not sure she can handle the responsibility. She is uneasy more than ever - her mentor and friend Hannah disappears and Taylor is sure it has something to do with her mother; Jonah Griggs, a Cadet who she has a shared past with, is back and seems to know her all too well; she is plagued by dreams of a young boy who attempts to tell her something. What follows is Taylor's journey through the past and present to uncover the reasons why and how she was abandoned by her mother.

As always, it is hard for me to explain what I like about a 5-star book, but I'll try. Melina Marchetta draws characters that are deep, complex, and real. The relationships among them are touching - more than anything I think, this book is about the power of friendship and, boy, there are some magnificent examples of friendship in this book! The book is also about grief, guilt, forgiveness and, of course, love.

If I am forced to point out any flaws in this book, I'd say the writing some might find confusing in the beginning. It takes a few pages to figure out what is a dream and what is a page from a story Taylor is reading; what is from present and what is from the past. But soon enough all pieces of the puzzle fall together and you are faced with a deep, meaningful and heartbreakingly beautiful story.

Another thing that might bother readers is that some characters go through a lot of tragic events, sometimes too many. However, the story never becomes overly melodramatic or emotionally manipulative IMO.

Jellicoe Road is a remarkable work of YA fiction and rightfully deserves the Printz award it was given in 2009. I have no doubt I will read Marchetta's books in future.

Ari says

It took me 113 days to write a full review.. I counted.

Reading one of Marchetta's stories should be one of the "*10 things to do in your lifetime*". Seriously, this woman is one of the most creative people alive, one of the most amazing writers I came across and I wish I could put into words the awesomeness of this book, but I feel at a loss for words once more.

In fact, I should invent a new language with a dictionary full of ways to praise her talent.

Because Melina Marchetta doesn't only write books, she creates entire worlds full of fleshed-out characters and shattering emotions, and after you read about them you feel like you're the luckiest person in the known Universe and beyond. Because not many people in this world are able to feel what she makes you feel, and not many authors get to create such strong connections between the characters and the reader.

I feel like her stories have a soul. Like her characters are living beings trappend into a fantasy world, waiting for us to come and listen to their stories. They seem to breathe through our emotions, and I don't remember a moment when I didn't feel something (deep) towards this story and these wonderful characters.

Her words sing to me, they reach into the deep core of my own soul, they make me laugh through tears, they break my heart into thousand pieces but they also put it back in together, making it beat in a whole new rhythm, making it love and ache on a different level.

Once again, the complexity of the plot left me lightheaded, in awe, even though I knew what was coming my way. It's been a while since the last time I read this book and I felt it all all over again: the confusion, the despair, the hope, the heartbreak, the happiness. My teary eyes could barely read and I was left breathless too many times to count. I loved EVERYTHING about this book, after all this time it is still my favorite story and I really hope that when (and if) you read this book you will be able to feel just a tiny-tiny part off all these blissful emotions flowing through my heart right now.

THE STORY:

How much heartbreak can a heart take?

Jellicoe road is a roller coaster, a story meant to break hearts – one about true friendship and love, about forgiveness and salvation, about hope and disappointment, about life and death and everything in between. It simply left me in awe again because there is no tiny detail, there is nothing less important in this story. Everything has value, all words have power – to make you laugh or cry, to dream and hope.. and the real beauty of it is connecting all the threads in this fabulous piece of art.

But as heartbreaking and intense as it might be, it is also fun, and I found myself smiling more than once. So don't go thinking that this is a depressing book, it is not; it has the perfect balance between joy and sadness, between delight and heartbreak – but don't believe me, see it for yourself!

THE CHARACTERS:

I can't put into words how much compassion I felt towards the characters in this story. I don't think there's one that didn't leave an impression on me. Some times they made me laugh (even through tears), some other I just wanted to hold them close to my heart and protect them from all the hurt in their lives.

CONCLUSION:

Every time I read “On the Jellicoe Road” it simply takes my breath away. I fall in love with this book all over again, it hits me full strength no matter how well I think I know the story, it makes me smile and cry and sometimes both in the same time, all while I get drunk on the beauty of Marchetta’s words. Pure talent, pure Aussie awesomeness!

The full review can be found at: ReadingAfterMidnight.com

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Favourite quote (one of the many):

--

PS: And now allow me to express my joy:

PSS: Is this Jonah coming to life? :D

Emily May says

There's a monster in my mirror with puffy bloodshot eyes because she stayed up most of the night, crying and reading *On the Jellicoe Road*. But it was worth it.

Melina Marchetta never fails to remind me why she is one of my favourite authors and, in my opinion, this is the best of her books I've read so far. It's very difficult to put into words how I feel about *On the Jellicoe Road*, all I can say is that my heart has been ripped out and shredded, my throat has sealed up with emotion and when I finally get some sleep, I get the feeling I'll probably dream about Jonah Griggs.

The story is of Taylor Markham, a girl who was abandoned by her mother as a young child and now resides in a boarding school for kids who are troubled, neglected or criminally inclined, her closest friend and mentor being Hannah, a woman who lives on the edge of the school grounds. Taylor is elected as a leader in the territory war games played by her school with the Townies (locals) and Cadets. She tries to balance this responsibility with her own worries about Hannah's sudden disappearance and her belief that it is connected to her own mother. On top of that is Jonah Griggs, one of the Cadets and a boy from her past, who knows her a little too much for comfort.

The biggest concern of mine is that the intended young adult audience may not fully appreciate Melina Marchetta, I know she's somewhat of a celebrity here on goodreads but she's hardly a household name... and it irks me. I want to tell everyone to read this, scream praise from rooftops, and glare with disapproval at the teens in my local library until they drop *Halo* and pick up these fantastic works of fiction. But it makes me sad that Melina Marchetta is probably too sophisticated a writer for the *Twilight* generation.

Saving Francesca, *The Piper's Son*, *On the Jellicoe Road*... every book I read seems better than the last. She creates moods that permeate the entire book so even the most simplistic scenes or conversations become deeply emotional, and Melina Marchetta plays my emotions like Jimi Hendrix played guitar. I can't think of a single book that has had me choked up more often than this one.

And Jonah Griggs, you stole my heart. Though I do think Melina Marchetta could quite easily persuade me to fall in love with a goldfish.

Basically this book is everything... beautiful, powerful, tragic without being melodramatic, and I know this wonderfully sad story will stay with me for a very long time.

Kristin (KC) - Traveling Sister says

5+ Stars! Gorgeous

Books like this make me realize just how insignificant words become when attempting to convey raw emotion.

On the Jellicoe Road is more than just a book; it is a hauntingly beautiful journey towards an unexpected destination where tragedy and despair become the bridges to the greatest of friendships.

And life goes on, which seems kind of strange and cruel when you're watching someone die.

This story is told in alternating perspectives set in both past and present which, at first, seem entirely unrelated. But as the mysteries of this plot unravel, they begin to show hints of their glorious connection.

If you find yourself confused or frustrated at first, don't give up - you are strategically been fed only pieces to a larger puzzle that will all fit together nicely in the end.

The character development in this story is extraordinary; no one is denied the sweetness of redemption and transformation.

Seventeen year old **Taylor Markham** has been living on the *Jellicoe Road* after being abandoned by her mother at a local 7-11. The school she attends partakes in traditional games of territory wars where Taylor eventually becomes a leader.

Taylor is tormented by the grief and uncertainty of her abandonment and keeps herself emotionally distant from others. She has few memories of her childhood, but when her history starts presenting itself she begins a relentless quest for answers.

The writing in this story is captivating as it flows methodically from one vivid scene to the next. Taylor's character, as broken as she appears, is actually quite funny in a dry and witty, sarcastic sense - which is my favorite type of humor. I appreciated being able to smile and laugh in the midst of such angst-ridden scenarios.

Taylor's love interest, **Jonah**, is equally damaged and initially comes across as arrogant and crude. But, as their gentle relationship develops, it not only becomes one of the most loving but also one of the most inspiring.

Being part of him isn't just anything. It's kind of everything.

Every single element and occurrence in this book is connected to some larger piece of the story. Everything. Most connections are prominent enough to take your breath away, but then there are those as subtle as whispers, and if you're not careful enough you just may miss them.

I was still connecting the dots even after the book was done. The way this author seamlessly executes this perfect union of all that exists though past and present is truly astonishing.

Touching messages of hope, love, and determination tugged at me endlessly while reading this book. This story brought me to tears - from being just so deeply moved and so humbly inspired.

"Hold my hand because I might disappear."

Book Stats:

? Genre/Category: Young Adult

? Steam: Clean

? Romance: Beautiful love story involved, but not sole focus.

? Characters: Complex, well-developed, lovable.

? Plot: Uniquely focused on tragic events forming powerful friendships. Lots of mystery; a side story interwoven.

? Writing: Brilliant! Beautiful execution. Insightful, poetic dialogue. Inspiring concepts with a slight spiritual element.

? POV: 1st Person: Heroine.

? Cliffhanger: None/Standalone

emma says

THIS IS NOT A ROAST!!!!!!

NO ONE IS ALLOWED TO HATE, DISOWN, OR OTHERWISE PUNISH ME BECAUSE THIS IS NOT A RANT REVIEW!!!!!!

I'm giving it three stars okay???? So don't be mad. That's not even a bad rating.

That being said:

- this book was sosososo confusing, for, like, the first 15%, after which it was overwhelmingly obvious but took 300 pages to get to the revelations that had been pretty clear in a long term way
- STUPID UNNECESSARY ROMANCE THAT I HATE. SO MUCH. BLEH BLEH. Why do people ship this so hard???

However there were moments of very pretty writing, and ya gotta admire the badassery of these characters folks.

But this book and I just didn't click.

Bottom line: I AM SO SORRY I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED NOBODY IS ALLOWED TO HATE ME PLEASE

IF I DON'T LIKE THIS BOOK I WILL BE DISOWNED BY EVERYONE I LOVE.

also i've read the first 10% of this four times. excited to go in for attempt #5

anyway PLEASE LET ME LIKE THIS BOOK @READING GODS

~~I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING.~~

Andreea Pop says

“From this distance everything is so bloody perfect.”

This will not be a proper review, because *On the Jellicoe Road* turned me into ruins. Quite possibly, **my favorite book of the year**, because it is so unique and so gut-wrenching and so enrapturing it deserves the title.

This book is not merely a reading experience; **this book is a journey**. One filled with two emotional plotlines, past and present, that overlap in places only to thread themselves together in a masterful and sad, yet agonizingly beautiful story.

This book is about finding yourself. About hating the world and cursing the universe for forcing you to exist when you're left abandoned by everyone else. About your whole life being a question mark. And about finally opening up to the world and embracing it to the fullest.

“Hold my hand because I might disappear.”

This book is about love, every kind of love. The one between siblings. The one that's so intense it's everything to you and leaves you dying when that love suddenly stops. The one that's as natural as breathing.

The one that you try to bury beneath excuses. And about the love for life, for living, despite it continuously trying to shove you down.

“It’s funny how you can forget everything except people loving you. Maybe that’s why humans find it so hard getting over love affairs. It’s not the pain they’re getting over, it’s the love.”

This book is about the ugliness of humanity. About serial killers. About drug addiction. About neglected children. About pedophilia and child pornography. About goddamn cancer. About abuse. About suicide. About car accidents. About being parentless. About loss and about death.

“Is a person worth more because they have someone to grieve for them?”

But, I believe, most importantly, **this book is about friendships.** I cannot find the words to describe how amazing the friendships portrayed in this novel are. They just filled me up with immense joy and plastered smiles on my face and gave me a sense of family. With their banter, their bromance, their love for mischief, their leadership, their honesty, their support for one another and their endless, boundless, eternal love.

Also, **this book is about clever and magical storytelling.** About how an author can enthrall you with some words on a page and make you cry like you lost someone dear to you. About how she can twist your heart and make you curse out loud for (fictional) life being so unfair. About how she can give you goosebumps and butterflies in your stomach and sighs and accelerated heartbeats.

And **this book is about me and how I have fallen in love with its every single character.** I love Taylor. I love Jonah. I love Santangelo. I love Raffy. I love Ben. I love Jessa. I love Trini. I even love Chloe P. and Richard and Sam. And I adore Webb and Narnie and Tate and Fitz and Jude. They were the backbone of this book, its essence, its soul.

And oh, Fitz, I just want to hug the poor precious boy.

And oh, Narnie, I just want to destroy her numbness.

And oh, Tate, I just want to hold her hand and be there for her.

And oh, Jude, I just want to save him from the heartache.

And oh, Webb, I just want to place him in the sky between the stars where he belongs because he is perfection.

After I finished reading at 5AM, I kept asking myself:

Why haven't I read this sooner?

How much can a single person cry in one night?

How much can you love a book?

What to do with my life now?

And so here I am, **begging you to read this book** if you haven't done so yet. Let it be a journey for you.

"You just have to belong. Long to be."

I'll go back to my sobbing now, thank you.

Candace says

'On the Jellicoe Road' is the first book I've read/listened to by this author. After all of the glowing reviews for this one, I was prepared to be blown away. Unfortunately, it just didn't work out that way for me. It ended up being an "okay" story for me.

My first problem has less to do with the actual story, and more to do with the format that I chose. I listened to the Audible edition and that was a big mistake. The problem didn't stem from the quality of narration, so much as the complexity of the story. There were simply too many moving parts for me to try and keep track of while listening to an audiobook. It is incredibly hard to pull off a book like this in audiobook format and it didn't work for me.

I spent hours trying to figure out who the characters were and what the hell was going on. The transitions between characters and time frames was not always obvious, making matters even worse. I must have been hours into the story before I figured out that there were actually two stories playing out -- one in the present and one in the past. Needless to say, I lost a lot of time being utterly confused and unaware of what was going on.

By the time I began to piece some things together, I had already missed so many of the "connections" and details that it was kind of pointless. When the big reveals came toward the end, they were kind of meaningless to me. I never really connected with the characters or the storyline. I had simply missed too much to play catch-up at that point.

The story centers on Taylor Markham, a girl that was abandoned on the Jellicoe Road by her mother at the age of 11. She lives at a boarding school (orphanage??). When the lady that has taken care of her disappears, she is certain that something is amiss. Taylor sets out to find Hannah, or discover what really happened to her.

When she runs across a book/journal written by Hannah, she begins to unveil some long-standing secrets. Along with some friends from her school, she has several creepy encounters and a variety of adventures. There is some sort of rivalry described between the two groups of kids...but I was pretty confused so I can't say I ever really grasped what that was about for sure.

Overall, this ended up being a middle of the road story for me. I do suspect that I'm not doing this story justice though. I was just too lost for most of the book to take much away from the experience this time around.

I do plan to re-read this in the future, because I have some lingering questions. I'm sure they were answered along the way and I just didn't catch it. I definitely won't be listening to the audiobook on my second attempt. This story will require my full attention.

Check out more of my reviews at www.bookaddictshaven.com

Jo says

God. This book.

Note: I'm not sure where the words 'On the' went... I'm assuming it's different for the British version and not that I have a defective copy.

Also... while I'm **Note-ing**: This review will be a lot shorter than other reviews because this book is best read knowing nothing about it.

Initial Final Page Thoughts.

Breathtaking. I need to listen to the masses more.

High Points.

JONAH GRIGGS. Sorry, had to get that out there. Taylor Markham= New Soul Sister. Australia. Mystery! Nostalgia. Childhood games. Raff. Beautiful writing. Amazing character development. Heartbreakingly perfect ending.

Low Points.

When I read books (real books, not Kindle ones because they have the nifty 'Add Notes/Highlights' button) I have a pink polka dot notebook that I jot down page numbers, thoughts and quotes in. I know that's not a radical thing to do because I know a lot of people who do similar things, and as I read this novel I found myself writing down questions that I believed would be answered at the end.

Most of them were and everything made sense, but there were two questions that I had that I really wanted to know the answers to. The answers wouldn't really add anything to the story... I'm just nosy.

Not that I'm hankering after a sequel because this book was perfect on its own and I think a sequel would be pointless, but I feel like I need to sit Ms Marchetta down and ask her my questions just for some closure. So, if you're ever in Manchester MM, there's a caffeinated drink on me!

Heroine.

I loved loved loved Taylor Markham and from the first page I knew that she was going to be a part of the League of Soul Sisters (along with Vera, Katniss (don't mention Mockingjay), Viola and The Rat) that I am considering setting up.

I'm going to be the 'funny one' in this group, obviously, because I lack the coolness, wit, feistiness and the ability to throw a ball in a straight line never mind shoot an arrow.

Taylor was the perfect mix of disgruntled moody teenager, spunky heroine and confused young girl. Yes, she can teeter on the edge of being a bitch but I think that's what I liked about her. She's flawed and she's normal and she's trying to deal with so much I practically encouraged her to be a bit prickly.

YA fiction is so full of impossibly perfect heroines that make it so hard to relate to. But I really related to Taylor and her outlook on life and in the time it took me to read this book, I found myself really caring about what happened to her. And I think that's why a lot of people really love this book.

So yeah, Taylor, keep your eye out for the postman because there's an official invitation in the post for you...

Love Interest.

Oh Jonah. When I heard you described by many a girl as the mysterious loner with a dark and tortured past, I have to admit that alarm bells were going off.

There's something about the word 'mysterious' and 'loner' when used to describing boys that triggers an alarming adverse reaction in me (lots of frowning, yawning, skipping of pages, eye-rolling, eye-clawing-out etc).

But you, Jonah Griggs, you are my kind of guy and you are allowed your dark and tortured past. I don't want to say a lot on this subject because if you haven't read it already then you need to experience JG first hand. But this guy brings the swoon and I have to agree with Taylor on one thing (well, on most things, but this one in particular)... I prefer him in his fatigues. BOOM.

Also an honourable mention has to go to Santangelo, with his abs (don't worry Taylor, I wouldn't look away either) and Ben, my violinist and his medieval jousting. Hot damn.

Theme Tune.

Local Boy in the Photograph - Stereophonics.

I immediately thought of this song... not just the subject matter but the whole message of the lyrics. Bitter sweet.

Angst Scale.

9/10. I really don't want to say anything in this department for fear of spoiling things. But my favourite part of this book was the way past events were interwoven with the present day and how they affected the characters. I found these passages that were filled with innocence, hope, lost youth, impossible situations and, most importantly, the power of best friends so beautiful and captivating.

Recommended For.

EVERYONE. People who love mystery books. People who are comfortable with having butterflies in their stomach permanent because when JG brings the swoon... sorry, I'll stop. People who like kick-ass, resourceful and perfectly complex heroines. People who love beautifully written and fantastically paced prose. People who wish they were younger again so they could have adventures in the best tree house in the world... complete with espresso.

You can also read the review for this book and others and a whole lot of other exciting stuff on my blog here.

Maggie Stiefvater says

I will preface this review by saying that I love this book. But not every will love this book.

I will also preface this review by saying that you shouldn't decide whether you belong in group A or group B before you get to page 125 or so. The first 125 pages are a confusing, emotional slog that seems to be about territorial "wars" between rival teen sects in Australia. But it's really brilliantly done -- because that is exactly what the main character, Taylor Markham, thinks of things. It's busy and there are plot threads everywhere and all I knew was that I loved SAVING FRANCESCA and Melina Marchetta was doing all of this for a reason.

And she was. It ties up beautifully in the end, and there's a scene which even made me shed a tear -- me, who has not cried since THE TIME TRAVELER'S WIFE (three tears) and while writing my second novel

SHIVER (one tear from each eye) -- and I'm left feeling just about cheerful about everything in the book though it was not a Hollywood happy ending by any stretch.

I think quite possibly my absolute favorite thing that Marchetta does is the character reversal. She introduces a character which we view in a terrible light because the main character views them in a terrible light, and then she completely changes our mind about them in a subtle and realistic way throughout the book until finally we and the main character are in love. She did this in SAVING FRANCESCA and she pulled it off again in JELLICOE ROAD even though I was *watching for it*. By the time we get the first kiss in the novel, I was sort of clapping embarrassingly like a seal.

This is one of those books that I know will be wonderful on the reread, because I'll get to look past the busy beginning to see the groundwork Marchetta was laying.

Happy sigh. I'm very happy this one won the Printz this year.

wondering why all my reviews are five stars? Because I'm only reviewing my favorite books -- not every book I read. Consider a novel's presence on my Goodreads bookshelf as a hearty endorsement. I can't believe I just said "hearty." It sounds like a stew.

Flannery says

A lot of people think that Henry David Thoreau* went to Walden to live a solitary life. I felt like that until I actually went to Walden Pond. Imagine my surprise when some friends and I decided to go for a hike, go for a swim and check out the scenery--we left Boston around 9...and we got there by 9:30. Yeah right, HDT, I could live deliberately in the woods, too, if I knew my transcendentalist cronies would bring me a Cinnabon and some pumpkin ale once in awhile.** Nevertheless, Thoreau's idea served as the inspiration for Yeats' poem Lake Isle of Innisfree*** from which Melina Marchetta quotes in this novel. Yeats, who looks a little like Kenneth from 30 Rock, wrote about Innisfree because, to him, it served as an idyllic place where he could always go for peace and solitude. (I find it rather amusing that both Thoreau and Yeats wrote fascinating works about livin' la vida simple that become so popular. **Lesson:** If you find a perfect place, KEEP IT TO YOURSELF) But Marchetta's magnificent storytelling was only enhanced by her reference to Yeats' poem. Instead of pounding quotations into your head, like a sad number of authors do, Marchetta only mentioned *Innisfree* once in passing...but it stuck with me through the rest of the book.

I don't want to go into the plot of this book too deeply, for the point I took away from the book is that we all have those idyllic places we go to in our minds. For some of the characters in this novel, their Innisfree was with family, or with their childhood friends, or even just spending time with one particular person. It doesn't have to be a place at all. No matter how far we get away from those memories, they are always all polished up in our minds like the Hope Diamond when we need to imagine a perfect place in time.

Marchetta's characters, as usual, were intriguing and fleshed out. It is constantly amazing to me that I can read a book and be unable to visualize even the protagonist, while this author is able to give me an extensive cast of characters and I feel like each one of them is someone I know. From Santangelo to Griggs to Raffy to the Brigadier, I understood where they were coming from and could reasonable predict what they would do in a situation. Very rarely was I frustrated with choices that characters made. (view spoiler) I also have no idea how Marchetta can make my heart hurt one moment and make me hysterically laugh the next.

I must admit that the territory war aspect of the novel was not my favorite, though I understand its place in the overall story. (view spoiler) The transfer back and forth between Taylor's present day and Hannah's story was rough for the first fourth or so of the book. If you try it and get stuck, please truck through it--it is so worth it.

As I knock each of Melina Marchetta's book off my to-be-read stack, I am a little more sad. When I'm done with them, how long will I have to wait for a new one?

*The Wikipedia entry for HDT informs me that he wore a “neckbeard” for many years and insisted many women found it attractive. 1) I never knew that hideousness had a name; and 2) If you are a woman that finds a neckbeard attractive and we are friends on here, just go ahead and defriend me.

**He was only 1.5 miles from his homeboy Emerson's house.

***This poem is the shit.

EDIT: I listened to the first third or so of this book and read the rest in book form. The audiobook was great but I wanted to read it faster. The only negative for the audiobook was the annoying DMB-type music that played between every chapter and at the beginning and end of every disc.
