



# Roseflower Creek

*Jackie Lee Miles*

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## **Roseflower Creek** Jackie Lee Miles

'The morning I died it rained. Poured down so hard it washed the blood off my face.' Thus begins the story of ten-year-old Lori Jean, whose short life and early death are woven into a poignant, heart- wrenching novel set in the rural South of the 1950s.

## **Roseflower Creek Details**

Date : Published August 1st 2003 by Cumberland House Publishing (first published 2001)

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Author : Jackie Lee Miles

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# From Reader Review Roseflower Creek for online ebook

## **TheReadingKnitter/ Kasey says**

"The morning I died it rained. Poured down so hard it washed the blood off my face."

Thus begins the story of ten-year-old Lori Jean, whose short life and early death are woven into this affecting novel set in the 1950s rural South. Abandoned by her father when she was just five years old, Lori Jean's world consists of a weak-willed mother and an alcoholic stepfather who can't keep a steady job. Yet Lori Jean is filled with the curiosity and hope common to all children.

When Lori Jean uncovers her stepfather's secret, everything spins out of control and she pays the ultimate price for what she knows.

But through this heart-wrenching story comes surprising tribute to the human heart's ability to heal and love despite the most difficult circumstances.

My Review - This book was incredibly long and it didn't even get good until like the last 25 to 50 pages of the book. Most of the rest was just filler and stuff that didn't even matter to the plot. I admittedly skipped chapters here and there just because it wasn't anything to do with the big picture. When I go to the last chapter I was like oh my gosh it continues. And when I finally finished there was a sigh of relief. I also didn't like how since the person was from the south they didn't know how to speak correctly. I'm from the south and majority of the time I speak correctly. It was an insult to the south. Sorry, just didn't care for this book but stuck with it. Still only gets one star.

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## **Stephanie says**

I love this book! I picked it up at the library on a whim. You will instantly fall in love with Lori Jean. I couldn't put the book down! It is a very powerful, wonderful novel.

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## **Cassie says**

I gave this book 5 stars because it definitely deserved more than 4...but I would actually give it a 4.75. I liked the author's second book, Cold Rock River, a tiny bit better. But with that said, this book was excellent and I really did love it. The book is narrated by a 10 year old girl and the narration is so sweet and innocent and at times downright comical. Her narration helps lighten the dark theme of abuse that runs through the book. I can't wait to read more from this author. Too bad she only has two books out and now I've read them both!

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## **J says**

(FROM JACKET)"The morning I died it rained. Poured down so hard ti washed the blood off my face".

Thus begins the story of Lori Jean, whose short life and death are woven into this poignant, heart-wrenching novel set in the rural South of the 1950s. Told from the point of view of ten-year-old Lori Jean, a sensitive dreamer of a child who longs for a "normal" family, "Roseflower Creek" is raw with the emotions of a child burdened by the harshness of her life. Abandoned by her father when she was five years old, her world consists of a weak-willed mother who fails to protect her and an abusive, alcoholic stepfather who can't-or won't-keep a steady job. Yet Lori Jean is filled with the curiosity and hope common to all children.

After Lori Jean's stepfather, Ray, begins attending AA meetings, he seems like a changed man, and Lori Jean begins to think that finally she and her mama are going to experience son long-overdue happiness-to be a real family. But tragedy strikes anew, and unable to cope, Ray returns to the bottle and to his shiftless ways. Fired from his job at the cotton mill, he resorts to stealing, and when Lori Jean uncovers his secret, things begin to spiral out of control. Unable to keep silent, Lori Jean pays the ultimate price for what she knows.

Poignant and bittersweet, "Roseflower Creek" is a story of the loss of innocence. Told with an honesty and authenticity that only a child narrator could achieve, it is a remarkable first novel that will move readers with profound emotions and haunt them long after the last paragraph had been read.

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### **Chocolate & Croissants says**

I wanted to like this book. It is written from the voice of a 10 year old who is dead. I just could not get into the book. I understand that the characters live in the south, they are poor and probably not educated. I just do not enjoying reading books that have poor grammar and English. I comprehend it is their voice it is just not the voice for me. Aside from not enjoying the voice, I found the flow of the book to be unbelievably slow.

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### **Kristen says**

Roseflower Creek by Jackie Lee Miles was offered for free for the Kindle on Amazon, so I decided to give it a try. The story involves the life, murder, and afterlife of a 10-year-old girl named Lori Jean, written from the point of view of the little girl. (Note: This is not a spoiler as it tells you that in the very first paragraph.) It is set in the 1950's in a very poor part of Georgia.

Even though the story itself deals with a tough subject matter, it is very engaging. It is written as though Lori Jean were sitting there talking to you, complete with a drawl and moments of joy and pain that a child feels. I felt connected with Lori Jean right from the start was compelled to hear her tell her story.

Roseflower Creek is one of those books that just stays with you long after you read it. It is not exactly "entertaining" because of the subject matter at hand, but it does have a certain endearing quality and once I started, I had a hard time putting it down.

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### **Cherrybomb says**

I'll admit that this book hooked me from the first sentence. A sentence, as it turns out, that the author borrowed from a real life event. It's too sad to think about that these kind of things happen in real life.

As engaging as it was, I only gave it three stars because the whole story left me with a sick feeling. Too much bad and not enough good. I was also very annoyed at the way the abuser's actions were excused by his violent past. I don't think this was intentional. I believe the author was trying to make points about the value of forgiveness and the effects of child abuse on future generations. Even so, I found myself angry at the justifications. I also thought it was too unbelievable that a 10 year old could grasp these difficult concepts.

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## **April says**

Free Kindle download.

This is a bit like *Lovely Bones*, in that it's narrated by a dead girl, but with less emphasis on what happens to the family after the death. That in itself can be hard to accept — anytime a book is narrated by the dead, it's much harder to suspend disbelief and really get into the story. But the girl is alive for much of the story in this case, so it's easier to accept.

The death is mentioned at the beginning, but it serves to provide the suspense since most of the book builds up to it, and the death isn't actually described in much detail until it comes up towards the end. The girl is very young white trash, so the colloquial voice of the narration takes some getting used to before you settle into the story. Her character is angelic, but a little too angelic, too forgiving and too loving. She berates herself for not being understanding when she actually sees (after her death) what it was that Ray went through in his childhood, but even before that she was already more understanding than most people. She never really seems to hate or resent Ray, and she remains ever hopeful that they can be a family.

This is probably the only thing that bothered me about the book — the character's lack of shading. I would have had an easier time accepting a child who at least part of the time resented and hated Ray for doing the things he did, as that would have been more realistic.

Pretty good story, though. Very engaging.

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## **Alaine says**

A story told by a ten year old girl that had been physically abused so badly by her step father that she died. He did feel remorse for killing her but not enough to take any responsibility as he threw her body in Roseflower Creek. This was a difficult book to read as it is full of violence and abuse. Whilst Lori Jean's life is filled with fear and heartache her life was also touched by people who showed kindness, compassion and love. These were tough times in the 1950's where the world was a violent place for many children.

This is a gut wrenching read full of sadness and pain through the eyes of a child. I particularly loved the way the author wrote the scene of a death and the pain of this poor little girl and how she coped with it. I also enjoyed reading the little thoughts that Lori Jean had about certain circumstances or people, it was amusing and she was always honest. This was a beautifully written book that touched all my emotions.

As Lori Jean observes people from the afterlife she is able to see their memories. Memories so terrible that I felt physically sick reading them but because of what she's seen she finds forgiveness in her heart and when that happens she feels lighter and peaceful. This is only a small book but it has a huge impact and I highly

recommend it.

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### **Polly Gill says**

This was a difficult book to rate, let alone, read. It was dark, disturbing, and yet, poignant. The story begins with the death of the main character. Miles took some poetic license, as she uses flashback liberally and even allows the dead character to resume the story. The main character is Lori Jean, a 9 year old poor, white girl growing up in the South during the 1950's. She dreams like all children, but her biggest dream is simply to have a normal family life, but tragedy is abundant. The point of view is through the eyes of Lori Jean. At times, her viewpoint is humorous, but sadness overshadows the few, light moments. A disturbing novel, but certainly worth considering. This would be a good choice for a reading group.

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### **Sue says**

"The morning I died it rained. Poured down so hard it washed the blood right off my face." That opening set the pace and tone of this book. Lori Jean recounts the events that led to this day and even though I knew what was coming, I wished for her dream of a normal, loving family to come true. Loved this book!

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### **Candice says**

Another book that I "bought" as a free title for my Kindle back in January. It was an easy, quick enough read and it wasn't a *bad* novel, really--just so basic that it reminded me of something I could have written in college (a perception that was aided by the fact that I wrote a short story for a writing class in college that had several similarities to this novel).

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### **Cristy Hunter says**

With a book that begins with the words: *"The morning I died it rained. Poured down so hard it washed the blood off my face."* It immediately pulled me in and I wanted to see what had brought on this horrific outcome.

You very quickly learn that you are reading a first person tale, told by an innocent 10 year old little girl with broken speech and a thick southern accent. As she tells her story you laugh, you cry, you shake your head, you feel sorry for her and her family...but you also feel her happiness and share her excitement about things. And you just don't want to put the book down.

Lori Jean, the 10 year old little girl takes you on a journey of her life, her love, her losses and ultimately her sad untimely death. There are **many** sad things in this book and **many** disturbing things...but the thing I was reminded of, was the goodness that hides in almost all children.

No matter what is going on with Lori Jean, she has such an innocent outlook that reminds you of just how

innocent our children are. You ask yourself as you are reading, if I was in this situation, could I sincerely feel this way or has growing up tainted me?

Some how, Lori Jean gets through the loss of her unborn brother that they buried, her MeeMaw, her best friend Carolee as well as a few others and all before she's 10! She's teased relentlessly at school, she is from a poor family, she's an abused child...and yet you know her face lights up the room each time she walks in.

Even after her death, her words beg us to forgive her step-father who abused her and her mother and in the end, killed her in a drunken rage. All Lori Jean wanted was a family. A real, loving family. She thought good of everyone and no matter how poor she was, she wanted to always help others and even saved her dimes and pennies to donate to the "March Of Dimers" (and "Penniers"). Such a sweet girl that you can not help but to embrace her and FEEL her story.

The end of the book did surprise me a little, but I won't ruin it for those of you who have not read it yet. The author has a way of writing in an innocent child like manner that makes you believe you are being talked to directly by the young girl from the south. I thought the writing style would get to me and be irritating, but it did just the opposite, it sucked me into the story even further.

It is hard to read some of the scenes, but I think the graphic descriptions are needed to set the frame of the story and to remind you that this stuff really *DOES* happen in real life sometimes. The religious undertone that I've read some complain about was pretty non-existent for me. I mean yes, it talks about her going to church, she talks to God...but it's talking about her experiences and how SHE relates to things by what she was taught growing up. I didn't get the feeling God was overly brought in - just that it was part of HER and her family's story. And if you really think about it, back in 1950, didn't most families attend SOME kind of church on Sunday?

It's very sad to think of how many "Lori Jean"'s there are out in our world that have been through these situations. And it also makes you grateful that it's not the 1950's where the mentality was 'it's not my business'. Whereas there are still a lot of those cases, there are many more that have been recognized, stopped and the children have lived...although may not have the happiest memories, they don't end up floating at Roseflower Creek.

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## **Wendy Hines says**

This book is AMAZING! It made me cry, laugh, hope, and believe. I read it in one sitting, and even after I closed the book, the main character, Lori Jean stayed with me. Jackie Lee Miles is a gifted writer.

From the first lines, I was captivated.

"The morning I died it rained. Poured down so hard it washed the blood off my face."

Roseflower Creek is told from the perspective of Lori Jean. The only thing she remembers of her dad is the dust his truck raises as he's driving away. She is raised by her grandma and her mom, and she's just devastated when her grandma passes away. But when she does, her mom wastes no time is marrying Ray. Grandma told Lori Jean that Ray was no good, but her mom doesn't listen. Ray makes her happy, except

when he's beating on her.

Lori Jean is poor, but she doesn't let it bother her much. She and her best friend Carolee spend their time making mud cookies down at Roseflower creek and talking to their invisible friend. Carolee's dad wants to help out Lori Jean's family when Ray loses his job at the mill, so he and other's from town give him odd jobs so he can put food on the table. But when Ray keeps the money instead of putting new parts in a tractor he was supposed to fix, all goes downhill from there. That tractor ran over and killed Carolee, and Lori Jean is just heartbroken.

Then, Ray decides to steal the payroll from the mill, but Lori Jean finds it, and she is bound and determined to return that money so she hides it away from Ray. But when he finds out about it, it's a real tragedy for Lori Jean. All she wanted was a real family, maybe one of those Chevrolet cars like she saw on TV, and a birthday party. But what transpires is heartbreaking.

Lori Jean hardly ever complains, she see's life in a simple way. And it makes no sense to her when folks do what they shouldn't. She's very forgiving and always wants to do what is right. Roseflower Creek is haunting, memorable, inspirational, and uplifting. God has a reason for everything, and Lori Jean does her darndest to figure out why some things that are bad happen. Definitely a keeper for me!

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## **Jennifer says**

From My Blog...[return][return]There are certain novels that stay with the reader long after the story is completed and Roseflower Creek by Jackie Lee Miles is such a book. The book is narrated by 10-year-old Lori Jean, who from the beginning, is deceased. Lori Jean takes the reader through her young life, specifically her last two years on Earth before reaching the end of her story. Lori Jean's life is filled with tragedy, hardship, and cruelty no child should witness; yet in her sweet narrative voice, the reader is kept from tears and often found smiling at Lori Jean's spunk and the wisdom she learned from her MeeMaw even at times she found herself the most scared. Miles has crafted a beautiful novel based on some dreadful events in a manner that is engaging and not too depressing, in part due to all of the kindnesses Lori Jean receives. The characters are described in full detail, flaws and all, some more flawed than others, and many questions that beg to be answered or explained. One cannot help but love Lori Jean and her best friend Carolee. The tragic events are balanced with happy events, maybe not what everyone would view as happy, but for the lives of Lori Jean, Nadine, Ray, Melvin, and Lexie there were happy times. Roseflower Creek is an exceptional book that I would, without reservation, recommend to anyone and I would definitely recommend to discussion groups as Roseflower Creek offers the reader a lot to debate.

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