



Song Of The Orange Moons

Lori Ann Stephens

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A mosaic of stories that follow the intertwined lives of three girls coming of age. Two young girls from Jewish and Christian families and their elderly widow next door try to find happiness in a seemingly cruel world. In spite of their different cultural and economic backgrounds, Rebecka, Helen, and Adelle all share the delicate and self-conscious journey to womanhood. In their search for they find lasting strength in the power of their friendships.

Song Of The Orange Moons Details

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Author : Lori Ann Stephens

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From Reader Review Song Of The Orange Moons for online ebook

Amy Plum says

This book is like a jewelry box full of glistening childhood memories: some delightful, some painful, but all tugging on the reader's heartstrings. Lori has the knack for tapping into universal memories: I could swear that I knew the characters in a past-life and had that magical feeling of personally relating to their stories. Beautifully written and hard to forget.

Jennifer says

From my book review blog Rundpinne"It has been quite some time since I read such a beautiful and diverse story of friendships as found in Song of the Orange Moons and I was held captivated by the story caught between wanting to know what would happen next and not wanting the story to end.".....My full review may be read here.

---- says

Those who are going through the phase of growing into adulthood will connect well with this novel, as it goes in depth on three character's lives as they deal with growing up and hardship. Stephens discusses the role that strong friendships play during these difficult times and the effects it has on someone. She proves that the small things count the most, and if you do a good deed for someone it will always come back to you. I really enjoyed reading this novel.

Melissa Menten says

I "met" the author at an online publishing workshop and put this book on my Kindle wishlist. It does not disappoint!

Lyrical writing and great character development combine in this coming-of-age story. The experiences of the three protagonists are so real and moving. I also enjoyed the great descriptive writing, not too much but well done. At times I didn't realize right away the POV had changed at times, but I couldn't wait to read what happened to the characters as each of them had some very painful experiences. FYI, at one point a character swears repeatedly and also has a casual sexual encounter that is not gratuitous, but may not be for every reader. Overall, can't wait to read Stephens' next book!

Gregory Allen says

I read this book in Hardcover in fall of 2010, but wanted to share this review on the new Kindle version of this wonderful book too:

Lyrical written with descriptions that linger long after the pages have been closed, Lori Ann Stephens' debut novel of 'coming of age' is a lovely paradigm of genuine friendship. I believe this book will speak to not only women who are going through (or have gone through) the bloom into adulthood, but those that revere the place of the female in our society. (As a man who grew up with a sister and a large extended family of women - I was pulled right into every ounce of the story.) Told beautifully through first person accounts of three different 'girls', Stephens shows that friendship can break through barriers of religion or even age. She articulately describes cultures and customs in such a way that I was not only entertained, but educated as well. From Elvis to dog balls to first periods and dealing with death - her anecdotes of these three people create a song full of life, humor and poignancy...with a refrain of nostalgia singing from a much simpler time.

Pamela says

Song of the Orange Moons by Lori Ann Stephens grabbed me from the first sentence. Stephens writes poignantly from the perspective of a small child, beautifully from the standpoint of a young woman, and movingly through the character of an old lady. She helps the reader understand the depth of friendship across gaps of age, geography, and time, and she shows how love helps us find our place in the world.

Jillian says

Deep, real, beautifully written... it reminded me a bit of Margaret Atwood's contemporary works, and I can't think of much higher praise.

Laura B says

This book was written by a friend of a friend. I read it for my book club and enjoyed it. I liked the characters and the story. It makes you think while still being a light read.

Jack Urquhart says

"When I was four, I found God under our organ." Beginning with what must surely be one of the most arresting and enticing opening lines in recent memory, *Song of the Orange Moons*, Lori Ann Stephens' wonderful debut, gets right down to the business of beguiling the reader. The instruments of this magic, three female protagonists--two of them young girls struggling to establish their connection to the greater world, the third, their mentor, an elderly widow confronting her mortality--are spun so masterfully that when their stories finally converge, it seems their respective histories were always filaments in the same tapestry, destined to touch in ways that conjure meaning out of mere threads.

Stephens, who teaches writing at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, lavishes lyrical attention on her three unforgettable characters.

Rebecka, the product of an unhappy marriage mired in cross-cultural conflict, endeavors to find solid ground

somewhere between her father's fundamentalist Bible-by-rote rigidity and her mother's Columbian witch doctor mysticism. Stephens, giving voice to Rebecka's perception of her parents' estrangement from each other, movingly describes the distance that opens, often subtly, between members of the same family unit: "They spoke to each other's limbs and clothing, to the rug, the furniture. When I spoke, I found their eyes, but they couldn't find each other's."

Meanwhile, Helen, Rebecka's misfit best friend, not only wrestles with an elusive sense of Jewish identity, but with a more all encompassing loneliness--a longing for connection so profound that it drives her to touch, literally and furtively, others. These tactile encounters she logs with heartbreaking simplicity in a Journal of Touch:

- * "Mr. Berg. Two hands on my shoulders. I touch his pant leg on the crease.
- * Cashier at the Zippy Kwik. Not the Mexican, an Indian with cocoa skin and a curly beard, change.
- * Woman with flame-red hair and freckled shoulders, Harvard indoor pool, locker room..."

The widow, Adelle--whose early history is steeped in cruel, loveless neglect, and whose battle with cancer is drawing to a close--is the bridge that further unites Rebecka and Helen in their struggles to become women. Connected to the girls by the orange tree that grows in her backyard (from hence, the title), Adelle is a mentor who draws strength from her charges even as she dispenses brusque affection, understanding, and wisdom. To be sure, the widow finds ways of dispelling the girls' more half-baked perceptions of personhood. For example, when it comes to religious routes to identity, Adelle is clearly a woman who has had a-plenty of people who think they are "the ring on God's finger." Seeking to dispel Rebecka's notion that religion can provide the cultural `label' her own mixed heritage denies, Adelle opines: "Those church-ordained picnics and prayer lines and ladies groups are the finest excuse for conjuring up rumors I ever heard, and just more evidence that God is a woman." How to resist a character that dispenses such pearls! Indeed, this reader could not.

But perhaps Stephens' greatest accomplishment in creating and weaving together her characters' individual but similar strivings for meaning, for identify, for connection, is that she reminds us that we--each one of us--"are swimming alone together, sometimes bumping into each other" in our separate journeys, each one of us with the potential to ease another's passage. And perhaps more importantly, sometimes, "It takes the smallest distances to move through the universe, and that one touch can mean nothing or everything."

Jack Andrew Urquhart is the author of the inter-connected story collection, *So They Say Stories Volume 1*. Follow him on Twitter @JackAUrquhart

Heather Mauriello says

This book was a fascinating glimpse into the personal worlds of three unique females. Written in first person, but the person changes with each chapter. Weaves each character's thoughts and actions around the surface-story with the other characters.

Andrea Slot says

A beautiful first book. There are hints at the writer this author will one day become throughout the book, too

-- she has a gift for nailing the thoughts of young people and for bringing events (such as a dust storm) to life in a way that causes the scene to remain in your memory long after you close the book. A treat to read. I already look forward to this author's next work.

Gregory Allen says

Lyrical written with descriptions that linger long after the pages have been closed, Lori Ann Stephens' debut novel of 'coming of age' is a lovely paradigm of genuine friendship. I believe this book will speak to not only women who are going through (or have gone through) the bloom into adulthood, but those that revere the place of the female in our society. (As a man who grew up with a sister and a large extended family of women - I was pulled right into every ounce of the story.) Told beautifully through first person accounts of three different 'girls', Stephens shows that friendship can break through barriers of religion or even age. She articulately describes cultures and customs in such a way that I was not only entertained, but educated as well. From Elvis to dog balls to first periods and dealing with death - her anecdotes of these three people create a song full of life, humor and poignancy...with a refrain of nostalgia singing from a much simpler time.

Julie Heckman says

Note: I received a free copy of this book through a Goodreads Giveaway

I really wanted to like this book; it promised coming of age tales from three distinct women of contrasting backgrounds and wove in elements of faith, family and love. Unfortunately, I couldn't seem to connect with the characters enough to make me fall in love with it like I had hoped.

The author narrates the stories from three different points of view - a young Christian woman who comes from a family where the parents faith backgrounds conflict and a tragic illness takes the life of her brother during his childhood, a young Jewish woman who is overweight and struggling to fit into the world and her faith, and an elderly woman who suffered an abusive childhood in foster care and has already lost the love of her life when her story begins. We meet both of the girls during their early elementary years and the elderly woman is the link that connects them with her orange tree in the backyard that draws them both in. The three form a bond and the stories follow them as they grow older as well as reverting to describing memories to fill in background information. I found this method of storytelling to be disjointed and hard to follow; the transitions between the various voices and time periods for the stories were abrupt.

The character I identified the most with was Rachel, the Christian whose father was extremely conservative and whose mother still clung to her "witch doctor" voodoo roots under the guise of being sick and not attending the family church. She struggled to figure out relationships and had a hard to relating to her family after the death of her brother

Overall, I think the author set out to write a book that showed how regardless of your background or time period in which you grew up or faith, every girl goes through challenges and trials which define her as she becomes a woman. I think that you might enjoy this book if you enjoyed *The Time Traveler's Wife* (which I did not but others did and it got rave reviews). It had the same style of writing and character development.

Kathleen Rodgers says

This book TOUCHED my SOUL...

How do you write a review for a story that touches your soul? How do you put into words the emotions that overtake you as you turn each page, highlight whole passages or phases, then stare off in the distance to reflect? How do you tell a fellow author that her work has moved you so deeply that you stop working on your own project for days at a time just so you can spend time in her novel?

This is how I tell her. I leave her a note of thanks:

Dear Lori Ann Stephens,

Thank you for writing a novel that leaves me weepy but smiling. Thank You for writing a story that lifts me out of my daily grind and sends my spirit on a healing journey, a journey where I get to live inside the hearts and minds of Rebecca, Helen, and Adelle.

Through your beautifully rendered characters, I lived many lives and learned many things... But my favorite scene will always be the "park" scene. I read this passage late at night and went to sleep with tears on my pillow. You wrote about love in a way that has left me in awe. In awe of your talent. I will carry this scene in my heart for a long time.

I'm recommending SONG OF THE ORANGE MOONS to all my readers and fellow authors. You have a gift and I am so grateful our paths crossed through the pages of your captivating novel.

A grateful reader,

Kathleen M. Rodgers

author of THE FINAL SALUTE ~ Ranked #1 on Amazon's Top Rated Literature and Fiction 2012.

Lori Stephens says

It's my book, so, eh, I think it's worth reading. Hope you enjoy.
