



## A Song for My Mother

*Kat Martin*

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In this charming novel, Kat Martin brings readers back to the town of Dreyerville for another compelling story of love, loss, hope, and second chances...

Years after running away with her boyfriend in her junior year of high school, Marly Hanson returns to Dreyerville at the request of her daughter, Katie, who has recently been treated for brain cancer. Katie has never met her grandmother, Marly's mother, Winnie. But Marly and Winnie have been estranged for years, and confronting the past for each of them is painful. The homecoming is bittersweet, but revisiting the conflict between them is crucial if Marly and her mother are ever to find the bond they shared before Marly left Dreyerville.

To complicate matters, living next door to Winnie is handsome sheriff and widower Reed Bennett, and his son, Ham, who is close to Katie's age. Ham and Katie become fast friends, while the parents find their attraction to one another going deeper than mere friendship. But Marly's time in Dreyerville is limited and risking her heart isn't something she's willing to do.

As the days slip past, and though she tries to avoid it, Marly and Reed become more deeply involved. Can she risk loving the handsome sheriff and giving up the future she worked so hard to forge for herself and her daughter? Can she make a life in Dreyerville after what happened all those years ago?

Will Marly finally realize that her true destiny and ultimate happiness lies in coming to terms with her past?

## A Song for My Mother Details

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Author : Kat Martin

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## From Reader Review A Song for My Mother for online ebook

### Sandy M says

What a heartwarming story this is. It's one of those stories that goes straight to your heart, not your libido, which it seems we're so used to these days in our romance reading. *A Song for My Mother* is a tale of second chances, of forgiveness, of friendship, and, of course, of love - all in more ways than one.

Not wanting to return to her hometown after twelve years away, Marly sucks up the hurt and betrayal she suffered at the hands of her parents to make the trip to Dreyerville to introduce her daughter to the grandmother she's never met. Katie has just completed cancer treatment and Marly can deny her nothing, including reliving the past in living color where all the horror happened. Steeling her heart against her mother's explanations, Marly stays in the background while Katie and Winnie become acquainted.

Living in Detroit, city girl Katie doesn't have a lot of good friends, so when she meets the boy next door so begin her hopes of making Dreyerville her new home, if only she can talk her mother into those hopes. Ham is the perfect friend, going to bat for her as no one else but her mom ever has. But Marly just can't get over the past, avoiding her mother whenever possible and wanting to get back to Detroit as soon as she can. But things also change for her when she meets a next door neighbor of her own.

Hoping she can somehow get through to her daughter, Winnie also doesn't want to push Marly too much. She ran from her family once and she will again if feeling cornered. After all these years, Marly should know her father's secrets and why Winnie stayed when her daughter wanted only to go. Patience is her only option.

Reed is the local sherrif, a widower raising his son in small town America. He's not been interested in a woman in four years, but meeting Marly has stirred something in him he thought never to feel again. Maybe it is time to move forward. He tries to help mother and daughter also move forward and gets a door slammed in his face for his efforts. But Reed isn't one to give up, especially when it comes to something he wants.

There's also a side story of Emily, widow of another sheriff's officer killed in the line of duty, and her son Timmy, which is just as moving as that of the main characters. I love the small town way of life, how folks look after one another, and Ms. Martin writes it very well, even giving readers an extra romance along the way.

All of these characters are real and hurt by life, some of them want and need forgiveness. Others need enlightenment and friendship. All of them need love. Ms. Martin handles every one of these elements with compassion and emotion. I read the last page of this book and gave one of those happy sighs from the warmth and smiles, even the mistiness, these characters evoke. Pick this book up. Soon. You need to read it.

See my complete review at <http://www.goodbadandunread.com>

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## **Laurie says**

Marly is returning to her childhood home because her daughter, Katie, wants to meet her grandmother Winnie. It's been twelve years, but Marly is still bitter and heartsick about the rift between her mother and herself.

Reed Bennett and his son live next door to Winnie. As Sheriff of the small community, it is his business to be nosy. When Marly and Katie arrive, a friendship quickly develops between the two children, and Reed finds his interest piqued by Marly, as well.

Winnie is delighted to meet her granddaughter and to be given a potential opportunity to reconcile with her daughter. Marly dreads the visit but is willing to make an effort for the sake of her daughter. However, as the days pass, Marly finds herself more and more attracted to Reed, but with a new job waiting in Detroit, she feels the budding relationship must remain casual.

This is a charming story that I read in a single session. The characters are remarkably well depicted, believable and likeable. I think the pacing was outstanding; I never lost interest and was kept fully engaged as the story evolved. I particularly like that Reed is a fairly straight-forward type of guy who deals ably with the prickly Marly. In many ways, he becomes as much of a bridge between Marla and Winnie as the darling, irrepressible Katie. This sweet, feel-good story will appeal to women of all ages. It is a beautifully written testament to the fact that past mistakes, failures, or heartbreaks should never deter us from striving toward a better, more promising future.

Laurie  
Reviewer for Coffee Time Romance & More

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## **Mary says**

### A Song For My Mother by Kat Martin

While picking up my books on hold at the library, A Song For My Mother was being displayed on a shelf above my books. It's a small book so I picked it up and read the book flap. Since it was a very short story I figured why not. It's not one I would have read if not for being displayed, so I took it home. I try to expand the genres I read.

The story was about a mother's love for her children. The mother in the story gets a chance to explain to her grown daughter why she made the choices she made when her daughter was young.

After 12 years of not seeing or talking to her mom, and after hearing the reason why her mother made the choices she did, the daughter forgave her and everyone lived happily ever after.

I assume readers finished the story feeling good that all is forgiven and a good life was lived by all. I did not have this feeling. I think the mother made the wrong choices. I'm not even sure I would forgive the mother. I understand her daughter's reason for leaving home and not communicating with her mother for 12 years.

However, the story itself was touching and the characters fit the story. But to me it lacked substance so I

looked at it from a different perspective as I always try to bring something positive from a book I didn't really enjoy. What I realized was Kat Martin's dialogue sounded effortless and spontaneous. It was literary genius.

As any aspiring writer does, I read to improve my writing skills. *A Song For My Mother* is a great book to improve writing dialogue. It's the perfect model to emulate.

A writer may take classes, purchase writing books, and write daily to improve. I learn better reading books by authors who have mastered writing dialogue, along with taking classes, purchasing writing books, and writing daily!

I recommend *A Song For My Mother* for readers who enjoy romance novels and feel good stories that have happy endings.

For aspiring writers, I recommend *A Song For My Mother* for its outstanding dialogue!

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### **Michelle Boyer says**

This is a one star rating that has a purpose. Let me start by saying that I enjoyed this mini-read, because though short there is some depth within the story that is nice. I especially appreciated the theme of a woman returning to her smalltown home and rekindling a relationship with her mother, falling in love with the Sheriff next door, etc. All of this is fine and dandy. There is a side story about a widowed woman named Emily that I didn't think the story needed, but even that story is kind of sweet and sappy in a positive way.

Here is my problem: The story attempts to make the statement that no mother is perfect and can only do the best she can do. Of course, yes, no mother is perfect. Most mothers can indeed only do the best they can do. **HOWEVER...** when you're a mother that is being beaten in front of your child, you owe it to your child to get out of that situation. A mother in this story attempts to shrug off staying with an abusive alcoholic as "she loved him" and "she didn't want to abandon him like others had" and "he used to be a wonderful man." I'm sorry... but those are not reasons to let your child witness abusive, live in fear, think this cycle is normal, cripple their understanding of relationships, feel their only way out is to elope with another asshole.

No, no, no. I simply do not agree with the sentiment that you can explain everything away with a simple "no mother is perfect" and commend a woman that stayed in an abusive situation above protecting her daughter. Sorry... but there's nothing sweet about that. And there's nothing acceptable about trying to brush it off as not being perfect. As a child that witnessed years of abuse in a family, let me just say, I'm offended at how easily this was swept up and wrapped in a bow.

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### **MaggieReadsRom says**

Marilys "Marly" Hanson escaped Dreyerville, her hometown, 12 years ago determined never to look back or come back. Then her daughter escapes death and her only wish is to see the grandmother she's never met. Marly is a teacher and a single mom with a complicated and painful past, now dealing with a daughter recovering from brain cancer. Her return home sets in motion a bunch of events: a reunion with her mother

seems less impossible and the possibility of love and romance emerges.

Reed Bennett is Winnie's (Marly's mother) neighbor and town's sheriff. He's a widower and single dad and an all-around good and decent guy. Though the focus of the book is more centered on Marly, her mother and her daughter. Reed and his son do make memorable characters that formed a very good match and balance with the female ones.

This novella is not just about Marly and Reed, it's also about the people who surround them and play important roles in their lives. Kat Martin makes sure you get to know and understand them all, which pushes the romance a little bit to the background. Also, there are no love scenes, just kisses. However, I didn't mind that at all, because it's not that kind of book and having read **THE CHRISTMAS CLOCK**, I went into this book knowing what to expect.

**ASONG FOR MY MOTHER** is set in Dreyerville, like Kat Martin's **THE CHRISTMAS CLOCK**. Although it's in the same setting it can perfectly be read as standalone because there's no ongoing plot and some characters from **THE CHRISTMAS CLOCK** only briefly appear or are mentioned. Other than the main theme being love in its different forms the storyline is totally different too.

Kat Martin's writing is unique in its simplicity and the way it just pulls you in the story, no matter what genre it is. The POV transitions contribute to the pace and they're executed very smoothly. It doesn't even matter what length the story is because even though this was a novella, in the small span of 155 pages Kat Martin gives the reader an emotional story about love in all forms, loss, regret and forgiveness and she even touches the heavy subject of abuse. But she also manages to depict vivid, realistic characters with such depth and back-story I was astounded and pleasantly surprised at the end that I didn't even miss the sexy times in this book. The story and emotions carried this story so much better than any love scene could have ever done.

Despite the thoroughness with which the characters are portrayed Kat Martin's writing is swiftly paced from the very beginning, keeping the story moving and the reader eager to keep on going till you've read the last page and closed this lovely book with a satisfied sigh.

There were a few scenes that were memorable and made such an impact that I want to mention them in this review. One of them was the scene with Emily, when Marly realizes she needs to forgive her mother. That scene was so powerful and emotional it made me cry. The other one is the scene where Marly and her mom finally talk about the past and make peace. This scene had the same powerful impact on me as the earlier mentioned scene had.

**ASONG FOR MY MOTHER** is an emotionally heavy read and you have to be in the mood to read it as it will tug at your heartstrings in a most intense way.

### **Quotes:**

*Reed hadn't really been attracted to a woman since Carol had died. Hadn't felt that little kick in the gut a man feels when he meets a woman who appeals to all his male instincts.*

*She was attracted to Reed Bennett. For the first time in her life, she understood what it was like to feel desire for a man. When he kissed her goodnight, she didn't want the kiss to end. When he held her hand, little tingles ran up her arm. When he laughed, she wanted to laugh with him. When he shared his thoughts and dreams, she found herself wanting to share her own, discovering in the process a few she hadn't realized she had.*

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## Romancing the Book says

Reviewed by Mary, reposted with permission

It is not always easy to forget the pain of the past but can true love help you forgive?

Marly Hanson has struggled to get where she has in life and never wanted to look back at the town she left. But when her daughter Katie wants to meet the grandmother she never met Marly agrees knowing this trip down memory land may have the ability to break her strong will. Katie is recovering from cancer and Marly will give her anything to make her happy even if it means dragging up bones she buried a long time ago.

It has been 12 years since Marly broke away from her abusive father, then moved past her loser husband and helped her daughter recover from cancer. Nothing scares her anymore but the town she came from does frighten her a bit. She left there a bitter young woman and she returns a headstrong woman who refuses to forgive her mother for not leaving the man Marly blames for ruining their life. But her mother has reasons and answers for all the questions Marly poses and tries to explain that the way things turned out was not the way it always was.

Old wounds do start to surface again when Marly finds herself back in her mother's kitchen, but they are soothed more than a bit when she meets the neighbor, widower Reed Bennett. It seems Sheriff Bennett is as lonely as Marly and while not looking for love, companionship would be awful accommodating to him. He is raising a son on his own and the days keep him occupied but the nights tend to drag on. Rumors may have him committed to another and proving to Marly that there is nothing to any relationship but theirs is something only a determined man in love can accomplish.

A Song for My Mother is written as a story of love between a mother and daughter, as well as a love story between a man and a woman. Relationships are never easy regardless of who they are with but they always live and thrive when the heart of a person is truly sincere. Ms. Martin has written a book that shows regardless of who you are love does find its way to you and like with answered prayers the unanswered ones are just as fulfilling.

Side note from Stephanie: Be sure to check out Mary's blog for more reviews and giveaways!

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## Mardel says

A Song For My Mother is about anger, holding grudges, and forgiveness. There are a few situations here that involve decision making, judgement, doubt and the need for forgiving.

The main character, Marly Hanson, moved away from home at an early age, escaping from a traumatic home life and a small town. She returns to her hometown only because her own daughter wants to meet her grandmother; unfortunately, the grandmother, Winnie, is the one person that Marly does not really want to see. Marly hasn't seen Winnie since she moved out of town as a teen bride. Even so, she brings her daughter

to meet her; her daughter has recently went a few rounds with cancer and chemotherapy, coming close to death.

Things aren't very comfortable for Marly and Winnie, but Winnie and Katie (Marly's daughter) hit it off right away. Not only do Katie and Winnie make fast friends, but Katie meets a neighbor boy, Ham and they become friends. Marly also meets Ham's father, Reed who happens to be the sheriff of this small town. Marly is very attracted to Reed, Reed is very attracted to Marly but there are complications. Reed is a widower, and Marly is divorced with a low opinion of men as fathers and husbands.

It was both interesting and frustrating to read Marly's behavior with her mom. She is so angry that she comes across as unreasonably prickly and rude to Winnie - blaming and judging Winnie for past decisions and what she perceives as a weakness and betrayal of herself. Winnie is heartbroken, but patient - this bothered me, because I would have been in Marly's face....but then I also wouldn't have been in Winnie's past position...so that would affect things.

Even though Kat Martin's writing style is rather spare...what I call no-frills writing - *A Song For My Mother* is packed with emotions of all kinds. There are subplots - a young widowed mother of a three year old boy who is coming close to having a breakdown, overcompensating for her husband's death. There is also the reluctant relationship between Marly and Reed. She's having fun seeing Reed but doesn't want to become involved with him, seeing no point in it. Reed is ready to come out of mourning for his deceased wife and wants a future with Marly...only Marly is planning on passing through within weeks.

When I say that this novel has spare writing, I mean that there is not a lot of extra filler; reading it is like listening to a person telling a bit about some goings on. There is some dialogue, but it's definitely not a dialogue heavy book. This is kind of refreshing in a way. Kat Martin tells three stories involving this small group of people, getting to the point without a lot of extras. But when it's important, than the story goes into scene mode. I know I'm not explaining this the way I want to.

I did enjoy it, even though some of the subject matter is pretty heavy, it was written with a light and deft pen, so to speak, revealing emotions and tragedy without over-dramatization.

The book brings forth and shows a complete array of emotions - anger, contempt, betrayal, wistfulness, sadness, happiness, jealousy, relief, first pangs of love, embarrassment and love. All of this is packed into 224 pages. It was a pleasant experience reading it, even with the frustration that I felt at Marly over her stubborn anger at her mom.

I like the messages given through the story - that we're all capable of making good and bad decisions, of making mistakes and that it's possible to move forward through forgiving. It's hard sometimes, but it can be done, right?

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### **Jeanne says**

Insipid. No character development. Superficial. Bland. Trite. Cliche.  
This is why I rarely read the romance genre.

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### **Susie James says**

Kat Martin's "A Song for My Mother" -- which I picked up from a swap paperback rack in the Carrollton, Miss., library awhile back -- proved to be a sweet change of pace, a simple, straightforward telling of the heroine's return to her hometown and a working through the unresolved issues from her childhood.

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### **Katy says**

Marly Hanson returns to her hometown after a 12 year absence, at the request of her daughter who has cancer. When Marly left at 16 years old, she vowed never to return. This novella address some hard questions: spousal abuse, cancer, roles of women as perceived by many, etc.

I would give the story a 3.5; I really have issues with a book that allows a partner to rationalize spousal abuse. But I do like how Marly realizes her mother, for all her faults, really did and still does love her.

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### **Mary Gramlich says**

A SONG FOR MY MOTHER written by Kat Martin  
04/11 - Vanguard Press - Hardcover, 224 pages

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when the heart of a person is truly sincere. Ms. Martin has written a book that shows regardless of who you are love does find its way to you and like with answered prayers the unanswered ones are just as fulfilling.

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### **Daisy Hart says**

This book was deserved four stars because it was very well written although could've included more action. If there was more action it would deserve five stars.

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### **Angie Fehl says**

Book 2 of the Dreyerville series is *A Song For My Mother*, which I finished the afternoon of January 1st. This novella takes place the following Spring after *The Christmas Clock* and introduces the reader to more residents of Dreyerville while also giving updates on characters from Book 1. Much of the plot focuses on Marly Hanson. Marly was just a teenage girl when she decided to run away from Dreyerville, wanting to escape an ugly home life of abuse, constantly battling parents and her father's alcoholism. Marly runs off with local bad boy Burly, knowing she's not in love with him but feeling like he's her only way out of town. Fast forward twelve years -- Marly and Burly are no longer a couple but do have a daughter together, Katie (though again, like *The Christmas Clock*, this story features an absentee father). Katie is recovering from battling brain cancer and her one major wish is to meet her grandmother, Marly's mother. Marly has always been resentful toward her mother for not standing up to that abusive husband and protecting little girl Marly, but after everything Katie has been through, Marly feels like she owes her daughter this one wish. So here Marly is, back in Dreyerville, with Katie.

Katie befriends the boy who lives next door to her grandmother, Hamilton, or "Ham", the son of widower / local sheriff Reed Bennett. Katie and Ham becoming such good friends ends up bringing Marly and Reed closer together, though Marly keeps telling herself she's "only visiting", having no intention of staying in town too long.

There's also the side story of Emily Carter, recently widowed when her husband, a deputy with the police department, is killed during a routine traffic stop. Emily suddenly finds herself struggling to raise her three year old son in this new position as "single mom".

This book left me feeling much like *The Christmas Clock* did -- a cute story overall, at times a little heavy on the schmaltz but a nice, easy read with some heartwarming moments. But again, this one had a pretty predictable plotline that didn't strike me as all that memorable. Good if you just want a simple read for a chill day on the porch swing.

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### **Bookaholics says**

*A Song For My Mother* by Kat Martin  
Contemporary Romance – April 5th, 2011  
4 ½ stars

Although a short book this is a heartfelt and moving one. This book has it all: romance, endearing children and the never-ending love of a mother and her daughter.

Marly Hanson was smart and beautiful but her life at home was anything but picturesque. With a physically abusive father and a mother who never stood up to him, Marly had a secret life of shame and helplessness. As her home life deteriorated so did her grades and her desperation to leave the small town of Dreyerville. When she hooked up with the town bad boy, she left as soon as possible with a vow never to return.

It is several years later and Marly is now divorced. A single mother of a young and precocious ten year old girl who is recovering from cancer. Her daughter's biggest wish to see the grandmother she has never known. Marly loves her daughter and soon finds herself unwillingly driving to Dreyerville so her daughter can have her wish. But the town has dark memories for Marly and her life has scarred her. She is haunted by men who she cannot trust and a mother who did not protect her. All Marly can think of is leaving. But plans soon change when Marly suddenly finds herself dating the local sheriff, Reed Bennett. She tries to steel herself from this gentle and caring man and the mother who longs to be reunited with her. Marly has many difficult and life changing decisions to make.

This story was very touching to read. I became deeply invested in Marly's emotional turmoil as she journeys back to visit her mother. I loved how it deals with real issues and does not try to gloss over their impact on the subject of abuse to its victims. Although it does not go into graphic detail it hones in the emotional scars and the ability to forgive even when a person thinks it is impossible. This was a very healing book as Marly lets go and allows herself to trust and really care for a man. And Reed is a very thoughtful and stable hero. I loved how he was determined to pursue her and was willing to stand by her until she was ready to open her heart.

This is a touching novel filled about hope, courage and overcoming adversity. I really cared for the heroine who struggled to find her own way and rejoiced when she was finally able to find a man who she could finally love.

Reviewed by Steph from the Bookaholics Romance Book Club

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