



Country Roads

Nancy Herkness

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When sheltered artist Julia Castillo flees her family home, she has just one goal: to prove to her overbearing family once and for all that she can make it on her own. In Sanctuary, West Virginia, her horse paintings promise to take the art world by storm. Yet Julia finds her courage tested as never before—by her love for a handsome country lawyer, by her bond with a dangerous black stallion, and by the secret she is so desperate to keep...

Paul Taggart abandoned his high-powered legal career to return to Sanctuary, giving up his own dreams to care for his troubled brother. But the day he rescues Julia Castillo from the side of the highway, his staid, responsible life changes forever. Irresistibly drawn to the fiery but unworldly artist, Paul will do anything to protect her—even sacrifice his own happiness to guarantee hers.

Dramatic and emotional, *Country Roads* is a heartwarming tale of two people struggling to balance the bonds of family with a passionate love of their own.

Country Roads Details

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Author : Nancy Herkness

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From Reader Review Country Roads for online ebook

LORI CASWELL says

Julia Castillo knows she is a talented artist. Her work has sold at top prices at several galleries. But her uncle believes her new work is too much of a departure from her previous paintings. He has taken care of her and been her agent since her parents moved overseas. He has tried to protect her from everything the world has to offer, including any negative criticism her work may receive.

Julia has made the decision to show her family she can take care of herself. The first step is connect with someone who loves her work and find out if her new work is as good as she thinks it is. She loads up her paintings and heads to a gallery in Sanctuary, West Virginia.

Julia is going to find herself tested like she never has before. Will her new work be accepted by the art world? How will a huge black stallion change her life? Will her heart open up to a handsome country lawyer, a man with a whole set of obstacles in his own life? Can she keep an important secret from all the new people in her life?

Dollycas's Thoughts

This the second Nancy Herkness story I have lost myself in. Take Me Home was the first. Like that one this was a wonderful story. The groundwork about "whisper horses" was all laid out in that story so this one really took us into Julia's and Paul's lives.

Julia grew by leaps and bounds in a very short time, beautifully written and perfectly paced by Herkness. Paul's awakening finally was reached by the end of the book thanks to another character's wake up call. Julia was driven by several forces including the force of one huge horse who needed her as much as she needed him. Paul was resigned to his life and didn't see any future of change until Julia entered his life.

This is a passionate story of two people finding their way together while keeping promises they made and trying not hurt their families in any way. There are some very steamy scenes between Paul and Julia. Their romance burned up more than a few pages.

A extraordinary romance. The author painted lovely and powerful images in my mind. I wish Julia's work was real so I could see if my thoughts even come close to the real thing.

Ellen says

Wonderful book and can't wait for the next book! Nancy us a great writer !

Shirley says

A charming romance novel!

Julia Castillo embarks on a road trip from South Carolina to Sanctuary, West Virginia to showcase her artwork to a gallery owner. Julia is insecure about the quality of her paintings because of all the negative feedback she has received from her overprotective Uncle and she is determined to get a second opinion. Julia has lived a very sheltered existence and this journey proves to be a life changing experience for her. Just outside of town she has the misfortune of getting a flat tire. Luckily for her a tall, dark and handsome lawyer - Paul Taggart- comes to her rescue. A passionate love affair develops between the two. Julia also learns a lot about the strength of her character from her interaction with an unruly stallion named Darkside. Julia believes Darkside is her "whisper horse" and sets out to tame the savage beast. Julia undergoes a transformation from being weak, vulnerable, and insecure into a strong, independent, and self-confident woman. However, Julia is harboring a secret that she fears, that when revealed, could cause her new life to crumble. Julia discovers that she is not the only one that has life issues that must be overcome and that with enough perseverance change is possible!

I really enjoyed this book and would highly recommend it!

I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

Lisa Higgins says

Nancy Herkness has written another fabulous, sensuous romance with Country Roads, her second installment in the Whisper Horse series. Her characters always steal my heart -- they seem to me like people I'd bump into at the local store. And the romance! This story has the added attraction of major cameos by Tim & Claire from TAKE ME HOME. Nancy is on my MUST BUY list - can't wait for her next one!

lk says

Received the book for free through Goodreads First Reads; it was a wonderfully written book and now I'd like to read her other books. Thank you for the Goodreads!

Veronica Hardy says

My full review and review policy is available on my blog: <http://veronicahardy.blogspot.com/>

Overall: ★★★★★

So, keeping with the West Virginia theme, I explored Country Roads by Nancy Herkness and was pleasantly surprised by what I found.

(Copied Excerpt)

"Nancy Herkness welcomes readers back to Sanctuary, West Virginia, where family loyalty leads to sparkling love, with the help of a whisper horse.

When sheltered Julia Castillo flees her hometown, she has just one goal: to prove to her overbearing family once and for all that she can make it on her own. After she moves to Sanctuary, West Virginia, her horse paintings take the art world by storm. Yet Julia finds her courage tested as never before—by her love for a handsome country lawyer, by her bond with a dangerous black stallion, and by the secret she is so desperate to keep..."

Originality: ★★★★★

The idea of West Virginia as a center for art is original. Not unprecedeted, but I have never seen West Virginia depicted this way. It is fresh, gives WV the culture it deserves to have, and it gives the state depth. I love West Virginia. I visit a lot, I live an hour from the state line. I want to see positive things come out of it, not just negative. This does that, and it does it in a (mostly) believable way. I like the attention given to horses, it is part of the series, but this is a great stand alone work. One I happily dove into.

Character Development: ★★★★★

Herkness hit it out of the park for me. Sure, sometimes it was a little cheesy (I am not a fan of motorcycles) but it was good and it made sense. She has complex characters with wants, desires, needs and fears. And she wields them well. I love the way Julia develops, comes alive in front of my eyes and the way that Paul responds and also seemingly comes alive. The intricacy made me turn the pages, and I looked forward to reading this one. I can't wait to go deeper in the series.

Editing: ★★★★★

Superb. Montlake Romance is an Amazon subsidiary and I appreciated the attention to detail. I also love the syntax and word choice of the author.

The Sex: ★★★★★

This is a romance novel, so it is not as... graphic as an Erotic Romance but it was very good and the tension was both believable and page turning. I found myself slowing down at these parts, hoping to savor it. It was tame enough that I would recommend it to family, but I still found it exciting.

Veronica Hardy is a professional editor and author who enjoys writing reviews in her spare time, for fun. She is not compensated by authors, publishers or online retail markets for her opinions. If you are interested in a book review or editing services please email her at Veronica.R.Hardy@gmail.com.

RoseAnn DeFranco says

I enjoyed this return visit to Sanctuary, a town rich in culture and warmth. While I like the concept of the Whisper Horse, it was the complexities of the main characters and their romance that kept me turning the pages. Paul Taggart is dynamic, tortured hero worth rooting for, and Julia is his perfect counterpart. Their romance and passion equals one inventive and HOT love story. If I were ever stuck roadside, you better believe I'd want a man like Paul to stop and give me a lift. I highly recommend this book and I'm looking

forward to the final installment in the Whisper Horse series.

Joanna says

Predictable, but fun and light. If she writes more of these Whisper Horse novels, I'll read them...have to keep following all these people in Sanctuary, WV...

Nancy says

A Victorian Town, Horses, and Romance

Julia, a painter celebrated for her horse pictures, gets a flat tire on her way to Sanctuary, West Virginia. She's alone and frightened. She's escaped from her controlling uncle because he tells her that her new paintings are not good enough to sell. At her wits end, she searches out a critic who supported her first pictures. She has to know if the work is any good. It's her life.

She's rescued by Paul, a handsome attorney. Immediately there are vibes. He makes sure she gets to the gallery with her pictures, but he can't leave her there, and the two become involved.

This is a very typical romance. Paul and Julia set eyes on each other, immediately feel the tingle, and then problems set them apart that have to be resolved so they can be together. If you like romance, this is a gentle one.

Julia is an interesting character. She's escaped from a domineering older man, her uncle, and immediately falls in love with another domineering man, Paul. I suppose that's psychologically accurate behavior, but she wants so much to be her own person, I was a little surprised she leaped into bed so quickly.

The town of Sanctuary is a wonderful setting. It is beautifully described and welcoming. It makes you want to visit and perhaps stay for awhile the way Julia did.

I recommend this book if you like romance. There are horses and it's an interesting sub theme, but doesn't overshadow the romance. Likewise the discussion of Julia's creativity and paintings is interesting and makes the character more alive.

I reviewed this book for the Amazon Vine Program.

Julie says

Being a horse lover, I truly believe that horses can be saved, and can also save you. This is the first time I have heard of a whisper horse, but I can easily see this being the case.

It is a beautifully written story. I do look forward to seeing the characters in her next book, and I will be

going back to read #1

I received this book through a goodreads giveaway

Becky Bradshaw says

i loved this book, i loved the characters . I could not put this book down :)

Vickie says

Nancy's second book in her "whisper horse" series is as good as the first! Once again we're in Sanctuary, West Virginia with Claire, Dr Tim, and the other wonderful characters Nancy introduces us to. And once again, 2 lost people find each other and their "whisper horse" and we love them all. I love Nancy Herkness's books!

Paula Shene says

Nancy Herkness has been on my radar for as long as she has been published. She was an author I watched, but did not read, only having her on my TBPTBR list. Being on 'To be put, to be read list' is one step closer to actually being read.

This went on for several years until I entered a give away for COUNTRY ROADS by Herkness. This is book two of her Whisper Horse series. Finding out I had won made me think, maybe I should read book one in the series, TAKE ME HOME. That didn't happen because I am not only pressed for time, saying no to extremely little, but also because I am a full time care giver to my husband of nearly fifty years.

Herkness is not one to procrastinate, and I had COUNTRY ROADS in my mailbox within the week. As I do for books, I intend to keep, COUNTRY ROADS made it to the chair I use as my night book reading stand. I was almost finished with my last library book, making COUNTRY ROADS, the next read.

I thought, at a little over 400 pages, I was embarking on a life commitment. Well, I was, but not one of being stuck in a book, forever. I've been enamored of horses all my life, their strength, their character, their beauty. They were my first study in drawing, from the majestic Arabian to the cartoon horses of that day. Then the love and romance, fast and furious, and quite reasonable to one who trod that path. Three, being a magical number of likes rolled into one piece was a build up of anticipation.

COUNTRY ROADS is for my reading, an ARC, and I expected to catch typos or dangling participles or, horror, squinting modifiers. If there were any, and I doubt it, I was too engrossed in the storytelling and finished the book in three nights.

The story, COUNTRY ROADS is a stand alone even though it is book two in the series. I had to try and find out who were featured in the first, TAKE ME HOME hence no spoilers. I am not a critic who gives the plot away. If you want a taste of that, read the blurb. If you need a storyline that will attract and keep you wanting to see what is coming, COUNTRY ROADS is a read I highly recommend.

Now, it is time for me to carry Herkness' earlier books onto the TBR table.

Virginia Campbell says

Author Nancy Herkness did indeed "Take Me Home" with the first book in her "Whisper Horse" series, and now book two, "Country Roads", has led me back to the welcoming community of Sanctuary, WV. Julia Castillo is a talented young woman whose artistic and personal growth is being smothered by the confining concern of her uncle, who is also her manager. Due to a medical condition which causes her to have seizures, Julia has been restricted from many activities and situations which her family felt would cause unnecessary stress that could lead to an epileptic seizure episode. However, as a grown woman desperate to leave her childhood behind and explore more of life, Julia decides to take a daring leap of faith. She leaves behind her isolated life in North Carolina and heads to the mountains of West Virginia to find the woman who had been the first art dealer to buy her paintings. Claire Parker had once worked at a big gallery in New York City, but she had married the local veterinarian, Tim Arbuckle, and was happily settled in Sanctuary. Julia has actually never met Claire, but she knows that Claire runs her own small gallery, and is hoping that she will be interested in Julia's newer, darker style of painting. Julia's Uncle Carlos had disparaged the vivid, bold, hues and dramatic emotions apparent in Julia's most recent work. Just outside of Sanctuary, the old vehicle Julia bought breaks down, and handsome lawyer Paul Taggart comes to her rescue. A friend of Claire's, Paul arranges for a tow truck and drives Julia to the gallery to meet Claire, who is quite taken with Julia's paintings. Paul, who had once thought Claire was the only woman he could love, is immediately smitten by Julia, who finds him equally intriguing. Julia had only planned to stay long enough to meet Claire and hope that she would accept her work, but now with the sweet and sensual relationship blooming between her and Paul, she finds hers plans delightfully changed. On a visit to Healing Springs Stables, Julia discovers Darkside, the embodiment of the black horse who rumbles through her paintings. Julia and the troubled animal are kindred spirits, and as she works with him to gain his trust, she gains a sense of purpose and a new confidence. Paul has his own issues to deal with, including keeping an eye on his alcoholic brother, Jimmy, and helping Jimmy's ex-wife and son. Will Claire find the freedom she seeks by reaching out and grabbing hold of new experiences? Will Paul once again find a lightness of heart and joy of living by letting go of his heavy sense of responsibility? Is there a way for them to be together and blend both their worlds? "Country Roads" is a passionate and poignant love story that will leave the reader looking forward to the next visit to Sanctuary and the compelling storytelling of author Nancy Herkness.

Review Copy Gratis Amazon Vine

Aphrodite says

The story of Paul and Julia was not one I cared too much from the blurb. But, boy, was I wrong! I totally enjoyed the story, it is about family, loyalty, and the personal sacrifices one has to make sometimes for the people you love, mainly your family. Sometimes you protect them too much that you don't allow them to grow, sometimes it feels like it is not enough. I liked the depth of this story more than the first book and it still had steamy scenes. Now I am looking forward to the book about Adam.
