



# Guitar Highway Rose

*Brigid Lowry*

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## **Guitar Highway Rose** Brigid Lowry

*My name is Rosie Moon. I am nearly sixteen. I'm hungry for a juicy life. I lean out the window at night and I can taste it out there, waiting for me.*

Popular and smart, fifteen-year-old Rosie Moon is the quintessential good girl. She also wishes she could be someone else for a while, someone more interesting. Asher Fielding is the mysterious new boy at school who has dreadlocks and a love of Jim Morrison.

On the first day of tenth grade, Rosie develops a crush on Asher, and when the two pair up for a poetry assignment they quickly form a bond. When Asher is falsely accused of stealing a wallet at school, he and Rosie decide to escape it all - their families, their school, their ordinary town - and hitchhike up the Australian coast. They know they shouldn't, and that is exactly why they do.

Part road story, part love story, *Guitar Highway Rose* is a thrilling ride for anyone who has ever dreamed about escaping everyday life, even just for a little while.

## **Guitar Highway Rose Details**

Date : Published January 24th 2006 by St. Martin's Griffin (first published January 1st 1997)

ISBN : 9780312342968

Author : Brigid Lowry

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Genre : Young Adult, Romance, Travel, Road Trip, Fiction

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# From Reader Review Guitar Highway Rose for online ebook

## Joy (joyous reads) says

Rose is waiting for life to happen; to break free from her mum's suffocating way of caring. She wanted her dad to do something about his suffering marriage to her mum.

Asher wanted nothing to do with Perth. He'd rather be back to his old hunting ground where everything was normal and familiar.

This is a story of two kids who found themselves on the run from a petty crime Asher was accused of. But mostly, they wanted freedom. Along their adventure, while their parents were going insane with worry, they took a journey of self-realization and discovery through the people they meet.

This book is a short read. And while I appreciate the uniqueness of the way this was written, I couldn't be enthused about the story. The multiple P.O.Vs didn't deter me as much as the lack of punctuations in Asher's point of view. I did say I wasn't going to get technical on my reviews but the lack of beginning and ending on a sentence loses some of the element of good storytelling. I can honestly say that I was tempted to put slashes and turn his POV into nice, tidy verses.

## INSIDE HIS HEAD

*"maybe i shouldn't have said that about thinking she was a try-hard i hope she isn't mad at me you never can tell with girl creatures but she seemed to understand hey cat i nearly flattened you she's fun making up those names was cool i want to see her again..."*

And he goes on.

What I liked, however was the way the author was very descriptive about a character's quirks. There was something poetic about the way she enumerated the objects in a person's room or the complete account of what Asher was wearing for the day. To some this may seem like fillers or something that was irrelevant, but for me, I took it as the author's way of introducing a character. Kind of like the old adage, *tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are.*

I have kids but they're not teenagers. If this is what teenage angst is all about, then I'm in for a headache the size of Mt. Olympus. While I don't want to brag about how much of a good girl I was when I was sixteen, I got a good look of how it was when your world is like a jail cell and every word that came out of your mother's mouth was no. So I get where Rose was coming from. But. And this is a big BUT. I'm not a fan of teenage drinking and doping. I want to believe that this is something my kids will not discover. I'm going to drill it to their heads that curiosity is overrated and peer pressure is just a lame excuse for weaklings. Am I being naïve? Perhaps. But I'd like to keep the hopes alive.

To sum it up, Guitar Highway Rose is a quick, heartfelt and funny read. And though, the writing takes a bit of getting used to, this lyrically infused book will at least whet your reading appetite with idiosyncratic characters and peculiarly pretty prose.

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## **Thebookbutterfly says**

I adored this book. I loved the poetic prose and the varying perspectives: it swooped from teenagers to adults to the younger brother in a way that kept me rapt the whole time I was reading it.

It's inspiring and creative and Brigid Lowry approached YA fiction with such a refreshing take on teenagers that I could not help but be drawn into the promise of it on first sight.

'Guitar Highway Rose' is not one thing in particular. Its part love story, part road trip, part families and friendships, and part life. I love it. Highly recommended.

(Thank you Samantha!)

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## **Choco says**

3.7 stars (yes it's very close to 4)

When I was around 15, I was obsessed with the TV series My So-Called Life. And I can see how teenagers in Aus might have been in love with this book as I see similarities. The book also captures adolescence psych well: their burning desire for independence, their frustration with the parents as well as love and need for them, and their struggle and confusion with both internal and external variables which they cannot control (their hormones, family breakup, relocation etc). With all that the book deals with, it retains a positive and a bit fluffy atmosphere, in which I somehow kept seeing pink and sunshine. As usual I loved the tiny details. I loved the mention of Crocodile Dundee and numerous appearances of Vegemite.

Overall it was a very cute and nice read, which just fades a little in light of My So-Called Life (which I grew up with so nothing can beat it) and other recent Aussie YA reads.

I'm now thinking of giving this book to my 15 year-old friend as a present.

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## **Sarah says**

This is one of my favorite books ever! I love the author's unconventional writing/formatting style. It has a very sweet story and quirky, fun, interesting, lovable characters. :D

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## **Cass - Words on Paper says**

This is my favourite of the 3 available Aussie covers. <3

\*crosses fingers\*

Bought for \$4.50 @ Brotherhood Books.

4/5

Loved the mad gypsy vibes. <3 What a lovely kind of feel good Aussie read. Rose and Asher were so good together, I liked the progression of their relationship. The writing was crisp and easy to read, I also enjoyed the unique storytelling format. It was interesting to see the point of view and lives of those involved in the story too. Will probably keep and re-read one day.. especially since I really like this cover, I do think it captures the spirit of the novel pretty well.

## Quotes

"You are joy and sorrow and energy and boredom and earth and sun." - 47

"Some ideas are not born of logic and good sense. They are made of clouds and cobwebs. They sprout from nowhere and feed on excitement, sprinkled with adventure-juice and the sweet flavour of the forbidden. The psyche moves from the realms of the ordinary and takes a delicate step towards the territory of the unknown. We know that we shouldn't and that is exactly why we do. -93

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## Limonezza says

I *WISH* this were my favorite quote from the book:

*Some ideas are not born of logic and good sense. They are made of clouds and cobwebs. They sprout from nowhere and feed on excitement, sprinkled with adventure-juice and the sweet flavour of the forbidden. The psyche moves from the realms of the ordinary and takes a delicate step towards the territories of the unknown. We know that we shouldn't and that is exactly what we do.*

However. Unfortunately.

It is this:

*Sometimes you think you know where you're headed. You think you know what each day will bring you. You think there will be a breath to follow this breath. It has always been that way before. You think that lunch will follow breakfast and sometime later dinner will naturally appear. You think you know that the sky is blue and the trees are green, that cats are furry and that life will go on smoothly forever like an infinite ripple of turquoise ribbon. But sometimes you are wrong.*

This is to say that I *might* be a tad too old for this book.

It's good, don't get me wrong, and I completely understand all those 5 and 4 stars reviews.

It is perfect for teens, 14 to 16/17 y.o., I'd say.

It is perfectly appropriate for adults who have read this book in their teens and are feeling nostalgic.

It is a celebration of striving to leave the parents' nest and become your own person/identity/personality.

It is a book about fathers/mothers and children and cutting the umbilical chord.

It is a book about a roadtrip.

It is a truly Australian book.

Too bad I related more to Rosie's mother than to Rosie.

Too bad I didn't much care for the stream-of-consciousness format, or the experimental style with lists and doodles and continuous switching of point of views.

What I am trying to say is that this book is far, far from being bad and it would have been perfect for a

younger me. \*sigh\*

Younger teens will surely love it, a mix of rebellion, angst, romance, adventure, a swoonworthy guy and hippies.

And actually, my favorite passage is this:

*Dear Asher,  
[...] Grandpa and I are both well except for his new choppers. They look quite good but they don't fit properly. About three times a day I find him out in the shed rasping away at them with a file. He has to see the dentist again next week, if he has any plate left. He is persevering but I wouldn't be surprised to find the teeth shoved in the drawer one day soon.*

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## **Jasprit says**

### **Favourite Quote;**

*"Sometimes you think you know where you are headed. You think you know what each day will bring. You think there will be a breath to follow this breath. It has always been that way before. You think that lunch will follow breakfast and sometime later dinner will naturally appear. You think that you know that the sky is blue and that trees are green, that cats are furry and that life will go on quite smoothly for ever like an infinite ripple of turquoise ribbon. But sometimes you are wrong."*

I'm quite gutted for only giving Guitar Highway Rose 3 stars, it's not that I didn't enjoy it, because I did, I think I just set my expectations too high, thinking I would love it as I'd really enjoyed every other Aussie book I'd read and given them 4 stars or more.

In Guitar Highway Rose both Asher and Rosie are restless; Asher's the new kid in town, he's been having a rough time of it lately, his parents have recently separated, so him and his mum have moved to Perth, he's had to leave his dad and friends behind and start all over again. Rosie's always getting into arguments with her mum, she always wants to know where she's going and won't even let her get her nose pierced. Everything changes when Rosie meets Asher, he's different to the other people she knows. But it's the final straw for Asher when he's accused of stealing Mrs. Hyde's wallet, he decides to take off and Rosie goes with him. What follows is an unforgettable adventure full of hitchhiking, short blonde hair, mistaken identities and fun.

### **What I liked about Guitar Highway Rose;**

The alternative pov's; I never used to read books with alternative pov's, but now I can't get enough of them, the alternative pov's in Guitar Highway Rose could be a bit confusing at times as you didn't know whose pov it was from, but nonetheless I found them extremely funny. Guitar Highway Rose definitely gave me the urge just to take off randomly one day to Australia, make a trip with no plans, no worries, nothing and just live in the moment.

### **What I didn't like;**

The writing was beautiful; but I couldn't get to grips with the run along sentences and the no full stops.

Overall despite not enjoying Guitar Highway Rose as I'd hoped, it was a quick entertaining read.

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### **Victoria says**

I'm sorry, but all the run-on sentence/paragraphs without any commas or anything even drove me nutty! This book totally brought me back to 1997 considering all the music and fashion mentioned (in which I was a teenager at that time as well). It was nice that they gave you so many perspectives in this book. Sadly though, I was bored out of my mind. I was glad this was such a fast and short read. I couldn't even attach myself to the characters. I was extremely surprised to find that this book did so very well in Australia. The poetic pieces were wonderful in the book but I just had a hard time enjoying this. I also think that it lacked realism by making everything so happy for everyone in the end of the book. I don't think things always turn out that way considering how the characters are described throughout it. It was like everything had a quick fix suddenly.

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### **Shirley Marr says**

The odds seemed stacked against me liking this book - the 90s is my least favourite era, I don't think anyone other than Joyce and Faulkner should attempt stream-of-consciousness narrative and I dislike hippies (sorry no offence to anyone). So an experimental book written in 1997 about two teens with the gypsy blues? I would say no thanks! But I'm glad I gave this novel a go - this novel charmed me over and I had to agree at the end that yes this is a gorgeous book!

Upon starting this, I was instantly intrigued by the fragmented prose. The entire novel is presented in little bite-sized pieces. We slip in and out of the minds and lives of the two main characters, their friends and families and everyone that becomes tangled in their lives. I was sufficiently interested enough to read on, but I was also afraid - in the back of my mind I wondered if this style was going to be able to sustain a whole novel or even come together to make a satisfying whole.

I shouldn't have worried. This book is absolutely wonderful. Every little passage in this novel is perfect. It doesn't feel like there is a single filler paragraph or even word. I wanted to stay inside the universe of this book forever, one where I could feel, watch and listen to everyone like I knew them intimately. It could only take someone with the heart, light touch, humour and wisdom to be able to pull this off and indeed Brigid Lowry does. Eventually I even have to agree that the stream-of-conscious narrative used for Asher *worked*, as I could see this reflecting the jumbled-up contents of a young teen's mind.

Reading this novel more than 10 years after it was published, the writing is very reflective of its era, but instead of sounding dated, this actually works as an absolute treat as a chronicle of the era. The feel, flavour, language and references ended up as my favourite thing about the novel (and I hate the 90s!)

If you are a sentimentally inclined girl, I suggest you read this book tomorrow!

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## Nomes says

Guitar Highway Rose by Brigid Lowry is one of my most favourite nostalgia books <3

it came out when I was 17 and in my final year of high school.

i loved it.

my mates loved it.

i carried it around with me.

i wanted to be Rosie. i crushed on Asher.

i doodled all the little icons out of it into my journal.

i answered some of the profile-y parts in my journal, too :)

it's such a perfect teenagery book.

it's about crushes and first love. running away. a road trip. a kombi van. hippies. it's sweet and quirky. funny and gorgeous. and very zen-alternative-byron-bay-esque.

it's gorgeously Australian.

it is experimental in structure: the story told from all POV's: Rosie and Asher and a narrator and their parents ...

Asher is all stream-of-consciousness with no punctuation.

other parts are all the little tidbits of their lives.

**how much do i love it now?** it was an ultimate favourite for me 14 years ago. it's still gorgeous and addictive and makes my heart swell when I flick through it. it reminds me of myself, as a teenager (not necessarily the characters, but how i felt and how i felt reading this book for the first time). i LOVE how different and arty it is (i do not know many books like it). it's still 5 stars from me ~ for being everything i wanted a book to be and more when I was younger.

i re-read this last month. i just got it back on my shelf ~ yesterday~ after loaning it to two sisters: 11 and 13 years old who LOVED it. i recced it to an adult friend of mine (in the US) last year, and she adored it too <3

this review is much more informal and chatty (although, it is my review and i'll chat books in whatever format i like ;).

as a bonus, i took some pics of random parts of the book so you could see how it is a little bit different ... captions/explanations under the images :)



asher has dreadlocks :D  
rosie tries to make them ~ by putting wax in her hair O.o

lily is rosie's mum. she is having her own little freak-out due to what lily has gone and done...

this is what asher and rosie did while they were on their road trip  
(for part of it. for the bliss part... ;)

top of page: asher sending a post card to his byron bay friends  
middle: a slice of character profiles, very awesome  
bottom: a wednesday diary for rosie

more of how the story moves forward in it's own funky/cool way  
including:  
snippet from LIVING WITH TEENAGERS (which rosie's mum is reading. her and rosie are getting all rock  
in their relationship)  
what asher packs to run away  
sightings at the local bus station  
strange signs they see on the way  
rosie's thoughts while on the bus <3

what rosie and asher talk about, under a tree, while on their road trip  
(next section, we see all their answers to the questions)

it is my own personal aussie YA cult classic kind of book :)

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## Nic says

***Favourite Quote:*** *Some ideas are not born of logic and good sense. They are made of clouds and cobwebs. They sprout from nowhere and feed on excitement, sprinkled with adventure juice and the sweet flavor of the forbidden. The psyche moves from the realms of the ordinary and takes a delicate step towards the unknown. We know we shouldn't and that is exactly why we do.*

Guitar Rose Highway is a fun read. It is quirky, charming and vibrant story that captures the joy and angst of being a teen.

Lowry's writing has a very lyrical feel and also a little bit different. There is multiple points of views and no

punctuation in parts, snapshots and poetry giving it a very unique format. It kind of feel likes a happy place between a verse and prose novel. Also this book is a little bit dated written in the late 90's and has a hippie-grunge kind of feel but I enjoyed it and the memories it brought back.

The story and the characters really capture how it feels to be a teen with such raw honesty. Focusing on how you feel your parents don't get you and the feeling of being restricted. It also has the parents' points of views in a couple of parts showing their feelings.

Rosie and Asher are amusing and heartwarming characters. They are the kind of characters that grow on you more and more as the story goes on and in the end you don't won't to say goodbye.

There is a touch of romance that is sweet, tender and a little bit awkward like first relationships are. It just brings a grin to your face.

*"they do not kiss but they both want to instead their feet touch and so do their arms it is electric magic their tiny arm hairs tingling happily lying together the sun warming them watching sky through green-leafed gum branch close enough to hear each other breathe sweet togetherness this lazy lying down dance of love"*

Overall, Guitar Rose Highway was an enjoyable and slightly off beat read. Can't wait to read more from Lowry.

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## Arlene says

*Book quote: Some ideas are not born of logic and good sense. They are made of clouds and cobwebs. They sprout from nowhere and feed on excitement, sprinkled with adventure-juice and the sweet flavor of the forbidden. The psyche moves from the realms of the ordinary and takes a delicate step towards the territory of the unknown. We know that we shouldn't and that is exactly why we do.*

Wow! How beautiful is that?

**Guitar Highway Rose** is filled with amazing thoughtful passages, enlightening Aussie lingo, and precise descriptions of the landscape in Australia that makes you feel part of the setting and the story. The writing style is light and very much unique as it allows glimpses into the lives of Rosie, Asher and their families during a time a transition and adjustment.

In this story, Asher comes to a new town and school in the aftermath of his parents' separation. He's had to leave his friends and father to try and make a new life in Perth with his mom. There he meets Rosie who not only develops a crush on him, but stands by him when he's falsely accused of stealing a wallet at school. Rosie's life isn't much better. Her parents are fighting quite a bit and her relationship with her mom is strained and full of tension. Together, Rosie and Ash form a plan to take a small "time-out" from their lives and go on a road trip that ultimately leads to a lasting friendship.

**Guitar Highway Rose** was nothing short of what I expected from this genre of Australian YA Contemporary. I fell for the characters immediately as they shared their raw feelings with no remorse. There were moments in the story where my emotions jolted and that just proved how much I came to care for the characters in this story. From beginning to end, I was vested in this wonderful story, which I know I'll be re-reading over and over again.

Another beautiful example of the brilliance Australia has to offer . Brigid Lowry holds a firm spot among her talent pool. Loved it!

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### **Emily May says**

The recent reviews I've read on this have been mediocre at best but I **really** didn't like it. The language is childish and the characters are boring. In the very first chapter there are sentences that repeatedly use "and" or are short and choppy, it reads like a young kid's book!

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### **Jess - The Tales Compendium says**

I read this book for the first time when I was 12 years old and have continued to reread it every few years (I am now 24). It is one of my all time favourite teen novels and highly recommend it.

#### **Edit 24.3.13**

Now 26, I have finally attempted to review this properly.

**In a Nutshell:** Guitar Highway Rose is a novel about growing up. It's about the family dynamic, in a variety of forms such as mothers and daughters, husbands and wives. It's about teenage acts of rebellion and the restlessness felt at being in that limbo age of adolescents. And it's about hope.

**For the full review, please visit my blog:** <http://www.thetalescompendium.com/201...>

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### **Noah says**

I absolutely love this book.

I think I first read it in 2007/08 (Around the time I first read Looking For Alaska and many other books that stuck with me), and I've just re-read it at least twice a year since.

I need to get a copy of my own, it amuses the librarian at my school everytime she sees I've picked it up again.

I don't know what to say. I love where it's set, I love Asher and Rose and Rose's best friend's relationship with her Mum, similar to my friend's.

Brigid's book Tomorrow All Will Be Beautiful, filled with her short stories and poems, is just as perfect as this.

I think I'll stop rambling and just have a point here.

My dear Librarian calls books like this, the ones you read over and over "Comfort food", which is the perfect term. Fabulous book.

