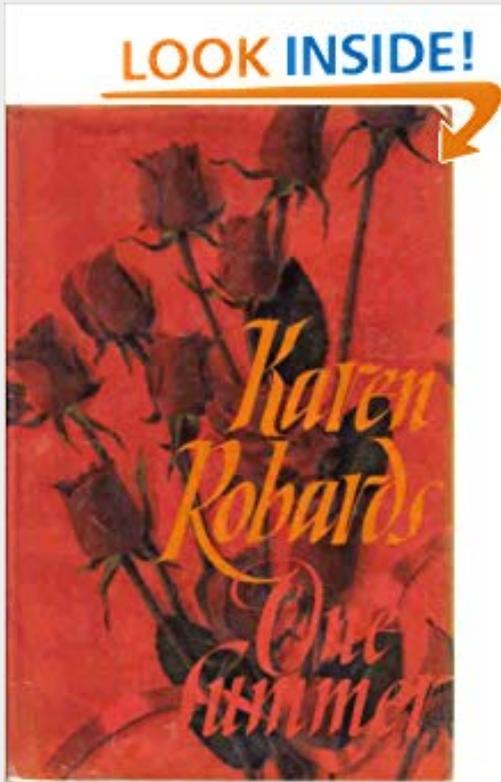


One Summer (Eagle Large Print) by Karen Robards



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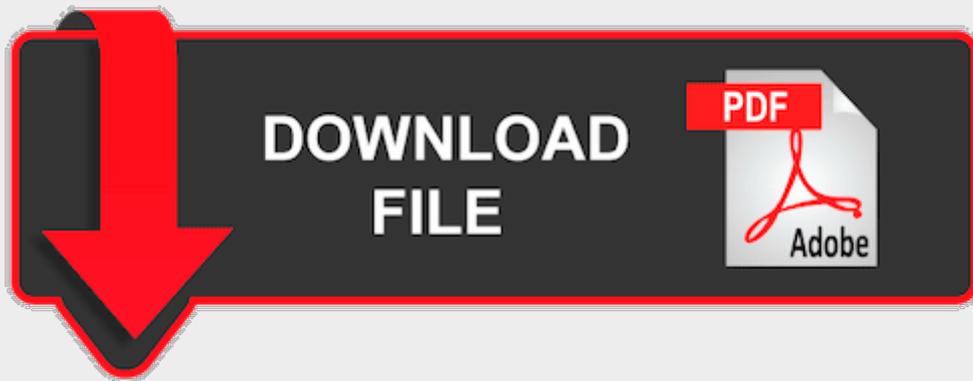
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Book by Robards, Karen



Reviews of the **One Summer (Eagle Large Print)** by Karen Robards

1. Dynen

"One Summer" took another stab (pun intended) at the "ex-con released back into the small town" romance story. I admit to having a fondness for that storyline, but I find that most stories are, sadly, pretty similar. It's a small town. The townsfolk look down upon the hapless ex-con, who,

invariably was innocent all along. Some woman takes pity on the guy, and they fall for each other despite the disapproval from the townsfolk. This story was that story... But, it was more too...

The novel examined differences between social classes and the similarities that all mankind share. Rachel Grant, our heroine, is (as expected) in the higher social class, but she manages a hardware store and tries to care for her very ill, mentally departed, father (as well as her judgmental mother, and, later, her sister, when she shows up with her own troubles, which add even more depth to the novel). Johnny is the handsome man from the proverbial "wrong side of the tracks," and his parole is contingent upon employment, which he appeals to Rachel to provide. She, of course, does so without any hesitation. Their relationship develops as you might expect and, of course, with the full disapproval of everyone around them. I have to say that I would have enjoyed this book, predictable as that tale is, had it stopped there. It was well-written, and I enjoyed getting to know the characters. I loved Johnny's spirit and refusal to be beaten despite the terrible hand he'd been dealt, and I respected Rachel for making up her own mind despite all of the naysayers.

I don't know if anything supernatural truly happened, but the twists in this story made me double-check that this wasn't meant to be a horror novel as the hairs on the back of my neck stood straight up, and I got the creeps! There is a massive twist embedded in this not-quite-as-predictable-as-I-thought story!! To be accurate, there were three supernatural-like anomalies that weren't explained. Maybe they were beyond this world. Maybe not. Either way, it made this an awesome read for me. I don't like horror books, so this stopped just shy of that—thankfully. Please don't interpret my commentary here to mean that this was a paranormal romance, because it truly wasn't. It just MAY have held an element or two of something "else."

For me, the culprit was guessable at about the 75% mark. I think that we were meant to guess. The author dropped more and more clues as the story progressed. It was quite difficult to predict what would happen (exactly anyway) from the revelation of the true killer through the final confrontation and ending, which housed yet another twist regarding an earlier plot thread that I can't mention without providing a spoiler at the same time.

I loved this. I really did. I always root for the underdogs, so Johnny was great from the start. As someone rooting for the underdogs, I had to love Rachel for trusting her instincts and not letting small-minded judgmental people influence her too much.

They were a great couple. This was a fantastic book. I'd give it more stars if allowed.

Favorite Quotes:

"With all the disparity in their backgrounds, they belonged together like two halves of a whole."

I'll leave the review with this quote... It's an insight into what makes this version of the same tale rise above the rest. This is a taste of the uniqueness found within the pages.

From the Perspective of Someone As Yet Unidentified: "From the air, islands dotting the ocean seemed complete in themselves. Only when one delved beneath the surface of the sea did one discover that islands were no more than the tips of gigantic mountains that the water concealed from view. Everyday personalities, the watcher considered, were like islands. But only the most perceptive were permitted to see what lay beneath."

2. Road.to sliver

Rachel is a proper, educated school teacher from the money side of town. Johnny is the bad boy from the poor side of the town... who was once her student. She believed in him and gave him a chance, and he drooled after her from afar. When Johnny goes to prison for murder, Rachel always believed in his innocence. Now that he's out of the jail house, she puts it upon herself to get him a job in her company (she also owns a store) and see to his well-being, even going as far to rent him a room.

The chemistry between them is pretty sizzling. Johnny is definitely attracted to this woman and he pretty much bee-lines in her direction. He zones in on her with dark, lusty eyes and basically makes her swoon into his arms. This would have been a four star romance, however, if there was "more" to their relationship. They hardly exchange a real conversation before they're tumbling into bed. I also didn't enjoy reading about her awkwardness the next day when she was disgusted with herself. Of course she was... she's not the kind of lady to just jump into a bed based on physical attraction. But with Johnny, she does. I really enjoy when the characters get to know each other more and actually fall in love. They don't in this story.

This is a really engaging romance though, with a touch of suspense. There's a murder mystery in the background of the story that's OK to follow. The revelation was so unlikely though.... a bit of a disappointment.

The best parts of the book were Rachel defending the bad boy to the town, and to her prior boyfriends. I think that's why this has been a favorite with romance readers. Everyone loves to read about a bad boy, you know? His smoldering eyes, tight jeans and devil-may-care attitude is pretty sexy. And the prim little school teacher defending him is touching. Overall though, it fails in the "romance" department as there is very little between the two but chemistry. It also fails in the "suspense" department because there's very little of that too and the ending is contrived. But it's a three star novel because the prose is good, the characters are interesting on their own and it does feature Johnny... a sexy, alpha cutie pie who deserves a second chance.

3. Winotterin

High school teacher Rachel Grant gets more than she bargained for when a former student is about to be paroled for the murder of the town's golden girl and turns to her for help getting his life back. Getting him a job and an apartment are the least she can do, since she is convinced that he was innocent. No one is more surprised than Rachel when she picks him up and instead of coming face to face with a gawky teen; a sexy alpha man is waiting for her. As Johnny fights for his right to return to his hometown, and the town heavies try to make his life miserable to drive him out, Rachel finds herself attracted to him, and acting on that passion sends them both on a collision course with the real culprit behind the slayings. When another former lover turns up dead, Johnny is the only suspect, but this time Rachel is his alibi.

Much is made about the teacher-student romance, but the age gap is a mere five years (and the romance did not start until both were adults). And do they ever sizzle. But the story is also sensitive, particularly in the dramatization of Johnny's fractured home life. The two make a striking duo, and their story will capture the reader's attention. Despite numerous red herrings and possible suspects, the revelation of the killer was truly implausible and felt like Robards would do anything to keep the culprit a surprise. My first Robards novel, I periodically return to the sizzling story again and again, making Robards an automatic purchase for me.

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