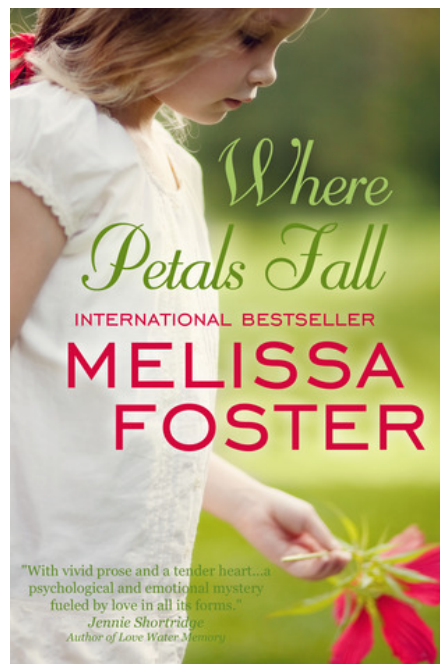




Where Petals Fall

Melissa Foster

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On the surface Junie Olson's life looks idyllic, from her handsome husband and beautiful daughter to her successful business, the bakery she always dreamed of opening. But in the past few months her world has slowly unraveled. Her precocious child is withdrawing, showing unexplainable signs of emotional regression, a condition that frays the bonds of Junie's once impenetrable marriage. When her father dies suddenly of a heart attack, Junie packs up her daughter and goes home to help her mother. Her homecoming stirs up memories of the nightmare she thought she had put behind her, the disappearance of her childhood friend, Ellen. Haunted by recurring memories of what happened on that fateful day, Junie must gather the courage to revisit her past and untangle the secrets surrounding her missing friend, and the trauma that has caused her little girl to climb back into herself. As the pieces come together on the event that shook her small town, and at the risk of losing everyone she loves, Junie will question everything she thought she could rely on and everyone she thought she knew.

WHERE PETALS FALL is a gripping and emotional novel with an undercurrent of suspense, featuring a determined mother whose world slowly comes apart around her. Where Petals Fall will appeal to fans of Lisa Scottoline's *Save Me* or Jodi Picoult's *Salem Falls*, who love an emotional and gripping read. They will root for Junie as they follow her transition into an indomitable heroine who must reconcile what she discovers about her husband and family's tragic past, and find a way to put the pieces of her family back together and carry on.

Where Petals Fall Details

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From Reader Review Where Petals Fall for online ebook

Sharon says

Loved this book. I was very fortunate to read this as a ARC instead. of waiting for it to come out. The book is full of twists and turns that will keep you going.

Jen says

This book is a bit difficult to rate. On one hand I couldn't put it down because I wanted to know what was going on, and while I had some ideas around the mystery, there was enough doubt that it kept me guessing. On the other hand, I had issues as well and found myself getting frustrated with the story at times.

June Marie (my Grandma's name!) is a wife and mother whose marriage is on the rocks due to her young daughter's (Sarah) sudden, inexplicable regression and refusal to speak. Junie's father's unexpected death brings her home to Pennsylvania and brings up unwelcome memories surrounding the disappearance of her friend Ellen, who was also June's husband Brian's sister, when she was only 7. As Junie starts having flashbacks to forgotten memories surrounding Ellen she begins searching for the truth and unravels the mystery as all those close to her become suspect. The book unravels the mystery surrounding Ellen's disappearance and Sarah's silence.

Ok, so the positive first. Like I said, I felt compelled to keep reading this book because I wanted to know what happened to Ellen and Sarah, so the book definitely sucks you in. I think the writing was good in the sense that I had a good feel for the characters, at least Junie anyway. I think the overall plot was good, not a typical mystery, more of a mystery wrapped around human drama. If you're looking for a book that goes a bit deeper than a mystery and includes a lot of human drama and navigating family relationships, I'd recommend this book.

Now the negative (sorry ahead of the time for the rant,) but there was one major annoyance...Junie, the main character. God, I wanted to slap a bitch by the end of the book, can't say I'll miss being inside her head. On one hand, the author does a good job of capturing her thoughts and giving a very clear view of her confusion and anxiety. Having said that, this character was SOOO annoying. She was whiny, needy, passive, weak, self-absorbed and mostly VERY insecure, her constant negativity got very old. Every other page we had to hear about what a failure she was, she was a bad Mom, wife, daughter, friend, patient, etc. She sucked at everything, she did and said everything wrong and did nothing right. God, I was just like "shut up already." Not to mention she overreacted to everything and constantly jumped to conclusions based on "iffy" evidence.

One example of this that shows her insecurity as well is when her Mom admits to something regarding her father and is explaining to Junie why she responded the way she did, partially being because Junie was a newborn. Immediately Junie responded with "you're saying this is my fault?" No Junie, I know it's hard to believe, but not everything is about you. You were a baby and babies are a lot if work. Your Mom was just explaining the situation and stating the facts. Of course Junie would make the situation about her. Everything was about Junie, even her daughters problems Junie made about her, basically by either whining about what she (Junie,) was doing wrong to cause this or how she was handling it wrong and it was all her fault. Hell, she even hijacked her daughters therapy sessions and made them all about her. Her mother just lost her soulmate, but Junie could barely be bothered to concern herself with her Mom or her feelings. She'd mentally acknowledge that her Mom needed her but then immediately dismissed it and start talking about herself and her problems, dumping it on her Mom because her needs were bigger. I don't think she ever really once

asked anybody else how they were, not her husband, her partner Shane or any other character. It was all about poor, weak Junie, and we were told multiple times by Junie how she wasn't as strong as her Mom, as though that excused her selfish behavior and neediness. The worst part was she recognized how she should be more concerned for others but then made no effort to do anything about it. She was too emotionally weak to do so.

Also, her actions/inactions were contradictory. She'd mentally talk about how she'd do anything to find the truth, but then she'd avoid the things that would lead her to the truth because it was just too much for her to handle. And Junie, Dear, fill out the f**king questionnaire. You want to help your daughter up until it's emotionally too hard for you to do so. Then you just put it off and hope it will just go away on its own while you wring your hands. Actually every time I pictured Junie, I pictured her as constantly wringing her hands, that's the type of person she came across as.

I don't mean for this review to put anyone off from reading the book, because as irritating as Junie was, it wasn't enough to make me put the book down, I just had to recognize there are certain personality types that irritate me more than others, and hers was one of them. She's a nice enough of a person, she doesn't do anything wrong, I just don't think I could be friends with her and I'm not to sure why Shane put up with her, but to each his own.

To end on a positive note, it's a relatively quick read and has some twists that aren't necessarily something you couldn't kind of guess, but the author did a good job of keeping uncertainty surrounding the situation so you really couldn't be sure what happened to Ellen, so ultimately, I'd recommend this book to people who like mysteries with a bit more depth to them.

Marilou George says

Melissa Foster has written an emotional and intricate story of a family in crisis as the past clashes with the present and rips a family off its foundation. This story is packed full of plot twists and character interactions that will draw you into their world.

Sarah Olson is a four year old girl who has suddenly gone from a lively and talkative child to a child who is now totally withdrawn and has regressed to the point that she is uncommunicative. Her parents Junie and Brian have no clue what the problem is and disagree on her treatment. To add to all the stress Junie's father suddenly dies and she is forced to deal with his passing her daughter's behavior and a dark secret from the past.

The characters in this book are written with great attention to detail and bring the emotions of the story to the forefront. The interactions between them are realistic and dramatic which lends to the suspense and poignant feel of the story.

The writing style of Melissa Foster always captures my emotions and succeeds in getting me invested in her stories. She has a smooth and clear writing style and combined with her distinct character development and realistic situations I am always a satisfied reader.

I enjoyed reading and was totally involved in Where Petals Fall and would highly recommend it!

Marlene says

Junie, Brian, and their four year old daughter, Sarah, recently moved into a new house. But since the move, Sarah has begun to regress ... no longer talking and wetting the bed. They have taken her to countless specialists and have yet to receive an actual diagnosis. Stressed out over Sarah, and the fact that it's put a wedge between her and her husband, Junie also learns of her father's sudden passing. Not wanting her mother to be alone Junie and Sarah make their way to Pennsylvania to be with her.

But being back in her childhood home brings back flashes of memories for Junie. When she was seven, her best friend (and Brian's sister), Ellen, went missing. She was never found and there weren't any leads to her disappearance. So why was Junie all of a sudden seeing disturbing flashes from her past? A past that she can't even fully remember. She remembers the day that Ellen went missing, but the details surrounding it and the days following it were blank.

As Junie continues to have these flashes, she starts to question the people in her life that she has trusted the most. She begins to ask herself if they had any involvement in Ellen's disappearance and questions the safety of her daughter and herself. Will the past come back to haunt everyone? And are the people she loves really the people she thought they were? Junie is determined to find out the answers. Even if it threatens to tear apart her family!

Where Petals Fall is a women's fiction, suspense novel. I have to be honest in saying that it's not the usual genre that I read, but I could not put this book down. I started it in the morning and couldn't go to bed until I finished it that night. Yes, it was THAT good! It had my emotions going in over drive. From one page to the next, I had no clue what was going to happen next. I was literally on the edge of my seat in anticipation. The story was brilliantly written, the characters felt so real and it had more twists and turns than a theme park roller coaster! The author, Melissa Foster, is a literary genius! I highly recommend this book and can honestly say that it is one of the best books I've ever read!

Marie says

I was lucky to receive this book as an Arc. I found it difficult getting into the story but once I was, I was intrigued. The story twists and turns with emotion from Junie, and your heart goes out to poor Sarah, who is deeply affected by her grandfather's inappropriate actions, which make her regress. It takes sometime to understand what is happening, and I was hoping to get Brian's POV, as I believe the readers need to know how he is feeling as his family is ripped apart. overall this is a good read, sometimes there is a bit too much description, but I definitely recommend it.

Susan Swiderski says

Why did precocious four-year-old chatterbox Sarah Olson suddenly stop talking? Why the vacant stares and nightly bed-wetting? Her regression is threatening to tear her family apart, but the doctors don't know what's causing it. Her parents don't know, either, but her dad Brian's patience is running mighty thin, and he's beginning to think she's doing it willfully. Her mother June doesn't believe that for a minute; she's sure it has to be something medical, something the doctors haven't found yet. She's convinced Sarah hasn't experienced an underlying trauma of any kind to cause the regression... Or has she?

The only one who knows for sure is Sarah, and she isn't talking.

When June's father dies, the Olsons return to their old home town for the funeral, the old home town where Brian's sister Ellen, who was June's best friend, inexplicably disappeared many years ago. While visiting her mother, June is tormented by snippets of long-repressed memories and images of Ellen, images that terrify her and plant seeds of doubt and suspicion about her father... about her husband... about herself. Why are these memories re-surfacing now? Is she in danger? Is Sarah?

No matter what, June has to find the truth.

Foster has created a rich tale of secrets and suspicions, of lies, love, and forgiveness. "Where Petals Fall" is a thoroughly enjoyable book, even if it does make you cry a little.

Sue says

This is an absolutely amazing book. Melissa has a way with pulling in the reader and making them care about her characters. In this book, you following Junie as she tries to first understand why her 4 year old daughter is regressing back to toddler-hood and then she takes you on her journey of discovering hidden things from the past which impacts everyone's future. Several different story lines come together with a surprising ending.

Danna Smith says

This book could not be put down until the final page was turned. I was drawn in from page one and wanted, no needed, to know how things would turn out for Junie and her family. Melissa Foster is an author that you will not want to miss out on reading. This is not my first book by Melissa but it is now my favorite. Junie pulls you along her emotional ride and you grab hold and hang on, she becomes the heroine you want to cheer for.

Do not let this book pass you by. Buy it now!

Beth Hale says

Where Petals Fall is a fantastic book. I could relate to the characters; they seem so real and I learned to care for them. The story flowed flawlessly and it was an easy read. I actually started reading on my day off and had been cover to cover before the day was over. Junie's struggle to deal with the mysteries of her past and present is wonderfully written and the mystery of "why" and "what happened" kept me turning pages. (I thought I had it solved but I was wrong.) Melissa did a tremendous job of making me feel the emotions Junie was experiencing and of keeping the twists and turns of the book engaging so that I stayed caught up in the story. Where Petals Fall is just one more example of why Melissa Foster is a literary genius. I would recommend this book to anyone.

Michele says

Melissa Foster really out did herself in this poignant book about the unraveling of a family because of past occurrences. Junie Olson had a best friend when she was a young girl-that friend disappeared and Junie remembers nothing. She ultimately marries her friend's brother and they have a little girl who is perfectly normal in every way. Life is good. THEN-out of seemingly nowhere her little girl starts to regress and no longer speaks. Junie's father dies. Junie herself is beginning to remember or wanting to know what happened to her friend-her husband is not being all that cooperative or understanding. They do separate for a while and Junie and her daughter move in with Junie's Mom which happens to be very near where her husbands father still lives.

It is not until the pictures the little girl draws are finally recognized that the truth will be revealed--it will shock and sadden you. There is a somewhat happy ending--and possibly a continuance of this book. I definitely recommend this book to everyone and give it without reservation a 5 Star.

Melanie says

I've read a couple of Melissa Foster's books and let me tell you, I've not once been disappointed. I'm going to jump right in here and lay it on down.

Junie, has opened her own bakery - one she has always dreamed of owning. She is married to Brian and has a four year old daughter Sarah, everything seems to be alright until her daughter begins to withdrawal from life itself. Junie as any mother would be is worried and stressed about how to help her daughter. Feeling helpless and caught on what to do she tries to help Sarah in any way she can . Things start to slip though, her marriage suffers and she's trying to hold it all together. No matter what she tries though things just seem to start falling apart and to makes matter's worse- Her husband suddenly passes.

Dealing with the passing of her husband Junie moves back to her hometown with daughter in tow. Going back home stirs up memories for Junie, about a little girl who had up and vanished. Could it mean something? Why is it all starting to stir back up, and why is her daughter slipping away from her? Little by little she tries to piece things back together again. Along the way people she had trusted haven't been as she thought they would creating a wonderful dynamic story.

As you are uncovering new lies and mystery throughout the book you are caught in an emotional grip of a story you won't be able to set down easily . There is so much more I can say about this book but I'm afraid I'll end up letting some spoilers slip. You won't be disappointed if you pick this book up, Foster did an amazing job once again and delivered a captivating story for her readers. Suspense , mystery and an ending that leaves you hopeful you won't go wrong with Where Petals Fall.

I enjoyed getting to know the characters which were very well written and realistic. This is a book that has caught me by page one and with every turn of the page had me wondering, guessing and stunned to find out the truth as it went on. I loved the mystery but most of all I loved how the story just flowed. This book had some flashbacks and moments where it brought you somewhere else . Foster managed to bring you where you needed to go right along with the characters and the plot without missing a beat.

Karen says

Junie Olson has a handsome and successful lawyer husband, a lovely 4 year daughter, and has achieved her dream of having a successful bakery business but despite all this, her life is not entirely happy. Their daughter Sarah, has changed from being an outgoing and friendly little girl to being silent and

uncommunicative and nobody, not even the professional therapists, can understand why. Her daughter's regression has created a great divide between Junie and her husband Brian and Junie is unsure what the future holds for them as a family. To add to her worries, a family tragedy drives her back home to her mother where she is confronted with the past memories of her childhood when her best friend Ellen suddenly disappeared without trace.

This was the first book by Melissa Foster that I had read. I love stories with an element of suspense and mystery and it was this that drew me to the book and I wasn't disappointed. Melissa Foster has cleverly woven the feeling of tension and suspense through the story by use of flashbacks and fragments of memory. The reader is taken through the story with Junie and her quest for the truth, she remembers nothing of the day that Ellen disappeared – however the risk she takes is that knowing the truth may destroy her family completely.

All the characters were so well written, Brian, her husband, seemed at times to be cold and uncaring compared to Junie's softer, caring side. My favourite character however was Junie's mother, Ruth. She was a strong woman, who despite tragically losing her husband, was someone that Junie could completely rely on for advice and reason. I liked Junie although I have to admit that I did find her frustrating at times. I completely sympathised with her predicament but sometimes her inability to face up to things and her habit of running away in denial made me irritated with her.

I would describe this book as a family drama with suspense. If you like contemporary fiction that has that little something extra then I would recommend that you give this a try.

Irene says

On the surface Junie Olson's life looks idyllic, but in the past few months her world has slowly unraveled. Her precocious child is withdrawing, showing unexplainable signs of emotional regression, a condition that frays the bonds of Junie's once impenetrable marriage. When her father dies suddenly of a heart attack, Junie packs up her daughter and goes home to help her mother. Her homecoming stirs up memories of the nightmare she thought she had put behind her, the disappearance of her childhood friend, Ellen.

I finished this book just because I was curious as to how the story would turn out. The main character, Junie, got on my every last nerve. She was an annoying, 30 year old woman throughout the whole story. I think the "idea" of this book was good, it's just the story line was irritating to read.

Stacey says

I received an ARC of Where Petals Fall in return for my honest opinion. I have never read anything by Melissa Foster before, and I always love finding new authors.

I liked this book, I found it difficult in some places due to the realness of the situation that Junie was going through. Circumstances, feelings, etc. I am glad that things seemed to work themselves out.

Melissa's writing style is good, and the story just flowed. I didn't get stuck anywhere, and I didn't find myself straying.

If you like to read books about real people, with real feelings, and situations and circumstances that DO happen in real life, then this is a good match for you! You will not regret reading it. It is a very well written book.

Deborah Bean says

I received this book as a free ARC in exchange for an honest review.

When Junie's four year old daughter suddenly stops talking and starts regressing, she thinks this is the worse that can happen. She then receives the phone call that almost shatters her world. Her father has died. Brian, Junie's husband, is having a hard time dealing with his daughter's illness, and hates returning home because of the memory of his lost sister. Junie starts having memories of the summer her friend went missing and no one wants to believe her. Will these sad circumstances bring her family together or be the final straw?

While I found this story slow to start, I quickly got immersed in the story. I thought I had it figured out, boy was I wrong. The quiet strength of Ruth will make you shore up your patience with Junie. Junie, while a loving mother, often times seems like a stubborn and self-centered person. You stay with her though in hopes that she figures out what is wrong with her little girl. I enjoyed the plot shifts and turns throughout the book. I look forward to reading more from this author.
