



Desert Gift

Sally John

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What does a nationally known marriage expert do when her own marriage falls apart? Just as Jillian Galloway sets out for a publicity tour to promote her new book, her husband drops a bombshell: He wants a divorce. Jill flees to her parents' home in the California desert, wondering whether everything she's built her career on--indeed, everything she's built her life around--is a sham. Navigating this "side road" of life is an uphill climb that leads to new understandings about herself, her marriage, and her relationship with the One who created marriage.

Desert Gift Details

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Author : Sally John

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From Reader Review Desert Gift for online ebook

April says

DESERT GIFT by Sally John is an interesting inspirational fiction Chicago and Los Angeles. It is well written with depth and details. This is Book 2 in Side Road Series, but can be read as a stand alone. See "Ransomed Dreams". The characters are charming, engaging and will capture your heart. This is the story of Jillian Galloway and her journey after her world crashes down around her. When her husband of twenty-four years asks her for a divorce, her life is turned upside down and she wonders if everything she has built her life on is a sham. This is the story of life's unexpected detours, faith, trust, second chances, anguish, healing, emptiness, lies we tell ourselves, the truths we sometimes overlook and the knowledge that God is always at work and right on time. This is a powerful story about married couples, their journey from the beginning to the end, their laughter, tears and the reassurance that life sometimes is not what it seems. It shows us God's love, understanding, hope and forgiveness. Desert Gift is a must for it shows us that we can find second chances and hope even in the desert. This book was received for the purpose of review from the publisher. Details can be found at Tyndale House Publishers and My Book Addiction Reviews.

Renee says

I enjoy a lot of fiction and while my favorites are romances I do enjoy the stories that take place after the happily ever after as well. With last year's release, Ransomed Dreams, Sally John earned her place on my must read authors list. The continuation of her Side Roads series features yet another couple whose marriage is in crisis. While not as dramatic as the Montgomery's story, Jillian and Jackson Galloway's marriage is falling to pieces too. Jillian, a renowned marriage expert doesn't see the bombshell that her husband drops coming in the least. Just when she's about to head out on tour, her world, her career and her marriage are at stake.

Jill is a terrific character, while she appears confident and poised she's almost reached her breaking point with the news that her husband wants a divorce and her son has surprised her with an engagement announcement. To get away and give Jackson the space he wants she visits her family in the California desert. Jill's desert visit was my favorite part of this book. Her reconciliation with her family, the appearance of an old flame and some new and unexpected friends definitely make things interesting.

I did have an issue with how Jill dealt with the death of someone she had grown to care for and the lack of actual communication between Jack and Jill but other than that I found this to be a realistic and believable book. The author doesn't shy away from issues such as jealousy, communication and trust, things that everyone faces at one point or another in their lives. I think this a book any couple could read together and potentially learn from.

I received my complimentary ARC of this book from the publisher in exchange for posting my honest review.

Beverly Frisby says

Book Two in the "Side Roads" series, "Desert Gift" introduces us to Jillian "Jill" and Jack Galloway from Chicago. Jill has built a career as a relationship expert, using a "formula" she developed through her research and interviews with people. Jill now has a nationally syndicated hit radio talk show "Recipes for Marriage" and has just released her first book "She Said, He Heard." Jack has a success practice as a podiatrist, has been a faithful husband and father, is a wonderful cook and contributes recipes for Jill's talk show and book.

Everything seems to be perfect for the Galloway's as they prepare to leave for the West Coast for a publicity tour of Jill's book. Jill's perfect world comes crashing in on her as Jack says he wants a divorce, hurries her into waiting taxi and sends her on her way. Jill's attempts to talk things out with Jack, yet he avoids the topic each time they speak. Suddenly, the woman with all the answers now finds she doesn't know as much she thought. Jill struggles not only to keep her faith in God, but also in herself and what she has been telling her listeners. Jill seeks refuge at her parent's home in Sweetwater Springs, CA.

In Sweetwater, Jill is able to learn and grow through unexpected sources: several elderly ladies on a tour bus Jill's sister runs, her high school boyfriend, and her parents. As the author delves into the Galloway's marital struggles, she also addresses Jill's insecurities with her mother and sister, assumptions about Jill's brother-in-law, and the cool welcome to their son's surprise fiance.

At the heart of "Desert Gift" is God's healing power and forgiveness. The reader learns that it takes more than open communications to live in unity and harmony - you must also let others be who they are while remaining true to yourself. Ms. John's characters are wonderfully warm and believable. The story is full of tears and laughter, but most importantly the reader is left with a sense of God's unconditional love. You may find more about Sally John by visiting her website, www.sally-john.com.

I received a complimentary copy of this book from Tyndale House Publishers in exchange for my unbiased review.

Dorry Lou says

Jillian thinks life is perfect until her husband announces he wants a divorce after 24 years of marriage. What a blow since she is a nationally known marriage expert. She thought she was doing things right so how did her marriage slowly slip away?

I did not like the husband much because he would not even talk to his wife when she was trying to find out what the problem was. She spends time with her parents, & sister trying to continue on the publicity tour, but she is just devastated at what has happened.

Ellen says

Him: a well-respected podiatrist.

Her: an up-and-coming Christian writer and speaker on marriage.

Together: a marriage tumbling out of control.

In Desert gift, Sally John introduces us to Jack, the doctor, and Jill, the motivational speaker. Throughout their 24 years of marriage, Jill has been honing her gift of communication. She has been studying marriages and relationships, interviewing experts in this field, and speaking on the topic on radio, at women's conferences and Sunday school. Now - just as her first book tour is about to begin - Jack informs her that he

wishes a divorce!

Sally John has brought a difficult topic to the table. How many Christian marriages end because of non-communication or miscommunication? As we watch Jill unpack the many truths about her own shortcomings, we can take a few steps back and examine our own hearts. Through the introduction of different characters, Jill is finally able to admit her faults/sins, seek God on a truly intimate level, and ask His forgiveness. All the while, Jack is realizing that his life is not all that he thought it was.

I enjoyed Desert gift and the chance it gave me to examine my own heart and motives. I could relate to the characters and the difficulties they found themselves in. I did have a hard time with the names chosen, Jack and Jill. I feel the author could have chosen more appropriate names for the main characters. Sally John did play on the nursery rhyme throughout the book.

Click [HERE](#) to read an excerpt from Desert gift!

Star rating: 4 out of 5

I received a complimentary copy of Desert gift from Tyndale House Publishers for my honest review.

Mary Ann says

This is the story of Jillian Galloway. Jill's an expert on marriage... or so she thought. Through her own radio show, speaking at churches, as well as teaching a ladies Bible study, she's helped countless couples with their marriages. Now, at the height of her career, she has a book being published and she is scheduled to speak at the Mega Church of her dreams. She's reached the top... until her husband's sudden announcement that he wants a divorce brings everything to a screeching halt.

Jill's character was easy to relate to. She's a woman who knows all the answers. But she forgot one thing... to let God lead. I think the author did a wonderful job of portraying Jill. So often we get all the right answers and think we're good to go... then we leave God behind. I love how the other characters were forced to look at their own lives as well, not just blame Jill. This is a great book to remind us to take a look at ourselves and take responsibility for the mess we are in. Not just blame everyone else.

This book has a great story with a wonderful message of forgiveness and restoration. Not just the main characters... but with the supporting characters as well. I loved them all. Couldn't put this book down. I'll definitely be reading more by Sally John. I think you'll enjoy it too! :)

*Tyndale House Publishers has provided me with a complimentary copy of this book for my honest review. - Thanks Tyndale House! :)

Jessica Patch says

Jillian Galloway's life turns upside down when her husband asks for a divorce before she sets off to a tour to promote her new book on communicating in marriage. She's built her whole life around her career and ministry in teaching women how to make their marriages work.

What she learns when she goes home to Sweetwater, in the desert, is that marriage isn't a formula and maybe she had some things wrong.

Sally John did a really good job showing that there is no certain form to making marriage work, but God alone and the freewill choice to make it happen. I especially liked Jillian's sister, Vivian and her husband Marty. Jillian doesn't particularly approve of their marriage or how they interact, but they actually have a better handle on marriage than the "expert." They also bring humor to the book, which is needed because for the most part of the book, Jillian is grieving and trying to figure out where she went wrong or if her husband is simply having a mid life crisis and it's intense.

I enjoyed the book and thank Tyndale for giving me a complimentary copy for review purposes. I've never read Sally John before, but this won't be the last book I read of hers.

Margaret Metz says

A book about a marriage falling apart didn't appeal to me at the outset. I'm more about romance and happily ever after. There is a part of me that also thinks being real is valuable and I wondered just how this author tackled this very important topic. Was it sugar coated? Was everything fixed with a fancy dinner and flowers? Did a prayer make everything all better?

The truth is this book was refreshingly real in many ways. Jillian has been telling everyone how to make sure their marriages are perfect but she hasn't been taking note of her own. Her husband isn't even sure why he wants out at first - just that he feels like he can't breathe and that she is the cause of his pain.

As time passes Jillian has to take a hard look at who she has become and whether she likes that person. Then she deals with her faith and how she feels about family as well. Only then is she truly ready to try and fix her marriage. Her husband deals with his own issues. Neither is perfect and on top of their marriage problems, their son comes back from a trip with a surprise fiance. They want to get married right away - so now the stunned couple have a wedding to plan while their marriage is disintegrating.

What I liked is that there were no easy answers given in the book. People judged, fought and struggled in a way that was both unique to her situation and that many people will be able to relate to. I thought the characters were well written. I got angry and felt bad for them at different times in the story. I don't know that enjoy is the right word for the book - but I took away a lot from it and I would suggest it to others.

Robin says

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Sally John

What does a nationally known marriage expert do when her own marriage falls apart? Just as Jillian Galloway sets out for a publicity tour to promote her new book, her husband drops a bombshell: He wants a divorce. Jill flees to her parents' home in the California desert, wondering whether everything she's built her career on—indeed, everything she's built her life around—is a sham. Navigating this “side road” of life is an uphill climb that leads to new understandings about herself, her marriage, and her relationship with the One who created marriage.

This was an interesting story of marriage. It is nice sometimes to see things as they really are out there. Marriage is the choice we made and to divorce is also a choice. It was a good premise that keep up with the ups and downs of life which should always lead us to Christ. I like that in the end a woman growing in Christ is highlighted deeply and that the main characters were able to rest in Christ to lead the way.

I would like to thank Net Galley and Tyndale House Publishing for allowing me to read and review this book in return for a free copy and was never asked to write a favorable review by anyone.

Carly says

I'm usually a little uncertain about reading books that are about marriages collapsing. It is a difficult topic to read about, but at the same time, these books can provide readers with a powerful message about forgiveness and healing. Because of this, I wanted to read Desert Gift. The story sounded intriguing and I have liked Sally John's writing before.

One of the traits of a really good book, in my opinion, is a book that doesn't have what I like to call “an adjustment period”. That is a book in which the story starts right away and it instantly has my attention and doesn't require any time for me to get into the story. Desert Gift was exactly that way. It had me from the very beginning and I was hooked on this story and the characters. The story starts very strong and gains momentum and gets more complex as it goes on. I was very impressed with how this story moved along with very real situations and characters that helped make this such a memorable book.

Sally has written a lovely story that I just could not put down. Of her books that I have read so far, this one has to be my favorite and it makes me want to read more of her books. If you are looking for a book that will grab your attention and leave you filled with hope, then you will definitely love the Desert Gift experience. This may sound silly, but I received an Advanced Reader Copy of this book and when the actual book comes out, I am going to buy myself a finished copy. Yes, I loved it that much.

Mindy says

Imagine you are a national expert giving advice on keeping marriages alive. You have a national radio program counseling couples how to communicate and not miss the tell-tale signs of a problem. You have speaking engagements, and you just wrote a book. You have a book tour lined up, including speaking to the biggest church on the west coast.

Your bags are packed, and you and your husband are about to leave for the book tour followed by a well-deserved and over-due vacation. It will be great to share this mountain-top experience with him and then have some time alone -- just the two of you. As the cab pulls up to take you to the airport, though, he says he's staying home. And he wants a divorce.

Desert Gift is well-written and draws you into Jill and Jack's world as it turns upside down. Can they follow the advice she's given others all these years? Or are the people who write and tell her she's way off-base really correct? Can you see signs of impending trouble in your marriage? How can you correct it? Sally John walks you through all of those gut-wrenching questions and helps you experience and wrestle through it as you walk in both Jill's and Jack's shoes.

I have also read Sally John's book *Ransomed Dreams*, and I like her writing style. She is able to walk you through belief questions in a positive way. I recommend *Desert Gift* wholeheartedly.

Tyndale House Publishers has provided me with a complimentary copy of this book. All opinions are my own.

Barbara Brink says

As with every book I've read by Sally John, I am completely sucked into the story and connected with the protagonists. She writes with real emotion, delving into the hearts and minds of her characters with such finesse, that I often forget the story isn't about me:)

Her stories always point to God as the final authority and lover of our souls even while her characters struggle with doubt or sin. This is a story that is quite relatable and oftentimes manages to prick the conscience and soul.

Thank you for another great read, Sally John!

Leanne says

I enjoy this Christian author....

Sherri Smith says

Book synopsis: What does a nationally known marriage expert do when her own marriage falls apart? Just as Jillian Galloway sets out for a publicity tour to promote her new book, her husband drops a bombshell: He wants a divorce. Jill flees to her parents' home in the California desert, wondering whether everything she's built her career on—indeed, everything she's built her life around—is a sham. Navigating this “side road” of life is an uphill climb that leads to new understandings about herself, her marriage, and her relationship with

the One who created marriage.

For me, this is one of those books that once you get to a certain point in the book, you just can't put it down. You have to stay up as late as you need, just to finish it.

I downloaded this book from Amazon, for my kindle. It had been sitting amongst my many other books waiting to be read. To be honest, I was not really sure what I was going to be getting into, especially since I seem to have inadvertently downloaded some rather steamy novels. That's what I get for downloading a book based on the cover art rather than reading the synopsis!

This book started off with Jill headed off on a book tour with her husband, only her husband informs her that he wants a divorce on the day that she is to leave. Originally he was supposed to go with her, and share vacation time. Instead, he takes her to the cab and doesn't look back. Needless to say, Jill is a mess, trying to figure out what is going on. This came out of the blue. However, she has to hold it together for her tour. Unfortunately, she has trouble doing just that. Over time in the book, she visits her family members, and other key people who help her realize that maybe she had a roll in the demise of her marriage. In the same vein, her husband Jack, is just wanting to go thru with the divorce while his friends are forcing him to understand why just out the blue, he wants to call it quits.

This book, by the end, had me sniffing with a pile of tissues next to me. Personally, I enjoyed the book, however, I do admit I read it rather fast, especially towards the end. But, it will be a book that I will most definitely read in the future.

R Bartel says

So they've packed the night before for their first vacation together in years; and best of all, it's beginning with a book tour for her new book along with a whole lot of speaking engagements to promote this book. The problem is that when he's standing at the door in the morning with the taxi waiting at the curb, he announces he's not going with her – in fact, he wants a divorce. While this would be devastating to any woman, it is earth-shattering for Jill Galloway, celebrated marriage counselor. But earth-shattering hasn't finished yet. Her only child, their son Connor, returns from Europe with his fiancé and the announcement that they plan to be married in less than six weeks. Jill is now expected to present the perfect mother AND wife to the world while the two men in her life desert her, to leave her without everything that has been a part of her life for almost twenty-five years. Jill returns to her parents' home in the deserts of California where God meets her in the worst season of her life and leads her to a submission of her will to His.

This, my first of John's books to read, was a delight. I laughed and wept, ached and joyed with the main character in her search for answers and peace. But most of all, I learned something about my own journey with God. For anyone who has suffered through bitter betrayal – marital or otherwise – this is a book I would highly recommend just for role model presented through Jill.
