



Raising Wrecker

Summer Wood

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Elegant, warm-hearted and utterly unsentimental, Wrecker is a stunning and deeply moving novel about motherhood and mistakes, survival and hope. (Published as Wrecker in hardcover)

Original published as Wrecker in hardcover. Reprinted in paperback as Raising Wrecker.

It's June of 1965 when Wrecker enters the world. The war is raging in Vietnam, San Francisco is tripping toward flower power, and Lisa Fay – a young innocent from a family farm down south – is knocked nearly sideways by life as a single mother in a city she could barely manage to navigate as just one.

Three years later, she's alone again. Kids aren't allowed in prison. And Wrecker, scared silent, furious, and hell-bent on breaking every last thing that crosses his path, is shipped off to live with distant relatives in the wilds of Humboldt County.

Raising Wrecker is the story of this nearly-broken boy whose presence turns a motley group of isolated eccentrics into a real family. Real enough to make mistakes. Real enough to stick together in spite of everything ready to tear them apart. There's no guidebook to mothering for Melody, who thought the best thing in life was eighty acres of old growth along the Mattole River and nobody telling her what to do – until this boy came along.

For Melody, for Len, for Willow and Ruth, for Meg and Johnnie Appleseed, life will never again be the same once Wrecker signs on. And for Lisa Fay, there's one thought keeping her alive through fifteen years of hard time. One day? She'll find her son and bring him home.

Raising Wrecker Details

Date : Published September 4th 2012 by Bloomsbury USA (first published August 1st 2011)

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Author : Summer Wood

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From Reader Review Raising Wrecker for online ebook

Sarah Boon says

I couldn't finish this book, it was very hard going

Helena says

The title of the novel - Raising Wrecker- evoked images of destruction, of a boy doomed from the day his mother named him. In the end this is a novel of unconditional love, repair, acceptance. A novel underlining that a "family" does not need to be by blood and birth alone (on the contrary, Melody's relationship with her parents forms a sharp contrast).

Motherhood as a theme, is superbly drawn like a thread right through the novel, whether it is by birth or choice or circumstance.

With the beautiful use of language, with the rhythm of words and sentences, Summer Woods reminds the reader of the work it takes to be a family, to love unconditionally.

I found this a wonderfully uplifting read!

Rhonda says

Really liked the extended family Wrecker grew up with. Glad that he was able to meet his birth mother.

Sian Lile-Pastore says

this book had all i want in a book - a bit of san francisco, the 60s, a sort of commune and finding family in other people.

it had a lovely gentle feeling to it (even though the plot isn't particularly gentle)and such memorable, realistic characters. i loved how all these misfits were brought together in their caring and concern for a sweet little boy called wrecker. i was pretty touched by the ending.

Nanci says

A light, enjoyable read!

Martina says

This quiet novel of life in a family of misfits in Humboldt County, CA is well rendered. When Wrecker's mother is sent to prison, his uncle provides an unusual foster home for the boy and eventually adopts him. Wrecker is raised on Bow Farm, owned by Melody and Willow. Melody, a troubled young woman in her 20's takes on the role of adoptive mother. Wrecker is a fully realized character, as is most of the rest of the cast, each of whom faces down personal suffering in order to live. An original take on a coming of age plot, RAISING WRECKER points out that it is not only the young who 'come of age.' We grow and change in profound ways throughout our lives.

Christoph Fischer says

This is a little gem of a book about the unconventional upbringing of a boy in 1965 San Francisco. It raised a lot of interesting questions about a right or a wrong way to nurture children without being a text book or a fairy tale either. Very sympathetic to all characters this is a feel good book with some food for thought.

Kathie says

This is now one of my all-time favorite books. I cried at the end...for happy! The writing is superb! The characters are well developed, interesting and the I cared about them. What I especially liked is the way in which the author gives enough information to tell the story and keep your interest and curiosity but is exceptional at leaving out unnecessary details so the reader has the opportunity to imagine and visualize. Stephen King says, "description begins in the writer's imagination, but should finish in the reader's." YES! Summer Wood gets an A+. Such an unlikely group of people together raising a boy who shows in the last two pages of this novel what an amazing young man he has grown to be from the influences of those who 'raised Wrecker.' I LOVED IT!!

For Books' Sake says

"Following her acclaimed novel, Arroyo (Chronicle, 2001) the mostly self-taught writer has continued to garner various awards, receiving special recognition from the Room of Her Own Foundation with the Gift of Freedom Award and \$50,000 grant for her work on Raising Wrecker.

If you had three boys of your own under your belt about to turn teen you'd either have to be insane to contemplate upping the quota of children to adults in your home, or just a very, very giving person indeed." (Excerpt from full review at For Books' Sake.)

Laura says

I did not plan on liking this book. After reading it, I would suggest it to anyone looking for a book club/discussion book & anyone looking for a GOOD book to read. Beautiful writing, interesting characters, great settings. Very thoughtful & thought provoking.

Suzanne Eastman says

This sensitive page turner has an intriguing plot premis...what would you do if a child was left on your doorstep for an undetermined time. After a few months, would you be able to give him up and send him to a state run situation? What if you were part of a communal living situation and had lots of help? The characters in this story are pushed to their limits, but each one has a different set of limits to contend with. This story is developed very well with interesting and engaging characters, some who find resolution, and some maybe not. A little raw, a little real, and very engaging. Loved the pace of this one also! Great book club selection!

Teddy Jones says

From the intriguing opening page that sets the stage for Raising Wrecker in 1965 San Francisco, to the next page that pushes the reader and the "perfect, beautiful baby boy" his mother calls Wrecker three years forward, and all the pages after, this novel holds the reader's heart and mind. Before the story end twenty years later, Wrecker's life and the lives he touches show us how real families can (and do) form in the presence of care, concern, and love, but without the shared genes that many take to be the basis of a family unit.

The boy named Wrecker leaves chaos in his wake as he storms through his early life. Fortunately for him, the people who become his family cope with chaos as a matter of their daily lives in California's Mattole Valley. They certainly do not depict the traditional nuclear family. But they do demonstrate the best qualities of family--genuine acceptance and enduring love.

Summer Wood's characters display the depth a reader hopes to find. And they become real with their struggles, compassion, humor, and genuine weirdness. Wood's exquisite imagery and deft dialogue remind the reader that a skillful writer can bring literary quality to a very human story. In the process she leaves us with a fresh understanding of an important aspect of what it is, or might be, to be fully human.

Saleh MoonWalker says

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Dianna Winget says

I have to admit I didn't finish this book. The writing is strong and the premise great, but I expected it to be a lot more about the little boy Wrecker. Instead, it's mostly about about all the various women who had a hand in raising him. I guess I got a little bogged down by all the deep emotional aspects of these women's lives and just moved on to other stories.

Nic Ayson says

A nice story with a promising plot that just didn't quite deliver. Wrecker is somewhat of a misleading title as although we see a snippet of a troubled child in his initial years, the story becomes more of a tale of a group of waylaid adults finding their paths through the unconventional raising of a child.
