



Whistling Past the Graveyard

By Susan Crandall

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From an award-winning author comes a wise and tender coming-of-age story about a nine-year-old girl who runs away from her Mississippi home in 1963, befriends a lonely woman suffering loss and abuse, and embarks on a life-changing roadtrip.

Whistling past the graveyard. That's what Daddy called it when you did something to keep your mind off your most worstest fear. . . .

In the summer of 1963, nine-year-old Starla Claudelle runs away from her strict grandmother's Mississippi home. Starla's destination is Nashville, where her mother went to become a famous singer, abandoning Starla when she was three. Walking a lonely country road, Starla accepts a ride from Eula, a black woman traveling alone with a white baby. Now, on the road trip that will change her life forever, Starla sees for the first time life as it really is—as she reaches for a dream of how it could one day be.

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

The South on the eve of the civil rights movement, as seen through the eyes of this novel's plucky nine-year-old narrator. Starla Claudelle lives in Mississippi with her stern grandma. Her daddy is away working on an oil rig. Her mama has gone to Nashville to be a star, so Starla decides to head there when she gets herself in trouble one too many times. She's offered a ride by a black woman named Eula, who has with her a white baby found abandoned on the steps of a church. Eula takes Starla and the baby home, but violence forces them back on the road with no money and a truck about to break down. During their long and sometimes perilous trip, Starla sees firsthand what it's like to be the wrong color in a segregated society, and her keen sense of injustice and need for love help her create a bond with Eula that transcends any barriers. It's not easy to keep such a young narrator convincing for more than 300 pages, and for the most part, author Crandall manages it well. Readers will take to Starla and be caught up in her story. --Mary Ellen Quinn

Review

"A coming-of-age story as well as a luminous portrait of courage and the bonds of friendship. . . Susan Crandall tells young Starla's story with pitch-perfect tone, evoking 1963 Mississippi and its struggles with a deft hand. I laughed and cried at Starla's keen observances of life and family and the sometimes blurred edges of justice. Like Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Kathryn Stockett's *The Help*, *Whistling Past the Graveyard* is destined to become a classic." (New York Times bestselling author Karen White)

It's not easy to keep such a young narrator convincing for more than 300 pages... Readers will take to Starla and be caught up in her story. (Mary Ellen Quinn *Booklist*)

"Crandall delivers big with a coming-of-age story set in Mississippi in 1963 and narrated by a precocious 9-year-old... Young Starla is an endearing character whose spirited observations propel this nicely crafted story." (Kirkus)

"Starla's fiery independence makes her a likable narrator." (*Publishers Weekly*)

About the Author

Susan Crandall is a critically acclaimed author of women's fiction, romance, and suspense. She has written several award-winning novels including her first book, *Back Roads*, which won the RITA award for best first book, as well as *Whistling Past the Graveyard*, which won the SIBA 2014 Book Award for Fiction. Susan lives in Noblesville, Indiana, with her family.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dean Rakestraw:

In this 21st century, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive right now, people have do something to make them survives, being in the middle of the crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that occasionally many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. That's why, by reading a guide your ability to survive enhance then having chance to stand up than other is high. To suit your needs who want to start reading a new book, we give you that *Whistling Past the Graveyard* book as

beginning and daily reading e-book. Why, because this book is greater than just a book.

Ilene Cody:

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Phyllis Thompson:

Spent a free time for you to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their leisure time with their family, or all their friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, planning to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing ditto every week. Do you feel it? Do you need to something different to fill your free time/ holiday? Could be reading a book may be option to fill your totally free time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to attempt look for book, may be the guide untitled Whistling Past the Graveyard can be great book to read. May be it could be best activity to you.

John Davis:

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