

Content Guide

Joan of Arkansas

By Sarah Robsdottir

Themes: Coming of age, pro-life, broken families, emotional abuse in relationships, bullying, teen pregnancy, mental illness, substance abuse, unconditional love, redemption.

Educational Value: Joan of Arc's historical account is interwoven throughout the book and summarized in the appendix. There are also journaling/ discussion questions at the end of the novel.

Positive Messages: Every life is sacred, including those that are born into poverty, dysfunction and marginalization. Great saints such as Joan of Arc have risen against the odds to accomplish greatness and so can you!

Spiritual Messages: God's mercy shows up in the strangest places. He works through the weak creatures of the world to shame the wise. God renders good from evil, especially when we trust him to.

Positive Role Models The protagonist Joanie exemplifies courage in that she barrels through adversity often terrified but doing the right thing anyway. Minor characters are also vessels of grace.

Violence/ Gore: No gore. Joanie escapes a potential date rape situation, but the scene is presented in a dramatic yet non-scandalizing manner.

Sexuality: The book deals with teen pregnancy, but the scene in which the teen becomes pregnant is non-scandalizing.

Language: None

Drinking, drugs, smoking: Joanie's mother is a recovering addict, so there is a scene where she is drunk. The book also talks about Joanie's mother and her boyfriend and their friends smoking, using drugs, going to prison and rehab. These behaviors are always presented as destructive; they are never glorified.

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW: This is a book for mature teens. While it is non-scandalizing in nature, it is not recommended for readers under the age of 13 unless a parent has read it first. The book deals with heavy topics such as teen pregnancy, mental illness, drug use, date rape, abortion and elder abuse in an honest way without negatively influencing or traumatizing the reader. That being said, these are topics that simply do not need to be handled by young readers.

Rating Scale: Moderate

Scale:

Light- For all readers.

Moderate - Story includes subject matter for teens 13 plus

Advanced - Although not graphic in description, the subject matter is recommended for teens older than 15.