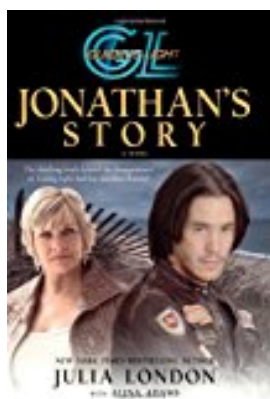


[PDF] Guiding Light: Jonathan's Story

Julia London, Alina Adams - pdf download free book



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Description:

About the Author Julia London is the *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author of *The Hazards of Hunting a Duke* (the first novel in her Desperate Debutantes trilogy), *Highlander Unbound* (a finalist for the Romance Writers of America's RITA Award for Best Historical Romance), *Highlander in Disguise*, and *Highlander in Love* (also a finalist for the RITA Award) -- all published by Pocket Star Books. She also contributed a short story, "The Merchant's Gift," to the anthology *The School for Heiresses*. Her other romantic novels include the Rogues of Regent Street trilogy. She lives in Austin, Texas. You can write to Julia at P.O. Box 228, Georgetown, Texas 78627, or email her at julia@julialondon.com.

Alina Adams is Creative Content Producer for *As The World Turns* and *Guiding Light*. She is also the author of The Figure Skating Mystery series of books.

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Prologue

Reva Shayne felt the back of her car fishtail as she careered around a bend in the country road and cried out with fear. But she didn't dare take her foot off the gas and risk losing sight of her son. Instead, she gripped the wheel tighter and sped up, catching sight of the bumper of Jonathan's car just as it rounded another curve, still in pursuit of Alan Spaulding's limousine.

This was Alan's fault! Showing up at Tammy's funeral. What did he think would happen? What did he think Jonathan would do when Alan laughed at his grief, called it a performance? Reva should've taken Alan out right there, clubbed him with a prayer book or an angel statue, left him for dead. Because of Alan, Tammy was gone forever and now Reva feared what Jonathan would do in retaliation.

She rounded another corner, banking the car wide and praying no one was coming toward her on the other side of the road. She quickly straightened her car out and resumed her reckless speed. Ahead of her, she could see a cloud of dust where Alan's and Jonathan's cars must have turned onto a gravel road.

As she raced ahead, she tried to banish the image of Jonathan's shattered expression when they'd wheeled Tammy's casket out of the church, the weight of his grief so evident in the slope of his shoulders. "Focus," Reva admonished herself, blinking back tears.

She'd had a feeling Jonathan was going to do something crazy, in spite of his assurances that he wouldn't. Not while he had her grandbaby Sarah with him. But she'd heard it in his voice, seen it in his eyes. Something she hadn't seen there in a long time, not since Tammy's love had changed him. "We won't be safe," he'd said.. "He won't stop until he has Sarah. He'll *kidnap* her." He never stopped looking at his daughter in Reva's arms as he spoke.

Reva knew Jonathan was right. Little Sarah, born to Alan's granddaughter Lizzie and Jonathan -- was the heir to the Spaulding empire, and Alan had vowed to keep her in his family so she could be raised properly -- as a Spaulding. That Sarah was rightfully with her father made no difference to him -- what Alan wanted, Alan got, at any cost. Just look what he'd done to Tammy. Good, sweet Tammy. How do you get over something like that? How do you survive when someone murders the love of your life?

Maybe you survive by seeking comfort in your infant daughter. And maybe you survive by seeking revenge. Reva knew Jonathan was planning something. She knew because they were alike. Quick to anger and slow to forgive. That was why she had come back to the church.

It was a miracle she'd seen them at all -- Alan's sleek black limo cruising along the outskirts of Springfield, Jonathan's green sedan following closely behind. Reva had had a feeling in the pit of her belly -- whatever Jonathan thought he was doing, she had to stop him. She'd tried to catch up to them, but had lost them in the many turns of the road, and had just caught up to them again.

She whipped her car onto the gravel lane and the car bounced along the rough road. She drove between two barns, and out through barren fields. She could barely make out the cars ahead of her through the dust, but she saw the limousine make an abrupt left in between two silos. She did not see Jonathan's car follow it.

She did not see Jonathan's car.

"No," she said, and gripped the wheel tighter. "No no no no...."

She reached a curve in the road and saw the signpost warning that the edge of the quarry lay straight ahead, and her heart sank. "Jonathan!" she screamed, and slammed on the brakes so hard that her car slid into a patch of evergreen trees. Reva threw open her car door and pushed through the tree branches.

She heard a loud scraping noise as she ran down an old walking path marked with the fresh tread of tires. She reached the edge of the quarry just in time to hear the sickening crash of metal and glass against rock, and saw the car explode upon impact at the bottom. Her mind could not comprehend it -- her son was in that car! So was his baby, Sarah, a tiny little being with so much life ahead of her!

As the flames roared and rose higher, it seemed to Reva that the world was suddenly spinning the wrong way. She opened her mouth to cry for help, but what came out was a scream, a blood-curdling scream of her son's name. "*Jonathan! Jonathan! Jonathan!*"

Another explosion sent a fireball into the air, and Reva screamed again.

Out of nowhere Alan appeared at her side -- Alan Spaulding, the monster who had caused this tragedy. Horrified, he watched as the flames engulfed the car that had carried his beloved Sarah, his heir, his future, his salvation.

It seemed impossible, unreal to Reva, as if she was watching a bad movie. No amount of screaming would make it stop; the car just kept burning and burning, the flames growing higher and more ferocious, burning with them all her hopes for a son who had known more pain in his life than a body ought to, burning all her dreams for her granddaughter.

They were gone. Her hopes and dreams for them. The son she'd fought so hard to tame, the son who finally came to believe he was loved. Jonathan and Sarah, gone just like that - as long as it had taken that car to sail from the top of the cliff to the bottom of the quarry.

It was all gone.

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Aubrey Cross liked to do her shopping when most everyone else in the dusty town of Tourmaline, California, was sitting down to dinner in front of the TV. The fewer people she ran into who knew her or her family, the better, and in Tourmaline, it was impossible to go anywhere without someone knowing her because of her dad. That was because he was Ezekiel "Zeke" Cross -- the county sheriff, which he'd been as far back as Aubrey could remember -- who made this godforsaken town his home.

Everyone who knew Zeke loved Zeke -- everyone except Aubrey. She couldn't stand him. One might go so far as to say she hated Zeke. And hating Zeke made her the town's pariah.

Okay, maybe not the town's *pariah* -- she did have one friend. Sort of. Not the kind of friend she'd go to lunch with and then go shopping with, because Aubrey wasn't much of a shopper, and they'd only recently become friendly at work. But Noelle Fischer was someone Aubrey could talk to, and she had

the feeling that Noelle was really on her side.

Aubrey didn't get that feeling from most people in Tourmaline, and while she wasn't exactly a pariah, she sure felt that way sometimes.

She just didn't fit in with the sleepy pace of this town. Her mom used to talk about how different the town had been when she was a kid, when they were still mining tourmaline here and the economy was thriving. But the tourmaline had been mined up before Aubrey was born, and most people who wanted to make a good living had moved to San Diego or Phoenix. To Aubrey's way of thinking, that left the old people, the deadbeats, and those with no ambition in life -- the very sort of people who were easily influenced by a bully like her father.

He *was* a bully, maybe even worse, even if she was the only person who knew it.

Just this afternoon, they'd had another verbal brawl. He wanted her to move back home. When she'd come back for Mom's funeral three months ago -- and ended up staying for reasons that had seemed noble at the time, but now seemed insane -- he didn't like that she hadn't come home to be with him. Zeke said her living in the small apartment she rented when he had a big house right in the middle of town left her open to talk.

But Aubrey knew it was because he couldn't control her as easily if she wasn't under his thumb.

"I'm only going to be in town another month, if even that," she'd said warily when he'd started in on her again today. She'd watched him walking around her little apartment, his hands on his gun belt, that ever-present sneer on his lips as he looked at the few things of Mom's she'd managed to salvage before he threw all her mother's belongings away.

Most women thought Zeke Cross was handsome -- tall, dark-haired, with a nice smile when he decided to summon it -- but Aubrey thought he was the ugliest man on earth. She could hardly bear to look at him when she said, "I'm going back to San Diego so I can start school with the fall session."

"And what are you going to live on, your good looks and charm?" he asked snidely. "You don't have any money, and I'm sure as hell not giving you any. I'm done throwing money down black holes, especially now that your mother is gone."

She winced at the stab of pain caused by the reminder of her mother's death. As for the money, she couldn't care less. It had been three years since Aubrey had lived at home. Three years since she'd earned enough money to move to San Diego and start college. In those three years, she'd never forgotten how abusive her father was, but the pain of it had faded. Now, she was sorely reminded of how debilitating his nastiness could be to one's psyche, and he was just getting warmed up.

By the time he'd left her apartment, she'd been reduced to the size of a garden gnome.

She was still feeling unsettled when she pulled into the lot of the local supermarket and parked. She pulled a black corduroy newsboy cap down over her eyes, which did nothing to keep people from recognizing her, but made her feel as if she couldn't see them. She pushed her short, black hair behind her ears, straightened her black T-shirt advertising the band Radiohound, which she wore over a pair of low-rise, tightfitting jeans, topped with a killer metal belt she'd picked up in San Diego, and got out of her car.

She checked herself in the reflection of the car window -- she liked her style, which her friend Franny at college said was a cross between urban hip-hop and California tree hugger. Frankly,

Franny -- a performance artist -- had introduced Aubrey to style, all of it different and expressive and so much better than what seemed to be the standard uniform for women in Tourmaline -- capris and a white shirt.

Aubrey lifted the lo... --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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