



Stand By Me: The uplifting and heartbreaking best seller you need to read this year

S.D. Robertson

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They'll always have each other...won't they?

Lisa and Elliot have been best friends ever since the day they met as children. Popular, bright and sporty, Lisa was Elliot's biggest supporter when the school bullies made his life a misery, and for that, he will always be grateful.

Twenty years later, life has pulled the pair apart and Lisa is struggling. Her marriage is floundering, her teenage kids are being secretive, and she's so tired she can't think straight. So when Elliot knocks on the door, looking much better than she remembers, she can't help but be delighted to see her old friend again.

With Elliot back in their lives, Lisa's family problems begin to improve – he's like the fairy godmother she never had. As their bond deepens, she realises how much she's missed him, and prays that this is one friendship that will last a lifetime. But sometimes, life has other ideas...

A heartwarming story perfect for fans of Keith Stewart and Jojo Moyes, that will leave you with a tear in your eye but hope in your heart.

Stand By Me: The uplifting and heartbreaking best seller you need to read this year Details

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From Reader Review Stand By Me: The uplifting and heartbreaking best seller you need to read this year for online ebook

Paula Sealey says

A beautifully touching story covering the binding friendship between Lisa and Elliot, it left me a little misty eyed but so pleased I chose to read it.

In the past timeline, we learn how the two characters became friends, starting with a very sweet scene where Lisa comes to Elliot's aid after he has been bullied. Lisa goes on to rescue him many times again. In the present, and a couple of decades after they last saw each other, Elliot appears at Lisa's door. Going through a tough time, Lisa is surprised but happy to see Elliot, little knowing that he is there for a specific reason...to rescue her.

The book took a different turn than I expected, but I loved it for that and I especially enjoyed reading the chapters about Lisa and Elliot growing up, which were beautifully written. I got a very real sense of their friendship with its ups and downs and the torment poor Elliot suffered. The present chapters were equally good but I don't want to give any of the plot away, so I'll just finish by saying that I highly recommend you read it!

*I received a copy of this book from the publishers via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Claire Thake says

This is the story of Lisa and Elliot; childhood best friends that life pulled apart. Twenty years later, Elliot returns to Lisa's life at a time when she needs him the most. Struggling with life and with her marriage, Elliot couldn't have returned at a better time.

This was sweet, well written and easy to read. I enjoyed the story, however, I felt it was missing something that I just can't put my finger on. Definitely worth a read, and I think it will be a reread for me in the future to see if I can put my finger on what I have missed.

Emily says

Perhaps I've missed something crucial in this book, but I simply don't get it! All of the amazing reviews I read before purchasing this book, made me sure that I would enjoy it, but sadly that's not the case. A weak storyline that ultimately makes no sense in the finale! Yes, we understand the friendship that Lisa and Elliot has is special, (aren't they all?), but this book has so many flaws and holes, and details missing that it just doesn't make sense! Perhaps the author wasn't sure where it was going either, so in some bizarre attempt to make it interesting came up with an utterly unbelievable ending, that honestly just failed. A real disappointment :(

Shirley says

Stand By Me was such a beautifully written story about love and friendship, it was so heart warming, I enjoyed every minute of it.

Shalini says

I like books which have friendship, love, family, children. Then throw in a little magic, a little miracle, and it should make the book complete.

Stand by me started well, with childhood best friend, Elliot, making his appearance in Lisa's life after 20 years when she is struggling with marriage and children. He is like a beacon of light in her moments of despair. Things begin improving in her family life. But in the present time, there is a mystery surrounding Elliot. Who or what is he??

My first book by S D Robertson, and I really tried liking this book, but I couldn't. I wanted to feel the emotions the characters were feeling, but I couldn't. I tried feeling the awe of supernatural, but I couldn't. There was something missing!!

This book left me cold, took me 5 days to read, just couldn't get into the skin of the characters. The chapters are written in the present and in the past. It goes into flashbacks to show the childhood friendship, where Lisa was Elliot's bodyguard of sorts, protected him from getting bullied. In the present time, Elliot helps to improve her family time, in the short span of time that he has.

I wanted the book to capture me and hold me in its arms, and make me feel all warm and gooey inside. But, alas, that was not the case. It left me unaffected. There was some core element missing to draw me into its emotions.

I read it, thought about it to write the review, then forgot it. Over and done, now on to the next..

I received an ARC from NetGalley and publisher Avon Book UK, and this is my honest and unbiased opinion.

Julie Williams says

Stand By Me is an emotional story of a powerful friendship and turbulent family relationships. Lisa a confident child who first meets Elliot when he is in a vulnerable situation in nothing but his underwear hiding in a bush! New to the area and keen to make friends Lisa not only helps him out of this predicament but becomes his protector and forms a lifelong friendship and bond that Elliot is eternally grateful for. Lisa being the much stronger character out of the two defends him and often comes to his rescue. As they grow into teenagers their relationship is tested with the arrival of boyfriends and girlfriends but as these come and go they still remain good pals.

Intertwined are chapters with their lives as adults with Elliot returning to Aldham after emigrating to Australia years ago on a mysterious business trip. Lisa is over the moon as his visit comes at a time when her family is fractured and it seems difficult to imagine a remedy. Mike her husband, has taken to drinking excessively since resigning from his Deputy Head post due to a false accusation from a cocky troublesome pupil. This is putting a strain on their relationship as being the only bread winner now Lisa is also left feeling unsupported. Her two children Chloe and Ben are also experiencing difficult times and the kindness and help from Elliot is most welcome.

This is the third novel from S D Robertson and I have read them all, with this latest being a cracker of a read. There are lots of sensitive subjects that have been dealt with superbly and with credibility. A joy to read and a most deserving 5 star rating.

Wendy says

First of all I would like to thank Netgalley and Avon Books UK for the free digital copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. I really enjoyed this sweet and heartfelt story. I didn't quite know what to expect at first but soon enough I was engrossed in the story of main characters Eliot and Lisa. When teenager Lisa first arrives in the uneventful little town of Aldham she is absolutely gutted and mad at her parents for bringing their family to the other end of the country and forcing her to start all over again. Attending a new school, having to make new friends, she just doesn't think it's fair. When she unexpectedly stumbles upon Elliot, an overweight dorky looking boy, caught in a bad situation she can't foresee that it's the beginning of a lifelong friendship between them. Lisa is everything that Elliot is not. Good looking, popular, sporty and assertive. However Elliot is so funny and easy to talk to, Lisa feels right at home with him and his mother Wendy. Lisa knows from the start that Elliot has got it rough at school, not fitting in and too insecure to stand up for himself. She on the other hand makes sure that anyone messing with Elliot will have her to answer to. The story is told by various perspectives and goes back and forth in time. I particularly liked the parts that were set in the nineties. The chapters that were told from the present were less captivating to me but still kept me curious. They tell the story of the grown up Lisa, her husband Mike and children Ben and Cloe. Each of them is going through a hard time but none of them manage to share or solve their problem. Meanwhile Elliot has moved to Sydney, Australia, and set up his own, hugely successful tech company. Their lives couldn't be further apart. Still Elliot never forgot everything Lisa did for him back in their teens. In fact it's time for him to return the favour...

Without getting into detail or spoil anything I will say that there is a supernatural element to this story. Although I doubt whether I would have picked up this book if I had known about this beforehand it didn't bother me that much when I found out.

All in all I genuinely enjoyed this book and I'm looking forward to read more by the author.

Juana says

“Pain. That was the last thing he remembered. Excruciating, relentless, all-encompassing pain. The kind that focuses your mind absolutely, driving out all other thoughts as it pierces through your defences with shuddering ease.

The past, the future. Neither existed at that moment. There was only the present, rolling in ultra-slow motion.”

Readers of Robertson's previous books, *Time to say goodbye* and *If ever I fall*, know that his novels' openings have a habit of throwing you head-first into the story, a confusion you can only solve by going on with the reading. An on I went, until the last page, to which I got too soon – hardly 2 sits after I started.

Elliot and Lisa are childhood best friends. They met in a rather embarrassing situation for Elliot when they were 11 and have stayed friends since. With the usual ups and downs of life, they grew up together until Elliot's stepfather, an Australian doctor, had to move back to Sidney when Elliot was still a teenager. Through the years, although they haven't been seeing each other, the two friends have been keeping in touch. Lisa is a schoolteacher in Aldham, the small village she moved to when she was a child; Elliot has a well-established IT company and is doing very well in Sidney. Lisa has a nice house, a loving husband and two beautiful children; Elliot is single, too busy to run his company to have time for anything – or anyone – else.

This separation comes to an end on a summer day, when Elliot turns up unannounced on Lisa's doorstep. He is on a business trip and will stay in Aldham for a few days: what better occasion to catch up and go through everything that happened in their lives in the last two decades?

As days go by though it becomes clear that Elliot's reason for being there has little to do with his business and a lot to do with Lisa. With a husband who is depressed, angry and unemployed, a teenager son who is becoming more and more withdrawn and a young daughter who is facing an upsetting situation on her own, Lisa's family is far from being safe at the moment. Elliot's support and advice will be essential to sort all of their problems and be close again. Not least, they will eventually discover how that has always been the purpose Elliot came back to Aldham for...

With an unmistakable writing style we appreciated already in the first two novels, *Stand By Me* is a story that slowly wraps around your mind and won't let go until you reach the epilogue. The mystery behind Elliot's return is what makes this book a page-turner, together with the incredible stories behind each and every character. Characters feel real, their issues and inner turmoil well described, especially Mike's, Lisa's husband, who is struggling to get back on his feet after losing his job as a teacher, a career he loved and to which he was very committed.

As in the previous two novels, also in this case the author gives us the details carefully, explaining only a bit at a time what happened to the characters and how Lisa's friendship with Elliot developed. The story is set on two different timelines, the present and the 1990s, a technique that helps the reader to understand why the two friends have such a strong bond, so strong to draw Elliot back to Lisa in one's most desperate times of life.

A 5-star book I definitely recommend to anyone who feels ready to cry and laugh and love the characters as much as I did.

Abbie says

Stand By Me is the first novel by S.D. Robertson that I have read although I have been aware of his previous two novels. Now I have ventured into his books I will definitely be reading more by him. *Stand By Me* is a gorgeous tale of friendship, life and appreciation.

When Lisa's childhood best friend, Elliot, returns to their home town for a visit after twenty years she has no idea about the impact he will have on her and her family's life. Struggling through a difficult time, Lisa's life

is about to change for the better thanks to her old school friend.

The prologue and the first few chapters work effectively to draw you into the book. You know from the start that there is more to what's going on than meets the eye but you are not sure what that is and you have to keep reading to find out. Luckily, I had a box of tissues from the cold I had over the Christmas break and, oh boy, did I need them at the end of this book!

Roberston takes us between timelines, flitting between the present and the 1990s. There is often a danger with dual timeline books that you will prefer one storyline over the other, however, this wasn't the case with *Stand By Me*. The 1990's side of the book worked effectively to show the friendship between teenage Lisa and Elliot and the reason behind Elliot's current actions. It also ensures that you feel emotionally invested in the characters. I found myself really caring about the main characters. I also really enjoyed how Robertson captured the early 90s – through the TV programmes, music and lack of technology – and it added a nostalgia that I really enjoyed.

Equally I enjoyed the current storyline and while this isn't a fast-paced book with thrills, spills and cliffhangers, *Stand By Me* gets under your skin as spend time with the characters and the issues they are each facing. Robertson gives us a depiction of family life and how it can become difficult following one dreadful event and yet it is optimistic. The appreciation Elliot has for his old friend, Lisa, is moving and will have you thinking about the people and friends that have come (and sometimes gone) through your life.

As it progresses *Stand By Me* becomes more than just a book about friendship and becomes a book about hope. It will have you mulling over life, death and the universe. How many of us are remembered for the seemingly small acts of kindness we have bestowed on others without thinking about it? In an often cynical and dog-eat-dog world, *Stand By Me* is a welcome break from the doom and gloom. It is a book to snuggle up with and immerse yourself in and, despite the tears at the end, it leaves you feeling uplifted. Wonderful!

Love says

When Lisa rescues a bullied Elliot from a bush back in the day, a strong friendship is born. The book flip-flops from present day to the past and slowly we learn the depth of the bond between the two. Elliot moved abroad and at some point, they lost touch.

Lisa's family is in turmoil each battling with their own troubles and tribulations. Suddenly Elliot is back and he seems keen on keeping close and helping them resolve their battles.

It took me a while to really get into the book. On reflection, I feel that maybe that's more to do with the amount of crime fiction I have been reading and changing pace was a difficulty for me. Although I really enjoy the flip-flopping from past to present day it really gives you an insight into Lisa and Elliott's journey. I liked them both and I cared what happened. I thought the fact they had lost touch was a little strange. S.D Roberston really likes to play around with the what if's and the afterlife. It makes for an enjoyable heart wrenching read at times. But it does make you reflect a lot which I also enjoy.

I recommend taking a day, getting comfy with a hot cuppa and your favourite biscuit and settling down with *Stand By Me* and get to know Lisa and Elliot.

Ps. You will need your kleenex handy.

Find more of my reviews at Lovebooksgroup.blog

Amanda says

This is the third book by S. D. Robertson that I have had the pleasure of reading. I loved his previous two books, even if they did make me want to weep and this one was no exception. I totally loved 'Stand By Me' but more about that in a bit.

The story is told from two different points of time, which are 1991 and 2018. 1991 is when Lisa moved to the same place as Elliott and they first met, before becoming firm friends. 2018 sees the story move to the present day and we meet Lisa and Elliott as adults and we see how life has treated them down the years.

I must admit to liking the characters of Lisa and Elliott from the start. They just seemed so nice and so compatible with each other. Lisa from 1991 is a stroppy, adolescent child on the cusp of puberty. She is in conflict with her parents because they have uprooted her from everything she knows and from all her friends and they have moved to a sleepy area, where she knows nobody and everything is unfamiliar. You can certainly tell that Lisa is one angry child. She meets Elliott and they become firm friends. The modern Lisa is not having an easy time of it. She works hard as a teacher but her home life is somewhat strained to say the least. Her husband has lost his job, although the reasons why are not immediately evident, and he is using alcohol as a coping mechanism. However, this has turned him into an abusive bully and he has outbursts in public places that are both embarrassing and shocking to witness. It is after such an outburst that Elliott comes back into her life. I really felt for Elliott and empathised with him to a large degree. In 1991, we learn that he was being bullied by boys old enough to know better (I was bullied so I know how it affects you) and he first meets Lisa after these boys have stripped him of the majority of his clothes and have smashed his glasses. He is grateful that she is there and she helps him to get home. Elliott is also angry in a sense. His best friend used to live in the house that Lisa has moved into and Elliott is in a way mourning the loss of his one ally and true friend. Elliott also seems rather fearful of just what the bullies might think up next for him. Lisa sticks up for him though. We meet Elliott in 2018, when he lands on Lisa's doorstep. The present day Elliott is rather enigmatic and when Lisa asks him questions about his personal life and what he is up to now, he answers in rather a vague way. It's true to say that Lisa's life takes a turn for the better as Elliott becomes more involved in it. There is a bit of a sting in the tail though although I am not going to tell you why as that would be giving too much away.

'Stand By Me' is sensitively and superbly written. The writing style is such that I was sucked in from the very first word on the very first page and I was under the book's spell until the last word on the last page. I was concentrating so hard on the story and the path it was taking that I didn't realise quite how quickly the pages were turning and before I knew it I had finished the book, which I was so disappointed about. Don't get me wrong I was pleased to finish because at least I knew how the story ended but I was so disappointed to finish because I was enjoying the writing style and the story so much that I just wanted it to continue. That might sound strange to some but it makes sense to me. As I alluded to above, 'Stand By Me' deals with some pretty tough topics but the author handles them with great skill and with great sensitivity. The one subject that sticks in my mind is the issue of bullying. The author really taps into how a victim feels and how such behaviour can still affect people ever so many years later. By the time I had finished reading 'Stand By Me', I really did feel as though I had been through the emotional wringer with all the highs, lows, hope, despair, feelings of guilt, the happiness and the sadness and well you get the point.

In short, I absolutely ADORED reading 'Stand By Me' and I can't wait to read more from this hugely successful author, even if he does make me want to cry. I would recommend this book and author to anybody. The score on the Ginger Book Geek board is an easy and well deserved 5* out of 5*.

Kristin's Novel Cafe says

My Review: 4/5

This book came at the right time for me. My go-to genre is Psychological Thriller/Crime, so reading Stand By Me was so refreshing.

The story...where do I begin? It is an amazing story of courage, love, and hope. After years of not seeing her childhood best friend, Elliot shows up on Lisa's doorstep. Amazed and delighted, no one realized his true purpose of visiting after many years.

While I did find it a little predictable, and a little confusing at the beginning with the many points of view, this book was a delight to read. It can easily be read in a long weekend. The perfect place would be laying on the beach, with a refreshing drink by your side. It is so uplifting and positive, you can't help but smile.

I enjoyed the author's style of writing, and although this was my first book by the author, it definitely will not be my last. Pick up the book today and prepare yourself for an uplifting and glorious journey!

booksofallkinds says

So the award for the first book in 2018 to make me cry goes to STAND BY ME by S.D. Robertson. What a beautifully written, heartwarming and emotional story about the importance of friendship and family.

When Lisa moved house as a child all those years ago she never realised that it would bring such a special friendship with it. But it did and as she grew up, Elliot played such a huge part in her life, and her in his. Now twenty years later, Lisa may not have seen much of Elliot since he moved halfway around the world years ago, but she has never forgotten her best friend. Especially now when her life seems to be falling apart at the seams. Her marriage is floundering ever since the incident, and her kids have become more serious and seem to be hiding something. Lisa could do with Elliot's advice. And just like that, he appears on her doorstep for he will always be there for the best friend who saved him so many times during their childhood. With Elliot's arrival comes fresh hope as he slots perfectly into their lives and seems to know exactly what to do and say to make things easier. But Elliot cannot stay forever ... can he?

This amazing story completely sucked me in from the very first page and didn't let me up for air until the very end. Be prepared to laugh, smile, and sob, as you fall in love with these characters. The story moves from past to present so that we can see the depth of Lisa and Elliot's friendship which really conveys to the reader just how beautiful and caring their love for each other is. Lisa's life is stressful and as Elliot does his best to bring her fragmented family back together you cannot help but wonder what will happen if Elliot must leave.

?

STAND BY ME by S.D. Robertson is a superb tale of love, loss, and the value of real friends who will do anything for those they love. An outstanding novel that deserves to be read far and wide. I'm a forever fan of S.D. Robertson after finishing this novel.

*I voluntarily reviewed this book from the Publisher

Jo Barton says

Stand By Me is a thoughtful story about the power of friendship and of the importance of keeping those we love always in our hearts. Lisa and Elliot were friends as children but as adults, time and circumstance have caused them to live very separate lives. Now twenty years later, Lisa is facing a difficult time, as her marriage to her husband, Mike, has hit rock bottom. With her personal life in disarray, the last person Lisa expects to see standing on her doorstep is her friend, Elliot. And as Elliot slowly starts to infiltrate into her life again, so things start to improve for Lisa and her family.

This is one of those stories which gives you a lovely warm feeling inside. The characters are so realistic that you feel as if you could have met them at the local shops and called for a coffee with them. Lisa and Mike's problems are so reminiscent of modern day life that you can't help but feel sorry for them as they try to work out their problems in their own inimitable style. In places, the story moves back, in time, to Lisa and Elliot's shared childhood and it was great to see the references of their life as teenagers in the 1990s.

Stand By Me gets right into the heart of a family which have been fractured by circumstances and yet, with love and understanding, it shows that they can come through their troubles with new hope.

Bookread2day says

Twitter@favouritenovels I've had the most wonderful time reading this book. I loved how so much goes on and how it all came together. Lisa has been struggling to keep her family together with her husband Mike always being drunk. Mike turned to drink after he was suspended from his school as a deputy head teacher. Lisa and Mike's teenage children have secrets of their own. Which I won't reveal as I don't want to spoil your reading time. When the door knocks the last person Lisa was expecting is her best friend Elliot. Lisa's best friend Elliot plays a very important part of Lisa, Mike and their teenage children lives. The ending I honestly didn't see coming . I highly recommend reading Stand By Me by S. D. Roberston as it does have Quite a tearful ending.
