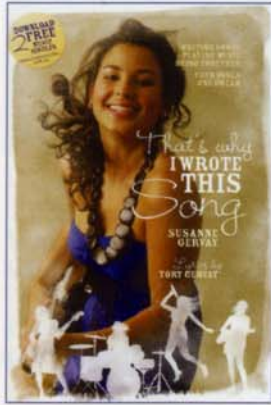


are forceful and vivid. This is exciting storytelling for mature readers—there are ugly murders, and ghosts both poignant and eerie—but the whole is told with such verve and conviction that the reader is willingly carried along. I eagerly await the sequel.  
*Chloë Mauger*



### That's Why I Wrote This Song

Susanne Gervay, lyrics Tory Gervay,  
Angus & Robertson,  
978 0 207 20086 1 \$15.99 Pb

Though marketed as an innovative multi-media package (book, 2 free music singles downloadable from the publisher's website, and a video clip on Youtube), the words-on-paper alone are good enough to attract many teenage girls and other readers who are interested in their world view. Music and mutual support are the guiding lights as four talented girls, three of them friends since kindergarten, negotiate their passage through the troubled waters of adolescence. All of the girls find the father-daughter relationship difficult: Pip's father is angry and hypercritical; Karen's father is abusive and more interested in his new wife and expected baby; Irina's strict, Russian-Jewish father does not approve of her rock music activities and even Angie, whose father is loving and proud of her, finds he has not always been truthful. There are issues with boyfriends, but the untroubled joys of Pip and Irina's combined girls-only birthday party and sleepover put boy-girl matters into perspective. The conflicts of the four friends are individually and collectively resolved as the plot rises to a climax: the school concert, where the girls' band, *Not Perfect*, perform their song *Psycho Dad* and the consequent fallout. The girls are never portrayed as the powerless victims of a *not perfect* society or their *not perfect* families: they learn from experience and triumph through their creativity, hard work, friendships and some understanding adults. All are loveable, memorable characters.

Susanne Gervay and her daughter Tory have achieved a perfect synthesis of the lyrics; the composition, practice and performance processes; and, above all, the interaction of life with art. Most young people can identify strongly with the feelings expressed in *I Wanna Be Found* and the five with whom I have shared it instantly downloaded it for themselves. We all enjoyed the strong, lively musical performance, especially the haunting a capella ending. *Psycho Dad* is disturbingly full of hurt hostility if you listen to it before reading the novel, but is excellent in context. You can understand both the intense feelings and the wonderful sense of liberation Pip and Karen feel when they perform the song in public. Susanne Gervay has *lived youth music culture* to good effect in order to write such a convincing novel. She communicates the exciting atmosphere of rock concerts and the way in which rock music expresses and explores the feelings and issues young people care about most deeply. The memorable songs ensure that readers continue to think about the characters and their lives long after the book has been read. The vibrant, well-designed book cover promises much and teenage readers will not be disappointed.

*Lyn Linning*

### Runemarks

Joanne Harris, Doubleday,  
978 0 385 61131 2 \$29.95 Pb

Malbry is a small village, so it is no wonder that Maddy is treated with suspicion, for she carries a *runemark* on her arm—a mark of the old (Norse) gods. Meanwhile the Order is gathering strength as it seeks to stamp out any taint of the old powers, and all the villagers know that nearby Red Horse Hill was a goblin stronghold, while the mountains of the Seven Sleepers loom over the landscape. Taught by the itinerant traveller, One-Eye, on his yearly visits, Maddy learns the old tales, and how to read runes and work cantrips, kenings and glams. There is, of course, a quest involved, and Maddy is sent on a perilous journey underground to capture the Whisperer and to save the world from the End of Everything. The Norse gods appear in various guises, a number of creatures make alliances with Maddy—but always for their own purposes—and she has constantly to deal with betrayal and uncertainty, as well as the physical hardships of her journey. And then there is Loki, the trickster *par excellence*, on whom she is forced to rely.