



If I Can't Have You: Susan Powell, Her Mysterious Disappearance, and the Murder of Her Children

Written by Gregg Olsen

Published by mckeanandassociates

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If I Can't Have You: Susan Powell, Her Mysterious Disappearance, and the Murder of Her Children

Susan Powell, Her Mysterious Disappearance, and the M

By Gregg Olsen

If I Can't Have You

In *If I Can't Have You*, bestselling author Gregg Olsen and co-author Rebecca Morris investigate one of the 21st Century's most puzzling disappearances and how it resulted in the murder of two children by their father.

If I Can't Have You Chords

Every once in a great while a genuine murder mystery unfolds before the eyes of the American public. The tragic story of Susan Powell and her murdered boys, Charlie and Braden, is the only case that rivals the Jon Benet Ramsey saga in the annals of true crime. When the pretty, blonde Utah mother went missing in December of 2009 the media was swept up in the story “ with lenses and microphones trained on Susan's husband, Josh. He said he had no idea what happened to his young wife, and that he and the boys had been camping in the middle of a snowstorm.

If I Can't Have You Lyrics

Over the next three years bombshell by bombshell, the story would reveal more shocking secrets. Josh's father, Steve, who was sexually obsessed with Susan, would ultimately be convicted of unspeakable perversion. Josh's brother, Michael, would commit suicide. And in the most stunning event of them all, Josh Powell would murder his two little boys and kill himself with brutality beyond belief.

On February 5th, 2012, hours before the Giants defeated the Patriots to win their fourth Superbowl, America's television screens were filled with images of what remained of an exploded house. Josh Powell--a person of interest for more than two years in the disappearance of his wife Susan--had killed his two young sons and himself in order to prevent his in-laws from taking custody of the boys.

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This book is an account of Susan Powell's troubled marriage and her suspicious disappearance, but it is also an account of the two years of investigation that followed. Given what the reader learns of Josh's pattern of controlling behavior, his scarcely credible alibi, his suspicious actions following his wife's disappearance, and the many pieces of supportive evidence accumulated by law enforcement, it is almost impossible not to ask: shouldn't he have been charged with murder and taken into custody? True, Susan's body was never found, and prosecuting a murder without a body is a difficult undertaking. On the other hand, if he had been charged and incarcerated, his two sons might be alive today.

Olsen and Morris do a good job of setting out the details in good order, creating suspense and mystery where they can, and yet giving us a disturbing portrait of the Powell marriage and the entire Powell family, including Josh's father Steve--an odious man sexually obsessed with his daughter-in-law--who, although probably not a murderer, may be the real villain in the piece.

This book is written in an efficient, straightforward style, and delivers what it promises. If you like true crime books, I think you will be pleased with this one. ...more

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If I Can't Love Her

This book pulled me in and I couldn't put it down. After learning about this couple on the news, I had to find out more. It's such a harrowing story and I was hoping to learn details that weren't in the documentaries.

It's well researched and a true crime story that will leave you shocked. It's difficult to read at times, but I wanted to know the truth and every fact. I feel so sorry for Susan's family and I still can't believe what people are willing to do to keep things in their control. It mad This book pulled me in and I couldn't put it down. After learning about this couple on the news, I had to find out more. It's such a harrowing story and I was hoping to learn details that weren't in the documentaries.

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Overall, the book was written well and it's a fast-paced read. I don't want to spoil the details, so if you'd like to learn more about the Powell family, you should read this one.

5***** ...more

Even knowing this story intimately, inside and out, as I do, I still couldn't put this book down. I learned several things that even I didn't know. It was accurately factual and well-researched, and told Susan's story very well. The authors did a wonderful job.

If I Can't Have You Bee Gees

I felt like this after finishing this book:

I'm disgusted by the police. I had no idea that the circumstantial case was so strong against Josh Powell. Those poor kids shouldn't've died. I mean, it would've been terrible if the only thing the police had against Josh was his wife's disappearance. That wouldn't lessen the tragedy. It's just the fact that they had so much against him. Enough to, at the very least, terminated his parental rights.

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Let's see: a) they found Susan's blood in an area that Josh was frantically trying to clean. b) cadaver dogs were alerted that there had been a dead body in the brother's car. c) he destroyed a lot of evidence after he got back from his camping trip. d) he cancelled automatic payments to things like daycare a good four or five days before she died and then told the babysitter that she wasn't needed after Susan disappeared (that he was going to have his family watch them.) e) when police notified him of his missing wife, he made a cellphone call to ask her where she was -- and the police found her cell in his car with him. f) the testimony that Josh said over and over again how much he wanted Susan to die and how he could get away with the perfect murder. g) the fact that both the sons were telling, and kept telling, pretty much everyone (along with drawing fucking diagrams) of what happened to their mother.

Un-fucking-believable.

...more

"Mommy's in the trunk...Mommy and Daddy got out...And Mommy never came back.

I'm thinking unless you've lived on another planet the last few years, most everyone is aware of the basics of this sad story. Utah wife and mother Susan Powell goes missing after the husband takes the two young boys *camping* to a very remote location in the middle of the winter and in the middle of the night at that. Comes home the next day and spends hours cleaning out his van and areas in the home instead of taking p "Mommy's in the trunk...Mommy and Daddy got out...And Mommy never

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Why the local police detectives weren't all over him like bees on honey from the get-go should be a dereliction of duty.

Any-hoo, you either know the story or you don't, so I'm not going to blather on and spoil further for those new to this sad saga. And for those like me who have been following the case in the news and know what the ending is, there's so much more you didn't hear on the newscasts that will make you very, very angry at the injustice of it all. Josh Powell had a very disturbed father who with one exception raised a very disturbed pack of kids.

"Sitting at home all summer wasn't ideal in a home not really set up for little ones - a household with an uncle on meds, a caregiver aunt who'd been thrust into the role without any training, and a grandfather who was obsessed with pornography.

shudders

And ya know, not a spoiler since it's a matter of public record but (view spoiler)[he's now done his time and is out of prison. Oh snap - parole - so we're all safe aren't we? (hide spoiler)]

This story will make you cry at the injustice of it all, and will also make you very, very angry - and not just at the Powell family but the spineless police detectives and other official agencies that couldn't seem to talk to each other. The circumstantial evidence is just too compelling to be coincidence.

Josh Powell, may you burn in hell forever and a day.

My copy obtained via library loan. ...more

If I Can't Scuba

Oh, I feel weird saying I loved a true crime book with a sad ending but it really sucked me in.

A young mother mysteriously disappears. All hints seem to point to her controlling husband. When shocking secrets come to light and the couples two young boys begin to open up, it all culminates in a breaking point that only a few saw coming.

This review has been hidden because it contains spoilers. To view it, [click here](#).

The story is appalling; this book is merely competent. A young Utah wife and mother is declared missing while her hot-headed husband and two sweet sons are out on an unusual winter camping trip. To the consternation of her family, the husband refuses to cooperate with the police.

If I Can't Have You is good enough reading, but at times it drags, more from the inherent slowness and broad time span of the story itself than any deficit on the part of the authors. I wish more had been made of the fact that the frustratingly slow procedural results along the way came from the clash in philosophies and investigatory styles of the two government agencies at work: the police, who focused on looking for the missing wife and mother; and social services, which concerned itself with the welfare of the two little boys. The authors mention this clash, but do not really develop it. Otherwise, it's a good enough recount though the reader is warned at every turn when something gruesome is on the way -- what, we cannot imagine. It's that kind of book. ...more

If I Can't Have You Piano

I found this book to be flat and emotionless. It was like reading a newspaper article.

Nevertheless, it's a heart breaking story and I feel that at least part of the tragedy could have been avoided.

This book has two major flaws. First, there's just not enough material to make this book of this length interesting. We all know that poor Susan Powell is dead and we all know it was because of her husband, Josh, and an undetermined number of his creepy family members. But because Susan's body has never been found, her husband can never be brought to justice by a trial, and none of the remaining Powells are talking, there's not really too much to write about.

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Second, what there is to write about isn't written about terribly well or objectively. Josh Powell is not a sympathetic figure in this story -- none of the Powells are -- and his actions clearly stand as awful on their own. Repeated remarks about how "evil" Josh or his father are feel like overkill. Similarly, I didn't need to be convinced that Susan *didn't* deserve to be murdered; I was already on the her side, and after a certain point, talking about how wonderful Susan was became boring.

The poor pacing, filler material, and lack of objectivity made reading this book feel like talking to Susan's gossipy neighbor. I gave the book two stars because the case is perversely interesting and I did have enough interest in the subject to finish the book. ...more

If I Can't Have You Yvonne

3.5 Stars

When I first started this book, I was disappointed that it seemed to lay out the entire case in the first chapter. Because I thought I was unfamiliar with this one, I wasn't sure how the authors would be able to sustain my interest for the rest of the book. Then I realized that I actually DID know something about this case -- I've seen at least one television show depicting Josh Powell's murder of his two children, but I'd never known about the disappearance of his wife or how her disap

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I can remember reading bits and pieces about the Powell family on the internet. Just like everyone else, I was spellbound by this story. Hoping for a happy ending. Even though Susan was missing. I was praying for the two little boys, Charlie and Braden. It seemed like the boys were going to get their happy ending until that unthinkable act by their father took them away.

I am familiar with Mr. Olsen's work as an author. I can not imagine writing a book like this. I don't know how Ann Rule does it. I can remember reading bits and pieces about the Powell family on the internet. Just like everyone else, I was spellbound by this story. Hoping for a happy ending. Even though Susan was missing. I was praying for the two little boys, Charlie and Braden. It seemed like the boys were going to get their happy ending until that unthinkable act by their father took them away.

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I am familiar with Mr. Olsen's work as an author. I can not imagine writing a book like this. I don't know how Ann Rule does it. I have read some of her books as well. This story is really sad. It goes to show you that we all have our secrets. You never know what people are hiding behind closed doors. It is very sad that Susan was so dedicated to her husband, despite all the signs that he exhibited in their marriage. If she could have found the greater strength to leave sooner, this story might have been different. Again, it is easy for me and others to say ...could have, should have, would have, when we are not in the situation. However the authorities were sloppy in the way that they handled the investigation. We have all these agencies that are supposed to help people and protect them and yet too many innocent lives are being lost every day. This needs to stop. I thought the authors did a good joint job of writing and telling Susan's story. They gave her a voice again. Although, this book was hard to read at times. Especially as the secrets and violence escalated. Ann Rule fans will like this book. ...more

If I Can't Have You Uke Chords

What I want to actually say in this review would be deemed HIGHLY inappropriate. To have been a friend or family member of Susan Cox Powell must be the most frustrating, exasperating, saddening thing imaginable. To live with no closure and so much pain and death is unbelievable. There were whole chapters that just broke my heart or simply made me want to vomit from the pervading evil and sickness in the Powell family. And I'm sorry but I have to say this-WTF 911 dispatcher???? Were you even listening to the case worker? I closed the book completely numb having missed hours of sleep 2 mornings in a row to finish this tragic tale of a wife's misery and abduction and her friends' and family's neverending pursuit of the truth. ...more

3.5

I had trouble getting into this book at the beginning finding it boring and dragging. Around the middle of the book it picked up speed and became harder to put down.

If I Can't Have You Dance

I read this book in three days, not just because of the book's extreme readability, but because I couldn't stand to be a part of the evil of the events described therein for much longer than that.

Like many others, I followed this case compulsively when it was in the news. The book reports, in great detail, of what happened. But more than that, it functions as a reminder of other important things:

1. Susan's family (I'm clearly referring to the Coxes here) have suffered nearly more than one can possibly conceive. I read this book in three days, not just because of the book's extreme readability, but because I couldn't stand to be a part of the evil of the events described therein for much longer than that.

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1. Susan's family (I'm clearly referring to the Coxes here) have suffered nearly more than one can possibly conceive.
2. It keeps Susan and her children in the public's memory.
3. It works to set the record straight and refute the shameful and disgraceful lies that the Powell family tried to perpetuate for so long. And, therefore,
4. It reiterates how despicable the Powell family is/was.

Let's be clear here: the victims of Josh's horrific acts are Susan's family and her friends. Josh never was a victim, even though some might try to scapegoat his father for Josh's behavior. This is wrong. Though Steve is clearly an evil man and a horrible father and human being who deserves to spend the rest of his life in jail, Josh is wholly responsible for what he did. There are many, many cases of people who overcame massive personal struggles to become good and successful people. Josh obviously did not try to rise above his tortured childhood. He not only was a narcissistic, cowardly, monster, he reveled in his evilness. He chose to kill his entire family. Though his sister and father will doubtlessly keep trying to convince the media that Josh was the victim of a conspiracy by the media and the LDS church (which is, yes, just as ridiculous as it sounds), they are wrong. Josh was purely evil.

There is a poignant quote near the end of the book by Paul Pastor, the Pierce County (Washington) Sheriff, that needs to be repeated here: "This was something evil. Let's not refer to this, please, in public, as a tragedy. This was not a tragedy. This is a horrible murder of two little kids. Let's not dress it up. Let's not sanitize it. Let's not distance ourselves from it. It is something wrong. It is something evil."

The heartbreaking book by Olsen and Morris brings to light not only the evil, but also the good. It is very heartening to read about the family and the community of Susan and the boys and their acts of love.
...more

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This book follows all the twists and turns of the Susan Powell disappearance and the fallout that occurred because of that. I fully admit that I was buried deep in grad school world when this happened, so I COMPLETELY missed all news stories about this at the time. So I genuinely had no idea where it was all going as I read it.

The writing is well-paced and sucks you in, with only a few flaws. For instance, the writers love doing something like this: "The police began to focus on Steve. They sho This book follows all the twists and turns of the Susan Powell disappearance and the fallout that occurred because of that. I fully admit that I was buried deep in grad school world when this happened, so I COMPLETELY missed all news stories about this at the time. So I genuinely had no idea where it was all going as I read it.

The writing is well-paced and sucks you in, with only a few flaws. For instance, the writers love doing something like this: "The police began to focus on Steve. They should have been focusing on Mike." Don't spoil it before you spoil it! At one point they also described one of the Powell brothers as having "Bipolar Schizophrenic Disorder" - whaaaaaaaaaaaaa? Other than that, it was a fast easy read, and I finished it 48 hours. The book doesn't try to answer why it happened or even what happened; it simply reports speculation of others and the scant evidence found by police. This might drive some people crazy and some people might really really appreciate it, depending on how they approach true crime. ...more