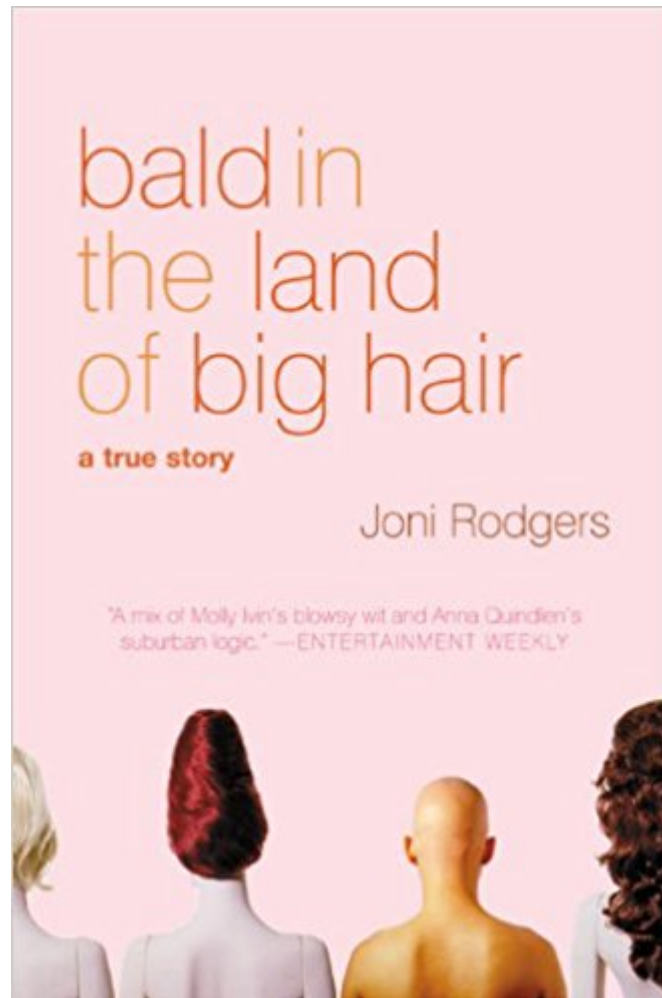




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# **Bald In The Land Of Big Hair: A True Story**



## Synopsis

Bald in the Land of Big Hair is the hilarious-and often heartbreaking-tale of Joni Rodgers's journey through the badlands of cancer told with humor, occasional anger, and unflinching honesty. More than just a cancer book, this is a deeply affecting memoir of one woman's struggle to come to terms with everything that life throws her way. Ultimately, this is a moving celebration of the true meaning of human triumph and courage, the importance of community and the imperative of living everyday with joy.

## Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: Harper Perennial; Reprint edition (February 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060955260

ISBN-13: 978-0060955267

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.6 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 62 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #379,625 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #7 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > Cancer > Lymphatic #358 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Specific Groups > Special Needs #876 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Medical

## Customer Reviews

At first blush, a lighthearted romp through the horrors of chemotherapy seems like a stretch. Yet that is just what Rodgers has attempted with considerable success in this memoir of her bout with cancer. Even Rodgers admits, "I didn't find cancer all that funny, especially at the time." Then why the comic touch? If her previous novels *Crazy for Trying* (1996) and *Sugar Land* (1999) are any indication, she delights in creating over-the-top characters whose idiosyncrasies highlight the world's absurdities. And nothing is quite so existentially absurd as a reminder that you are about to die: "You stop living and start staying alive." The comic tone enables Rodgers to render the ordeal without monochromatic grimness. While essentially a story about cancer and its implications, the vehicle is Rodgers herself. She portrays herself as a rebellious, somewhat loopy woman who, almost despite herself, managed to find professional success, marry a good husband and have two kids. Into this setting comes an intruder in the form of a lump in her neck and a puzzling loss of

energy: she has a virulent lymphoma that requires aggressive treatment, including chemotherapy. While Rodgers's attempt to convey serious business lightly is commendable, the constant wisecracking keeps the reader at an emotional distance. And when she does turn serious, the insights are pedestrian: "Truly, I promise you, grace is real, God is here, and in the end, everything is going to be all right." Fortunately, Rodgers survived her ordeal. The memoir that sprang from it, though, is stronger on anecdote than insight. Agent, Laurie Harper. (Feb.) Forecast: Despite its flaws, Rodgers's book will appeal to women, especially those who enjoy feel-good, strong-women-discovering-themselves memoirs. It's the stuff of book-group discussions, and with strong marketing by HarperCollinsAa five-city author tour and a 50-city national radio campaignAsales are sure to be brisk. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Librarians don't need to buy this first-person cancer narrative, but they'll probably want to. Rodgers, a novelist (*Crazy for Trying*), actress, and radio DJ living in Houston ("the Land of Big Hair"), discusses being diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in her early thirties. She covers the confusion of diagnosis, the horrors of chemotherapy, and, finally, the uncertainty of remission. Rodgers tells her story with wit and clarity. It's not an aggressively sad storyDin fact, much of it is funnyDbut there are moments with her daughter, husband, and mother that are heartbreaking. Her free-spirited life is interesting, even without the cancer stories, and the reader is drawn into her relationships. There are many other cancer-survivor books, but this one stands out for its appeal to general biography readers. Recommended for public and consumer health libraries, particularly in Texas.DEElizabeth Williams, Fresno City Coll. Lib., CA Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I adore Joni's colorful self-aware feminine voice. She is the life of the party...even when that "party" is a life threatening disease. This author really puts herself out there in every sense, sparing no detail of how Cancer impacts a young woman's life...from sexuality to spirituality and everything in between. Unapologetic and direct like your best friend at a cocktail party who feels compelled to say what everyone else is only thinking.I read this as a survivor myself ( of a different type ) in search of a sophisticated story of conquering Cancer as literary inspiration. I certainly found it here.

This is one of the best books I have read lately. It's definitely not a cancer-as-slapstick memoir. Joni Rodgers got horribly sick, could have died, and she pulls no punches as this book surveys the

physical, emotional and financial wreckage. Yet she weaves laugh-out-loud passages into her story, which also resonates with tough spirituality, honest frustrations and fears, and love. Lots of love. I'm buying an extra copy, to pass along when I think someone could benefit from reading it. I want to hang on to a copy, though. There are things I can learn from reading it again. Things I wish I wouldn't need to think about, but for the sad fact that someone I know is likely to be diagnosed with cancer in the future. Maybe with Joni Rodgers' book under my belt I can feel less helpless and find something useful to do for them.

This story touched me deeply I'm not sure I would ever have had the fortitude to go through what she went through. 3 1/2 years ago I was diagnosed with breast cancer and testing had progressed to the point that recurrence probability could be detected. I got to skip chemo and radiation and survived with only a mastectomy however that changed my life profoundly too. When I read this story I realize what a lucky and blessed life I am living.

Had this book in my kindle for a few years. Bought it after my diagnosis of lymphoma. Did not even know it was about that. We all know that breast cancer gets all the good press! Opened it a few days after my first chemo. It was like I was thirsty and the book was a drink that I loved. Hated. And feared. But it quenches me when nothing else can. Not sure what to do next

This memoir made me cry, and laugh -- and want to fly down to Houston to hug the author. Joni Rodgers has a way of putting readers in her shoes and taking them along on her journey as she fights her way through chemo treatments and a devastating cancer prognosis while struggling to maintain who she is -- a mother to two young children, a wife and partner, and a talented actress/singer with dreams of making it as a novelist. This book is for anyone who has dealt with a devastating disease, or knows someone who has -- or is just interested in reading an honest, beautifully written story about illness, family relationships and making it through this journey we call life.

Having just finished going through bilateral mastectomy, chemo, losing my hair and reconstruction I was able to relate to this story. Would highly recommend for anyone who is personally touched by cancer. It is well written with a balance of truthfulness, sadness and laugh out loud humor.

I loved this book and couldn't put it down. Like Joni, I too had Non Hodgkins B Cell lymphoma in my

neck,so I was very interested in her story, but I do think her book appeals to a much wider audience. It's a great story of love,survival, and recovery. I am thankful that she shared her journey in writing and I especially appreciated her insights about how she recovered emotionally. Joni found that prayer, mentoring others, and allowing herself the time she needed were all instrumental in her healing and recovery and I find that very comforting.

The title is just a hint at the content of this memoir. Joni Rodgers is funny without even trying, and she is frank about the many aspects of living through cancer and cancer treatments, but she has a way with words that brings chuckles in the midst of pain and suffering. I loved this book, and especially appreciated the follow-up interview that brings the reader up to date on how and what she's doing now.

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