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Green Angel



Synopsis

Alice Hoffman is at her magical best in a new novel about loss and healing. When her family is lost in a terrible disaster, 15-yr-old Green is haunted by loss and by the past. Struggling to survive physically and emotionally in a place where nothing seems to grow and ashes are everywhere, Green retreats into the ruined realm of her garden. But in destroying her feelings, she also begins to destroy herself, erasing the girl she'd once been as she inks ravens into her skin. It is only through a series of mysterious encounters -- with a ghostly white dog and a mute boy -- that Green relearns the lessons of love and begins to heal as she tells her own story.

Book Information

Age Range: 12 and up

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Customer Reviews

Grade 8 Up-Beautifully written prose fills this first-person narrative of a teen whose world is turned around in an instant. This is both a survival story and an homage to the need to cherish life's every moment. Moody, introspective Green, 15, stays at home while her parents and younger sister travel to the city to sell their produce. Her disappointment at being left behind causes her to be cold and not say good-bye. Then the city is engulfed in flames, and ashes hover in the atmosphere for a long time. Green is left with her guilt for her sullen behavior and the solitude of her ruined garden. Hoffman has created a multilayered, believable protagonist. Readers suffer along with her and share her fears as she tries to pick up the pieces of her life. The contrast between her original faith

in the promise of the future and her later acknowledgment of the tentative nature of reality is vividly and eloquently portrayed. This is not an easy read, and though it is an absorbing tale, it will most likely appeal to more sophisticated readers. A powerfully written and thought-provoking selection. Renee Steinberg, Fieldstone Middle School, Montvale, NJ Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Gr. 6-12. Hoffman's latest fable for teens begins with an apocalyptic scene that mirrors the events of 9/11: a girl watches as her city across the river explodes into smoke and fire, and people leap from buildings. Green, named for her uncanny gardening talent, is 15 years old, and, in the tragedy, she loses her beloved family. Faced with grief and an anarchic world, Green finds solace in the brittle numbness of daily tasks and in the pain of the tattoos that she begins to draw on herself. Slowly, she connects with survivors, especially a mysterious boy, who helps her replant her garden and feel joy again. Hoffman's lush prose and moody, magic realism will easily draw readers into the harsh, ash-covered world that follows the explosion, as well as the sunny world that precedes it, when "bees would drink the sweat from . . . skin, and never once sting." Green's brave competence and the hope she finds in romance will appeal to many teens, particularly those with gothic tastes. Gillian Engberg Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

"I was Green, moody and prideful and angry." Green Angel has the most interesting writing style. I've never read anything like it before. The book kept my interest the whole time. It's somewhat of a slow read for such a short book. The author writes the most amazing atmosphere, I was able to visualize everything in the novel from the character, to her family, to the garden she spends her life in. Green has lost her family and literally shuts down. She blames herself because she was angry at them before they left for the city and since she didn't say goodbye to them, they did not return. This belief isn't true, but she is overcome with grief and has no other explanation than to blame herself. She begins to change from who she was before the incident occurred. She tattoos her body, cuts off her lovely hair and hides in her home away from people and away from light. It's so sad to read about her desperation to join her family. She is truly broken. Though she is so strong, she might not see it or believe it, but her ability to take of herself and not be thwarted by the actions and deceptions of others makes her very strong. As I read the novel, I felt like it was more like a fantasy novel based in another world than one that starred on Earth. The way the people acted and the stature of the cities and towns just didn't seem Earthly to me. I really enjoyed it. This was a great book. A short read great for a relaxing day. It was honest and saddening. You could feel the emotions coming off of the

pages. There is no good way to explain this book. It was excellent. I will definitely be reading more of Alice Hoffman's work.

Graphic, poetic, evocative, disturbing, comforting, tragic - all classic Hoffman style but in a short novel. The downside is that it ends too soon, the upside is the searing intensity and pace of the story. Only Hoffman can tell a story like this, loved it...

My first encounter with Alice Hoffman was through the movie "Practical Magic" (1998). Knowing that movies are pale reflections of books, I read the book and found it to be much better. When I spotted this book (Green Angle), I realize that Alice was diverse in her writing and decided to read it. I am a fan of YA books and wondered how Alice would translate. I bought the library bound version (sturdier than the paperback but the pages are not as white) but also the kindle (text-to-speak enabled) version as it was more convenient to port. I could listen too much of the book during my morning commute to work. There are two trains of thought on this book so instead of taking the low ground and saying that this puny book takes advantage of 9-11, gothic teens, and no plot. I chose to go the other way. The book itself could be looked upon as allegorical for a loss in one's life and how one copes with it. It is simple, elegant and poetic as we see the stages of grief and how different people deal with it. You can empathize with her situation and many of us have been in similar situations. The pacing was well done to go full circle in so few pages; there is not fluff as everything had meaning. It does however leave you to want the next book to see what happens. It is not so much the words or the situations that make the book, as they are just the incidences in life not life. They are just a shadow of what is taking place. The only thing I did not prefer in this book is that it is written in the first person "I, I, I" that preference does not distract from the story.

I am so delighted to have read this book, I loved it, I could not put it down or wait to get back to it. So we'll written I felt like I was there, in the story, I will definitely be reading more of Alice Hoffman's books in the future, this was this first one I've ever read, a wonderful take about life and I highly recommend for any age to read!

A haunting, lovely tale of loss and acceptance... The story is very spare and abstract, with few details given about the world as a whole, but focused on Green/Ash's experiences. And the book design of the paperback is gorgeous.

This book transported me to a magical poetic place and made me feel like I could write poetry if I tried. There is such veracity of emotion interwoven with fairytale like experience. I miss this book!

I loved the story. It rips out your heart, and then heals it. Call me old fashioned, but I like a book to take more than an hour and a half to read. It should have been combined with the sequel. And then there is a third book. It was not made clear that this was a trilogy. I will read the sequel, like I said, it is a great story. A lot is left to the imagination. I don't know when or where the story takes place unless I missed something. Maybe the point is that it could happen anywhere at anytime? Maybe the sequel will answer some questions.

Short and descriptive... Just enough characters and a beautiful story of how loss turns to fear and in time, a return to love.

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