

[PDF] Song Reader

L. Tucker - pdf download free book

Books Details:

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Author: L. Tucker
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Description:

Two sisters, Leeann and Mary Beth, have the debut novel *The Song Reader* firmly in their grip. Author Lisa Tucker seems almost entranced by her main characters, a teenager and her older sister whose mother is dead and father has disappeared. They've put together a cheery and eccentric life in their small midwestern hometown. Mary Beth--beautiful, empathetic and smart--practices an art she calls song reading. Clients come to her and tell her the songs that are stuck in their head, and she decodes the song to help them with their problems. Says her little sister Leeann, the novel's narrator: "She could take a customer who had all kinds of problems--poverty and family quarrels and lost love and even illness--and point her finger at the one thing that, if they found it and dealt with it, would give them the strength to handle all the rest." Leeann sees Mary Beth's song reading--and everything else about her sister--as admirable and glorious. But Mary Beth's gift leads her to a secret truth about a prominent neighbor, and the fragile structure of the girls' orphaned life comes tumbling down. Each secret seems to domino another until the sisters' whole complex emotional

history is laid bare. *The Song Reader* can be a little willfully twee with its wacky characters and unlikely scenarios, but Tucker has so thoroughly imagined her protagonists' psychological workings that the book exerts an undeniable pull. --*Claire Dederer* --This text refers to the edition.

From Publishers Weekly Tucker's assured debut novel is an achingly tender narrative about grief, love, madness and crippling family secrets. Preteen Leeann Norris introduces readers to her world: recently orphaned when her mother was killed in a car accident, she lives with her older sister, Mary Beth, who supports them by waiting tables and performing "song readings" for locals in their small Missouri town. Rather than reading palms to tell people's future, Mary Beth analyzes the songs stuck in their heads, explaining what the song fragments reveal about her clients' psyches. The plot device is fascinating, but what cleaves the reader to the page is the relationship between the two sisters—one determined to track down their long-missing father, the other equally resistant to looking at the past. When Mary Beth's song reading uncovers a local scandal, the community turns against her, and her resolve to help those around her crumbles. Leeann must become the stronger sister, and her quest to find their father finally succeeds, though not in the way she'd hoped. Tucker's dexterous portraits of the fragile family dynamics expose quirky and compelling characters. Her expertly sprung revelations will surprise readers. This intoxicating debut may remind them of Shirley Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* and Pat Conroy's *Prince of Tides*, but it's not lost in their shadows.

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