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## The Story Sisters: A Novel

By Alice Hoffman

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**The Story Sisters: A Novel** By Alice Hoffman

From the *New York Times* Bestselling  
Author of *The Third Angel*

Alice Hoffman's previous novel, *The Third Angel*, was hailed as "an unforgettable portrait of the depth of true love" (*USA Today*), "stunning" (Jodi Picoult), and "spellbinding" (*Miami Herald*). Her new novel, *The Story Sisters*, charts the lives of three sisters—Elv, Claire, and Meg. Each has a fate she must meet alone: one on a country road, one in the streets of Paris, and one in the corridors of her own imagination. Inhabiting their world are a charismatic man who cannot tell the truth, a neighbor who is not who he appears to be, a clumsy boy in Paris who falls in love and stays there, a detective who finds his heart's desire, and a demon who will not let go.

What does a mother do when one of her children goes astray? How does she save one daughter without sacrificing the others? How deep can love go, and how far can it take you? These are the questions this luminous novel asks.

At once a coming-of-age tale, a family saga, and a love story of erotic longing, *The Story Sisters* sifts through the miraculous and the mundane as the girls become women and their choices haunt them, change them and, finally, redeem them. It confirms Alice Hoffman's reputation as "a writer whose keen ear for the measure struck by the beat of the human heart is unparalleled" (*The Chicago Tribune*).

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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## The Story Sisters: A Novel By Alice Hoffman Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Lyrical but atypically monotonous, bestseller Hoffman's (*The Third Angel*) latest follows the dark family saga of Elv, Megan and Claire Story, sisters plagued by uncommon sadness. As a child, Elv spun fairy tales of a magical world for her sisters, but a period of savage sexual abuse—information about which slowly leaks out—sends her spiraling into years of drug addiction and painful self-abuse. Elv's story is unrelentingly grim, and without Hoffman's characteristic magic realism, its simple downward spiral becomes exhausting. Tragedy after tragedy befalls the family—Elv's commitment to a juvenile rehab facility, a deadly accident, a fatal illness and betrayal after betrayal. When the last third of the book turns to focus on Claire, who has been so damaged by the family crises that she refuses to speak, the slight glimmers of hope and goodness are too little, too late. Hoffman's prose is as lovely as ever: the imagined and real worlds of the Story sisters are rich and clear, but Elv's troubles and the Story family's nonstop catastrophes are wearying. (*June*)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Critics were generally pleased with Hoffman's latest novel, and fans will be happy that it follows the pattern of her much-loved earlier work with its vibrant characters and magical-realist elements. Though a few reviewers questioned some of her character choices and their actions, such as Elv's mother's strange passivity during the growing crisis, the *Kansas City Star* deemed it normal for parents to be "frozen in the face of rampant rule-breaking." Other complaints consisted of a slow plot and some melodramatic scenes, but only the *Boston Globe* denounced the book as completely unoriginal while still praising Hoffman's lovely prose. A moving exploration of the strengths and limitations of family bonds, *The Story Sisters* is quintessential, if somewhat darker, Hoffman.

From [Booklist](#)

**\*Starred Review\*** A writer as virtuosic as Hoffman doesn't bestow the name Story on a family lightly. So, yes, this is a many-storied novel about storytellers, brimming with magic and despair, atonement and redemption. The Story sisters, Elv, Meg, and Claire, are dark-haired beauties clustered in the attic of their old Long Island house, while their lonely mother broods below. Their all-female household, a sly variation on *Little Women*, is under a grim fairy-tale spell, and not even sojourns with their fairy-godmother-like grandmother in Paris can protect them. As always in Hoffman's glimmering universe, nature is an awesome presence reflected in the mercurial human heart, and consequently, the Story girls are preternaturally sensitive to storms, ghosts, and plant and animal spirits. Meg is practical, while Elv and Claire share a tragic secret, and Elv channels her anguish into elaborate, demon-haunted tales of an imaginary parallel world until she discovers more effective means of self-punishment. The always dazzling Hoffman has outdone herself in this bewitching weave of psychologically astute fantasy and shattering realism, encompassing rape, drug addiction, disease, and fatal accidents. Her alluring characters are soulful, their suffering mythic, and though the sorrows are many and the body count high, this is an entrancing and romantic drama shot through with radiant beauty and belief in human resilience and transformation. --Donna Seaman

## Users Review

From reader reviews:

**Michael Pauls:**

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