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Ecstasia



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Synopsis

From the bestselling author of Weetzie Bat comes a fantasy adventure.Siblings Calliope and Rafe, along with Dionisio and Paul, are EcstasiaÃ¢â ¬â •the most popular band in Elysia, a city of jewels and feathers, of magic and music, where the only crime is growing old. Then CalliopeÃ¢â ¬â„¢s visions take her to Under, where the Old Ones go to die, and where her parents had vanished long ago. Rafe joins her there, in search of the Doctor, who can bring back the dead to ease their loved onesÃ¢â ¬â„¢ broken hearts. And that is when rapture turns to nightmare.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

As members of the rock band Ecstasia, Calliope and her brother Rafe have only one worry in life--growing old in a city where youthful hedonism is the rule and the signs of aging mean permanent exile to the city’s dreaded underworld of sewers and tunnels. Greek myth collides with "sex and drugs and rock’n’roll" in this first adult novel by controversial (and award-winning) YA author Block (Weetzie Bat , HarperCollins, 1989). The author’s heady style lends a poetic quality to this graceful story of love in an all-too-material world. Purchase where there is a demand for experimental fantasy.Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"The sorceress of iridescent language is back again."This begs not just to be read, but to be re-read, and savored. ("Publishers Weekly", starred review for "Echo") The sorceress of iridescent language is back again. ("Kirkus Reviews" for Echo) Transcendent. ("The New York Times") A sensualist’s paradise. ("Spin")

Great book. love FLB and all she does. Ecstasia opens up your mind to experience love in a whole new way. Sometimes ’under’ is what it takes to get over.

Ecstasia: Now, finally, it’s available in the re-issued paperback! In a carnival-town called Elysia, the band Ecstasia lives its enchanted life. Calliope, Rafe, Paul, and Dionisio are the members, each with his or her own story. Though they were born in the desert, siblings Calliope and Rafe are products of the young, bedazzled culture of Elysia, and they have accepted that they will live the good life until signs of aging drive them--willingly--to the Under, where the old ones live.Their own mother fled there at her first signs of aging, and Calliope, who sees true visions in her mind, hears her mother dying below the city. She goes to her, and her brother follows to bring her back, helped in his quest by following Lily, a tightrope-walker with whom he has become obsessed. She has her own nightmare, and takes drugs to bring the dead back to her mourning mind. The drugs destroy her and almost destroy Rafe too, but the love of his band members bring him back from the brink. He mourns losing his love, but quickly finds his place in Paul’s arms; Paul has loved him since day one.Dionisio and Calliope discover that she is carrying a child, and when she decides to try to change the world so that her daughter will have a different place to grow up in, she becomes trapped below the earth with the demonic Doctor, who makes drugs and made a doll resembling her to take her place. Eventually she is recovered, and the band flees to the desert where they came from, off to turn it into a garden with their music.

Elysia is a city that is a carnival of light, sparkle, shimmer and joy. Sweet candy, hot house flowers, music, bars, clubs, circuses and carousels all make up this fun house city of youth and excitement. But, to stay in it you must pay the price. Only the young may stay above, when you grow old you go Under, to a labyrinth of dark tunnels and shadowy places of quiet, dark desperation, wrapped up in linen awaiting your death. In this beautiful city Calliope is a girl that has visions of the future and plays the piano. Rafe is her brother, an impulsive boy that plays the drums. They join a band called Ecstasia with a boy named Paul that writes poetic songs and sings while another boy named Dionisio, Calliope’s lover, plays guitar when he’s not drinking himself into a stupor.They all want

beauty and youth and gardens. They want what Elysia has to offer, but they want it real. They want real flowers that grow out of the earth, natural rain that isn't poisoned, beauty that isn't painted on. Will they ever find their garden of eternity? And, just what does that mean exactly?Ecstasia is a beautiful poetic novel that tells it's story through the vehicles of poem and song, visions and dreams, third person and first person narratives, flowing from one story telling device to another as the tale unfolds. The book is full of metaphor, allusion and interpretation and to really help you get it you need to know quite a bit about Greek mythology to understand all of the references and to really help you follow everything that is going on. Just when you think you have it all figured out, something else hits you and you have to sit back and re-evaluate the message that is being given. Everything is a metaphor for something else, resulting in a novel which illuminates a social commentary on our modern day society.I love Francesca Lia Block's writing and always have. Her words are just so poetic, so lyrical, and her descriptions so apt, interesting and thought provoking that you just savor every word and every sentence. Her metaphors and allegories weave the story together and the characters, the scenery, the dialog, everything just seems to sparkle.Because it so open to interpretation, different people will probably get different things out of this book. But, some of the main themes are love and acceptance, the illusions of eternal youth and eternal life, the folly of merely chasing dreams and the hard truth of working to realize them. Don't go someplace to have magical things happen to you, make your own magic happen yourself.As for the rest, you'll have to read to find out!And, yes, this is the first half of a two book story. The sequel is Primavera.

Ecstasia is the name of the band that Calliope, her brother Rafe, her lover Dionisio, and her friend Paul have formed. They live in the city of Elysia, where life is a non-stop fantasy, but when you grow old you go to underground to die. Calliope and Rafe's mother and father both went under while the two were young, but Calliope has visions that bring her and her brother to explore the land below.I loved the way Block combined elements of Greek Mythology with a sort of steam-punk, futuristic backdrop. The main characters seem to vaguely represent certain characters from Mythology, as well as the city of Elysia and it's counterpart, Under. The imagery from the book was very real, yet also hazy and confused at times, as if the lights and sounds of the city were getting in the way of what was really there. I loved the otherwordly feel of her descriptions, mixed with the poetry of the songs the band played. There is a lot going on in this book, and I definitely read it slowly to try to pick up on all the hints and references Block was making.

Ecstasia was another Block masterpiece. Many of the readers I have talked to simply tell me that

there is too much going on, all fluff and no substance - I'm afriad I must whole heartedly disagree. The text is hard to understand at first because it is stuffed with metaphors and other literary devices that sometimes trick the mind. I have read Ecstasia a few times and it gets better with each read. You have to look between the lines with this novel. The message is not instantly clear, but this is common in her writing. The reader must go through a mental journey with the characters. They need to expierence the love, the want, the fear, the pain, the challenge that the members of Ecstasia do. The characters themselves are wonderful, with their faults and strenghts, and sheer will to live outside a world of age restriction. The words are beautiful, like always; the descriptions, the poetry/songs, the emotions, the everything. Once again Block makes me wish I could weild such skill with a pen. This is an amazing read, wonderful in so many ways. I highly reccomend it to those willing to take on a literary challenge. If you thought it was garbage well, let me quip this "One mans trash is another mans treasure", and this novel, once given a good twice over, glistens like gold.

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Ecstasia

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