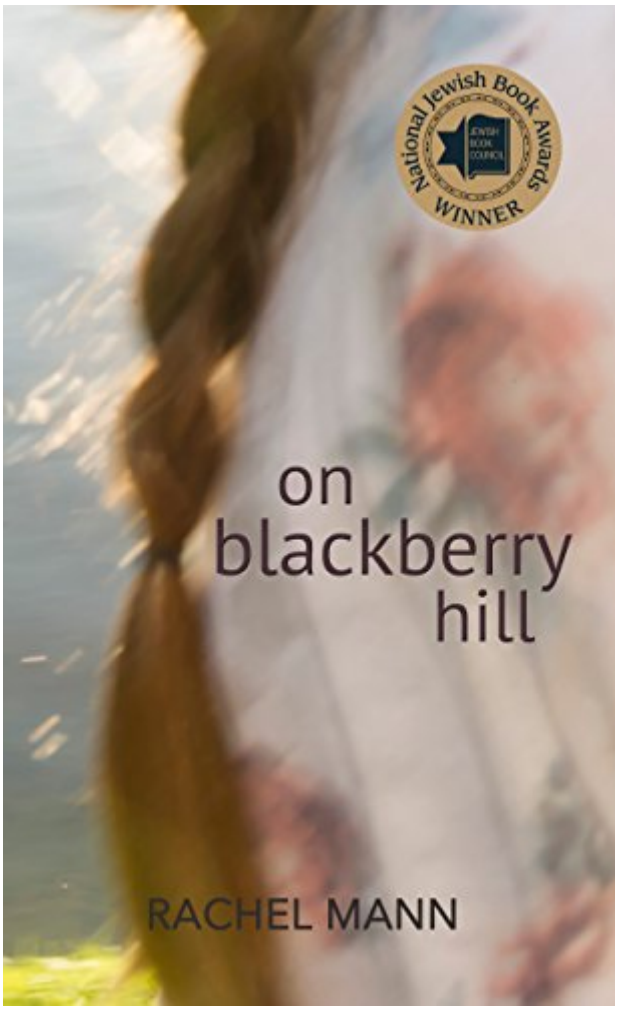
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On Blackberry Hill



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Synopsis

Winner of the National Jewish Book Award for Young Adult Literature'Not only is the writing exquisite, but it had me in floods of tears by the end. I loved this book and so will you!' Justine Solomons, Byte the Book'Jewish summer camp is the perfect setting for a multi-generational novel: a daughter connects with her late mother through names etched in the bleachers, murals in the dining hall, and a mysterious stranger. Mann's compelling story and artful writing make this an excellent read for teens and adults.' Sarah Bunin Benor, winner, Sami Rohr Choice Award for Jewish Literature'Mann weaves a poignant tale of loss and discovery that carefully builds to a hopeful, satisfying ending.' Wiley Blevins, author One daughter. One mother. One summer camp. Twenty years apart.If only Reena could stay in the city, instead of spending the last summer before high school at her cousin's Jewish sleepaway camp. From morning prayer to Color War to the social pecking order, she is lost from the start, and her cousin Lila is no ally. While working on her survival skills, Reena begins to find clues of the mother she never knew.Twenty years earlier, Naomi stands on a dock in the middle of the lake. Just finished with her first year of college, camp feels too small to contain her giant dreams. Her sister Mara is all about finding a man, but Naomi believes something more awaits.A mysterious, barefoot stranger appears on a hill, offering blessings and songs. Can he guide Naomi to her future? Can he help Reena untangle her past?

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Customer Reviews

This beautiful story is so full of life and love, or the search for love and acceptance within a seemingly fractured family set primarily at summer camp. Full of mystery and surprise On Blackberry Hill is ultimately moving and funny. Full of identifiable real characters finding their place in the world. I loved it. A perfect read year 'round but especially during the Summer.

A beautiful, affecting story that stayed with me long after I finished reading it. Though marketed as a young adult novel, the novel's elegant structure and deep meditations on love, loss, loyalty, spirituality, feminism, and the ties that bind us in friendship and in family dynamics (between sisters, between parents and rebellious children, between in-laws, to name only a few) is certain to appeal to adults, whether they've spent any time in a Jewish sleepaway camp (the story's main setting, and, one could argue, a character in and of itself) or not.I read the entire book in one fell swoop, on a long afternoon, and thoroughly enjoyed my visit to Camp Tovah in the process.

13 year old's review: This book is trying to find where you stand within your family, with your friends and with your religion. The book goes between the mother's and daughter's perspectives and the ending is satisfying. The story stayed with me after I finished the book, I kept thinking about it. Highly recommended!45 year old mom's review: This book is beautifully written, sensitive but not mushy or predictable. The characters are believable and likeable; the story grapples with religious themes in a meaningful and non-judgmental way. Great young adult fiction. Enjoy!

I have to admit that I've never been to Jewish Summer Camp, or any other summer camp for that matter. Nonetheless, this concise, elegant novel did a terrific job of evoking adolescence as well as the charms and challenges of camp life. I was especially touched by the portrayal of family life, and death. The fond hopes of mothers that their offspring will be life-long companions aren't always realized. Still there is room for accommodation and forgiveness.I liked the Angel, too. We need more angels in this world, winged or without!

This book was so much fun to read! As a former camper and a summer camp staffer I found Mann's novel thoughtful and heartwarming. It was a real trip down memory lane as it reminded me so much of summers past! The book is appropriate for teens as well as adults and would be a great addition to anyone's summer reading list! If you ever went to camp or have kids at camp you must read this book!

Wonderful, engaging, thoughtful work - told from two unique, and interwoven, mother-daughter perspectives. Mann brings summer camp to life - and brings laughs and tears to those of us who ache to go back to our youthful days at camp. Great reading for pre/teen girls and moms alike, and should be required reading for summer camp counselors!

This book really has it all. Coming of age, love, friendship, family... but without any corniness or cliche. The dialogue is 100% authentic. I read it in 2 sittings; it was that good. One also does not have to be Jewish (I am not) to be completely absorbed by the story and characters. Rachel Mann is on fire!

I LOVED this book. It brought me right back to summer camp, and depicted relationships, summertime, and family dynamics so beautifully and perfectly. It's not just a good summer-read; it's good for any season!

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