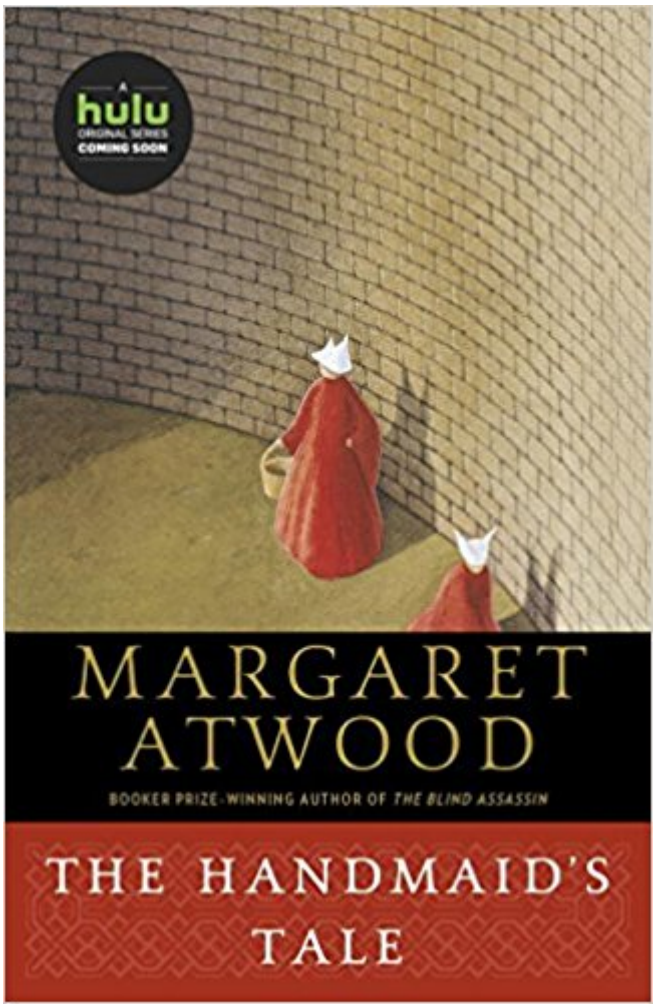
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The Handmaid's Tale



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Synopsis

From the bestselling author of Alias Grace and the MaddAddam trilogy, here is the #1 New York Times bestseller and seminal work of speculative fiction from the Booker Prize-winning author.Now a Hulu series starring Elizabeth Moss, Samira Wiley, and Joseph Fiennes. Includes a new introduction by Margaret Atwood. Offred is a Handmaid in the Republic of Gilead. She may leave the home of the Commander and his wife once a day to walk to food markets whose signs are now pictures instead of words because women are no longer allowed to read. She must lie on her back once a month and pray that the Commander makes her pregnant, because in an age of declining births, Offred and the other Handmaids are valued only if their ovaries are viable. Offred can remember the days before, when she lived and made love with her husband Luke; when she played with and protected her daughter; when she had a job, money of her own, and access to knowledge. But all of that is gone nowÃ¢â ¬Â¦. Funny, unexpected, horrifying, and altogether convincing,Ã Â The Handmaid's TaleÃ Â is at once scathing satire, dire warning, and literary tour de force.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In a startling departure from her previous novels (Lady Oracle , Surfacing), respected Canadian poet and novelist Atwood presents here a fable of the near future. In the Republic of Gilead, formerly the United States, far-right Schlafly/Falwell-type ideals have been carried to extremes in the monotheocratic government. The resulting society is a feminist's nightmare: women are strictly controlled, unable to have jobs or money and assigned to various classes: the chaste, childless

Wives; the housekeeping Marthas; and the reproductive Handmaids, who turn their offspring over to the "morally fit" Wives. The tale is told by Offred (read: "of Fred"), a Handmaid who recalls the past and tells how the chilling society came to be. This powerful, memorable novel is highly recommended for most libraries. BOMC featured alternate. Ann H. Fisher, Radford P.L., Va.Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"A novel that brilliantly illuminates some of the darker interconnections between politics and sex . . . Just as the world of Orwell’s 1984 gripped our imaginations, so will the world of Atwood’s handmaid!"Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •TheÃ Â Washington Post Book World"The Handmaid’s Tale deserves the highest praise."Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •San Francisco Chronicle"Atwood takes many trends which exist today and stretches them to their logical and chilling conclusions . . . An excellent novel about the directions our lives are taking . . . Read it while it’s still allowed."Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •Houston Chronicle"Splendid."Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •Newsweek

I first read The Handmaid’s Tale around the time it was published in 1986. I was just 22, a sheltered young thing. I recall wondering what everyone was raving about, since only the top story layer of the book connected for me. Now, with decades of life experience behind me, I see that this is a deeply moving, complex book. I’m so glad I decide to read again just at this moment in time.You would think that something written thirty years ago would seem dated. But that wasn’t the case for me. If anything, I think there are so many things imagined in the book which have become more possible today instead of less. In a sense, this is a cautionary tale that a large art of the population ignored or misunderstood.More than ever, we should be reading this and sharing it with the young women in our lives. And discussing it with them, so they see more of the depth than my 22-year-old self did.Margaret Atwood imagined a world where a totalitarian power went into action against foreign zealots and their own people’s "wanton" behavior. This power was meant to make the world better, but it also created a world of highly distinct "haves" and "have nots."She says, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Better never means better for everyone... It always means worse, for some.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• It might be just me (although I suspect not) but this sure sounds like what we often hear today on the news and in conversations.Reading this at the end of 2016 after a brutal election cycle, the following quote from Atwood seems both wise and horrible. Have we not been hearing about people who feel invisible?ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“We were the people who were not in the papers. We lived in the blank white spaces at the edges of print. It gave us more freedom. We lived in the gaps between the stories"Atwood’s Republic of Gilead gives people one-dimensional

functions. Correction - she gives women one-dimensional functions. They are Wives, Marthas, Handmaids, Aunts, or Unwomen (and a few more which would be spoilers). Unwomen are rebels, likely to be banished to the toxic waste dumps of the colonies. Everyone else plays a part in the singular female focus - procreation. As I read, I wondered what category I'd fall into should I have the bad luck to land in Gilead. The women there have no layers of life or experience. They are expected only to fulfill their narrow role.Why is procreation such a focus? Because of falling birth rates among white people. This book doesn't discuss race except one small spot near the end. It's as if there is only one race in Gilead. And the only people in that race with any power are men.The main character, Offred (literally of Fred named after the Commander she serves) is the perfect blend of weak and strong. She tells us of her past and says, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“When we think of the past it's the beautiful things we pick out. We want to believe it was all like that.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• But her life is not beautiful. And Atwood straddles the line of past and present, sending back and forth in a way that keeps you wanting more. Just as Offred wants more. Just as we all want more for ourselves and the generations of women coming after us.If you read this book long ago, pick it up again. If you haven't yet read it, move it up to the top of your TBR. Buy it for friends. Buy for your sons and daughters. Use it to teach and to learn what kind of world we could be if we stop valuing the diversity of all people.

I bought this book as a present for one of my friends since I already read it and got to love it! Canadian Author Margaret Atwood depicted dystopian society in this novel, formed because of lack of fertility, where antifeminism has reached its peak. Though the book is pretty dark, it makes the reader think a lot and is very fast to read. Once started, one hardly can stop. It is a remarkable piece.The book is written using first person narrative technique, which helps to empathize and get connected with the main hero, the handmade Offglen even better. There are many parallels drawn between The Republic of Gilead and The US, but nowhere does it explicitly state that the described state is The US. There is a lot of symbolism and imagery, which make the novel rich and beautiful. Every other time going through it new things get connected in readers mind and develops a deeper understanding of this novel. I particularly enjoyed the very last part, but will not spoil for readers. It's definitely must read!I ordered paperback. The book came in great packaging and in great condition.Update: May 28, 2017I bought the book again for another one of my acquaintances. The book is regaining new popularity and "second life" in a sense, since the recent situation in the world and especially in the US is finding a suite with the depictions of the book, unfortunately. I would recommend this book now more then ever to read, analyze, understand and fight for the life you

would like to live and for the world you would like to live in.

I was struck by the possibility that the world of Gilead could have been real at some point in history, it might have well been real which is even more striking. The author is a genius developer of thoughts and whishpers of the deepest kind, a picturesque illusion that the human soul can be salvaged in the face of horrific events. The amasing resilience of the mind and body against psychological rape of values and norms. I honestly could not decide which was more worrisome: finding consolation in the restrictive yet previsible routine of the day as a Housemaid or the revolutionary thoughts and actions determining perhaps a slight change for better or worse in the regime.This looks like a feminist movement led by men, thoroughly gone awry due to the greediness for lust and body control. Yet there were so many women who were adepts and helping, or was this also an illusion to keep the women slightly in charge as if the regime itself was created for their own good.I have many many thoughts provoked by this book and endless questions and musings. It is for sure a must read and a genius work, no matter how horrific the actions and the ideas depicted.

The plot lagged on occasion, but the overall story was interesting. I especially like the ending, which reviews the manuscript in the manner we are wont to do, trying to give cohesion to partial documents and records, to make of them a cohesive life.

Loved this book. Beautifully written and frighteningly real. You can really believe that society could disintegrate to such a level. My only complaint is Ms Atwood has left us hanging. Can’t wait for the next book.

A classic. Perfect and imaginative and slightly scary how relevant. You’ll want more at the end. I read 20yrs ago and then reread it and it was nice to reread w life perspective. One of my favorite books.

I did not read this book when it first came out and saw an ad for the Hulu Series, so I bought the book. Interesting view of a possible future world but somewhat scary! White Wings!

Read this book back and the 1980"s and wanted to read it again before watching the series. This is a very thought provoking book.

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