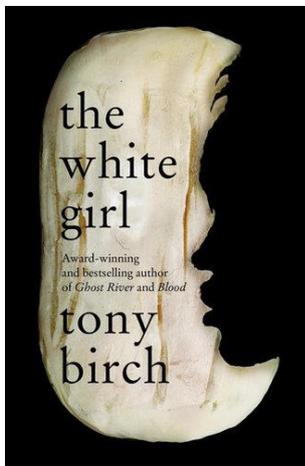


The White girl by Tony Birch

Reviewed by Debbie



The White Girl is a beautifully written story of the lives of Aboriginal people during the Stolen Generation. I loved the simplicity in which it was written. As we all know it was a horrible time for many Aboriginal people during those times and this topic can be very hard to hear and read about.

But Tony Birch has written The White Girl with a lot of respect and sensitivity and has provided an insight into how it would have been for many Aboriginal people. Odette has taken care of her 13 year old granddaughter, since she was 1 years old when her mother, Odette's daughter, left town with only a note to say for her mother to take care of her daughter Sissy. Odette had no idea where she had gone or whether she would return. Although it soon becomes evident that her intention was not to return.

It was beautiful to read the wonderful relationship and respect Odette and Sissy developed for each other. The many adverse situations they found themselves in, through no fault of their own other than being Aboriginal. It showed the strength, resilience and love they had for each other and those close to them.

Even though we have heard of the many stories around the Stolen Generation I felt that Tony Birch captured the intimacy and heartache that many Aboriginal people must have faced during these terrible times. It was told in a very caring and simple way that kept you wanting to read more and find out what was going to happen to both Odette and Sissy. It was also confronting at times to think that we, white Australians, could have been (and unfortunately at times still are) so ignorant and self-righteous about the welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I highly recommend The White Girl and as Tony Birch states in his Authors Note, hope that the love and strength of the Aboriginal people who suffered is acknowledged by everyone who reads this book.

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