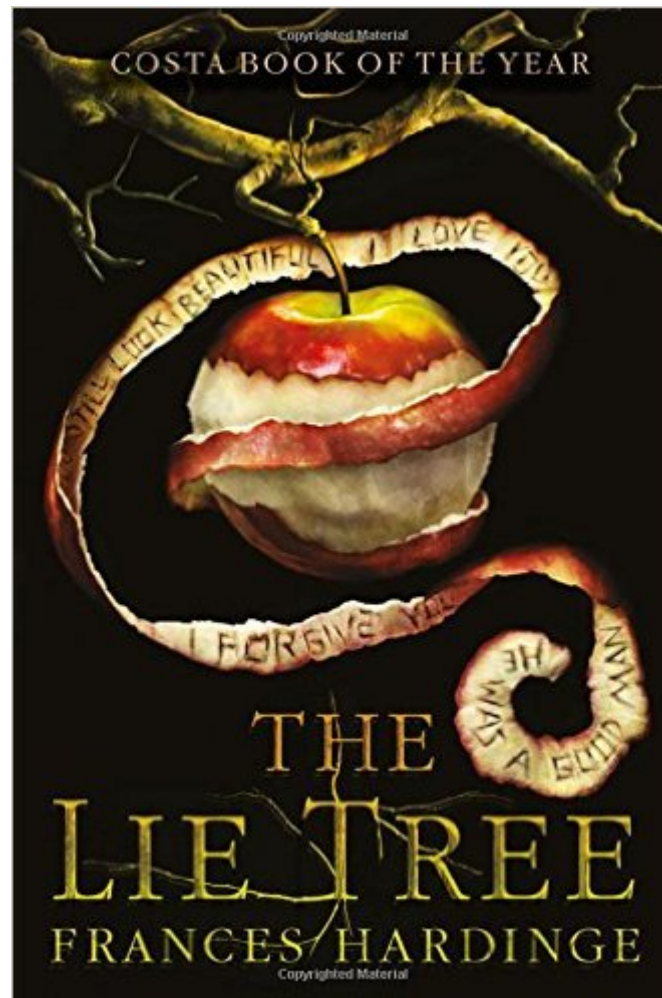


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The Lie Tree



Synopsis

Read this thought-provoking, critically acclaimed novel (6 starred reviews!!!) from Frances Hardinge, winner of the Costa Book of the Year, Costa Children's Book Award, and Horn Book-Boston Globe Award. Faith Sunderly leads a double life. To most people, she is reliable, dull, trustworthy—a proper young lady who knows her place as inferior to men. But inside, Faith is full of questions and curiosity, and she cannot resist mysteries: an unattended envelope, an unlocked door. She knows secrets no one suspects her of knowing. She knows that her family moved to the close-knit island of Vane because her famous scientist father was fleeing a reputation-destroying scandal. And she knows, when her father is discovered dead shortly thereafter, that he was murdered. In pursuit of justice and revenge, Faith hunts through her father's possessions and discovers a strange tree. The tree bears fruit only when she whispers a lie to it. The fruit of the tree, when eaten, delivers a hidden truth. The tree might hold the key to her father's murder—or it may lure the murderer directly to Faith herself. Frances Hardinge is the author of many acclaimed novels, including *Cuckoo Song*, which earned five starred reviews.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars See all reviews (30 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #21,688 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in Books > Teens > Mysteries & Thrillers > Historical #51 in Books > Teens > Mysteries & Thrillers > Fantasy & Supernatural #99 in Books > Teens > Mysteries & Thrillers > Mystery & Detective

Customer Reviews

The Lie Tree is an undeniably good book. But as a reader who has just retired from teaching children's literature at the university level for thirty-five years, I can't find any justification for characterizing The Lie Tree as children's book. The excruciating guilt its young protagonists shoulder for the cruelty of their elders paints a true picture of the guilt and responsibility that burdens so many children today without offering anything useful to mitigate that guilt. The past fifteen years

of children's literature is notable for historical fiction that is accessible to child readers without sacrificing complexity, controversy, and nuance. The Lie Tree is anything but accessible to children, and challenging for young adults, BUT it is must reading for millennials ignorant of the many on-going evolutions--spiritual, social, political, as well as scientific--Darwin's nineteenth-century discoveries sparked.

I am totally in love with this author. Her writing is beautiful, imaginative and I couldn't put The Lie Tree down. It had me breathlessly turning the pages till way past midnight. A YA novel it may be, but it is worth reading at any age. Her writing is crisp, but flowing, the words just seem to flow effortlessly from her pen. I won't detail the story, you'll just have to read it for yourself. It is enough to say that every young girl will find a bit of herself in the pages. It also encapsulates how women were thought to be less intelligent and capable than their male counterparts during the Victorian times, not to mention most of the past century as well. I highly recommend The Lie Tree for any and all age groups, both female and male. I can't believe I missed this author, but I won't in the future.

Faith appears to be a very somber and dutiful daughter to her father who is a clergyman and a natural history scholar. When their family is forced to leave Kent for a small island, Faith discovers that her father's entire body of work has been discovered to be based on lies and that their family is disgraced. Faith desperately wants to be seen as more than a burden to her father, so she helps him move a valuable specimen to a secret sea cave reached by boat. Soon afterwards, her father dies and people suspect it was suicide. Only Faith thinks that it could have been murder and may have something to do with the tree they moved to the cave. It's a tree that only bears fruit when a lie is whispered to it and grows in strength as the lie grows too. Now Faith is the only one who knows where the tree is and that may be enough to have her become a target too. Harding's writing is breathtaking. She uses unique and unusual metaphors that are compelling and vivid, further building her world of lies, distrust and isolation. At times the writing is so beautiful that it stops the reader so that it can be reread again. At other times, the pace rockets forward, the reader clinging on and whooping along. Harding has created in the tree itself a beautiful metaphor for lies, the fruit they create and the power they can bring. Throughout the strictness of Victorian society is at play, creating a world of rules that must not be altered or broken. In that world is Faith who must figure out how to solve a murder that only she believes has happened in a society where she is to be quiet and docile lest her reputation be forever ruined. As the book continues, readers will be carefully shown their own sexism about female characters to

great effect. This is feminist writing at its finest. Stunning writing, a compelling young heroine and a world filled with rules and lies, this is one amazing read that mixes fantasy, historical fiction and a big dash of horror. Appropriate for ages 10-13.

The Lie Tree is a wonderfully imagined novel with one of the most engaging heroines in the YA genre. The Reverend Erasmus Sunderly has fled, family in tow, to the remote island of Vane to escape the consequences of a mysterious scandal. Daughter of the house, teen-aged Faith Sunderly, must find out why, no matter the cost. Thus begins a tale of intrigue, murder and deceit that will catch and keep your attention until the last word.

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