



The Memory Thief

Rachel Keener

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

The Memory Thief

Rachel Keener

The Memory Thief Rachel Keener

"Burning down Black Snake trailer was easy. The hard thing was walking away, when what I wanted most was to watch it die... "

When Angel sets fire to her childhood home, it isn't the end—it's the beginning. Left with nothing but a few memories in her pocket, Angel escapes into the fields of tobacco, the only place she has ever felt safe. Hidden by those green-gold leaves, she sets her eyes on the mountains and believes someone waits for her there. Angel will do whatever she has to until she finds her. She longs to empty her pockets, hand over the answers to what became of her, and whisper, *This is my story*.

As Angel journeys toward the mountains, Hannah is struggling to tell her own story. The daughter of missionaries who follow the rules of a small and strict religious sect, modesty is prized above all else. Wearing floor length polyester skirts, and never cutting her hair, Hannah is forced to live a separate life from her peers. Until the summer her family moves to James Island, South Carolina. Slowly, Hannah begins to escape the confines of her strict upbringing, and soon makes a choice that will forever change the course of her life.

As these two women's paths connect, Hannah's past will prove to mean everything to Angel's future.

The Memory Thief Details

Date : Published March 12th 2010 by Center Street (first published 2010)

ISBN : 9781599951126

Author : Rachel Keener

Format : Paperback 370 pages

Genre : Fiction, Drama, Novels

 [Download The Memory Thief ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Memory Thief ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Memory Thief Rachel Keener

From Reader Review The Memory Thief for online ebook

Vivian says

What a wonderful surprise it is to select a book, serendipitously, and have it turn out to be a gem. Browsing the new fiction rack at the library recently, the title of this book jumped out at me and said "Pick me! Pick me!" So I did. This is a new to me author. I've never heard of her, never read her debut novel, and never read any reviews of the book before taking it home.

I was immediately pulled into the story. Angel and Hannah are such wonderful characters. The book is very well written and the story is sad and haunting. I knew the direction in which the story was heading, but it did not detract one bit from the journey. I did not want to stop reading, nor did I want the book to end. I love Southern fiction, so it was another plus for me that the book is set in the South.

I've put Ms. Keener's debut novel on my Wish list and can't wait to see what this very talented writer does next. Can't recommend it highly enough.

Sheri says

Without telling details of this complicated, intricate story, let me say that it was: descriptive scenery-wise. I felt as if I was right there. The main characters Hannah and Angel were very well developed and believable. The story is sad without being morbid. Beautifully told, I read about love, shame, pride and the entire gamut of human emotion. A treasure of a book.

There was a point in the story where a lightbulb went on in my head and I thought, "Now I have to read it again!" Oh my.

If you're looking for a light beach read, this isn't it. This is darkly lovely and picturesque.

Debbie says

"The Memory Thief" is a general fiction novel about two (well, actually, three or more) women who have to deal with the results of abusive childhoods. Hannah and her sister grew up with a mother who controlled every aspect of her daughters' lives in the name of her love for Hannah. Angel and her sister grew up with indifferent parents who were usually drunk, physically abusive, had affairs, and encouraged them to steal.

The novel was full of pain and disappointment. It did this in a very well-written way, but just don't expect something light or happy. It did have a satisfying ending.

The characters were complex and realistic, and they dealt with realistic problems. The world-building was excellent, bringing the story alive in my imagination. The pacing was very good and so was how the author slowly revealed how the two stories (told in alternating chapters) came together at the end. Symbolism was subtly woven into the story.

There were some vague references to the "Christian sect" that Hannah's family belonged to and to their attending several churches (where the focus was on how different these people acted than those at her own church). It wasn't "preachy."

Sex was vaguely implied. There was some "he cussed" style bad language and a very minor amount of actual cuss words. Overall, I'd recommend this novel as well-written, fairly clean reading.

I won this book in a Twitter giveaway by the publisher.

Daphne says

Great story! Great writing! The characters are strong. The story shows how one person's control can cause great strife in the lives of other people.

Gina says

I would rather give this 2.5 stars. I can't really put my finger on what it was about this book, but it just didn't grab me. It's not a bad book by any means because I enjoyed the author's style and depth of writing. The characters of Hannah and Angel were well developed and the alternating perspectives of the two was complimentary to the story and kept it interesting. However, it was easy to figure out where the story was going long before you got there. That's not necessarily a bad thing if there's enough in between to make it worth your while, but I eventually lost interest. I enjoyed the author's other book, *The Killing Tree*, much better.

Kathleen says

This was a Can't-put-it-down book, caused some sleep deprivation! Reasons I liked it:

From my part of the world, I've lived in the Carolina Low Country and the southern mountains.

An unusual "villain" - won't say more on that subject.

And it kept me guessing.

You can tell by my book list, I'm a big fan of mysteries; while this is not remotely a "mystery" as far a genre goes, it does tackle mysteries of life. The two dysfunctional family stories roll drunkenly toward each other, and you feel like a spectator to an accident - can't stand it, can't look away.

Allison says

Hannah and Angel lead two completely separate lives, each dealing with her own struggles of identity and family. However as events converge, their meeting becomes inevitable.

Upon finishing the book, my first thought was that the title is misleading. It gives far too much importance to a secondary character who, yes, is pivotal to the plot, but does not deserve foremost billing.

Keener's two main characters travel through independent timelines and lives. While I recognized her desire to keep the reader wondering what the connection was, I thought it took too long to arrive at the conclusion (although perhaps it was a sign of my own distractedness that I didn't draw the obvious conclusion before it was stated). By having two main characters whose stories are completely separated for most of the book, it is

hard for the reader to focus, and I found myself more interested in Hannah's sections than those relating to Angel.

I will grant the plot to be compelling. However, it is riddled with caricatures and stereotypes that could have been fleshed out into three-dimensional characters that don't elicit as much scoffing from the reader. And other secondary characters that were developed and seemed to be important disappear without fanfare.

Overall, I'll stick this on the beach-shelf. Perfect for when I'm looking for something not-too difficult or entertaining. As far as something I'll recommend from the mountaintops – not so much.

(posted at <http://www.read-all-over.net/fiction/...>)

Jessie Weaver says

When we find Angel, she's burning down the trailer in which she grew up. Determined to find what she's missing, she hid in her beloved tobacco plants before leaving town.

Hannah is the daughter of two Holy Rollers, made to dress in long sleeves and long skirts, not knowing any other life - until her family spends a summer on a South Carolina island.

The Memory Thief goes back and forth between the narrative of these two women, never quite allowing their paths to cross and leaving the reader mystified as to their connection until halfway through the novel. Keener's gorgeous language, perfect descriptions of Southern land and washing seafood pots, made me incapable of putting down the book.

While I'm longing to tell you more, I don't want to disturb the mystery Keener's constructed, and I urge you to go snatch up The Memory Thief.

Beth says

Angel, a young girl burns down her family's trailer after her mother and father leave her and heads for mountains on a search for what has always been missing in her life. Hannah, a girl brought up as the daughter of missionaries, following strict religious rules of modesty, begins to break those bonds when she her family moves to James Island. The direction of her life is forever changed. This book was fascinating and well written. The main characters were well written. I enjoyed the beginning and middle of the book very much but found the part leading up to the end of the book a little less believable, at first. Therefore I only gave it four stars.

MK says

In *The Memory Thief*, Rachel Keener lays out an intricate tragedy of two people who have been searching for each other since the day they first met and have been kept apart by a misguided albeit well intentioned third party. At times the novel stutters in its story telling but overall a beautifully told tale.

There is nothing I love to read more than stories about the emotional scars of humans, except if it is a story

about emotional scars that can eventually be healed. This story does just that. I have to say that my favorite character in this story was Hannah. A beautiful, sheltered girl, Hannah mistakes lust for love and turns inward over the next several years as she tries to cope with what she has done as well as what was done to her. Her story was heartbreaking and certain scenes will play in my head long after I have closed the back cover to this book.

I would recommend it to anyone who loves a story where the characters are flawed but never far from redemption.

Cheryl says

Hachette Book Group

The Memory Thief by Rachel Keener (Rating--5)

Published by Center Street division of the Hachette Book Group

ISBN: 978-1-59995-112-6

At the request of The Hachette Book Group, a PB copy was sent, at no cost to me, for my honest opinion.

Synopsis: (portions from the book's back cover) When Angel sets fire to her childhood home, it isn't the end—it's the beginning. Left with nothing but a few memories in her pocket, she escapes into the safety of the tobacco fields. She sets her eyes on the mountains where she believes someone waits for her. Angel longs for the answers to what became of her, and whisper, "This is my story." Hannah struggles to tell her own story. The daughter of missionaries who follow the rules of a small and strict religious sect. Slowly, Hannah begins to escape the confines of her strict upbringing and soon makes a choice that will forever change the course of her life. Hannah's past will prove to mean everything to Angel's future.

My Thoughts/Opinion: A poignant and moving story of two (2) girls, who are at the age of adulthood, that make choices that will change their lives. Do choices made, sins, guilt, lies, upbringing of the past form the present and alter the future? The author has an unique writing style whereas she writes a somber plot but allows the reader to see the good and root for the characters as they progress on their journey. She also incorporates a southern dialect and adds a few surprises that this reader did not see coming. A very good read. Highly recommend.

Rating: 5 star

Sandi says

What a terribly depressing story! As told by several woman and how their lives are connected even though, they don't seem to be related at all. One sad and lonely girl, her sister and their lives lived so differently than their peers. Another girl deserted by her family, left to fend for herself after a poor and desolate childhood. Then behind it all a strict mother pulling the strings, making these girls life stories have an ending that suits her, using her checkbook to gain absolution. Selfish and overbearing. Just so very sad!

Jennifer says

This is a damn fine book. The narrative is engaging and the author's style is feminine and raw at the same time. The mother character makes you want to throw the book in the freezer (is is well written, but such a bitchachi), but Hannah and Angel are wonderfully drawn and developed in such a way that makes you want

to see the ending that happens, happen. I wish more from the father character than I get, but, the novel is not about him. It is just unfortunate because he seems such an influence on Hannah's life, and yet, he is hardly a drop in the story's bucket. He is physically and emotionally ineffectual by the ending of this book, which is a short-sighted choice on the author's part as it doesn't develop the relationship between the father and mother enough to explain it away. Nevertheless, I couldn't put it down.

Corinne Edwards says

When Angel sets fire to the trailer that was her home and escapes into the surrounding tobacco fields, her greatest hope is for a chance to tell the story to the person she believes is out there waiting for her. The few trinkets she takes with her are the remnants of her past that pack the punches of the hurt she's endured. And while Angel is at the crux of our story, we also meet Hannah, the daughter of two missionaries. Her incredibly strict upbringing as a long-skirted "Holy Roller" doesn't prepare her for her sixteenth summer on the Carolina coast, where suddenly all the rules she was taught fly in the face of the joy she discovers.

What is the relationship between these two people? It didn't long to figure it out, but I loved the mystery of discovering the intricacies of how it happened and how it would resolve itself in the end. There is so much deception, so many heartbreaks - everyone in this book is hurting. Usually that would make a book drag and depress me, but somehow, THIS one didn't. Angel's "trailer trash" upbringing, Hannah's way of dealing with her choices, it made for such interesting reading - I believed it. I believed their pain and their different ways of suffering it. I ached for Angel and her tobacco field solace.

This book just flows, not always in a straight line - we keep switching plots until finally things converge, but I never felt lost in the shuffle. I let myself get carried away by their grief, hoping at some point that things would resolve. And even though I would've liked a tiny bit more at the end, I also see why it works perfectly. I'm giving this book my "comfy nest" award because it's been a good long time since I've read such a harsh story that was written with such grace.

Pamela says

This is one that doesn't grab for several chapters, but is well worth the effort. This would be a good discussion book, too, since some of the ideas in it are quite controversial. The narratives of the daughter of missionaries and a young teen overlap to tell a story of a mother's loss and the child's deprivation. When the two finally come together, it is only after severe struggles for both. Think *The Memory Keeper's Daughter*---gone wrong.
