



The Guardian Angel's Journal

Carolyn Jess-Cooke

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After her death, a woman is sent back to life as her own guardian angel in this lyrical first novel that examines questions of fate, free will, regret, and hope.

Returned to earth as her own guardian angel, Margot Delacroix, now named Ruth, watches herself, through her own birth, a troubled childhood, her first love, her son's birth, and, ultimately, her own untimely death. As she passes through this second chance at life, she must re-experience and record her biggest mistakes and her deepest regrets. As she relives her life, Ruth tries to change it and, in the end, prevent her own death. Ruth also tries to prevent Margot from ever falling in love with her husband Toby -- and eventually falls back in love with him herself.

A love story that proves that love is stronger than death, *The Guardian Angel's Journal* is a rich, lyrical novel that examines the questions of fate, free will, faith, and hope. This story asks readers to consider what they would change about the life they've already lived.

The Guardian Angel's Journal Details

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Author : Carolyn Jess-Cooke

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ILoveBooks says

Monday, April 25, 2011 The Guardian Angel's Journal: Carolyn Jess-Cooke

Admittedly, when I picked this book up I was afraid it was going to be about calling people to believe in angels...and not much else content. However, I was pleasantly surprised.

The main character, Margot, has just died. Her life was not particularly well-spent; one may even consider her life "bad". She has a chance to redeem herself; she can become a guardian angel. This is where the novel gets interesting. She becomes a guardian angel to herself, seeing herself being born (bad memory), watching through her orphanage years (more bad memories) and so on. I liked how the author handled the other guardian angels in the book, they could have been "holier than thou", but instead they were humble and reminded me a little of Mother Teresa. The interaction between a guardian angel and his/her ward is intriguing, the guardian angel allows for free will, but still attempts to guide. Throughout the novel, Margot re-experiences all of her bad memories interspersed with some good ones. She has the opportunity to make several different choices and, I believe, feel as if her life is fuller.

The ending was both shocking and expected. I was glad this novel didn't leave a cliff-hanger, but I wanted to read more about Margot's story. This book brings awareness of how some foster children and orphaned children are treated-not to say all experience certain atrocities, but that some do and those children should not have to experience them at all. The way the book was written flowed quite well, the vocabulary was easy to understand, and the reader really knows Margot and her living self at the end of the story. I really enjoyed this book and would recommend it to young adults/adults who like reading about the possibilities of the after-life.

Nezzo says

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Ana Luisa says

Acabei este livro com uma lágrima no canto do olho! Um livro emotivo, romântico e que demonstra claramente o quanto a força de um verdadeiro amor pode ser mais forte que a própria morte. Margot, é uma mulher complicada, com um passado ainda mais complicado que de um momento para o outro é assassinada numa suite do Ritz. Quando chega ao céu é lhe dada uma oportunidade que julgava impossível, ser anjo da guarda de si própria. Viu-se a nascer, viu-se a crescer...e a voltar a cometer os mesmos erros. Por diversas vezes tentou alterar os factos, mas há coisas que nem mesmo os anjos podem alterar...a vontade de Deus. Não vou contar mais, iria estragar a surpresa, a única coisa que posso dizer é que irão enredar numa viagem intensa pela vida de Margot, irão descobrir as razões por detrás de alguns acontecimentos inexplicáveis para ela e também irão descobrir que afinal talvez não estejamos tão sozinhos como pensamos, que talvez o nosso

Universo seja um pouco mais povoado.

Adorei também o presente que este livro trazia, um pequeno fio dourado com um pendente em forma de cadeado. Parabéns à ASA pela capa maravilhosa e por essa pequena prenda, só de olhar para a capa dá vontade de levar aquela menina pequena para casa e enchê-la de mimo. Vejo nessa menina um pouco da Margot, foi uma capa muito bem conseguida e que se enquadra muito bem na história do livro.

Deixo aqui uma frase que se encontra no final do livro, espero que ao lê-la fiquem ainda com mais vontade de devorar este livro: "Todos os dias vejo os bastidores das cenas, das experiencias que estava destinada a viver, as pessoas que estava destinada a amar, e quero pegar numa caneta celestial e alterar tudo aquilo. Quero ser eu a escrever o meu guião."

Lisa Carlson says

One of the best thrills for me is finding an unexpected great book at the library. This story is a fresh spin on the subject of guardian angels. A subject I tend to find more plausible, comforting and safe than astrology or tarot card reading. This is the story of a young woman who dies and comes back as a guardian angel. The writing is effervescent, haunting and thought-provoking. Contrary to other reviews the ending doesn't feel rushed and follows in the thread of all the other unexpected moments. I read this slow because I'm always looking for excellent writing and a story that provides the reader with something out of the ordinary. As far as I'm concerned this book delivers and I'll look forward to the next novel from this self-deprecating author who states in her acknowledgments " her chocolate dipped gratitude." Bravo!

Melissa says

A fantastic and original story. Four stars because of the problems, which were that the last two chapters were rushed and tedious, not living up to the promise the rest of the book held for it's conclusion. I absolutely love the way the character dies, the randomness of it. I was ready for something akin to the tragedies and injustices of the earlier part of the book. The writing was good, straight-forward, emotionally powerful and direct, with poetic gems peppered in in just the right amount.

The concept of the story was one of the main wow factors for me in the first page and I was hooked on it from the very beginning. I wonder if the author made a mistake in making the early life of Ruth/Margot so Dickinson. The drama comes from the conflict of Ruth and Margot (and of Ruth being privy to an aspect of her early life to which we never have real access to), not so much from the tragic early life. I believe, with the authors writing ability and the whole concept of the plot, that the book would have been as successful had the author chosen to use a more believable/relatable early life. The time line the author chose to work in was a great choice. Close enough in time to understand on a visceral level the consequences of what we were reading (and flesh out some of the mental images ourselves), but not too far back to lose connection with readers who haven't read their history.

Wish the writer had fleshed out more of Margot's life, instead of skipping whole decades and relying primarily on superficial drama of horrible life events and more on the loss of the tie between the two and the alternate fates that could result from the decisions, AND that she had really done more with the ending and drawn a more distinct line between Ruth's actions and the revolving morality of what she becomes in the end. The fact that she broke the 'rules' and made a bargain with the devil and is rewarded really (and painfully) twists the religious tradition within which the story lies. That incongruity is hard and another aspect of a badly done, rushed and unfulfilling ending. And yet, because of the whole novel concept I still want more.

Martina Flasarová says

Margot Delacroix p?ed?asn? zem?ela a ona se vrátila zpátky na zem v podob? and?la. Jmenuje se te? Ruth a jejím posláním je chránit samu sebe, tedy má chránit Margot Delacroix. Ruth je u svého zrození, jsme sv?dkem úmrtí její zdrogované matky krátce po porodu. Od té doby se život s Margot nemazlil - od krutého d?tství do doby dospívání s drogami, až do chvíle, kdy se Margot p?est?hovala do New Yorku a poznala tu svého manžela Tobyho. Narodil se jim syn Theo, ale manželství se Margot rozpadlo.

Ruth ví mnohem víc než Margot a snaží se ?ídit Margotiny kroky, ta ale její snahu ignoruje a jde si za svým cílem po hlav?. Ví, že Theo se stane vrahem a bude odsouzen na doživotí. Proto se rozhodne uzav?ít smlouvu s démonem a vzít do rukou syn?v osud.

Bude Ruth-Margot ve svém posláním úspěšná? Nebo ztratí nejen syna, ale i možnost dostat se do nebe a spat?it tak Boha?

"And?lé jsou duchové, ale nejsou jimi proto, že jsou and?lé. And?ly se stávají svým posláním." Sv. Augustin

Po p?e?tení anotace mi bylo jasné, že tuhle knihu si chci p?e?íst. A když jsem se do knihy za?etla, byla jsem p?ekvapená, jak se autorka zhostila tohoto and?lského tématu. Bylo to velmi zajímavé ?tení, kdy jsme sv?dkem toho, jak se Ruth snaží Margot všt?povat své myšlenky a popostrkovat ji k cíli, který neznamená konec.

Každý and?l musí ctít ?ty?i pravidla: *dohlížet, chránit, zaznamenávat a milovat*. Ruth se snaží pravidla dodržovat, ale protože ví, jak bude Margotin život pokračovat, snaží se jí cestu usnadnit, p?ípadn? ji nasm?rovat jiným sm?rem, ale její snaha je v?tšinou marná. Ruth je neš?astná a když se jí naskytne p?ležitost její osud zm?nit, využije toho i za cenu nejvyšší ob?ti.

Narozdíl od Ruth mi Margot byla nesympatická, nejvíce v dob?, kdy brala drogy a byla závislá na alkoholu. Ale v moment?, kdy, stejn? jako Ruth, m?la strach o Thea, jsem ji za?ala mít ráda.

Každý ?lov?k má and?la, ale i svého démona, který se pere o místo ve výsluní svého chrán?nce. Ob?as prob?hly v p?řbu bitvy o toto místo a vícemén? tyto boje byly vyrovnané.

Knize nem?žu nic vytknout, jen ?eské zpracování knihy. Tolik chyb jsem v žádné knížce ještě nevid?la. N?kolik p?íklad? za všechny: smých = smích, slarší = starší, kolpýtl = klopýtl. Nikdo nejsme neomylní, ale i (ne)chyby d?lají knihu. Kv?li tomuto jsem cht?la dát knize málo hv?zdi?ek, protože m? to docela roz?ilovalo, ale nakonec jsem díky p?řbu dala o hv?zdi?ku víc.

I když to bude znít divn?, hodn? se mi líbil záv?r p?řbu. Možná to n?komu bude p?ípadat jako hloupé a naivní, ale mn? se to opravdu líbilo a byl to jediný bod, kdy m? kniha opravdu dostala a tím vše, co bylo v knize napsáno, dostalo sv?j smysl.

Na záv?r bych cht?la podotknout, že by bylo opravdu hezké, kdyby m?l každý svého and?la strážného, který by vedl jeho kroky životem a napovídal mu. Ve spirituálně moc nev?ím, ale kdoví...

Shan says

Imagine that when your life ends you are sent back to Earth as a guardian angel. And not for just anyone but a guardian angel for yourself. Imagine you had the opportunity to observe and alter the life you have already lived.

This is what happens to Margot Delacroix when her tragic life comes to an end at the age of forty. Renamed Ruth, she is sent back to Earth to encourage Margot to make the right decisions, in the hopes of making her life a little easier. Not only does Ruth now have the opportunity to fix the wrongs of her life, but she also is able to understand why her life turned out the way it did. Will Ruth be able to give Margot the life she truly deserves, or will Margot continue to do things her own way and leave Ruth to be a witness to her own self-destruction?

The Guardian Angel's Journal by Carolyn Jess-Cooke is not the type of novel I would usually read. I tend to stay away from novels about angels and the spiritual realm that don't line up with my faith, and because of that I did hesitate for a second when contacted by the author to review this novel. But the premise of the book sounded so interesting, being ones own guardian angel, so I decided to give it a read. And I am so glad that I did.

This is a fantastic book. Right from the first page the reader is drawn into the book and captivated by Margot's story. Her life was full of tragedy, and as you read about her experiences you ache and hurt for the little girl, wishing that you could be her guardian angel to try and save her from these terrible things.

And as Margot grows older you feel for Ruth as she has to watch herself make difficult and terrible decisions, now having the wisdom to know better, but unable to convince herself to make a change.

There is so much wrapped up in this novel - death, abuse, addiction, angels and demons, tragedy, forgiveness, redemption - and yet it is a beautiful page-turner. This is a book that you will not be able to put down. I've read that Carolyn Jess-Cooke has been compared with Audrey Niffenegger and I can see why. The feeling I was left with after reading this book is the same great feeling I had after reading *The Time Traveller's Wife*. The Guardian Angel's Journal is an original and fresh take on the story of guardian angels and well worth a read.

Serendipity Reviews says

I am a complete sucker for an angel story and this one sent me straight to heaven. The idea behind this story is so original it blew my mind. I felt like I had stepped into a quantum physics experiment, where I could bend time backwards and forwards like an eraser.

Margot dies at the age of forty and is sent back to Earth to be her OWN GUARDIAN ANGEL! I kid you not. Doesn't that just defy mentality? Margot is renamed Beth and forced to accompany herself as she relives every minor detail of her past. Beth is allowed to encourage Margot into making the right decisions, but Margot is a force to be reckoned with and isn't about to listen carefully to her former self.

I refuse to give away any spoilers for this book. You just have to read it. I am actually rather desperate for someone else to read this book, so that I can talk about it openly without giving away any of the storyline.

This book felt like a 'before' and 'after' scenario. Just imagine being able to try and alter all of those incidents that you now know had disastrous effects on your life. Beth knows exactly how Margot's life will turn out

and does her utmost to try and change her actions, often without any change occurring. Margot's younger years are probably some of the worst you can imagine. So it is not surprising at all, the way Margot's life unfolds. The events of her son's life were definitely a direct consequence of Margot's emotional rollercoaster of a life. You could just envisage this vicious barbed wire circle of circumstances continually playing over and over again.

I found the writing to be utterly beautiful and often very poignant. Carolyn Jess-Cooke is extremely good at pulling your heart strings and twisted them into knots. This book is a real gut wrencher and a couple of times I felt my eyes welling up at some rather emotional and violent scenes. I felt every last tear and pain that the young Margot experienced right alongside her guardian angel Beth.

As Margot moves into adulthood, I wanted to dislike her, but everytime I reminded myself of the childhood she had led, I stepped away from those feelings.

Carolyn Jess-Cooke has been compared with Audrey Niffenegger and I can understand why. Her book is a fresh approach to angels with an original idea developed thoroughly, leaving you desperate to read more of her work.

The only thing I don't like about this book is that I didn't write it first! Only joking. I just can't wait to see what Carolyn writes next.

If you love angels like I do and believe that everything is not as it seems, then trust me when I tell you that you are going to want to read this book.

Nicola says

You can read my full review at: <http://nicolasbookshelf.blogspot.com/>

Ruth is sent back to earth to become her own guardian angel after her untimely death. It seems like the perfect opportunity to right all the wrongs of her life, but it quickly becomes clear that nothing is that simple, even for angels...

"The Guardian Angel's Journal" is incredibly well-written. Carolyn Jess-Cooke's imagery is just beautiful - the idea of water flowing down an angel's back, the metaphors she uses - the language is incredibly powerful and moving.

The characters are really likeable and you quickly become invested in them. Carolyn has an amazing gift - in just a few sentences she can craft a three-dimensional, realistic 'person', perfect in their imperfection. You are drawn right into the middle of the story and completely absorbed in the struggle of the protagonist - something which is difficult when the narrator is a supernatural character such as an angel.

This a really unusual, absorbing read that manages to weave the supernatural into a realistic storyline. It's hard to believe this is a debut novel and I can't wait to read Carolyn's next book!

Carol Peace says

I loved this book it makes you rethink your own life and how your decisions change the direction. The beginning of the book gives us Margot who is sent back to earth as Ruth who is her own guardian angel. I loved that she didn't really know how to react and we were stumbling along with her as she realised the rules and regulations of Angeldom. It hold your attention right till the end as thats when you get to know who killed her. Ruth thought she was changing the direction of 'Margots' life but would you remember every decision you made however trivial.A great read and an insight into our own lives.

Travelcrazyone says

I'm captivated, I haven't been able to put this one down this weekend! P.S. will write more once my book club has discussed it, don't want to give it all up yet!

The author's description of the angel's wings was so vivid, I could clearly see in my mind how beautiful they must have been and felt. Unfortunately, she was almost too good in her descriptive narrative that in the darker parts of the books, made the events feel too real, or close to home. As a parent, these parts were really hard to read through.

The optimist in me was hopeful that the guardian angels would have had MORE of an influence in the lives of those they cared for. I was frustrated that the story went in a different direction but this is my fault, not the authors!

The angel grew in ways she never had a chance to accomplish and learn as a human, a heavenly "Do-over" so to speak.

Sandy says

I cannot believe how bad this book is on every level: plot, style, theme, characters. I admit I do not like the theme - Lovely Bones did not thrill me but at least I could appreciate the writing and intention - but I did not understand what The Guradian Angel's Journal was tring to achieve. I stuck with it thinking all the time that something would be revealed and everything would fall into place but it didn't!

Brina says

Margot stirbt im Alter von nur 42 Jahren auf gewaltsame Weise. Da ihr Leben und das Schicksal es jedoch nie gut mit ihr meinten, bekommt sie die einmalige Chance, als ihr eigener Schutzengel auf sich selbst aufzupassen. Sie bekommt die Chance, ihr Leben zu verändern und in andere Richtung zu leiten. Aber kann sie es diesmal auch wirklich besser machen?

„Tagebuch eines Engels“ hat mich zuallererst mit seinem wunderschönen Cover beeindruckt. Da ich Engelgeschichten liebe, war es für mich Grund genug, dieses wunderbare Buch zu lesen.

Sehr überrascht hat mich der Schreibstil. Durch die Kurzbeschreibung habe ich eher eine sehr sensible

Geschichte erwartet, die die Autorin auf ruhige und sensible Art und Weise erzählt, doch hier findet man tatsächlich eine gewisse Ironie, die mir sehr gut gefallen hat.

Zwar habe ich schon viele Geschichten bzgl. Engel und Schutzengel gelesen, jedoch noch nicht in dieser Form. Hier wurde etwas – für mich – neues geschaffen, das Hand und Fuß hat, ohne zu überladen zu wirken.

Die Geschichte liest sich schnell und hat mich sehr schnell gepackt. Vor allem wie Margot als Schutzengel nun auf sich selbst aufpassen, finde ich sehr gut erzählt. Vor allem ihre Gefühle hierbei und ihre Reue bzgl. so mancher Männer finde ich sehr gut umgesetzt und sie wirkt sehr sympathisch und authentisch.

Aber die Geschichte unterhält nicht nur, sondern regt auch zum Nachdenken an. Wie sehr soll man auf sich achten? Verhält man sich gegenüber anderen immer richtig?

Die Covergestaltung gefällt mir sehr gut. Allerdings muss ich auch sagen, dass mir die Originalausgabe mindestens genauso gut gefällt. Die Person ist identisch, die Haltung und die Farben sind anders, aber mindestens genauso schön. Hier ein großes Kompliment an den Verlag, dass man das Cover nicht komplett verändert hat.

Auch die Kurzbeschreibung ist hier gut gelungen, ohne zu viel zu verraten.

„Tagebuch eines Engels“ ist eine gute Geschichte, die mich zum Nachdenken anregen konnte und gleichzeitig sehr gut unterhalten hat. Hoffentlich wird man noch viele weitere tolle Bücher der Autorin erleben können. Die perfekte Geschichte für verregnete Nachmittage. :)

Sherrie says

The book grabs your attention right away. Starting with Ruth's waking up to being an angel. The rules are explained to Ruth, which is her new name instead of Margot. I am wary of Christian lit. I don't like having a particular message shoved down my throat. But this book isn't like that. It's very well written with all the characters having their own personalities. Reading about Margot(Ruth) learning what God has intended for her is sometimes funny and sometimes very heart warming. If you're into reading angel books or just want something different to read, this is the book for you. Very good book, I really enjoyed reading it.

Gordon says

Back in April/May I was recommended to read *The Boy Who Could See Demons* by Carolyn Jess-Cooke. So I did, and I thoroughly enjoyed it, so much so that I ended up writing about it in my English exam since it fit one of the questions...

I knew back then that Jess-Cooke's first book was *The Guardian Angel's Journal* and after enjoying *The Boy Who Could See Demons* so much, I decided that I would read it.

Before I go into my thoughts let me give you a taster of the story. Margot Delacroix suddenly dies and when she gets into heaven, God gives Margot the task of being her own guardian angel, under the new name of Ruth. Under the direction of Nan, another angel in heaven, Ruth realises that she will watch over Margot from the very beginning of her life. Ruth knows exactly what happens all through Margot's life (having lived

it all before) and she wishes she could change Margot's life for the better after everything that happened, however it's not all that simple, as she soon learns what consequences are in store for her.

I really enjoyed this book. It was interesting to read Jess-Cooke's first outing second, because after reading *Demons* and enjoying it so much, I did wonder if this book would be less appealing to me being a first novel, but it did not take away from the enjoyment of the story at all. Both *The Guardian Angel's Journal* and *The Boy Who Could See Demons* have their similarities and differences. This one was told from the point of view of an Angel, and the other was kind of told from the point of view of the Demon (albeit the demon isn't really there.). It was interesting to see how demons fit into this story, after reading about them in the other book.

In short, *The Guardian Angel's Journal* is unlike anything I have ever read before. I love the style of writing Jess-Cooke has and how the story developed and also how the characters developed. Early on we see a completely different side of Ruth and then as it progresses we gradually see her develop and change and it really did keep the story going; her determination to be able to change things when she couldn't really shone through the whole novel. When reading about Margot's life, how dark and horrible it was, right from birth, it is, in parts, incredibly moving. In the early chapters, I nearly found myself in tears, and that hasn't happened since I read the end of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. The power of the narrative and what is going on in Margot's life, feeling sorry for both Margot and Ruth at the same time, it all really makes you want to bawl into your pillow.

I also found this book was one that couldn't be put down. That sounds very cliché, but the past few nights I have lost track of the time during the reading of it. It really grabs your attention and makes you want to read more and more, which is what I feel makes this book one that I won't forget for a long time. I bought my own copy yesterday and I've also ordered *The Boy Who Could See Demons* because I know that at some point in my life I would love to go back and relive these books again. I hope Jess-Cooke continues to write novels because right now I have been left with the desire to read more. It's probable I will pick up her poetry collection, *Inroads* at some point too. But probably not for a little while yet.

I wouldn't recommend this book to young teenagers, but older teenagers and adults will definitely appreciate this book, and if you are into books about Angels and Demons, this is definitely one you should read.

This review can also be found at : <http://gordonhorne.blogspot.co.uk/201...>
