



## Angel

*Cliff McNish*

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## **Angel** Cliff McNish

Two girls are inextricably linked by destiny, not choice.

Stephanie is friendless, strange, a misfit.

Freya can't stop seeing angels.

But when one of those angels begins to stalk her, its shadow following her everywhere, Freya is forced to make decisions from which there is no turning back.

## Reviews

'What a book. I simply couldn't put it down ... at moments, it reaches the sublime. I loved it.' Jill Murphy, The Bookbag

'Outstanding prose is married to a suspenseful plot and a quiet humour.' Amanda Craig, The Times

'Stands out for its original subject and plot ...each book takes McNish into new territory, and this one is both assured and thought-provoking.'

Nikki Gamble, The Bookseller

'Tense, quirky and highly individual, this story has plenty going for it.' Nicholas Tucker, TES

'A deft construction — McNish vividly portrays two worlds in the light of each other, creating a thin space between them that makes for a moving and thought provoking tale.'

Huw Thomas, BOOKS FOR KEEPS

'A fascinating read.' Carousel

'This neat combination of teen angst and behavioural ethics is — complex and charged.'

The Daily Telegraph

'What a book. I simply couldn't put it down ... a highly charged look at personal spirituality... the writing is effortless and elegant and as it slips between character perspectives, Angel never loses an air of authenticity. And at moments, it reaches the sublime. I loved it.'

Jill Murphy, The Bookbag

'This unusual fantasy is made plausible by a very strong depiction of the underpinning pattern of teenage anxieties and everyday angst.'

Lesley Agnew, The Bookseller

'Haunting and thought provoking.' Cy Mag

'A fantastic read.' Jo Griffiths, Waterstones

'If you love stories about friendship, this one's a must!' Bliss

## Angel Details

Date : Published September 8th 2017 by Doomspell Books (first published June 7th 2007)

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Author : Cliff McNish

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## From Reader Review Angel for online ebook

### Weishi says

nope

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### Emma says

Whilst working at Waterstones - as usual - I picked up this book as I was intrigued by the simple title. I read the blurb and was interested, especailly since I am veering in the direction of Supernatural at the moment. I started reading this and was immediately intrigued. The way Cliff McNish writes although not obvious is subtly eery. Especially when introduced to Mestraal. The discription although not overly detailed was very real - I for one have looked at the slither of light underneath my door and been scared when a shadow may pass over it and that feeling crept over me whilst reading scaring me slightly.

I felt the book was very moving and I agreed with the comment from The Times of the "outstanding prose". This book ws a joy to read and I loved not only the relationship between the family but also the choices that Freya had to make, which in turn guided her to the person that Hestron, Mestraal and Freya herself knew she could be.

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### Fatima Vorare says

It was a well written book and definitely picked up my interest for fallen angels and etc. but it takes time to get into the book and OMG FREYAS CHARACTER GETS ON MY NERVES! And whats the deal with Stephenie Rice? The way shes always kissing Freyas pictures.... Awks!

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### Krista says

The story dragged and had a totally lame ending. Actually, the entire plot was lame.

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### Airiz C says

Even before “angels became the new vampires” in literature—if you know what I mean—I’ve already encountered a novel that zeroes in on humans and angels and the possible connections and mutations between them (I know I still have the X-Men: First Class flick hangover, but 'paranormal' mutations do sort of apply in this book; if you figure out what I was trying to say, consider yourself SPOILED :p).

The premise is really promising. Freya is a teenage girl who has been obsessed with angels ever since she saw one in her bedroom. She had been put under therapy for seeing them, which therapists dismiss as hallucinations. Thinking that she’s already “healed”, Freya starts from scratch to build a new, normal life. That’s until the angels start appearing again, and this time they’re just not the beautiful beings with strong gossamer wings; there’s one that is as black as a raven, following her anywhere she goes. Freya tries to run

away from the creature, but she knows she can't hide from the creature no matter where she goes...

The prose is not florid yet not too flat, and for that I'm giving this book a check. I prefer female protagonists who get to kick a lot of behinds, but I'm willing to give Freya a chance when I first got my hands on this book. Several chapters later, I guess the dynamite in my chest of "chances" have gone off, triggered by the fact that the characters do not 'grow'; they are not so well-inflated that you can see their fragile flatness as easily as you can pierce a water surface with your finger.

I confess that I was truly engrossed by about the first three quarters of the book, but the thrill dwindled a bit when I reached the near-to-last part. The main twist didn't have much of an effect on me, and that's saying something because it's a big life-changing "bang!" for the character. As for the secondary character Stephanie, she is your standard heroine's side-kick, and she kind of reminds me of Helen Burns, the childhood best friend of the title character in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre.

Giving it three stars.

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## **Maria says**

It had potential to be a good read, but missed it by a good 700 miles. Ouch.

An interesting plot: High-school teen Freya is slowly, but surely, turning into an angel, all the while trying to balance her own life and trying to make friends at her high school.

However, the execution was lacking.

By having the point of view "jump" around to different characters' point of view (third person limited), it was very difficult to follow along with a fluid storyline, and made me quite nauseous (That happened way too much, and I had to stop reading for a day or two).

The characters were albeit kind of lousy in the decisions they made (Freya not standing up for Stephanie and befriending her; Stephanie triggering Freya with talk of angels, even after Freya explained to her that she spent time in hospital for hallucinating such; Stephanie starting a fire in her bedroom, etc.) but I really like how Luke was written, trying his best to protect Sam from Tate.

I thought that the story could've developed better, with Freya and Stephanie's relationship in particular, having them develop a "I'll take you under my wing" sort-of platonic friendship (pun intended).

Speaking of, why did Freya suddenly turn into a nephilim, with no explanation whatsoever? Menstraal said that human-angel hybrids are not caused by genes, as Luke is fully human, so this can't be from either her dad nor her mom (as theorized).

But that begs the question, "How does her dad know about her wings without them physically there, just by looking at Freya's behavior?"

The inconsistency of this just bothers me, as I feel that Freya's mom was some sort of angel, and Freya's behavior reminded him of her mom when they were both young, and of course, before she died.

Anywho, I thought that this book was an OK read, with some minor issues with consistency and with

character development, but it could be better

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### **Kara says**

.....Didn't Even finish it...

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### **Jose Phin says**

I remember loving this book very much when I was about 11! I called it 'my favorite book of all time' (still now), but I actually can hardly remember the story! Of course I still remember my favorite parts; tragic and the fluffy moments!

And I still can't believe why people don't like it, that makes me hesitate to give 5 stars.... And fantasy lovers must love it!

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### **Rachel says**

Freya loves angels, in fact she loves them so much she was hospitalized for being mentally crazy. She just got out a few months ago and is recovering but one day a new girl named Stephanie joins her class and Stephanie believes in angels. Now her world is changed forever as she faces the truth about who she is and what she is meant to be.

I picked this book up because I desperately needed something to read and this looked interesting so I started reading it and found out that it was good. I thought that the two girls, Freya and Stephanie, were a little weird because they kept doing weird things. They cried too much too and Freya kept breaking down.

I finished this book because it was pretty good and I wanted to find out what's going to happen next to Freya and Stephanie. The ending was really good and it made me want to figure out what's going to happen in the next book, if there is a next book.

I would recommend this book to Michelle T because this book is different than the other books and I want to see what she thinks about it.

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### **Becka dittmann says**

I thought the book was interesting. The characters reminded me of the people at our school. A girl named Freya was trying to fit in and be like the other girls but she had a secret that made her different than the others. She believed in angels and nobody was going to tell her different. She was fitting in well until a girl named Stephanie came to that school with the same beliefs. Freya had to get put in the hospital because her father thought she was crazy and she had just started to get over her thoughts when Stephanie brought up angels again and Freya started reliving the experience again. One night Freya got an unexpected visit from a real angel and everything she thought was fake was real. That angel told her that she was becoming an angel and she was to help the people in danger. She took on the duty and she realized that it was harder than she

thought. I would recommend this book to people in high school because it is an easy book but some parts are a little difficult to follow.

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## **Sarah Larasati says**

It's a sober YA book. What more can you ask for?

At first, I was reluctant to read Mcnish's *Angel* because it's a YA book, and the synopsis I found made it sound so cliched. Not to mention that I felt too old to read YA books aside from *The Hunger Games* trilogy, which has an overt political undertone. I tend to avoid the YA section like a plague these days. But this much is true: the synopsis didn't do this book justice. And the tiny blurb at the back of the book, too, didn't do it justice (it made it sound like all those superficial, overly-cliched paranormal romances). The reviews didn't quite do it justice too, but hey, to each their own.

The general tone of the novel felt like Mcnish's angels themselves: mostly ambiguous, a creature of the air, has a wonderful story to tell, but refreshingly, grittingly realistic in a way. The pacing felt just right to me, and the author doesn't rush to reveal his cards or try to shoehorn in too many mysteries. I love the slow build-up, and Freya's encounter with Mestraal is painfully realistic. Put a fourteen-year old girl with an ominous, almost eldritch creature, and she would be terrified out of her mind. Keep that in mind, YA authors. And keep in mind, too, that dark angels was generally unpleasant company to keep had they been real, or, as I'd love to put it: they're terrifying as fuck. I was hoping to see this terrifying aspect from the other angels too, and the author didn't disappoint (Hestron had eyes all over his body, a throwback to the Cherubim and Ophanim) - but it was Freya's reaction who disappointed me. But, to give her the benefit of the doubt, she was changing into one herself, so it's probably not a big deal to her. Still, it would be nice if the mythology of these mysterious creatures would be touched upon more than just "they came from the stars". Although it's likely better that way, given that this is a YA book. (Can I hope for an "adult" version? One where Freya had grown up, maybe, and finding out about hers and the angels' origins? Oh, that's why we have fanfictions.)

Kudos to Mcnish for daring to raise about the issue of bullying, by the way. I read some reviews here complained about how he's too focused on it, but I actually loved this book better because of it. As a victim of it myself, I can say that yes, it'll ruin your life (the psychological damage practically lasted forever) and yes, it is a more imminent threat, especially to teenagers, than demons. Or the Biblical apocalypse. That's why we need more YA writers writing about it. Mcnish presented it as part of the inescapable reality of teenagers, as much as his angels being aliens. He's doesn't deny it, nor tuning it down. He presented this reality as it is.

His angels are also limited, not the omnipresent semi-deities our mythologies made them up to be. They have to make hard moral decisions, and have to live with the consequences. Some of them, like Mestraal, couldn't bear it, and they shut themselves out from it. They are like the fictional superheroes we created, not invulnerable immortal entities. They are like us. (Only with wings and an extra set of arms, and a hellish number of eyes.) In a way, it taught the readers about choices, morality and consequences, and I sure as hell hoped that I've read something like this in my teenage years.

The prose are easily digestible but good, and the characters are alive. Freya is just another teenage girl who's trying to put her "crazy" past behind her, and is trying to fit in. Even before taking up the angelic mantle, she already had to make tough moral decisions - helping a seemingly crazy lady in front of her popular friends, wanting to talk to a peer who could destroy the social status she'd built. We've all been there, or in similar situations thereof, and clarity always comes later. It's about choices, choices, choices; choices that'll shape your life, just as it had shaped Freya's life. Other than Freya, the characters all have clear motives, and

understandable; sadly, even girls like Amy, Gemma, and Vicky (whose types really do existed in real life). The only one I could not bring to like (aside from Amy, but she's just that horrible as a human being) was Stephanie. She strikes me as hoo-boy-crazy-as-fuck. I could say a thousand incriminating things about her, but that's just a matter of personal preference. After all, some of us been through her phase - zealously believing in something, desperately wishing it to be true, and had that tower of Babel destroyed violently. I could understand her desperate wish of wanting a friend, too.

And in the heart of it all, lies family. The author touched the topic of friendship too, since it's such an inseparable part of the human condition, but when it comes down to it, it's about family. I'm not a big believer of families, but McNish definitely is. And that is refreshing because at the end of the story, Freya's heart didn't go out to Adam, nor does she ended up kissing him again, or getting a new boyfriend; but her heart goes out to her father. Her father, who's always been there for her, always believing in her, even bringing her back from her period of crazy. Her father, who was sick...and may or may not be dying. And I love it. I love it because when I was a teenager (which was not a long time ago actually) I did all sorts of horrible things to my parents and called them all sorts of horrible names. I never realised how much they have sacrificed for me, how they've always been there for me, and that, despite their (and my) mistakes, they genuinely loved me. How I wished I was like Freya, who realised what a horrible human being she has been to her parent much sooner than I do. And McNish was right, in a way: family does matter. Boyfriends and friends come and go, but family is bound to stay forever.

Yes, I'd totally recommend this book, especially to its intended audience: teenagers. Especially bullied teenagers. It's a delight to be read by adults too, for the topics and questions it raised was timeless: choices, family, growing up (among other things). How good do you have to be? It's up for you to decide, but can you live with the consequences?

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### **~Tina~ says**

An interesting and captivating look at Angels and a dark one at that!

With Angel books being the new "it" theme these days, I was eager to read more YA stories about them. **Angel** did not disappoint.

While some may not like the writing style British author Cliff McNish brings into his stories, I for one was fascinated and enjoyed his style, the plot and it's characters.

Along side with Angels, this story is also about the lessons that go along with cliques and bullies, and while I was annoyed by them and even a bit disturbed, it thicken the plot nicely.

Dark, moving and intriguing, Angel was a great read!

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### **Colleen says**

I don't actually know what to rate this book.

I didn't really like it.

But there were a handful of bits that I REALLY did.

It was, for the most part, average with below average parts, so it'll get a below average score.

The main character was irritating, the main 'baddie' not even half as bad as the writer wanted to make us

believe.

Her brother and his friend were the best characters but even they had their moments of being damn frustrating.

This book did everything that someone else has done but not as well as they did it.

By no means is this a bad book. I'm sure there are many people out there who would love this.

I just wish that the characters hadn't been so flat and - half the time - stupid.

I couldn't connect with them. I didn't sympathise when they chickened out because the way it was written made me just want to slap the crap out of them. When some of them were bullied, it kind of got glossed over which confused me as to what had actually happened.

The characters made bad choices and ended up whining about it later before making the same choice over again. What was the point in spending all that time whining if you're just going to make the same mistake? I see none.

It was supposed to be a story about discovery, and that needs a lot of character growth included. I just couldn't see the characters growing. They simply changed their minds on a whim.

Therefore, this was not for me. But it could have been worse.

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### **Cason Edwards says**

For such an astronomical plot, it was weak.

The story was inconsistent, skipping from the main character to her brother to some strange girl. The only likable character was Luke (the brother) and his role in the story is minute. Disproportionate with the amounts of ink and paper used to develop it.

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### **Jessica Smith says**

I don't mind this book, its characters, or its writing. In general, each was clear, albeit cluttered every now and then, which is far more than I can say about other YA novels like *Twilight* and *Starcrossed*. However, *Angel* lacks something vital to all storytelling--heart, passion, or whatever else you want to call it. The way McNish tells his tale feels stale and lifeless, as if he didn't understand his characters. There's no *feeling*, there's just . . . *nothing*. I wasn't pulled into the story at all, even for all the writing's sophistication. Whatever enjoyment I could've had evaporated with Freya's need to tell her story--neither of us got what we were looking for, let alone what we expected.

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