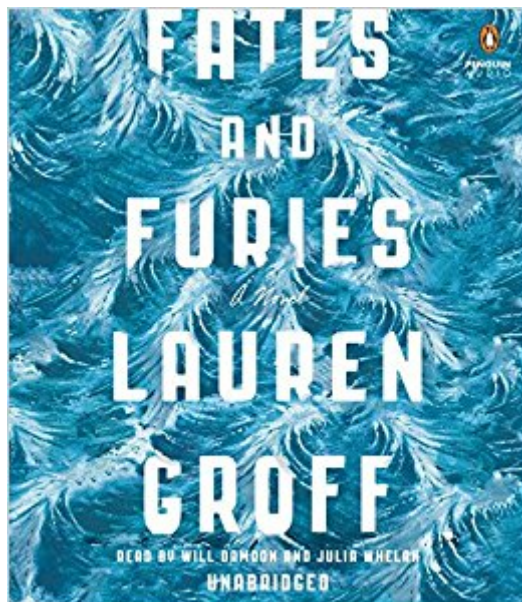


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Fates And Furies: A Novel



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER A FINALIST FOR THE 2015 NATIONAL BOOK AWARD NPR MORNING EDITION BOOK CLUB PICK NAMED A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR BY: THE WASHINGTON POST, NPR, TIME, THE SEATTLE TIMES, MINNEAPOLIS STAR-TRIBUNE, SLATE, LIBRARY JOURNAL, KIRKUS, AND MANY MORE

“Lauren Groff is a writer of rare gifts, and *Fates and Furies* is an unabashedly ambitious novel that delivers with comedy, tragedy, well-deployed erudition and unmistakable glimmers of brilliance throughout.”

• The New York Times Book Review (cover review)

“Elaborate, sensual...a writer whose books are too exotic and unusual to be missed.”

• The New York Times

“Fates and Furies is a clear-the-ground triumph.”

• Ron Charles, The Washington Post

From the award-winning, New York Times bestselling author of *The Monsters of Templeton* and *Arcadia*, one of the most anticipated books of the fall: an exhilarating novel about marriage, creativity, art, and perception. *Fates and Furies* is a literary masterpiece that defies expectation. A dazzling examination of a marriage, it is also a portrait of creative partnership written by one of the best writers of her generation. Every story has two sides. Every relationship has two perspectives. And sometimes, it turns out, the key to a great marriage is not its truths but its secrets. At the core of this rich, expansive, layered novel, Lauren Groff presents the story of one such marriage over the course of twenty-four years. At age twenty-two, Lotto and Mathilde are tall, glamorous, madly in love, and destined for greatness. A decade later, their marriage is still the envy of their friends, but with an electric thrill we understand that things are even more complicated and remarkable than they have seemed. With stunning revelations and multiple threads, and in prose that is vibrantly alive and original, Groff delivers a deeply satisfying novel about love, art, creativity, and power that is unlike anything that has come before it. Profound, surprising, propulsive, and emotionally riveting, it stirs both the mind and the heart.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

Picked by the editors as the #1 book of 2015: Many a therapist will tell you that honesty and transparency is the glue that keeps a relationship together. Lauren Groff cleverly turns this concept on its head in *Fates and Furies*, demonstrating that sometimes it's what you don't say to protect your partner's vanity, their reputation, their heart that makes a marriage hum. (Until it doesn't.) Broken up into two parts and numerous perspectives, this dazzlingly told tale of one such marriage introduces us to Lotto and Mathilde. The former is an out-of-work actor-turned successful playwright, although some of that success is fueled by forces his ego obscures. And then there's his adoring and enigmatic wife, Mathilde, who we later find out is a far better actor than Lotto ever was. For all the smoke and mirrors, Groff crafts a convincing love story that packs an emotional punch, especially when certain truths are revealed. There is also something satisfying in finding out the extent to which our own perceptions are skewed as the narrative unfolds. The title *Fates and Furies* is a nod to Greek Tragedy, and this novel revels in the themes befitting one: passion, betrayal, vengeance, redemption. You will revel in it, too.

Erin Kodicek --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

“Lauren Groff is a writer of rare gifts, and *Fates and Furies* is an unabashedly ambitious novel that delivers with comedy, tragedy, well-deployed erudition and unmistakable glimmers of brilliance throughout.” —The New York Times Book Review (cover review)

“One of the pleasures of reading Ms. Groff is her sheer unpredictability: She can inject her narrator's voice at any time, turn a sentence into a small hurricane.” —The New York Times

“Even from her impossibly high starting point, Lauren Groff just keeps getting better and better. *Fates and Furies* is a clear-the-ground triumph.” —Ron Charles, The Washington Post

“Thrillingly good—precise, lyrical, rich, both worldly and epically transfiguring.” —Groff is an original writer, whose books are daringly nonconformist. The prose is not only beautiful and vigorously alert; it insists on its own heroic registration, and lifts

this story of a modern marriage out of the mundane. — James Wood, *The New Yorker* — “Lauren Groff rips at the seams of an outwardly perfect marriage in her enchanting novel *Fates and Furies*. — *Vanity Fair* — “[*Fates and Furies*] is a stunning 360-degree view of a complex relationship. There’s almost nothing that [Groff is] not interested in and her skill set is breathtaking. It’s an incredibly ambitious work, she writes like her hands are on fire. — Richard Russo, *NPR’s Morning Edition* — “We can’t help but be fascinated by the possibility of what goes on behind closed doors — especially if there’s a glam, madly-in-love couple on the other side. Meet Mathilde and Lotto. Groff’s novel unfolds in a he said/she said gutting drama that you won’t be able to resist. — Marie Claire — “Sentence by sentence, this novel, like [Groff’s] others, is a thoroughbred. Measured by its narrative tricks, however, it is a Trojan horse. Groff’s story of a marriage in which neither partner truly understands the other uses a sophisticated technique to tell its simple story, subverting our expectations with a two-voice counterpoint as meaningful as it is dazzling. — *TIME* — “[This] story is a storm you hope won’t blow over: surprising, wild, with pockets of calm that build anticipation for the next squall. Groff scours her characters, laying them bare so questions of likability are moot. If, in the end, everyone is flawed, everyone also attains a kind of nobility. — *O, The Oprah Magazine* — “The book is a master class in best lines — It’s that good. That beautiful. Occasionally, that stunning. — *NPR.org* — “The Florida author’s third novel is billed as her most ambitious yet, filled with sex, rage and revenge. — *The Wall Street Journal* — “Audacious and gorgeous. The result is not only deliciously voyeuristic but also wise on the simultaneous comforts and indignities of romantic partnership. — *LA Times* — “[A] rich, tricky novel. Groff is a fantastically vivid writer. It’s hard to stop reading. — *Entertainment Weekly* — “A recounting of a 25-year marriage looks way different when told from both sides of the bed. — *Cosmopolitan* — “A playful and riveting read that questions whether love can be true when it’s wrapped in falsehoods. — *People* — “Renders majestic even the most familiar moments of everyday life. Groff’s writing is striking and revelatory. — *USA Today* — “[Groff has the] ability to write dazzlingly about sexual matters.” — *Vogue* — “A delirious, exhilarating and heartbreaking ride through the decades of one fable-like marriage ... The author demands the reader to participate, to engage deeply in order to

take in all of the mysteries, flaws and triumphs of this one relationship. Read it, relish it and be sad when the ride is over.

•San Francisco Chronicle

“Groff breaks the novel form open at the seams | What’s different and remarkable about Groff’s third novel can be summarized in two little words: the writing. Groff is a prose virtuoso, and in *Fates and Furies* she offers up her writerly gifts in all their glory.

•The Chicago Tribune

“Groff’s command of allusions, imagery, and the puzzle pieces of her characters and plot thrill. So do her words, phrases, and sentences, which bubble up like poetry.

•The Boston Globe

“[*Fates and Furies*] is capacious, messy, and bold | Groff’s hard, realist vision of marriage • not the fairy-tale voices of the fates that embroider it • gives her novel its considerable force.

•LA Review of Books

“Groff’s novel keenly probes the different ways that men’s and women’s creativity and human value are assessed.

•The Guardian

“Watching a relationship from its inception to its quiet demise is a perverse pleasure | Lifting the curtain on the front of a perfect marriage and finding a messy pile of emotions heaped on infidelities is strangely satisfying; reading about the nasty bits in prose as elegant and cutting as Groff’s is icing on the cake.

•Gawker

“Groff’s boldness pays off... the title evokes images of Greek mythology in all its vicious glory as Groff examines a marriage by dosing it with epic overtones and filling it with the sort of themes the gods themselves would appreciate: jealousy; betrayal; art; death; love; revenge.

•Miami Herald

“For all the homage Groff pays to the comforting rituals comprising a marriage, her novel is also attuned to how little we’ll ever know, even of those we know best. *Fates and Furies* will induce such reflection. Involving the bed you’ve made. The loved ones you’ve made it with. And whether you’re living your life there or just sleeping it away.

•Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

“*Fates and Furies* is wholly complex, dramatic, and riveting • an exploration of love, betrayal, perception, and the destructive power of secrets. Groff’s novel’s crackling energy makes it the perfect read for fall.

•Buzzfeed

“Each page contains sumptuous pieces of imagery.... *Fates and Furies*, too, begins as a fist, its secrets clenched in its grasp. Once it is pried open, the secrets release like a magician’s doves.

•Electric Literature

“With *Fates and Furies* Lauren Groff goes many levels below the surface of a marriage, into a place that is perhaps as hard to reach as it is to describe, but Groff, a bold and marvelous writer, is able to do both. Because she’s so vitally talented line for line and passage for passage, and because her ideas about the ways in which two people can live together

and live inside each other, or fall away from each other, or betray each other, feel foundationally sound and true, *Fates and Furies* becomes a book to submit to, and be knocked out by, as I certainly was. —• Meg Wolitzer, *A New York Times*-bestselling author of *The Interestings* —“*Fates and Furies*” is a dazzling novel, its people and its prose wondrously alive from page one. At once intimate and sweeping, this is the story of a marriage as parallel myths —• A flaring with passion and betrayal, with redemption and retribution, with the sort of heart-breaking, head-slapping secrets that make you want to seek out someone else who’s read it. Lauren Groff is a powerful and graceful writer, one of the best of her generation. —• —• Jess Walter, *A New York Times*-bestselling author of *A Beautiful Ruin* --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Review by: Stacy Palm*** 3 out of 5 stars Release Date: 9/15/2015 First, let me clarify that my 3 star rating is a neutral rating. This is a very difficult book for me to review. I'll start with what I believe is the premise. This is a book about marriage, and about individual perspectives on the same situation. It's a book that brings to light that every person experiencing a situation, even if the situation seems mundane, brings with them their own prior knowledge, and their own view hinged upon all the information that they know that others may not. It is also a book about compromise and what that compromise is worth to a person. The reasons I enjoyed this novel and would recommend it. The character development is astounding, after reading this novel I know these characters, inside and out. Honestly, this book is relying heavily on the fact that the characters are the driving factor for you to turn the page because there isn't much else there. So they are lively, vivid, characters. These characters do seem to propel the story along so that you feel lost in their world. The beginning and younger years were by far my favorite chapters of the book. The reasons I didn't enjoy this novel. It is not a light read. It is a heavy, dense read, and often times over pretentious (a whole glimpse into a pseudo play-opera based on *Antigone*) that brought the whole flow of the book to a grinding halt. Simply because I found myself having to go back and re-read the zealously laden series of complex metaphors, but some readers live for that kind of thing, and if you're one of them, you will love this book. I personally found it a bit much and would have preferred Ms. Groff sacrifice the literature for a better tempo to the story, but that is just my opinion. Overall, this is where it becomes very difficult to review. I see what this book had to offer. I see the intention and I see the reasons for the delivery. However, when I ask myself the question, "Did reading this book have an effect on me and if so what was it?" To be truthful, I honestly can't answer this question. I don't know that it had any effect on me. I contemplated some things that were factors in the book, but I don't know if that was

because of the reading or from knowing that I had a review to write. I also think I would have a difficult time recommending this book to anyone unless I knew exactly what type of reader they were. All these reasons are why I've given the book a neutral rating. This may be the book you are looking for, I may have not connected appropriately with the events, so this may be a book you have to try for yourself.

I gave this book 3.5. This is the type of book that you have to read slowly and patiently. Because if you don't, you'll miss a thing or two. This book takes us into our main characters past, present and future. Should all that has happened in the past in your life be talked about or discussed with your partner assuming you are married, about to be or thinking of heading that way? Would you be hurt by things unknown about their past and would that cast a shade or light (depending on the discussion) to the present and what could happen in the future? Knowing your partner through and through thoroughly prepares you for the unknown unless one person is more jaded and is wearing rose colored glasses. This book is divided into Fates talked about from an outsiders view of the husbands side-Lovable Lotto and Furies from the wife's side - Mathilde. After the end of fates, my heart literally sank. I didn't want to move on.. I wanted to read another book because I was sad. With Fates, we fell in love with Lotto and his nonchalant attitude towards everything, we felt his pain during his job search, finding what he really excels in and working hard, we felt his desire to have children and the way he associated himself with people. We were the audience and we loved everything, and we knew everything could not be as they were. We had to move on and read Mathilde's side of the story because it's time to remove that rose colored glasses and I think we are ready to meet the real Mathilde. In Furies, we find out that Lotto only saw things he wanted to see but Mathilde loved him immensely, even more than herself. We start to understand who Mathilde really is and her past which was hidden from us and her husband, Lotto. In a relationship, there will always be good friends and bad friends that might or might not mean anything by the actions they make. In this case we meet Chollie, he is both a gift and a curse. We see his dynamic with Mathilde and how they run each other crazy with their scheming and at the end of the book, we try to understand both of them, and we get a surprise from an old friend. This book was very difficult to read at first, but once you get out of chapter 1, you start to enjoy the story, and really get into it. I felt that the author was doing a bit too much with the acts, but I still enjoyed the book. It gave me a lot to think about, especially about relationships. I was more bias towards Lotto because you could just FEEL his heart towards everything. A question this book made me think about is - Do you start afresh with your new partner, not talking about your past, or do you divulge every single thing so

your partner knows before getting in too deep ?

One of the most interesting books of literary fiction I've read in the past three years. A stunning achievement by a truly talented author. Quite the conversation in my book club about it, with several people abandoning the book because they were unhappy to read sexuality so plainly described (which surprised me); others claimed they were unhappy with the mythological, allegorical, and literary allusions. Not me. As someone who prefers to read books that make me think, a work that uses apt and occasionally startling metaphors, and appreciates an author who creates complex characters and uses different structures, I'd say Groff's book was well worth my time and money. But I can also understand that it's probably not for everyone, particularly if you're a reader who must like the protagonists. Comparing this book to *Gone Girl*, however, seemed unfair; both books have a "his & her" type structure; beyond that, comparisons end. They are very different works.

In my opinion, there's much to love - a complicated make-believe world in which you, the reader, disappear; lush writing, moments leading to ripples of resonance and introspection. If you've watched *'The Affair'*, you'll immediately see that this is a much more effective, intelligent and dramatic version of multiple perspectives, what we think is real and how others see reality. I found the female protagonist, Mathilde much more compelling than her husband, Lotto. There's something less dimensional about him -- maybe because he's drawn to be the god and she the human (in ways). There's an intention in the novel towards fantastical fabrication, so there are moments that feel created rather than organic. Yet the story telling is compelling and I missed Mathilde when I was finished reading.

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