Clarion Review

General

Missing Angel
S. K. Stevens
AuthorHouse
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Three Stars (out of Five)

People from all backgrounds find the concept of a guardian angel comforting. Nothing is more reassuring than the belief that an invisible entity in another dimension will defend us from harm. Solace can be found in contemplating this mysterious power during times of upheaval and danger. An angel is often depicted with white luxurious wings to shield and enclose us like a soft blanket. This mythical creature appeals to our inner child's need to be nurtured and embraced.

Missing Angel is a youthful tale about a girl's relationship with a benevolent man only she can see. From the time that Holly loses her parents as a toddler, Nathan has guarded his charge like a loyal, protective father. As she matures, he falls in love with the young lady that emerges. This may seem like a simple, straightforward story with few complications, but Nathan has enemies who want to hurt Holly and others on Earth. Instead of a sweet, unfettered coming together, tragedy awaits them at every crossroad.

S.K. Stevens pits the forces of good and evil against one another in this original novel that explores the depths of a traumatized woman's mind and an angel's quest to meld with her in a romantic, spiritual union. The author gets high marks for creativity, but the plotline is convoluted. The tone shifts from young adult suspense novel to serious psychodrama. Reading this story is much like watching an innocent school play turn into a heavy R-rated movie laced with violence. Though the approach is interesting, these bizarre fluctuations tend to push the reader into the background, rather than drawing him or her into the action to experience the situations along with the main characters.

The author states that this story allowed her to face personal demons with righteous retribution; she invites the reader to enter this private world and feel the desperation. Stevens hopes that if others can feel the pain and understand the emptiness expressed in the novel, their

loneliness will begin to subside. Included is a bit of heartfelt poetry. Religious articles and the Nelson Bible were used as references for writing the book, along with the author's own autobiography. Despite its flaws, this sincere outpouring of emotion is a touching first novel by a talented newcomer.

Julia Ann Charpentier