



★ **Resurrection Girls**

Ava Morgyn

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Mystical and paranormal while at the same time all too real in its portrayal of grief, Ava Morgyn's searing *Resurrection Girls* is a refined, startling debut that brims with authorial skill. Though geared toward young adults, it doesn't shy away from adult conversations about death and its destructive power.

Captivating, enchanting, and slightly macabre, the story centers on Olivia, who's barely coping with the death of her younger brother a few years ago. His memory haunts the household, driving her father's absence and her mother to drugs.

Then the Hallas women move in across the street. Something isn't quite natural about them, and the distraction is just what Olivia needs. The youngest of the Hallas women, Kara, is confident and otherworldly. Kara has a morbid side, but she's also eager to shake Olivia out of her grief-stricken stupor.

Resurrection Girls is first striking because of its arresting, gorgeous prose. Every line is crafted in a tender way and with obvious skill. The text is full of slick metaphors and genuine introspection. Literary without being too verbose, the sheer language of the story qualifies it as a fantastic read.

The book's characters and story are just as outstanding. Olivia is deep and authentic, especially as she interacts with her childhood crush, Prescott, and with mysterious Kara. Her grief colors the novel's rich, dark tones, grounding its speculative elements in the harsh reality of loss and helping it to straddle the realms of realism and surrealism in an expert way. Only the book's final turn toward the overtly fantastical is abrupt.

Resurrection Girls is a promising debut from a talented writer. Equipped with hypnotic prose, tangible characters, and an immersive environment, it handles the heavy reality of grief with a healthy dose of the supernatural.

MYA ALEXICE (November / December 2019)

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