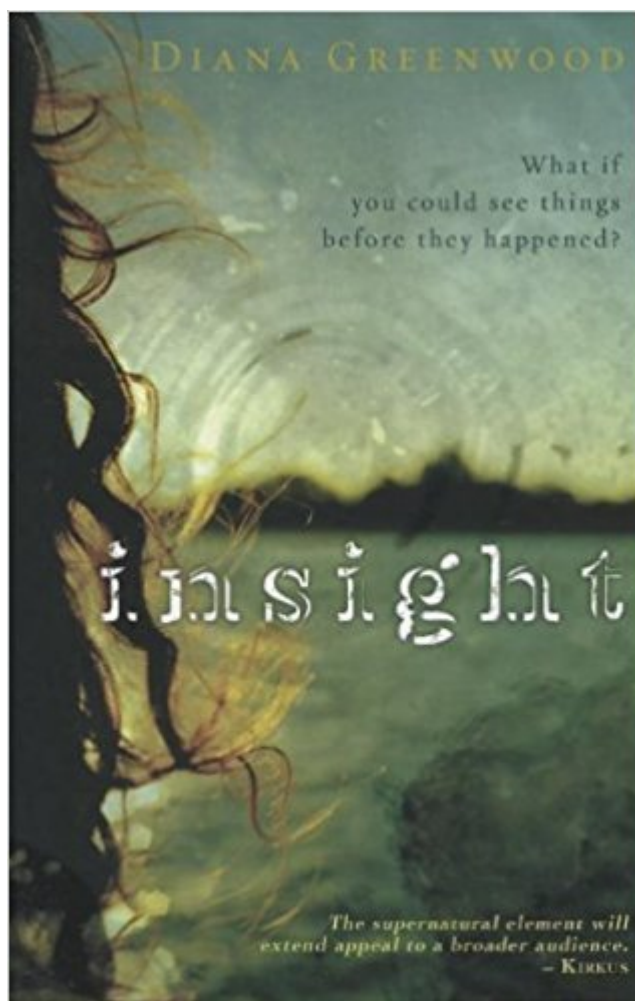




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Insight



Synopsis

Fourteen-year-old Elvira Witsil lives in a remote area of Wisconsin with her mother, Connie, who acknowledges Elvira only when chores need doing; her grandma, a cantankerous woman who can't hold her tongue; and her baby sister, Jessie, who, the family discovers, is a seer. Along with the burdens of a difficult family, Elvira also bears a daunting secret she encouraged her father to enlist in WWII. Ever since he was declared missing in action, Elvira has felt responsible for his presumed death. But Jessie also carries a secret about the father she never met—a secret so powerful that when her mother, Connie, learns of it, she sends the family on a journey to California with a traveling preacher. This powerful teen manuscript tells the story of a family's journey toward forgiveness and a young woman's journey toward faith.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Diana Greenwood grew up with the Bobbsey Twins, Laura Ingalls, Huck and Tom, the Hardy Boys, Jo, Francie Nolan, and Oliver Twist. She tried to duplicate the adventures of her favorite characters by writing poems, stories, and scripts for summer performances in her backyard. Today, she still has those childhood editions on her bookshelf and spends her days writing stories of young people embarking on life-changing journeys. Diana makes her home in the Napa Valley, where she watches college football, volunteers at her church, and continues to devour books.

This book is intended for young adults, but really it is for anyone who has wondered where God is in

their times of trouble or why He allows bad things to happen. The story brought me back to those awkward early teen years when I had that one adult I wished I could grow up to be (mine was Pam Price) and I worried no boy would ever be interested in me. One of my favorite lines from the book relate to Elvira's learning about a God she'd never really known or understood before. But then it occurred to me he meant you could believe in God anywhere, not just in some stuffy old church. You could pray and read the Bible in the middle of a campground and it was all a fine thing to do. God apparently didn't mind where you were as long as you believed. And another very wise Elvirism: There's only one God. But people see God the way they want to.

Reminded me of my earlier days of being a teen! Then I realized it was a teen book! No wonder it was so easy to read.

Flawed people leading hardscrabble lives. Yet each has something inside that we want to embrace. Love. Torture it with guilt, deny it, hate it. In the end, cling to it and let it free you to be at peace. I was charmed. I would recommend this book to all ages, anyone who loves a happy ending.

Imagine living in the 1940's, dirt poor in the middle of nowhere. With a mother who only notices you when you do something wrong, a grandmother who has nothing better than to constantly insult your mother for marrying your now dead father and a little sister who can see into the future. That is exactly the type of home in which Elvira Witsil grew up in. Family secrets, loss, strained relationships all wrapped up with a small glimmer of hope. Insight was a breath of fresh air. I was sucked into this novel within the first few pages. Diana Greenwood did an excellent job with the character development. I especially loved being inside the head of Elvira. She was such an interesting character, there were moments where I couldn't help but laugh at some of the thoughts that ran through her mind while other times my heart just ached for her. Jessie was another favorite of mine. For such a small child she showed more thoughtfulness and wisdom than anyone else in her family. Insight was an all around well written novel. Full of tense drama, emotional struggles and a family's journey to grow, heal and love.

I enjoyed this book a lot. As a history buff, I was tickled to travel down the road in the 1940s in a beat up old truck with the family's main character Elvira on a crowded road trip, complete with campgrounds and a seedy motel, from remote Wisconsin to the shores of California. But it was this young teenager's coming to terms with her father's disappearance in the war that I found so

compelling. Added to this mix, Elvira is faced with a distant mother, a cantankerous grandmother, and a little sister who has a strange ability to see the future, along with a kind pastor (their driver) who offers a new perspective on faith. This is published by Zondervan, a Christian publisher, but there are other good reasons to read this coming of age novel. Elvira's struggles in a difficult setting would resonate with young adults anywhere, and there is a heartwarming surprise at the end.

Insight was a good inspirational novel. I wasn't expecting the time period of the book to be in the 1940's. Usually I don't read things set in a war time era. However, this book was really good, and didn't focus on World War II much. The plot went along fairly well. Parts of the plot got a little boring at times, such as the stopping along the side of the road a few times to rest. I thought it was cool how the author wrote a few A.A. references into the book. She also wrote a couple of snippets about A.A. history. The ending of the book completely shocked me. I was expecting a totally different ending. I think I liked this ending better than the one I expected. I liked most of the characters. The grandma got a little annoying at times. I think my favorite character was Don, the preacher. I liked how kind and wise he was. He took the family almost cross country without knowing much about them. This was a great novel with a powerful message. The message it gave was to not let guilt consume you. Another message the book gave was that God will help you through your problems, no matter how big they may seem. I recommend this book to anyone looking for a good read.

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