



A Walk Across the Sun

Corban Addison

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Corban Addison leads readers on a chilling, eye-opening journey into Mumbai's seedy underworld-- and the nightmare of two orphaned girls swept into the international sex trade.

When a tsunami rages through their coastal town in India, 17-year-old Ahalya Ghai and her 15-year-old sister Sita are left orphaned and homeless. With almost everyone they know suddenly erased from the face of the earth, the girls set out for the convent where they attend school. They are abducted almost immediately and sold to a Mumbai brothel owner, beginning a hellish descent into the bowels of the sex trade.

Halfway across the world, Washington, D.C., attorney Thomas Clarke faces his own personal and professional crisis--and makes the fateful decision to pursue a pro bono sabbatical working in India for an NGO that prosecutes the subcontinent's human traffickers. There, his conscience awakens as he sees firsthand the horrors of the trade in human flesh, and the corrupt judicial system that fosters it. Learning of the fate of Ahalya and Sita, Clarke makes it his personal mission to rescue them, setting the stage for a riveting showdown with an international network of ruthless criminals.

A Walk Across the Sun Details

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From Reader Review A Walk Across the Sun for online ebook

Nate says

It's the sign of an incredible book that when it finishes, you have that butterflies-in-your-stomach feeling of closure, redemption and beauty. And that's what happens when you read this book. I read this as an ARC provided by the publishing company.

Other reviewers have mentioned that it's a "hard book to read", and that's true--at first. Coming face-to-face with the gritty realities of the horrendous trade in young girls is difficult. But Addison deftly weaves a tale of beauty and redemption throughout. It reads like a thriller, but has the soul of poetic lyricism.

This might be a small spoiler, but I believe knowing this fact, actually, greatly improves the read -- it ends with goodness. It's not a "pat" ending, and all of the twists and turns of the story contribute to an overall effect of depth and reality. So the "happy" ending -- rather than being cliché or saccharine -- comes off as a picture of redemption. Yes, I know I've used that word a few times, but there's no better descriptor for how this book feels. Redemptive.

Thriller fans will be delighted. Those who want a story with poetic beauty will be moved. The (on-the-ground) research makes you feel like you are walking the streets of Mumbai or Paris -- and the characterization is strong.

I can't more highly recommend this book!

TamElaine says

Brilliant writing, Moving, compelling story ! I cried, I raged, I hoped, I hurt. Failing the ability to give a rating of anything over 5 stars, this book makes me want to reduce the rating of every book I've ever read and given 5 stars to so that I can make sure it is understood that THIS book is truly a 5-star-worthy book....

I love how Addison took such a head-on, yet sensitive approach with such a horrific topic. He wrote with just enough detail to make the reader feel rage, yet not so much detail to make the reader want to wretch...although on my own time, thinking about the book, and the tragedy, my stomach certainly churned and my skin crawled.

Periodically within the story, other women or girls would appear and I would find myself unrealistically waiting for one of them to whisper an escape plan to Sita or Ahalya, offer assistance to get out, provide a cover....they never did....and honestly if they did, it probably would have made this story much less believable. But what I did realistically expect was that these girls/women would offer comfort, at the very least....some did – a heartbreaking, but wise, and cultural sort of comfort....the kind that gave little hope, yet courage. Sumeera, a woman of the brothel both girls were taken to attempted to comfort Ahalya by saying “I once was like you. I was taken from my home and brought here by strange men. Life in the adda is hard, but you must accept it. There is no use fighting your karma. Accept the discipline of God and perhaps you will be reborn in a better place.” She also says at another point “what you have experienced is difficult. The shame is natural. All feel it the first time. But you will survive. You will learn to accept it.” Ahalya, herself, comes to the conclusion that “To survive in such a world, she would to sever her heart from her body.”

At great length, prior to reading this book, I have pondered, even researched, the concepts of karma,

detachment and acceptance within the Indian culture.... I find it very sad, and tragic that Ahalya and Sita believed that this horror story they were living was their Karma, but I find the concept of detachment very helpful....in detaching her heart from her body, she would be able to find peace in her heart over the shame, and not allow "herself to surrender to despair."

Ahalya shows such hope in this statement: "The lotus was a finicky flower and there was no guarantee that it would grow. But Ahalya was determined to try. She wanted to have a gift to offer Sita when they found one another again, something that would keep alive the spirit of their family."

Woven among Ahayla and Sita's stories, is Thomas, the lawyer who landed in Bombay to work with an agency against the sex trade, becomes deeply drawn into finding Sita, bringing her back to Ahayla, and trying to win back his marriage at the same time.

The entire book is captivating from the beginning. I read hungrily through it all to find out what was going to happen next...yet about ¾ of the way through the book, the story became even more captivating - I was literally sitting on the edge of my seat, antsy, following the action, page after page without the ability to put it down for a break for any purpose.

I want to give kudos to the author for the ending of this story....Addison accomplished an ending that left me feeling full closure – and without cheese – maybe a little fluff, but I enjoyed this particular fluff !

Barbara Elsborg says

This book should have worked but it didn't for me. I was interested in the subject matter - people trafficking but the way the story was told seemed so cold and documentary-like that I couldn't get emotionally involved. I honestly expected to read at the end - that this was a real story, this had actually happened - but although it does happen and that's tragic, this story was made up. Whether it's because the author is a lawyer and used to writing in a different style - I don't know but the prose felt too structured, too neat somehow.

The story itself - well, the bit with the two girls I liked, the bit with the so-called hero, I didn't. For me the two threads didn't gel. It seemed too convenient that he had an Indian wife. I started to think things were cliched and predictable and my enjoyment waned. I know the author was trying not to sensationalize things but maybe it needed a bit more drama and action and umphhh.

The tragedy for me is that had it been true, I'd have read it in a different way and might have appreciated it more, but as a novel, no, sorry, I didn't like it.

BUT - the information in the book about the sex trade and trafficking and use of children is horrifying. I knew much of it, but he did do a good job in bringing it to people's attention.

Bonnie Brody says

A Walk Across the Sun is not a book for the faint of heart. It is a book about horrific themes - child trafficking for prostitution, drug running, and kidnapping. It takes place primarily in Bombay and in the U.S. but the trafficking that this story is about occurs world-wide.

The story opens with a lawyer witnessing the kidnapping of a young girl in a public park. It haunts him.

Thomas Clarke works for a huge and prestigious law firm in D.C. and has been spending the last several months working on a case representing a coal mine. The mine is accused of being responsible for an accident that kills many children and adults. Because of an error, his firm loses the case and he is the fall-guy. His father, who is a judge, is good friends with the firm's head so he is not fired. He is offered the 'opportunity' of a sabbatical. Recently, his wife has left him and he sees the opportunity for a sabbatical as a good move towards his goal of a seat on the bench. He takes an internship with a non-profit organization called C.A.S.E. - Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation. They have an opening in their Bombay office and he flies there to work. At first, his heart is not in it though he is committed to spend his year there.

Meanwhile, in India, there is a giant tsunami and thousands of people are killed. Two of the survivors are 17 year-old Ahalya and her 15 year-old sister Sita. Their parents were killed by the wave and they are now orphaned. As they try to get to their convent school they are kidnapped and sold into prostitution to become 'beshyas'.

The story is told from two vantage points, that of Thomas and the other of Ahalya and Sita. One of the first cases that Thomas gets to work on in Bombay is the sting operation on the brothel where the sisters work. However, when the sting is completed, only Ahalya is there. Her sister is nowhere to be found. Unbeknownst to Ahalya, Sita has been sold and is now a drug mule.

The story is heartbreaking and the descriptions do not hold anything back. The problems of child prostitution, adult prostitution, kidnapping, and drug trafficking using children are described in great, specific detail. This is a world the reader may not want to enter so take this as a warning. It is a difficult book to read.

My only gripe with the book is that parts of it are moralistic and preachy with a subtle religious overtone to it. That threw me off a bit despite the interesting topic and the good writing.

G.J. says

Emotionally this was quite a demanding book, the theme being child sex slavery, and young women being bought and sold like commodities, it is simply too dreadful to imagine that this "business " is so widespread! The story itself was well written, handled with sensitivity and the characters , both good and bad were very believable. I strongly recommend this book, and am so pleased to have been told about it.

Dem says

2.5 Stars

A walk across the Sun by Corban Addison was a disappointing read on many levels for me. The book has got great reviews and I know that I am in the minority on this one but while the subject is one that is so sad and very real in today's world I have to judge this book on how the story came across in reading it and how it made me feel.

This Novel explores the difficult subject of Child Sex trafficking and tells the story of the two Ghai sisters whose childhood's ends abruptly one day when a Tsunami rips through their Indian Village. Destitute and

alone their only hope is to find refuge at a convert several miles away. They hitch a lift and are abducted by human sex traffickers.

The opening couple of chapters of this novel literally drops the reader right into the story with a Tsunami, and an abduction of a child in a park and and I felt I had pages missing from my book as the author failed to build up a sense of time or place and the characters just seemed to appear with little or no introduction and were poorly developed and I never felt I got to know Ahalya or Sita and therefore could not form any attachment to the them as people.

I also felt the writing was cold and lacked emotion and while the novel had a very important message to convey I just wasn't convinced by the storytelling.

I did find the following quote from the book so important and true " *Traffickers will STOP wen Men STOP buying Women*"

I disliked the Characters of Thomas Clarke and Priya and they just seemed too contrived and I think they took up too much of the story.

As for the ending

An ok read for me but not a book I will be recommending.

Jennifer Campaniolo says

When I think of this book, all the reviewer's cliches apply: fast-paced, suspenseful, page-turning, heart-thumping, stayed-up-late-reading, etc. I'm not typically a fan of thrillers--too often they sacrifice character study for the sake of moving the plot along. But I admire the effort Addison took to give readers a realistic tableaux whether we were reading about the doomed family in Chennai, the hidden neighborhood of Indian restaurants in Paris, or the truck stops in Harrisburg, PA. We care about the two orphan girls, Ahalya and Sita Ghai, right from the start because of the details he gives us about their lives before disaster strikes (in fact, I wouldn't have minded a little more of that). Addison reveals to the reader the grim realities of an underworld that we associate with movies but that is actually happening--and not just in places like India and the Philippines. Human trafficking--particularly of young girls--is modern slavery, and Addison does here what artists do best: he gives a human face to the victims that are otherwise invisible in our society.

Kathie says

I do not know why this book is getting such rave reviews and an endorsement from John Grisham. It was so one-dimensional, lacked any emotional build up to what should have been major scenes (tsunami, kidnap, human trafficking). Thomas was a moron who should have been a secondary character and not the main event. It wasn't his story, but the author turned what could have been an appealing call to action in support of anti-human trafficking into a second-rate essay on one man's desire to be a hero. Written like a law brief for a journal article: who, what, where, when and how. No need to tell me who sat in the front seat and who sat in the back, how the girl looked out the window and saw people getting in and out of the car, and how Thomas turned left and then right and then left again on every city street in Paris. Unbelievable and way too predictable. Ugh!

Marcy says

This is Corban Addison's first novel. Thomas Clarke is a high-paid lawyer with one of the best law firms. In law school, he met an Indian woman, Priya, a brilliant lawyer in her own right. Neither family was thrilled about them marrying each other due to cultural differences, but marry they did, and had a beautiful baby. When their infant died of SIDS, their lives were turned upside down. Priya, unable to handle her depression, flew back to her family in India. Thomas, unable to focus as well in his firm, is given a leave of absence to spend a Sabbatical year. When Thomas witnessed a kidnapping of a child who was walking in a park with her mother in Washington D.C., Thomas knew what he must do. He took "A Walk across the Sun" to rekindle his life with his beloved wife and help find two trafficked sisters who were orphaned after a Tsunami.

This novel exposes the ills of young girls being trafficked all over the world for thousands of dollars being handed from one customer after another. Although this is a work of fiction, "the trade in human beings is all too real. It is a criminal enterprise that affects almost every country in the world, generating over \$30 billion a year in profits and involving millions of men, women, and children in forced prostitution and slave labor." Kudos to Corban Addison for writing a riveting novel that exposes human trafficking in a story that you won't be able to put down...

Saba says

This book was AMAZING!! Although "A Walk Across the Sun" is fictional, human trafficking is all too real. This could be easily be an unfortunate young girl's story. This book really opened my eyes to the "hidden world of sexual violence, where the most valuable prize is the innocence of a child". I would highly recommend it to everyone. This is truly a groundbreaking debut novel!

Elizabeth of Silver's Reviews says

In A WALK ACROSS THE SUN you meet Ahalya and her sister Sita who were saved, if you can call it saved, from the terrors of the tsunami that occurred in India. Their entire family perished in the tsunami, and these two innocent girls were kidnapped, bought, and forced into a brothel in India.

Meanwhile on the other side of the world, Thomas Clarke, an attorney in Washington D.C., takes on a position in India to try to find and arrest the sex traffic offenders.

You will follow the horrors of a life these two girls and the other underage and legal-aged girls lead in these houses. You will feel their humiliation and helplessness. The horrors of forced child prostitution are unthinkable, but it happens more than we want to believe...even in the United States. You will also see the wealthy side of Bombay, India, and feel the rush of everyday life and the unbelievable multitude of people. Ever-present poverty is never far away from the wealthy sections along with the red-light districts in the poorest towns with children hidden inside with no way out.

This book is not a police report...it is the story of Ahalya and Sita and the plight of these girls and other unfortunate girls around the globe. Ahalya and Sita are the main characters the story is based upon. The suspense and the fear you have for Sita, Ahalya, and the other "prisoners" of these traffickers is real. There is also a love story weaved into the book which takes the reader from the United States to India.

The book is very well written, as tastefully written as it can be, and will hold your interest in spite of the unpleasant subject matter. It is eye opening to find out about corrupt police forces and the trafficking that is incredibly rampant. It is also unbelievable that this trafficking can occur to such a great extent without its being discovered.

The last few chapters of the book take a different direction in terms of plot. The tense subject matter melts away and takes the reader on a more redeeming ride. The book leaves you with a powerful message and with a sense of sorrow for society.

My rating is an unequivocal 5/5. Great research and wonderful storyline.

Ajay Pradhan says

An absolutely amazing book. I'll write a longer review when I have some time on my hand. But for now, I'll take the liberty of sharing what I wrote on the writer's Facebook wall and his reply.

Ajay Pradhan

AWATS... a beautifully written story, with delicate narrative full of poetic imagination and a gripping message. To say that I absolutely loved this debut novel is probably an understatement. I bought the book last week at YVR airport in Vancouver and I finished reading it today. I couldn't help but be moved with emotion this morning when I read the passage in Chapter 31 where Thomas sees Sita in Atlanta and unfastens the rakhi bracelet and places it on the table before her. It is an interesting coincidence that today, August 2nd, is the rakhi day (aka Raksha Bandhan). For someone who grew up in Nepal reading countless news reports about human trafficking, young girls trafficked from the hills and valleys of Nepal, to places like Kamathipura in Mumbai, I found an instant connection with the story. The book has awakened a desire to be involved in efforts to fight this scourge. Corban, thank you for this story.

Corban Addison

Such a pleasure to hear from you, Ajay. Thanks for your lovely note. I'm delighted that you enjoyed the story and found meaning in the message. I'm convinced we can bring about change if we work together and make the abolition of modern slavery an international priority. Check out my website www.corbanaddison.com under the "Engage" tab for more information about organizations that are working to rescue children from human trafficking both in India and in North America. They do heroic work everyday and they need our support. I wish you and yours the very best!

Corban Addison - A Walk Across the Sun
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Sarah says

Human trafficking, sex slavery, the buying and selling of minor children for the purpose of the underground sex trade... whatever you want to call it...

A difficult topic to read about yet the author did a great job in creating a passionate and moving story that was entertaining while at the same time creating awareness about a taboo industry that exists but is easy to ignore in today's world.

Addison jumps right into the action from the start without setting a proper scene and with only little character development. So going into the book, you really don't know much about the Ghai sisters except a few mundane facts and, because of this, it didn't allow you to warm up to them properly before you got caught up in their tragic snowballing of events. Instead, you warmed up to them slowly as the story developed by pitying their unfortunate circumstances and rooting for their justice.

I enjoyed following along with the sister's chain of events, waiting and hoping for a climax where their luck will change and all the bad guys (there are a lot of them) get what they deserve. In that aspect, it was a page-turner for me. Also, despite the explicit nature of the topic, the author never got too... elaborate during the smutty scenes. He flowed through them quickly with just enough detail so you knew what was going on yet he still managed to capture the sorrow, helplessness and resignation of these girls forced into prostitution.

The only problem I had was with our so-called "hero", Thomas Clarke, who all the women in the book, except his wife, were desperate to sleep with. *rolls eyes* For what reason, I don't know. To me, he just seemed one-dimensional; flat. His actions were mechanical and the dialogue was bland and uninspiring to the point that whenever he said something, all I heard was a monotone in my head. On top of that, I don't see how he did anything to save the day except [spoiler?] use his Blackberry to relay information and tag along on raids.

Still, as a debut novel, this was pretty good.

Malak says

A Walk Across the Sun is a great story of success, failure, fear and courage. There are many elements that makes this novel worth the read.

It is very hard to choose the words to praise a novel with such a heavy and delicate subject, but what I can say is this novel had what it takes to keep me reading until the last page.

A walk Across the Sun kept me on edge most of the time. I thought: what is going to happen next? Is she going to make it? Will they succeed? Sometimes, I jumped in excitement or in others, closed the book shut from frustration. All of that made me want to know more about the faith of two Indian girls who had to make their way through hardship unimaginable by common people.

The plot was well put and I liked how the story shifts from the girls' point of view to Thomas'.

Despite the main theme of the novel, the sex trade, there is absolutely no explicit graphic description, only the shame, the sorrow, and the raging emotions of the girls or simple descriptions just enough to make the reader understand the situation. I was really grateful to this because I would have never finished the novel if there was explicit seances.

I liked the depth of the characters. The personal life of Thomas and his struggle to save his marriage while he tries to save Ahalya and Sita added to his personality and made him more human like character.

To sums it up, A walk Across the Sun brings to readers a small glimpse of the life of thousands if not millions of people who are enslaved to the sex trade industry all over the world and the life of those who are trying to set them free.

Parvathy says

Recently while surfing through channels way past midnight I came across a program in Nat Geo that talked about some kind of a covert operation.

Intrigued I sat and watched the whole show. It was about a human trafficking crime ring in Bangkok where women were transported from eastern Europe on the promise of respectable jobs and forced into sexual slavery. The whole show was focussed on the Bangkok police and an American investigating teams effort to bring down an international crime ring and the undercover operations they have undertaken to save the victims. I watched the show way past one in the morning to see how they fared. In the end they conducted a raid in one of the houses convinced two girls to talk only to have them retract their statement in court. So the perpetrators after months of operation are set free with a pat on the back and I was left feeling dumbfounded and disappointed.....I just couldn't believe that it was the end. After months of planning the whole team failed. Since reality was such a disappointment I decided to delve into the fictional world with the same motif and hence came up with the decision to read this book which was in my TBR pile for a long time.

Even in this fictional world I couldn't really shake of the feeling of helplessness that grasped me as I wrestled with pages after pages. Sometimes when writing books of such nature the authors often tend to be a bit dramatic so as to make you feel more sympathetic towards the characters. More often that not such efforts only end up making the book a pretentious read. But that is not the case here. As the author himself has said there is no need to over dramatise the concept of human trafficking and sexual slavery. It is what it is and shocking in the most basic of its forms. Being held against ones will and denying a life of dignity is outlawed in every civilized nations in the modern world. But it is in this very civilized nations underbelly that we find the most heinous kinds of crime taking place. While this book has gives us an insight into the enormity of the particular issue it also makes you aware that the war continues as long as the mindset of the people remain the same.

What this book ultimately made me realize is the fickle nature of our circumstance. While you are content living your life as a frog in a pond even the slightest change in circumstance can bring you face to face with the harshest of realities. That is what happened to the two main protagonist in this boo., Ahalya and Sita. When we are introduced to them are two sisters growing up in a well to do family with loving parents and a bright future ahead of them. It took only a second for everything to change. A Giant Tidal wave and everything they loved and knew was taken from them. Their parents, their home, their life everything. From there on the two sisters are taken to Bombay by some strangers who promised to help them and forced into a life of prostitution.

At the same time a young lawyer across the globe is struggling to come to terms with the loss of his daughter. Circumstances force him to come to India and cross his path with the two sisters who are currently facing a fate worse than death. Will a broken man be able to save the life of two innocents who are the victims of circumstance or will the challenge prove too much for him?

The book takes us through the initial part of the protagonists life at a fast pace. There is not much character building going on their as immediately after their introduction the crisis strikes. I admit at first I was kind of annoyed at the naivety the two displayed being 15 and 17 year old girls but then I realized what they went through and tried to understand the story from that point. But once the story takes off you could feel the characters and their anguish through the pages of this book. Not just them but all the others around them also make a striking impression. As the girls are exchanged from one to another as though a commodity I found myself cringing. Then they came face to face with other women even children who had it worse than them and the whole thing just felt sick. If it were the movies you could believe with absolute certainty that the good will prevail but here that is not the case here. The author has written his characters as grounded personalities. One with limitation and weaknesses, not as super heroes. Yet there is still the factor of luck and creative writing involved to obtain the kind of outcome that was expected. But in the real world problem is still at large and no amount of creativity can bring about the necessary outcome. The book has its ups and downs but for the most part it keeps you at the edge of the seat. It makes you think and that is one of the most important quality that a book of this nature can strive to achieve. A walk across the sun is a must read for those who like fiction rooted in reality.

Heather says

Author just seemed to get interested in the topic of human trafficking, read a bunch of articles about it, then tried to put as much as he possibly could of what he had read into the lives of the characters.

The main character should not have been Thomas. I couldn't make myself care about his affair, his wife, his family issues or even the loss of his child. The two girls (Ahalya and Sita) should have been main characters and he should have been a secondary character at best. Everything just seemed so contrived, so easily fixed and way too happily ever after for this novel to have any impact. Totally unbelievable plot, no emotions generated from reading the story and overall a very forgettable book.

Are all the people reviewing this book on goodreads being paid or did they read a different book? HUH?

Sandra Stiles says

Those of us not familiar with the sex trade, me being one of those, usually think of it as happening "someplace else". The reality is that it happens all over the world, including right here in the United States. Children are sold for drugs, prostitution, kidnapped right off of the street. Before you go any further in this review you need to know that this is not a feel good topic. It is repulsive and hard to read.

We start off the story with two innocent girls whose life is decimated due to a tsunami. They try to get to their school where the sisters will take care of them. Things go wrong and they find themselves where no young person should ever be, in the sex trade. Thomas Clarke is a lawyer who has lost so much already. He witnesses a kidnapping of a young girl in a park and this sets him on his mission to work against these traffickers.

This story moves along smoothly carrying the reader from one heartbreak to another. It is a very emotional book to read. It lets you see inside the head and heart of these people who sell children for sex. I think it was best said when one of the characters said to the young girl he had with him, "You are not here because I enjoy the sale of sex. You are here because men enjoy the purchase of it." (page 329)
I thought about that remark. If we could get rid of all of the people who were willing to pay for this service then we would not have the sex trade.

As the author took us across India we get a look at the different caste systems and the way they treat people. Both of these girls were middle class students who knew English. This made them more valuable than many others. The author doesn't leave the reader in a depressive state. He definitely wanted to give the reader hope that this situation can change in the future. This is a must read book. If nothing else you as a parent should read it to see what you need to protect your children from.

Corban Addison is able to give a voice to the victims of human trafficking. Without that voice people like me know nothing of it. We live in our safe little world. After reading this book my world doesn't feel so safe anymore and it isn't as small as it once was.

Ariele says

At the end, great books give us a feeling of closure, beauty, and redemption. Corbin Addison has triumphed

by doing that with his first novel, a thriller about a difficult-to-read subject - human trafficking.

The novel vacillates between the stories of Ahalya and Sita, sisters who are left orphaned and homeless by a tsunami on the coast of India, and Thomas Clark, a lawyer in Washington D.C facing a personal and professional crisis. As Thomas makes fateful decisions to bring meaning to his life, he heads off to Mumbai to work for an organization that prosecutes human traffickers. When he learns about Sita and Ahalya, he makes it his personal mission to rescue them.

Addison's characters are strong and believable, and his strong writing brings to life the streets of Mumbai and Paris. The second half of the book, as the girls deal with the harsh realities of life in the sex trade and Thomas' search for the girls intensifies, is intense and poetic.

I could not put this book down, and recommend it highly.

Kelly Hager says

Two teenage sisters (Ahalya, 17, and Sita, 15) are orphaned after a tsunami hits their Indian town. The sisters try to head back to school but are kidnapped and sold into the sex trade. Meanwhile, DC lawyer Thomas Clarke sees his life unraveling. His wife left him after their baby daughter died, and it's impacting his work. After seeing a young girl kidnapped and learning she may also have been sold into the sex trade, he agrees to spend a year working for a group that prosecutes sex traffickers. He makes it his mission to find Ahalya and Sita, but how can you find two specific girls inside something as vast as this?

I was excited to read this book because it's a subject I didn't know much about, except for what Cori has posted. Obviously, it's not a topic that anyone likes thinking about, but the first step toward changing anything is making people aware of what's going on.

There are several things that really surprised me about this novel. The first is that girls here are being kidnapped and forced into prostitution. (I knew that teenage girls were prostitutes, but I thought that happened to runaways and was sort of a thing of last resort, not so much something that was actually forced upon someone here, in this country.) I thought generally girls were being taken in other countries and forced to work there.

The second thing is that this is apparently nearly impossible to prosecute. So not only do you have these horrible guys stealing girls and allowing them to be raped over and over, they also basically do it with no fear, because 99.9% of the time, nothing happens to them. And if somehow they do get raided, they likely won't see any jail time and will maybe have to pay a fine. And the thing about young girls? So easy to replace.

This is not an easy book to read. It's not light, fun reading. But knowing is still better than not knowing.

Recommended.

Julia Grundling says

this was a hard read in the sense that it's quite disturbing. it's one of those things that you know exists, but you don't want to think about it too much - child trafficking. but sometimes we have to face the facts and educate ourselves. this is so extremely sad, as it is something that cannot be stopped completely. however, i take my hat off to people who make it their purpose in life to try and save one girl.

it was a riveting story - the author definitely did his research well. well worth the read. the language is not so eloquent, which is simply a matter of taste i would say - hence me giving it 4 stars and not 5 stars. i would however recommend it strongly.
