

The Forgotten Girl

by India Hill Brown · Language: EN

Summary by booksummaryai.com — <https://booksummaryai.com/country/en/the-forgotten-girl>

Overview

Iris and her best friend, Daniel, are exploring their new neighborhood in Willow Creek when they stumble upon an old, overgrown cemetery. What initially seems like a curious discovery quickly turns chilling when they encounter a mysterious girl named Avery. Avery, who reveals herself to be a ghost, claims she was buried in the forgotten cemetery and has been waiting for someone to remember her and help her find peace. As Iris delves deeper into Avery's past, she uncovers a dark history of racial injustice and segregation that led to the cemetery's neglect and Avery's tragic death.

The narrative explores profound themes of friendship, historical memory, and the importance of acknowledging forgotten histories. Iris must confront her fears and navigate the complexities of the past to help Avery, while also dealing with Daniel's initial skepticism and the growing unease in her own life. The book highlights how the past, particularly unaddressed injustices, can continue to haunt the present, and emphasizes the power of remembrance and empathy in healing old wounds. It's a poignant story about finding courage and giving voice to those who have been silenced and overlooked by history.

Key Takeaways

- Uncovering forgotten histories can reveal painful truths about past injustices.
- Friendship and empathy are powerful tools for overcoming fear and righting historical wrongs.
- Sometimes, the most important thing you can do for someone is to remember their story.
- Ignoring the past can lead to its lingering presence and impact on the present.
- Courage isn't the absence of fear, but the decision to act despite it.
- Even children can play a significant role in advocating for social justice and historical recognition.

Chapter Summaries

A New Home, A Hidden Place

Iris and her best friend Daniel are exploring their new neighborhood in Willow Creek when they stumble upon an old, overgrown cemetery. It's neglected and forgotten, with crumbling headstones and dense foliage, sparking their curiosity about who might be buried there and why

it's been left in such a state. This discovery sets the stage for the mysterious events to unfold.

The Mysterious Girl

During their explorations of the cemetery, Iris and Daniel encounter a strange girl named Avery. Avery seems to know a lot about the cemetery and its history, but her appearance and behavior are unsettlingly out of time. She quickly forms a bond with Iris, hinting at a secret connected to her own past and the forgotten graves.

Whispers from the Past

Avery's true nature as a ghost becomes increasingly evident, though Daniel remains skeptical. Avery reveals fragments of her story, indicating that she was buried in the neglected section of the cemetery and has been waiting for someone to remember her. Her presence begins to affect Iris's life outside the cemetery, making it clear that Avery needs help to find peace.

Uncovering the Truth

Driven by Avery's pleas and her own growing unease, Iris begins to research the history of the Willow Creek cemetery and the era Avery lived in. She discovers disturbing facts about racial segregation and the deliberate neglect of the section where Black residents, including Avery, were buried. This research reveals the systemic injustice that led to Avery's forgotten status.

The Haunting Deepens

As Iris delves deeper into Avery's past, the ghost's presence becomes more intense and demanding. Avery's manifestations grow stronger, impacting Iris's sleep and daily life, and even causing minor disturbances in her home. Iris feels a growing pressure to uncover the full truth and help Avery, despite Daniel's increasing fear and her parents' concern.

A Tragic Story Revealed

Iris uncovers the full, heartbreaking story of Avery's death and the circumstances surrounding it. Avery was a young Black girl who died tragically and was buried in the segregated, poorly maintained section of the cemetery, which was then deliberately forgotten by the town. This revelation solidifies Iris's resolve to right the historical wrong.

A Plan for Remembrance

With the full truth known, Iris, now fully supported by Daniel, devises a plan to bring recognition to Avery and the other forgotten souls in the neglected cemetery. They decide to clean up the cemetery and share Avery's story with the community, hoping to finally give the buried a proper remembrance and peace.

Facing Resistance

Iris and Daniel face challenges and skepticism from some adults in the community who are reluctant to acknowledge the town's uncomfortable past. They encounter resistance to their

efforts to restore the cemetery and tell Avery's story, but Iris remains determined, understanding the importance of her mission for Avery and for historical justice.

Peace Found

Through their persistence and courage, Iris and Daniel succeed in bringing the forgotten cemetery and Avery's story to the attention of the community. The cemetery is cleaned and recognized, and a memorial is planned. This act of remembrance finally allows Avery's spirit to find peace and move on, leaving Iris with a profound sense of accomplishment and understanding.

Themes

- Historical injustice
- Racial segregation
- Friendship and loyalty
- Memory and remembrance
- Courage and empathy
- The supernatural

Frequently Asked Questions

What is The Forgotten Girl about?

The Forgotten Girl is a middle-grade ghost story about Iris, who discovers a neglected cemetery in her new town. She encounters the ghost of a young girl named Avery, who was buried there. Iris uncovers a history of racial injustice and works to bring recognition to Avery and the forgotten cemetery.

Is The Forgotten Girl worth reading?

Yes, it is a compelling and poignant middle-grade novel that skillfully blends a spooky ghost story with important historical themes. It encourages empathy, teaches about the impact of forgotten histories, and offers a powerful message about speaking up for justice. It's highly recommended for its unique blend of mystery and social commentary.

How does The Forgotten Girl end?

Spoiler: Iris and Daniel successfully bring attention to the forgotten Black cemetery, ensuring that Avery and the other buried souls are finally remembered and honored by the community. This act of remembrance and the restoration of the cemetery allows Avery's spirit to find peace and move on, leaving Iris with a profound sense of accomplishment.

Who should read The Forgotten Girl?

This book is ideal for middle-grade readers (ages 8-12) who enjoy ghost stories, mysteries, and historical fiction. It's also suitable for readers interested in themes of social justice, friendship, and the importance of acknowledging difficult histories. Parents and educators looking for books that spark discussions on these topics will also find it valuable.

How long does it take to read The Forgotten Girl?

Based on its typical length for a middle-grade novel (around 200-250 pages), it would likely take an average reader approximately 3 to 4 hours to read 'The Forgotten Girl' from start to finish.