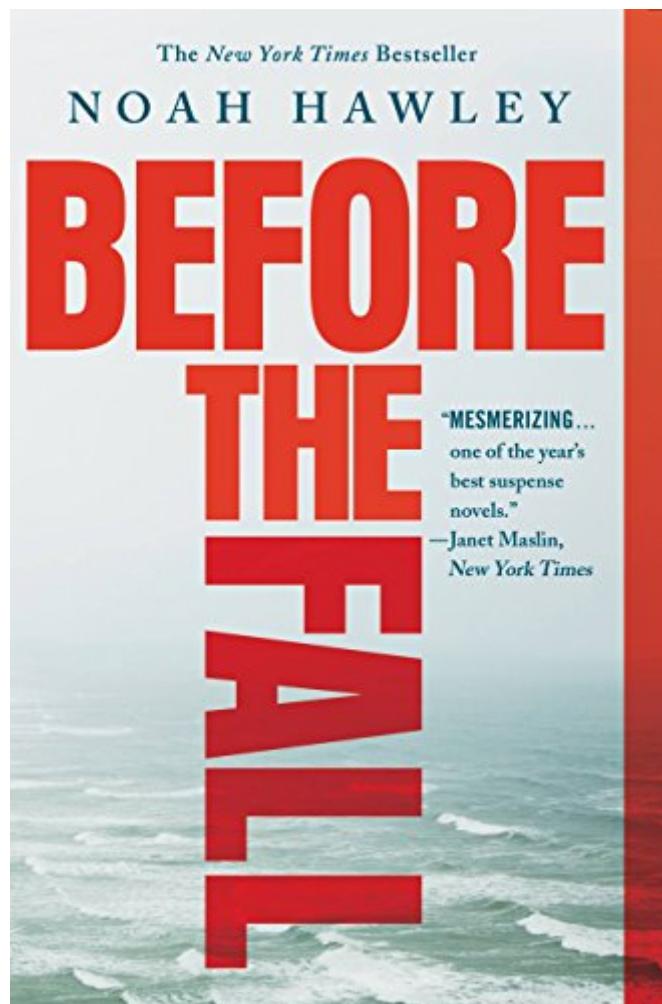


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Before The Fall



Synopsis

Winner of the 2017 EDGAR AWARD FOR BEST NOVEL and the 2017 INTERNATIONAL THRILLER WRITERS AWARD FOR BEST NOVEL FROM THE AWARD-WINNING CREATOR OF FARGO COMES "ONE THE YEAR'S BEST SUSPENSE NOVELS" (NEW YORK TIMES). On a foggy summer night, eleven people--ten privileged, one down-on-his-luck painter--depart Martha's Vineyard on a private jet headed for New York. Sixteen minutes later, the unthinkable happens: the plane plunges into the ocean. The only survivors are the painter Scott Burroughs and a four-year-old boy, who is now the last remaining member of an immensely wealthy and powerful media mogul's family. Was it by chance that so many influential people perished? Or was something more sinister at work? A storm of media attention brings Scott fame that quickly morphs into notoriety and accusations, and he scrambles to salvage truth from the wreckage. Amid trauma and chaos, the fragile relationship between Scott and the young boy grows and glows at the heart of this stunning novel, raising questions of fate, morality, and the inextricable ties that bind us together. Kristin Hannah raves, "Noah Hawley really knows how to keep a reader turning the pages... a complex, compulsively readable thrill ride of a novel."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Scott, an undistinguished painter, a recovering alcoholic, and a general sad sack, runs into a woman he knows casually while at the farmer's market on Martha's Vineyard. He's there for the summer to paint, she's there with her family to enjoy life as one of the mega-rich. They chat, she mentions that they'll be returning to New York that evening. Scott intends to return to the city the next morning and is offered a free ride back on their private jet. He accepts. And then the unthinkable happens. The plane crashes into the ocean just minutes after departure killing all on board except Scott and the four year old son of the woman and her renowned husband. The chapter that follows this terrible crash is one of the most exciting and well written I've read. Scott's disorientation is palpable as he comes to consciousness. The sea is dark, the sky is foggy, no stars can be seen to guide him. And then the whimpering cries of the boy reach his ears. I'm not giving anything away to say that they survived. But why should the plane have crashed? Many authorities believe it to be sabotage. One of the other passengers was about to be indicted for some big financial crime. Speculation runs wild among the investigation agencies and the press. We get short chapters defining the personal histories of all the passengers and crew on board. Okay, fine. This device isn't new and usually serves to let the reader have some investment in the outcome. As I stated, the "escape" from the sea was a thrilling bit of writing. The supporting players bios began to get a little tedious as the info was parceled out sparingly. I was losing interest in the outcome at about 70% but stuck with it anyway. And then, what happened? Suddenly we're at the end and rather than giving the reader a unique and original ending, the author wrapped up the mystery with something ripped right from the headlines. I felt cheated, duped, in fact. So you may want to wait for the price to drop before committing to purchase this book. I will say that the writing is fine but it seems to me that the author merely tacked on an easy ending that took no thought at all.

I so wanted to write a rave review of this book. The book tells the story of an ill-fated flight, a small private plane taking off from a fogged Martha's Vineyard to New York City. No spoilers here (it's written on the back cover): the flight doesn't make it. What happened to the flight is the driving force of the story. The author ingeniously vacillates between the present, where painter Scott Burroughs manages to break free from the wreck and saves a four year old boy JJ, and the past, in which we learn about the lives of the passenger, hopefully unlocking the mystery to the crash. The chapters are well plotted, and read quickly, drawing you in immediately. The author crafts an authentic world, a television network modeled on Fox News with a heinous personality to boot, and rich, real lives of the people on the plane, and their survivors. So why the three stars? At 60% of the book, I would have written a rave review. And then I got to the ending. No spoilers here, but I didn't like it. and felt

like the book came to an abrupt halt, ultimately leaving me disappointed. This is a book with much potential. I imagine it will serve as a great beach read (not so much an airplane read). The author shows much promise, just focus on tuning up those endings.

So much to admire in this many-layered story. The first chapter introduces several characters, all of whom, with the exception of a struggling artist and a young boy, die shortly thereafter in a plane crash. From there, the novel is a whodunit--why did the plane crash--combined with a story of the transformation of the artist, inspired by his heroism in saving the boy, plus backstory on the other passengers on the plane. Hawley is especially good at describing action in great detail without being boring. A few beautiful descriptions pop up, too. The book delivers lots of food for thought concerning the scandal-driven reporting on cable news. The setting is mostly New York (do agents and publishers think no one outside NYC reads?) where extreme wealth seems commonplace. The main characters include a cable network CEO and a Wall Street tycoon. The only thing I didn't like were some disgusting sexual comments by two of the male characters, but there were no graphic sex scenes. Hawley is a writer who knows what he's doing and gives readers their money's worth.

Well written, suspenseful and full of surprises. *Before the Fall* is a book containing extremely rich (no pun intended) characters, most of whom are quite flawed; some are likeable (Scott, Eleanor & Gus), some are detestable (Bill & Doug, etc.). Throughout the book, everyone is trying to figure out who or what caused the crash. That is the mystery.. Who are the good guys? Are there good guys or is everyone so fatally flawed that it makes them sinister? Scott at first, is portrayed as the hero though the media slowly tries to shatter that image, simply because, well, it makes for a better story. Several thought provoking issues are brought up, via the media coverage of the events after the Fall, that make me wonder: 1) How much of the news reported today is real and how much is trumped up?; and 2) How far do journalists really go to get the story? (I guess those questions could be answered by Brian Williams. :-)) Noah Hawley did an excellent job of providing back stories for each of the characters. He then wove them together beautifully leading up to the events of the mysterious fall. The book's pace never slows keep the reader's interest until the end. In truth, it was an extremely satisfying read that I wished wouldn't have to end.. I wanted to follow Scott whenever he went, but what would that make me? A stalker or worse, the Paparazzi? Lol. :-) Published: June 8, 2016 Published on Goodreads and

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