

The Possible World by Liese O'Halloran Schwarz

5 stars

The story of three interwoven, but separate lives.

Ben, Lucy and Clare are of different generations, but their lives have a connection in the most surprising way and this develops gradually as the story progresses.

Ben is the sole survivor of a terrible crime in which his mother and many others are brutally murdered. He is only six years old and the trauma of the event forces him to escape into another world and blot out the event which changed his life. Lucy also finds herself at a personal crossroads. She is a doctor in a trauma department who treats Ben when he is first brought in and finds herself strangely drawn to the boy. Clare is old and in a care home. She has a lifetime of secrets and up to now has been reluctant to talk about them. This suddenly changes when she meets another inmate, Gloria, and her extraordinary life is finally recorded. As each of these stories develops, a connection is revealed until all the strands are eventually pulled together in the moving final chapters.

This is a beautifully written study of three lives - one that is just beginning, one in the middle and one moving towards the end. The story of Clare is particularly brilliantly observed, as her hard and brutal life unfolds, revealing her sheer determination for survival against all the odds. Lucy, the ER doctor, finds her escape in emergency situations and caring for others, while disastrously neglecting her own personal relationships. Ben finds the only way he can survive is to inhabit another world and another life.

Jodi Picoult has been quoted on the cover as saying, "Every now and then I come across a book I wish I had written..." I tend to agree. This is a tender and touching story treating the unique situations of each of these lives with great understanding and awareness of the human situation.

I would highly recommend this book.

Jane

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review.