



The Distance Home

Orly Konig

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Sixteen years ago, a tragic accident cost Emma Metz her two best friends one human and one equine. Now, following her father's death, Emma has reluctantly returned to the Maryland hometown she'd left under a cloud of guilt.

Sorting through her father's affairs, Emma uncovers a history of lies tying her broken family to the one place she thought she could never return her girlhood sanctuary, Jumping Frog Farm.

Emma finds herself drawn back to the stable after all these years. It's easy to win forgiveness from a horse, but less so from her former friend Jillian, their once strong bond destroyed by secrets and betrayals. But despite Jillian's cold reception, for the first time in years, Emma feels at home.

To exorcise the past, Emma will have to release her guilt, embrace an uncertain future, and trust again in the healing power of horses.

Orly Konig's *The Distance Home* is a powerful and sparkling women's fiction debut novel of second chances, friendship, and healing.

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The Distance Home Details

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Author : Orly Konig

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From Reader Review The Distance Home for online ebook

Theresa Alan says

This is a beautifully written book. It touches on topics that are dark, yet the story itself isn't depressing but instead its life affirming.

Emma takes a week off from her high-powered job in PR in Chicago to return to Maryland and take care of her father's things after his death in a car accident. In addition to trying to mend the wounds of dealing with a depressed mother who died when Emma was young—Emma's father told her that her mother had heart problems and ultimately died of a heart attack—she's also trying to sort out her feelings for a father who was emotionally absent from her life.

When Emma was eight years old, they moved to this rural area and she discovered Jilli, her neighbor, who was nine at the time, and Jilli's grandparents, who raised Jilli and ran a horse ranch that gave lessons to kids who wanted to compete and therapeutic services for soldiers with PTSD, kids with behavioral or emotional problems, and folks with a variety of disabilities.

Though for years they were best friends, Emma and Jilli have been estranged since an accident when they were sixteen. After the accident, Emma's dad shipped her off to boarding school and the lies about that day have haunted her ever since.

Emma finds that though she'd stayed away from horses since the accident, returning to them is good for the soul, even to someone who rode them for ribbons and glory once upon a time. Fixing things with Jilli, Jilli's grandparents, and her father's ghost, is not as easy to do as getting back on a horse.

The novel is about finding oneself by looking at the past and reimagining one's future. I got lost in the story and in the way animals can be great emotional support in difficult times. The characters—including the animals—were well drawn, with complex, believable traits.

Recommended.

Thanks to NetGalley and Forge Books for the opportunity to review this book.

For more of my reviews, please visit: <http://theresaalan.net/blog/>

Cheryl says

This is a nice read. The incident that involved Emma and Jillian was sad. I could understand Jillian's frustration and her bitter attitude towards Emma; yet, it made me mad that Jillian would not forgive Emma. Emma proved that she had grown up and was trying to make amends.

I am a fan of horse stories. They will always hold a special place in my heart. Horse power is magical. It showed with the smiles that were put on people's faces with the rehab program. However, I wanted to experience that stronger connection with the horses. Overall, though I was pleased with this book and would read another one from this author.

Kerry says

A poignant story about friendship, family, and the discovery of self. Ms. Konig deftly crafts a tale about how coming home is more than returning to one's roots, but a process of healing, forgiveness, and well-being. Her characters are richly created, their flaws realistic. I loved getting to know them—the animal ones, too! I thoroughly enjoyed reading **THE DISTANCE HOME** and strongly recommend. It's a perfect bookclub selection.

*Thanks to NetGalley, Forge, and the author for the advanced copy.

Susan Peterson says

The Distance Home is a poignant story about finding our place in the world, finding out where we truly belong. Emma Metz left her life in Maryland behind 16 years ago, forging a successful life in Chicago. When she returns to settle her father's estate, Emma is instantly drawn again to life at Jumping Frog Farm, a place where she had found safety and salvation after her mother's death and the growing distance between Emma and her father. Can she return again to this place, where she had found unconditional love with the horses and the people who lived here; or are the secrets and pain of the past too much to overcome? This debut novel is a compelling look into forgiveness and letting go, and taking a chance on giving up what has become comfortable and easy. I loved the relationships that Emma and the other characters had with the horses, as well as Jukebox the goat! The bonds and emotions between humans and animals were so real, showing a connection that Emma was missing with her father, her mother, and her former best friend Jilli. I felt like I was AT Jumping Frog Farm, feeling the muzzles of the horses in my own hands. The relationships in this book are so honest, so heartfelt; brutally painful at times, and full of joy at others.

Pam says

I was lucky enough to win an advance copy of Ms. Konig's book. Hang onto your cowboy hats ladies and gents- this is one excellent tale. Well written, characters you can care about and best of all horses. The novel explores the complexities of family, friendship, betrayal and healing. The healing power of animals is also explored. I loved this book and can't wait for her next novel(hope she is busy writing). This is one good read you should not miss.

Sandi Ward says

The Distance Home is lovely book about how a difficult adolescence can shape the things we do and the choices we make later in life. Can we overcome our insecurities and needs of the past to become fully engaged adults?

For me, the heart of the story was about how the intense “best friend” bond we often find as teenagers

inevitably fades as people grow up and grow apart. It's hard to feel left out or left behind.

For our heroine Emma, her flawed childhood ends up haunting and shaping her values and sense of self long into adulthood. It's a relief to witness her start to break those chains and begin to better understand the past so she can fully live in the present. We also wonder if she can ever reconcile with her best friend Jillian, as they share a love of horses and a feeling of home with the farm where they rode as kids.

We can also see in this story how absentee mothers (whether due to illness or neglect) may impact daughters at vulnerable times of their lives. While we never get more than a glimpse of either Emma's mother or Jillian's mother, their absence plays a huge role in the story.

I also enjoyed the horses in this book! I was transported back to the days (I was about 11 to 13 years old) when I loved to ride and spent time at a local stable. My daughter went through the same phase when she was the same age. While riding wasn't ultimately for either of us, it was nice to be reminded of the smell of the hay and the feeling of bonding with a sweet animal much bigger and stronger than ourselves. Horses do seem to have a healing power for many people, and you could feel how true that was for Emma.

Cindy says

A powerful story about forgiveness and healing and moving on. The story centers around a therapeutic horse farm and two young girls growing up together and growing apart. I didn't think that a story that involved horses would grab my attention but the beautiful and heartfelt writing captivated me from the start. A very satisfying debut. Carousel Beach is now in my to-read pile.

Susan Haught says

When I began reading this novel, the beautiful writing wrapped a warm blanket around me and tucked me into the pages of a truly heartwarming story. It's not a page-turner in the typical sense, but something to be savored and enjoyed page by page.

I thoroughly enjoyed the story, loved the way the author wove distinct descriptions of horse ownership into it. I could tell she has experience with horses.

Between opportunities to read, I found myself smiling subtly in anticipation--not the heart-racing anticipation of a "can't-put-this-down" novel, because you can put this one down, but more like revisiting an old friend you haven't seen in a while. It's comforting. It's heartwarming. It's beautifully written. It's one I found to be as comforting as a warm blanket on a cold winter day.

Kudos to Ms. Konig for a fabulous debut!

Coleen says

Konig is a smooth style writer. She describes a good character, Emma, and about the worst thing one can think about Emma, maybe, is that she is too hard on herself.

The book starts as Emma returns from Chicago where she is high powered exec to the rural horse country of Maryland, where she lived from the time she was about 8 to about 16. Her father has recently died, and she needs to settle his estate. Her mother died when she was a child. The book moves along well, if predictably, and not too in-depth.

The chapters and action back and forth from the present to Emma's years of living in horse-country, and thus loving horses. Being a horse lover, I have to ask, who wouldn't?

I won this book in a Goodreads giveaway.

Pamela says

Solid writing. Prose that is beautiful, but not flowery. Loved the setting - and the therapeutic riding ranch. The pace meanders - sometimes a bit too much. But the characters are quite interesting. And the storyline is especially intriguing: an accident in the past severs the fragile, complex relationship between friends and family. A return to the town and ranch where it all began opens fresh wounds that must be resolved in order for both young women to move forward with fresh starts. And of course, with a romance entanglement(s) thrown in.

However, I threw the towel in around the 200 page mark. I grew ever so weary of all the expletives cluttering the landscape of an otherwise good story.

When reading secular fiction I expect a certain amount of morally questionable language. Not everyone's moral compass points north. I get that. And some character-types just fit the bill for spouting d... this and h... that. In this case, though, EVERY character - from the main gal to the genteel owner of the B&B, the yarn shop manager, and everyone in between - CURSES. To me, that's more the author's vernacular coming through than that of the characters. Despite the prevalence in the real world today, not everyone curses a blue streak.

TWO ** Intriguing Story, Fascinating Characters, Wonderful Setting - Spoiled by Expletive Overuse **
STARS

Jennifer ~ TarHeelReader says

"I'm not the only one who's found their second chance in the healing power of horses."

The messages in The Distance Home resonated with me - friendship, guilt, second chances, and healing through the love of animals (horses).

When I was six years old, my brother and I started horseback riding lessons. I rode a pony named Jeannie,

who was a bit challenging, but low to the ground, which is good for any six year old rider. I was always nervous riding, but once I fell off Jeannie when learning a new skill. Though they made me get right back on, I developed a fear for riding that never went away. Later on, when I was 11 years old, my parents bought my brother a Tennessee Walker named Smoky, and although I talked to him, sat by him in the barn, brushed him, and deeply loved him, I never rode him. Smoky was my confidante during my early teen years, and that's why I knew I would connect to this book when the synopsis spoke of the healing power of horses.

In *The Distance Home*, there are plenty of secrets to ponder and uncover. The characters are richly drawn and realistically flawed, and the animals are equal characters in the book. I adored Jack and Jukebox. Orly Konig's debut is brilliant. So much hope and healing, I truly loved this book.

I won a copy of this book through the Debutante Ball. Thanks to Orly Konig for the complimentary copy.

2017 Summer Book #12

Misty Vauble says

LOVED THIS. A 4.5 for me and was very pleasantly surprised by how much. even if Jilli got on my last nerve most of the time

Maya says

The Distance Home is a very well written voyage into the past as Emma tries to reconcile her memory of childhood events with that of her father and other people who lived them. The story jogs back and forth between the present and her girlhood so smoothly that I actually read this book as written (instead of following one timeline and then backtracking to pick up the other). I also enjoyed the nostalgia of horses as I was around friends' barns when I was young, but not as an adult and could relate to the young Emma. Definitely worth the read.

Jill Anderson says

First off, I want to jump inside this book, spend some time at the B & B Emma stayed at, hang out at The Spinning Ewe and crochet, and just enjoy the friendly, clean air, peaceful country life Emma experiences! Emma is raised in this countryside, raised with the horses she comes to love, and raised with a troubled mom and distant father. Now Emma is thrown back into her childhood surrounding after escaping it for years by giving her life to Corporate America. It is an easier answer to the questions haunting Emma from her youth than it is to go back and face not only her own past, but her parent's past as well. This book will make you settle back and rethink the important things in your life as it takes you on Emma's journey. A heartwarming read!

Kathleen Flynn says

An engaging tale of two troubled girls, family secrets, and the possibilities of redemption Does a particularly good job of depicting daily life around horses, which intrigued me because I have always admired these wonderful animals, but at something of a remove.
