



The Tulip Touch

Anne Fine

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The story of a strange and disturbing friendship seen through the eyes of Natalie as she gets to know Tulip Pierce, a delinquent girl most others go out of their way to avoid. Nobody wants Tulip in their gang. She bunks off school, is rude to the teachers and makes herself unpopular with her classmates by telling awful lies. But none of this matters to Natalie who finds Tulip's behaviour exciting and dangerous. At first she doesn't care that other people are upset by Tulip's bizarre games but as the games become increasingly dangerous and sinister, Natalie realises that Tulip is going too far. Way too far... Tulip becomes even more destructive and after a row with Natalie she commits a terrible crime.

This is a compelling story in which Anne Fine explores the dark side of a friendship bordering on obsession, and sensitively depicts one girl's gradual decline into hostility and violence.

The Tulip Touch Details

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Author : Anne Fine

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From Reader Review The Tulip Touch for online ebook

Anna says

Typo alert for those of you who mark a book down for typos/editing (I am definitely NOT included in this, I couldn't give a hoot as long as it's readable): there is a fragment of a sentence lurking somewhere in my edition, which I think was supposed to be deleted.

On with the actual review:

I have extremely mixed feelings about this book.

Anne Fine does a superb job at describing a sexually/emotionally/ physically abused child in Tulip and an equally good job at describing the fascinated yet increasingly more repelled but trapped friend in Natalie. She doesn't fall into literary clichés with Tulip and has obviously done her research into how (sexually)abused/neglected children will often act (different from common expectation). She also nails Natalie's rabbit-caught-in-headlights car crash helplessness.

So here is the BUT: it's all just alluded to, a dark hint here, a dark hint there and that's it.

Ultimately the book lacks a confrontation between the protagonists and the balls as a serious piece of (children's) writing. It could have been important but it chickened out.

And that annoys the hell out of me.

Barbara Tomi? Eterovi? says

One of the most disturbing books of my pre-adolescent years (I think I was 11 when I read it). I think of it very often, but honestly, it never even occurred to me I might check its rating on Goodreads. Right now, I'm reviewing it just because recently I read Things We Have in Common by T. Kavanagh and she mentions it in the prologue as a most influential book when she was a teenager (which I can really see after reading TWHIC).

Maybe I should read it again now, as an adult and honestly, I don't even think it was a very bright (as in "optimistic") thing to read as a kid in the first place.

Aoife says

This book was by no means mind blowing, but it makes you think a bit which is good I guess. It's a very quick read and it's mostly based on character rather than plot. Of course things do happen, but this book focuses more on the characters of Tulip and Natalie and their parents as well. It brings up the question (which we discussed in class) on whether Tulip's bad behaviour or "evilness" is her parent's fault. Or whether it's solely her fault, because after all she is a human being who should be responsible of her own actions, some would argue. I personally believe that of course her parents should be to blame, at least partly. The way she was raised and her environment has obviously affected her, and not in a good way. Regardless of whether or not she knows what is right or wrong, does she really care? Pain and worthlessness are all she has known in her life, so why shouldn't others be treated the same. If she really is worthless, then it doesn't matter if she follows any rules. And perhaps she believes others deserve to feel the pain she does. She perhaps feels the need to exert power over people in the same way her dad does. I'm sure she gets a kick out of being rebellious. Maybe then someone will notice her? I don't think her behaviour is right, yet I understand why she

is the way she is, and I do believe her upbringing has caused her to be so emotionally damaged and destructive and in turn has caused her to behave the way she does.

But Natalie also, is neglected by her parents. yes, it might not seem as obvious and perhaps is not as bad, but her parents do neglect to give her attention. If they had given her the attention she needed and taken a proper interest in her life then maybe they would see the bad influence Tulip had become, maybe they would notice how unhappy their daughter was. So yes, this book makes a point about the adults. It asks if the adults or the children should have helped or prevented the situations.

I thought this book was quite interesting. I could really see certain people I knew in the characters and how they acted. I could even see myself in how some of the people acted and dealt with their emotions and problems. In the end, this book doesn't give a lot of answers, but it points out a lot of problems. Natalie's character does develop a bit and we get to see Tulip and read about her abusive home and the things she does and says and it's really sad to think that there are probably people out there just like that, and it's even sadder to think that these people, just like Tulip, aren't being helped by the adults of our society. It also shows how greatly affected Natalie is by Tulip and because of the adult's ignorance and messed up priorities Natalie has to suffer this unhealthy relationship with Tulip and deal with it all alone.

J.A. Ironside says

I only read this book for the first time recently (in an afternoon in fact) as I'd somehow missed this as a child. This is a genuinely sinister book. The characters are exceptionally well drawn. You can easily see why Natalie is drawn to the clever, creative Tulip. At first it seems an innocent if somewhat controlling friendship but as Tulip's games become subtly nastier and more callous Natalie has to fight to break free of Tulip's hold on her. I can't really do this book justice. Everyone should try it. My heart was in my throat as it rushed to its conclusion. The reader is left with a slightly uncomfortable feeling and the question, if you turn a blind eye when you know harm is being done are you as guilty as the perpetrator? Could anyone have helped Tulip in any case? I'd have given this more stars if I could.

Isabella Craveia says

2,5?? perchè è tutto molto confuso, non per il livello di inglese ma proprio come trama

Lauren says

This book contains many themes and sadly ones that are prevalent today. Would be good for children to read to relate to and perhaps understand the behaviours of other children who live these sad lies. Can promote discussion about what can be done to help children that we know in similar situations. Overall a sad book but an interesting read

Despair Speaking says

It's been years since I read this book. I had borrowed it from my mother's friend's daughter and it was one of the first slice-of-life children fiction that I fell in love with. The plot was simple, and it was because of that simplicity that it's complicated. And I loved it.

It starts with two polar opposites becoming friends. Now, in most children's books, the bad one would eventually stop being bad or not be SO bad. But in this book, the bad one didn't change. In most children's books, the good one may have been led astray and will be good again and changes her friend along the way. In this book, the good one has been led astray but she simply breaks away from the bad one and doesn't make up with her. This makes the bad one badder. In most children's books, everything works out in the end. In this book, some things work out and some things don't - just like how the real world works.

Even though the ending broke my heart, it's exactly because it ended that way that I will never forget about it.

India Lees says

This book made for uncomfortable reading, although I found that I could not put it down, and read it all in one sitting! The character Tulip makes you feel uneasy right from the very start, and although this is never explicitly stated, there is a feeling that something really bad is always about to happen. This book could be useful for KS2 children, to talk about peer pressure and bullying, and it could be interesting to discuss the view of 'evilness'.

aditi mehta says

it was a little confusing. it was quite an easy read and was kind of a different side of things so it was interesting but i guess a little weird.

Ben Cooke says

At first I struggled to connect with the story; the characters, their personalities and the plot confused me. But when I sat and read the book properly, I experienced the same thoughts as Natalie. I felt as if Tulip was my friend, but I was not sure why I was friends with her. The best thing about this story is although Tulip was one of the main characters, I still feel as if I know very little about her; why was she always so horrible to Natalie? How was she really treated at home? What was her motive for burning down a home which had treated her so much better than her own? A dark yet interesting read.

Karolina says

The Tulip Touch, by Anne Fine, is about a girl called Natalie who starts at a new school after a change in her

father's job causes her family to move. Not knowing anyone, she becomes intrigued by a girl called Tulip, who is an outcast among the rest of the class. They become good friends. Tulip encourages Natalie to take part in silly games and dares. Gradually these become more sinister and Natalie finds she needs to escape this friendship. The story is told from Natalie's perspective, the first person narrative helps to convey the emotion felt by a character who is both being manipulated and bullied, whilst at the same time feels sad and guilty that she cannot support Tulip, who appears to have difficulties with her home life. The story also deals with the dangers of peer pressure, showing how some small seeming games can develop into more serious pursuits, and how important it is for children to take responsibility for themselves and their friends. This story would be suitable for older key stage 2 children, and would probably be most popular with girls. Curriculum links could be made to PSHE (peer pressure and bullying) and circle time.

Becca Edwards says

Well I don't think I've ever read a book so fast!

I had heard of the book, and had assumed the story would have been told from the perspective of 'Tulip' (probably because of the title) so I was surprised to find that the story was told from Natalie's perspective - a whole new character I hadn't been expecting to meet!

The story contains some dark and complex elements, and the characters have been so well written with so much detail attached, that it is easy for the reader to learn about the characters and their personalities as the story progresses.

A.E. Shaw says

An exceptionally well-crafted book that presents very frank and uncomfortable truths about the way we all, from children, to schools, to social services, deal with "troubled" (or downright abused) children, and the question of whether or not a child can be inherently evil is expertly framed by certain adults in the novel, and left hanging there, exceptionally sadly.

A book in which the cruelty and sheer cleverness of children is not underestimated by the writer, but by the adults in the book, is a very tough read, and rightly so. This is an important book, for all its nuances, on the face of it, it's about the consequences of friendship, the idea that you can't 'save' everyone, the idea that sometimes we don't all want to be saved, and fact that when everyone gives up, no-one wins.

Liz says

Recommended by: I first heard of The Tulip Touch here on goodreads, and I was interested by it. It was completely by chance, however, that I stumbled across the book in my school library one lunchtime. As soon as I finished reading the first three pages, I knew it would be hopeless to avoid reading it. So here goes: my review of 'The Tulip Touch'!

Basic Plot: Natalie, who's Father is the manager of a hotel, befriends a girl named Tulip. The two quickly

become fast friends, and play many strange games together. But as the two grow up, Tulip begins to abuse their relationship and Natalie starts to see the negative impact Tulip is having on her life. Tulip's games go from stalking hotel guests and wrinkling their nose at strangers to knocking on people's doors and burning down sheds.

Genre: Drama

Characters: I adored the characters. Each of them had their own depth, even if there weren't actually that many.

Natalie - The main character, Natalie, develops over the course of the storyline, most noticeably when she stops being friends with Tulip. Natalie, at first is the naive, care free eight-year-old you'd expect her to be. However, as the years pass and the two grow older, Natalie quickly starts to obsess over Tulip, barely spending a minute not thinking about her. Tulip's influence starts to have a bad affect on Natalie's life, but at first Natalie simply ignores it. But when the games the two play get more and more dangerous, going from stalking the guests at the hotel where Natalie lives to setting fire to sheds, she finally breaks away from Tulip, with some very interesting consequences, leading to Natalie becoming a better person.

Tulip - From the very moment Tulip is introduced, it's obvious she doesn't have a very good home life.

Blanka says

I didn't enjoy reading this book because it was strange and a bit creepy. I read it because some of the things were so strange that I found it interesting. I found her behaviour bizarre because never heard of anyone doing things like the things she did. The story tells us about the way people can behave if they are sad. It tells us that if someone is acting strange it doesn't mean she is bad but that she may have other problems in her life.
