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Posted on 24 December 2017 By Kristin Hannah

@Free Ebook ð The Great Alone æ eBook or E-pub free

One thing is for sure, Kristin Hannah, hands down, is a talented author who can weave a tale I have read many of her previous novels and always found them to be beautiful and thought provoking This one, however, rubbed me the wrong way. Forewarning This storyline deals with a lot of heavy issues, the most serious and horrific, physical abuse I am trying my best to keep spoilers out of this review. Just so you know where my thoughts are coming from, I am the wife of a twenty seven year military veteran, and I initially connected with this story and my heart ached for the family whose lives were changed forever due to the traumas of war, but then I became perplexed and then disturbed with where the storyline was heading, especially regarding the actions of the father, named Ernt In a manner of speaking, I wasn't buying what was being sold The explanation of his actions, one in particular, which he committed over and over again, wasn't resonating with me at all. The BEFORE Nam screwed him up excuse Ernt's wife invariably gave, wasn't cutting it Numerous times the wife would say to their daughter I wish you remembered him from before Yes, we are told Ernt was a Vietnam POW he doesn't do well in the darkness he suffers severely from nightmares and flashbacks Yes, he drinks way too much But to basically make the case his PTSD turned him into the monster he became, did not sit well with me It never made any sense to me why Ernt's actual thoughts were never revealed, only that his wife and daughter could see something was brewing in his eyes He acted out

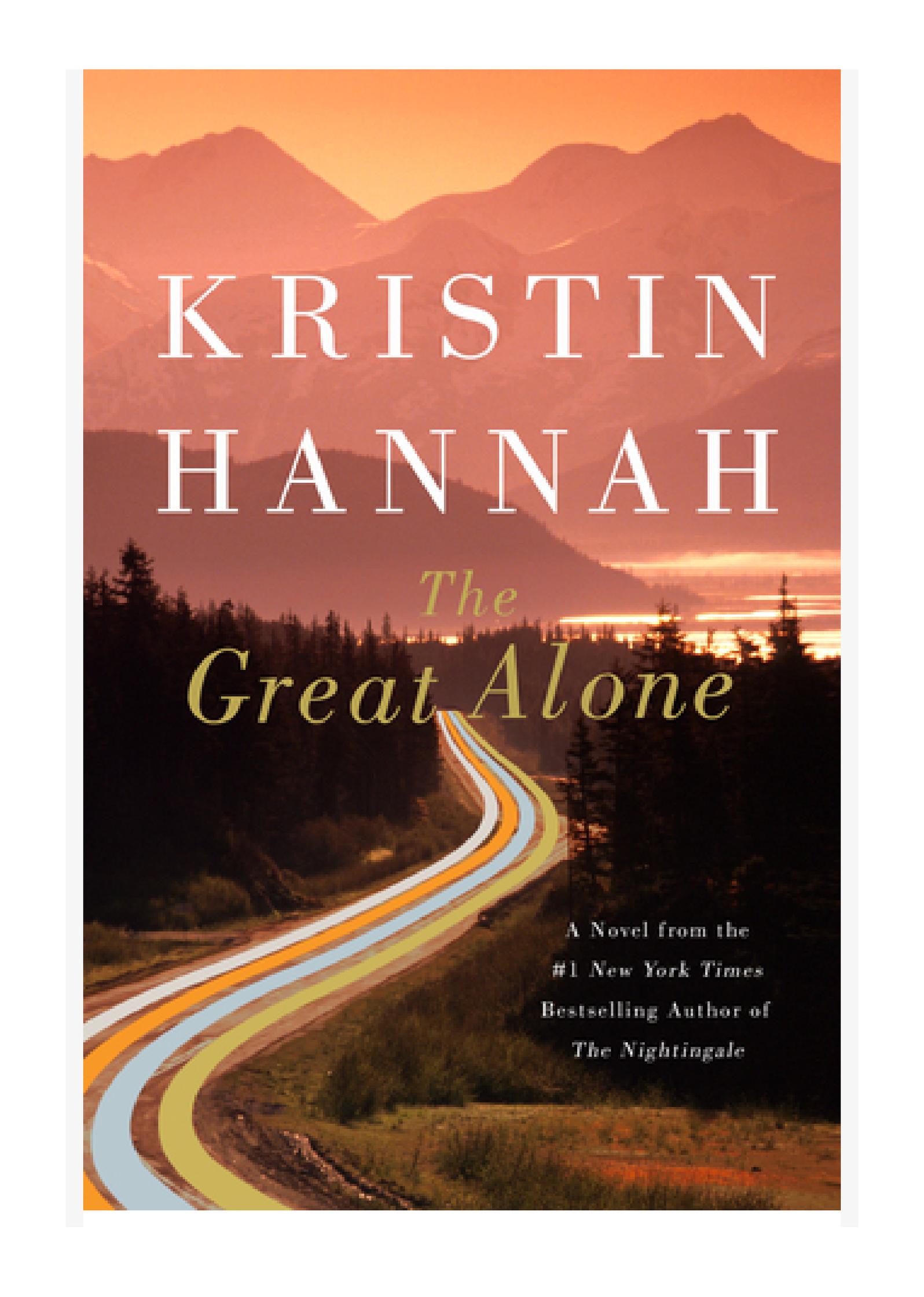
in horrible ways and then apologized profusely, time and time again. As a side note nowhere, in this author's acknowledgments at the end of the book, did she thank a psychologist/psychiatrist who deals with patients with PTSD for his or her expertise. I take that to mean she didn't seek out their input, but I could be wrong. Sorry if this sounds like a rant rather than a review. There are thousands of 4-5 star ratings for this book, and I definitely understand why. The writing is flawless, the descriptions breathtaking, and as one would expect from Kristin Hannah and as I already stated, she can weave a story like few others. I am certainly in the minority only giving 2 stars. MAYBE if I wasn't the wife of a military vet, who unfortunately saw his fair share of war, and maybe if I didn't relate to many of the issues Ernt was dealing with maybe I would have given this a much higher rating. @Free Ebook - The Great Alone x Alaska, Unpredictable Unforgiving Untamed For A Family In Crisis, The Ultimate Test Of Survival Ernt Allbright, A Former POW, Comes Home From The Vietnam War A Changed And Volatile Man When He Loses Yet Another Job, He Makes An Impulsive Decision He Will Move His Family North, To Alaska, Where They Will Live Off The Grid In America's Last True Frontier Thirteen Year Old Leni, A Girl Coming Of Age In A Tumultuous Time, Caught In The Riptide Of Her Parents Passionate, Stormy Relationship, Dares To Hope That A New Land Will Lead To A Better Future For Her Family She Is Desperate For A Place To Belong Her Mother, Cora, Will Do Anything And Go Anywhere For The Man She Loves, Even If It Means Following Him Into The Unknown At First, Alaska Seems To Be The Answer To Their Prayers In A Wild, Remote Corner Of The State, They Find A Fiercely Independent Community Of Strong Men And Even Stronger Women The Long, Sunlit Days And The Generosity Of The Locals Make Up For The Allbrights Lack Of Preparation And Dwindling Resources But As Winter Approaches And Darkness Descends On Alaska, Ernt's Fragile Mental State Deteriorates And The Family Begins To Fracture Soon The Perils Outside Pale In Comparison To Threats From Within In Their Small Cabin, Covered In Snow, Blanketed In Eighteen Hours Of Night, Leni And Her Mother Learn The Terrible Truth They Are On Their Own In The Wild, There Is No One To Save Them But Themselves In This Unforgettable Portrait Of Human Frailty And Resilience, Kristin Hannah Reveals The Indomitable Character Of The Modern American Pioneer And The Spirit Of A Vanishing Alaska A Place Of Incomparable Beauty And Danger The Great Alone Is A Daring, Beautiful, Stay Up All Night Story About Love And Loss, The Fight For Survival, And The Wildness That Lives In Both Man And Nature Kristin Hannah wrote 70% of a novel and then 30% of a soap opera. I know this isn't likely to be a popular opinion Hannah is an incredibly popular writer whose books sell into the millions This might be a case of it's not you, it's me The same problems I found in her sentinel work The Nightingale came back to haunt The Great Alone weak female characters, use of death and tragedy as plot devices, and an overwrought, melodramatic narrative People who liked Hannah's earlier work, will probably love this book But if you've not been a fan in the past, don't expect much to change with this Alaskan tale. The book starts when Leni Allbright is thirteen, awkward, and

unable to fit in anywhere It doesn't help that her parents are constantly moving her around the country Her father, Ernt, is chasing that next big opportunity that will make him happy for good Her mother, Cora, is hoping the next town will transform Ernt into the man he was before Vietnam The Allbright family wind up in Alaska, in a cabin without plumbing and electricity and far from any real civilization When they arrive at the start of summer, Ernt is able to relax in the natural setting, and Cora and Leni think he might really return to how he was before the war But as the days grow colder and the sun disappears from the sky, Ernt's demons come back with a vengeance. Cora reminded me a lot of Vianne from *The Nightingale*, only with an abusive husband this time Like her predecessor, she acts like a sad doormat the majority of the book until the moment she snaps out of character view spoiler and murders someone hide spoiler What a story I mentioned this in one of my status updates and I think it is the best way to describe this book every new scene in this book is out of the frying pan and into the fire My wife recommended this book to me and we usually have a pretty good idea of what the other will like probably a 95% success rate We have both read and enjoyed *The Nightingale*, which is probably what Hannah is best known for even though she has quite an extensive resume of novels This book is quite unlike *The Nightingale*, and, dare I say, even better. At first I thought it started slow and I was having trouble connecting to it But, about 1/3 of the way through the intensity and the story really ramped up From then on out it is a rollercoaster suspense thriller tear jerker that warms the heart and will terrify you with the possibilities of the human condition. I can easily recommend this to almost anyone It is just great storytelling of a unique and captivating tale. Were you ever out in the Great Alone, when the moon was awful clear, And the icy mountains hemmed you in with a silence you most could hear With only the howl of a timber wolf, and you camped there in the cold, A half dead thing in a stark, dead world, clean mad for the muck called gold While high overhead, green, yellow and red, the North Lights swept in bars Then you've a hunch what the music meant hunger and night and the stars From *The Shooting of Dan McGrew* by Robert W Service It's to the wilderness of Alaska, this *Great Alone*, a most fitting description, that Leni Allbright and her parents go, seeking yet another place that her mother hoped would be the place that made her dad happy Kristin Hannah with vivid descriptions takes the reader here and while I've never been to Alaska, I certainly felt as though I was Ernt Allbright, a POW who returned home from Vietnam a very different man could never keep a job and moved his family from place to place, clearly suffers from PTSD It isn't until they move to Alaska that 13 year old Leni, realizes just how bad things are and the imminent danger in their lives I couldn't help but love Leni She's wise for her age recognizing what might set off her father's rage As she grows and her character develops, into a strong, amazing woman in spite of all the tragedy and heartache, I loved her even My favorite passage is from Leni's college application several years later Books are the mile markers of my life Some people have family photos or home movies to record their past I've got books Characters For as long as I can

remember, books have been my safe place I read about places I can barely imagine and lose myself to journeys to foreign lands to save girls who didn't know they were really princesses Only recently have I learned why I needed those faraway worlds Leni has a loving bond with her mother and together they try to survive this place with the freezing, treacherous, winters and the most terrifying of dangers that they face within the cabin where they live the mental instability, the volatility combined with alcohol, and violence of her father as he wreaks havoc in their lives and the people of the town It is the friendships that Leni and Cora make with a fabulous cast of characters that help them survive it all Large Marge was my favorite but I also loved Matthew who was the only friend Leni could remember having in her life This is than a coming of age story It's about the reality of post war PTSD, the awful reality of spousal abuse, about the sense of community, of belonging, about survival not just in the wilderness of Alaska but in life in with challenges that seem insurmountable I don't often cry when reading a book, but this was one of the times It's gripping, gritty, heartbreaking and hopeful and illustrates the versatile storytelling of Kristin Hannah It was impossible for me to forgive Ernt, even knowing that he was a POW, but he brought to mind the POW's bracelet I wore for a long time I remember his name but out of privacy and respect for him, I won't mention it here I'll only say that he was captured in 1971 and thankfully released in 1973 This book prompted me to search for him online It appears that he stayed in the Army and then after retirement went on to the private sector I hope he has had a peaceful, happy life I received an advanced copy of this book from St Martin's Press through NetGalley. This is my first read by Kristin Hannah and I adored it Set in the 1970s, it is about Ernt Allbright, a man who returns home to Seattle after being a POW in the Vietnam War He is now a changed man, suffering sleepless nights, flashbacks, nightmares and volatile in his behaviour PTSD was an undiagnosed condition at the time but it ravaged Ernt's life and that of his wife, Cora, and his 13 year old daughter, Leni The Allbright family used to have good times, but now Leni hears the fights and conflict between her parents Ernt struggles to hold down a job and their moves makes Leni long for a sense of stability When Ernt inherits a cabin and land in Alaska from a dead soldier, he pleads with Cora that this will be the making of him and them, they could live off the land and be free of the pressures that they have been living under Driven by this hope, they sell up and buy a rickety old VW van and set off for their adventure in The Great Alone, having little idea as to what awaits them and just how ill prepared they are for it Alaska takes no prisoners, it has a majestic, harsh, awe inspiring beauty but its wilderness and wildlife is a cruel and unforgiving testing ground for those who make their home there. The Allbrights arrive in remote Kaneq, Alaska, shocked by the state of the tiny dilapidated cabin and taken aback by all that needs doing and facing a desperately steep learning curve Without the small community rallying together to help the family they would not survive the bitter, brutal Alaskan winter and the hardships that are to follow They stock up on supplies, working the land in preparation However, Ernt's condition worsens, exacerbated by alcohol He takes

out his rage and temper on Cora and the tiny home becomes a place of darkness and domestic violence Leni learns to read the signs and triggers that foretell when Ernt is going to lose it and you cannot help but feel for her and Cora Mother and daughter have a close relationship giving them the emotional strength to endure the unbearable Leni finds solace in books, something I completely understand and relate to She forms her first friendship with Matthew and begins to grow roots in the community The community prove to be an invaluable support to Cora and Leni such as the inimitable and capable Marge and Tom Walker The angry Earl rails against the injustices of life, politics and institutions, grieving over the loss of his son As the years go by, Leni is changed and shaped by the tragedies and heartbreak she faces, Kristin Hannah has written a beautifully detailed and emotionally affecting novel that is both compelling and gripping She captures the twin threats posed the Alaskan environment and the home ripped asunder by the dangerous Ernt Hannah's greatest achievement though is the characters she creates and the in depth development that takes place This is Leni's story, the burdens she grows up with, her emotional bond with her mother, and her search for identity and roots Its a tale of love and hope despite the battering that life can give It is remarkably instructive on the cost, consequences and damage of war on families and the suffering that ensues A brilliant read that I will not forget and recommend highly Many thanks to St Martin's Press for an ARC. Its books like this that remind me why reading is such a passionate and worthwhile constant in my life i have come to rely on books to help me learn, grown, empathise, and sometimes escape and this story did all of that but what i am grateful for, most of all, is how i was able to read about a place i have never been and fall in love with it, how i could find an undeniable softness for the harsh landscape of the alaskan wilderness, how i could come to understand the pure beauty of a place i have never seen for we few, the sturdy, the strong, the dreamers, alaska is home, always and forever, the song you hear when the world is still and quiet you either belong here, wild and untamed yourself, or you donti loved being able to accompany leni as she came of age and learned to call alaska and its people home yes, this story can be a bit dramatic at times yes, there is a lot going on i even saw a review describing this as the hallmark channel movie of books, and i totally get that but none of that could lessen the deep feeling i got reading about leni find love in where she lived and with a boy who saw her what a special story 4.5 stars 3.5 stars When it comes to emotionally compelling fiction, without a doubt, Kristin Hannah is in a league of her own Over the years, she's taken me to the brink of hopelessness, dangled me over the edge of complete devastation and trampled my heart in the process Where I think her magic lies is in knowing just the right moment to toss out a lifeline restoring faith, inciting love and in some cases, leaving me in complete and utter awe. Naturally, having experienced a number of her noteworthy reads, there's a certain level of expectation that now comes along with picking up one of her books unrealistic or not Instead of tiptoeing around the elephant in the room, I'm just going to get this over with and put it out there this is not my favorite of Kristin Hannah's work Like many

of her books, this is a hefty read, coming in at just under 450 pages. Where I had issues with the story, the inconsistent pacing and the blatant lack of development, particularly in the back half. From a slow and purposeful narrative, to an overly dramatic and rushed ending, it's almost as if the author crammed two completely different books together. When the story opens, the Allbright family is on the brink of yet another move, this time to Alaska. For Ernt, a Vietnam POW who's prone to bouts of anger, Alaska represents a fresh start and an excuse to leave behind the mess he's made of things. For 13-year-old Leni and her mother, it's a reluctant move, but one they hope will save Ernt from his demons. Luckily, the Allbrights meet a group of people who are than willing to help them prepare for the harsh winter ahead and lend some much-needed heart to a lackluster existence. What everyone soon learns, no matter how far you go, you can't outrun your demons. It's a toxic and vicious cycle they find themselves trapped in one that feels impossible at times. Kristin Hannah really takes her time laying the foundation for the Allbright family and the tedious work the Alaskan wilderness demands, and you know what, that was okay with me. It was around the halfway mark, when she switched gears, that everything came crashing down. There is a love story packed within these pages, although despite the anticipation, I found it all to be sort of lackluster. The words and the feelings were present on the page, demanding my consent, but I can't say I ever truly felt their connection with every piece of my being. It's the last five chapters that take the cake for the most drama in the shortest timespan. I'm not saying I take issue with what went down exactly, what I am taking issue with is the fact that Kristin Hannah bounced from one dramatic event to the next, without so much as a breath or time to process. The emphasis seemed to be on getting her characters where they needed to be in the end, rather than allowing the reader to fully appreciate Leni's journey. With all of that said, I still found this to be a worthy read. I love the thought of living a simpler life, although probably not realistic for this city girl, and spending a bit of time in Alaska proved to be eye-opening and even sort of refreshing. As readers, we all connect with books for a variety of reasons, and it just so happens, this one didn't land among my favorites. Whether you're a diehard Kristin Hannah fan, like I consider myself to be, or new to her work, I urge you to give this a chance. You never know, this might be your new favorite. I also feel compelled to mention, of her books, I adored these in particular: *Home Front*, *Night Road*, *Winter Garden*, and *The Nightingale*. A HUGE thank you to St. Martin's Press for a copy in exchange for an honest review.



KRISTIN
HANNAH

*The
Great Alone*

A Novel from the
#1 *New York Times*
Bestselling Author of
The Nightingale

All this time, Dad had taught Leni how dangerous the outside world was. The truth was that the biggest danger of all was in her own home. This book completely stole my heart. Maybe it's just fresh in my mind, but I'm pretty sure I enjoyed *The Great Alone* even more than Kristin Hannah's *The Nightingale*. In fact, it was verging on a five-star read for me until the final few chapters which I felt were too rushed and sentimental than I personally like. But I still highly recommend it. I loved the atmosphere that Hannah created. She deftly draws the wild beauty of the Alaskan landscape, painting it as the visually stunning and dangerous place it is. Set in the 1970s and 80s, this is about a family of three arriving at the last frontier in search of a different kind of life. And, boy, do they get it. The Allbrights must work themselves to the bone just to survive the perilous winter in Alaska, but we soon learn that for thirteen-year-old Leni and her mother Cora, there are dangers far greater and far closer to home than black bears and the freezing climate. They were trapped, by environment and finances, but mostly by the sick, twisted love that bound her parents together. The author wraps up a survival story inside a survival story. As the family grapple with raising livestock and gathering supplies for the long winter, they also must deal with the fragile, abusive dynamics that exist within their home. Ernt is a Vietnam veteran suffering from PTSD before anyone knew what PTSD was and this, in turn, leads to violent episodes and paranoid behaviour that threatens the safety of his family. The complexity of the characters makes this book something extra special. You hate Ernt, and yet are forced to acknowledge that he is dealing with a mental illness back when no one was willing to call it such. You feel frustrated at Cora for sticking by him, and yet she is clearly a victim of abuse. Add to this mix a set of charming secondary characters, a budding romance, snowstorms, near-death experiences and animal encounters, and you have a book that is utterly enthralling. I especially liked how the author captured the feeling of these Alaskans living in a isolated bubble of their own, being afraid of the Outside and the possibility of change. You can draw parallels between this and anyone who has ever desired to put up a wall to keep the Other out. Ernt as well as others in their tiny town wants to protect the community from any kind of change from anyone who might come in and affect their way of life. It is, of course, paranoid and delusional. I could probably go on and on forever, but I'll just say I loved almost all of it. I loved how, like in *The Nightingale*, Hannah shows the importance and the strength of the relationships between female characters. I loved the Alaskan setting and the multiple tales of survival against the odds. And I loved how everything had something of a fairy tale quality to it, dark places and broken dreams included. Mama had quit high school and lived on love. That was how she always put it, the fairy tale. Now Leni was old enough to know that like all fairy tales, theirs was filled with thickets and dark places and broken dreams, and runaway girls. Blog Facebook Twitter Instagram Youtube

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