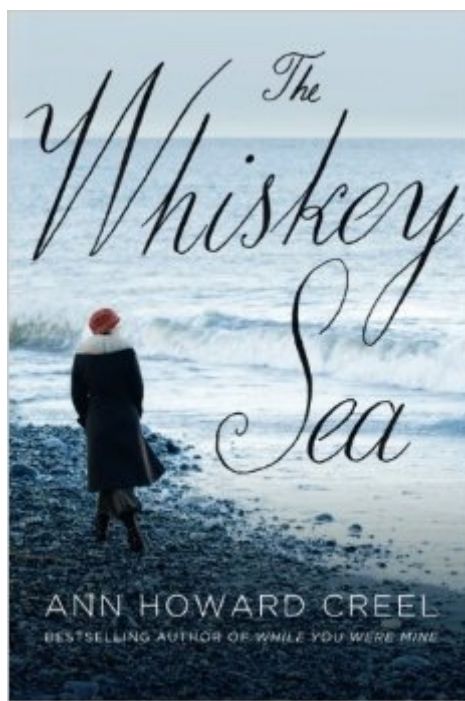


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The Whiskey Sea



Synopsis

Running rum, she'll risk her life and her heart. Motherless and destitute, Frieda Hope grows up during Prohibition determined to make a better life for herself and her sister, Bea. The girls are taken in by a kindly fisherman named Silver, and Frieda begins to feel at home whenever she is on the water. When Silver sells his fishing boat to WWI veteran Sam Hicks, thinking Sam would be a fine husband for Frieda, she's outraged. But Frieda manages to talk Sam into teaching her to repair boat engines instead, so she has a trade of her own and won't have to marry. Frieda quickly discovers that a mechanic's wages won't support Bea and Silver, so she joins a team of rumrunners, speeding into dangerous waters to transport illegal liquor. Frieda becomes swept up in the lucrative, risky work and swept off her feet by a handsome Ivy Leaguer who's in it just for fun. As danger mounts and her own feelings threaten to drown her, can Frieda find her way back to solid ground and to a love that will sustain her?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Whiskey Sea by Ann Howard Creel is beautifully written, with characters who draw you into the story and a setting so vivid that you can feel the dampness of the sea against your skin and smell the salt air. It spotlights an intriguing part of history that I hadn't ever really considered before now, and it does so from the perspective of a young woman (though in third person) who bucked against society's norms. I've read several novels set during Prohibition on the East Coast, but they've usually been focused more on the upper class. The Whiskey Sea approaches the time period with a lens on rum-runners, the rather rag-tag band of fishing boats and schooners that

dodged the Coast Guard “ as well as organized crime “ to bootleg alcohol for speakeasies and the like. As they ran their boats on the darkest nights “ with no illumination “ and carried large amounts of money or expensive cargo, rumrunning was highly dangerous. It was also highly lucrative. But it was certainly a man’s endeavor, and it would have been virtually unheard of for a woman to join a rum-running operation. Enter Frieda. Frieda is one of the most complex characters I’ve read in a while. She’s a lot prickly but she loves fiercely. She’s courageous but at the same she makes a lot of foolish decisions, the effects of which are far-reaching. She holds a grudge with little provocation and she keeps at arms’ length the people who love her the deepest, but she’s also willing to sacrifice everything to provide for those same people. She’s driven by her mother’s history and her sister’s future, but she’s restless in her own present. Bottom Line: Everything that makes Frieda such a complex character also makes *The Whiskey Sea* sobering and heartbreaking and captivating.

It is a special thrill as a reader when you are only a few chapters into a book and you know it will be one of your favorite reads of the year. *The Whiskey Sea* is one of those special books for me. The book begins with a mysterious image of a woman who is in the water and fears drowning. Then the story moves to 1908, when two young girls are orphaned after the sudden death of their mother. They are taken in by a kindly fisherman, and settle into life in a fishing community in New Jersey. The first few chapters are leisurely, but the pace picks up dramatically in 1923 when they are young women. The younger sister, Bea, dreams of going off to college and studying literature. The older sister, Frieda, wants to make a good living for her family in her hometown. While she is working as a ship mechanic, she becomes intrigued by the idea of rum running on boats, and takes on this dangerous and risky occupation. As a result she meets a wealthy and enigmatic young man from New York, and her life begins to change. This book is Frieda’s story. The storytelling in this book is just so beautiful. I really cared about Frieda, Bea, and their adoptive father, Silver. The characters are so well developed and multi-dimensional. This would be a wonderful movie! I have to mention that Ann Howard Creel also wrote *The Magic of Ordinary Days*, which was the basis of my all time favorite Hallmark movie. I have it on DVD and have seen it many times. Anyone who loves the book or movie *The Magic of Ordinary Days* will absolutely adore this book. The descriptions in *The Whiskey Sea* are vivid and unique.

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