



Leaving Eden

Anne D. LeClaire

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“The promise of beauty—the kind of real, personal beauty that can transform a person’s life—arrived in Eden, Virginia, on the fourth Thursday in June.” That’s the day Tallie Brock sees the sign at the Klip-N-Kurl, the beauty parlor where she works part-time, sweeping the floor and refilling shampoo bottles, among other chores. (What she really enjoys is listening to the women chat, gossip, and buzz like a beehive.) The sign in the front window announces GLAMOUR DAY. For twenty dollars, a woman can receive a complete professional makeover—and a glossy nine-by-twelve-inch picture of the result.

For Tallie, the glam shot just may be her ticket out of Lovettsville. She dreams of someday going to Hollywood and becoming a Star. Her mother, who was the spitting image of Natalie Wood, used to say “the sky’s the limit.” In fact, her mother once left home to make a movie in Los Angeles. But she returned six months later without whispering a word about it—and tried to pick up her life right where she left off. Tallie noticed something different, though. And her mother’s best friend, Martha Lee, the plainest woman within miles, knew the secret that soon the whole town would discover. At the time, Tallie was just afraid her mother would get antsy and disappear again. She was only half right.

But that was four years ago, and now Glamour Day is fast approaching. While jotting down observations in her Rulebook for Living (such as “Women with fat faces shouldn’t wear bangs” and “Beetles signify change”), Tallie finds *herself* changing in unexpected ways—as she tests the limits of trust, explores her growing attraction to a boy from a family as rich as her imagination, and reaches for the sky like she has never done before.

By turns funny and tender, joyous and poignant, bestselling author Anne LeClaire has written a winning, stylish novel of small-town Southern life—and what it means to be a mother, daughter, best friend, wife, and lover.

From the Hardcover edition.

Leaving Eden Details

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Author : Anne D. LeClaire

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From Reader Review Leaving Eden for online ebook

Donna Sundre says

What a lovely book. This was very well written and a joy to read. Interesting characters and a plot that was common, yet unrivaled. Hard to do for sure. Plenty of wisdom packed into this little book.

Karen says

Cute, formulaic feel good book.

Natasha Borah Khan says

The story is narrated by Tallie (Natasha) Brock, the protagonist. She leaves in a sleepy little town called Eden (imaginary) in Virginia, USA. She narrates her life through her teenage years and her relationship with her mother, who passed away when she was just twelve. She maintains a rule-book where she jots down do's and don'ts, things she learned from her mother and ladies who come to the beauty parlour where she worked, and also the lessons she learnt she learned from her own experiences. View my full review at [NatashazWords](#)

Suzanne says

I had read this book a long time ago, but couldn't remember the storyline. I absolutely loved Tallie and her mama. I read this book in one day; couldn't put it down. A very tender and poignant coming of age story.

Mary Hammock says

Not the type of story I like to read. Not bad though.

257 pages

Rick Baveras says

I can honestly say I never read a book written from the perspective of a teen-age girl before.

Now I can say that I have.

I didn't know what to expect. But I found enjoyment in the reading of the story. The character, Tallie Brock, was well written and developed. She was made "alive" through the descriptions of feelings about events in

her town of Eden, Virginia, and her feelings about other characters and the changes going on in her life and those around her.

Andrea says

I absolutely LOVED this book! After I finished it, I immediately wanted to read more about Tallie and her adventures in Eden. Anne D LeClaire gives us a little bit of everything; romance, family, friendship, career, travel.. you name it! And if you are a fan of Natalie Wood, you will REALLY love it, because Natalie is a prominent 'character' in 'Eden' I love that the book takes place in modern times, but it reads as though it takes place in the 50's. It has that small-town feel, and the thing I loved most about this book was how Tallie would describe things and people most notably, that someone was as 'Dependable as a ceiling fan.' Not sure what that means, but it has certainly stuck in my mind! PS: Tallie has a unique way of describing a certain regular event in her life... a phrase that women will find very useful!

Melissa Lee-Tammeus says

Now this is what I'm talking about. A beautiful believable book that weaves its way into your heart - I loved the main character and I loved the flow of language from this author. A coming of age book about a motherless girl who must find out all that stuff that most of us are fortunate enough to find out from our moms along the way. You couldn't help but root for this girl. Wonderfully written.

Praveen Rajkumar says

Two things often come to my mind while thinking about this book , Natalie woods, a Hollywood actress, whose name i never heard before reading this book . And the second thing is Talie's Diary, in the book she often listen to the gossips of other people and make notes of some valuable key points from their conversation. All i could feel in the Book was How Talie missed her mother..

Dora Okeyo says

Every once in a while as a reader you come across a book that speaks to you at some moment and with the right words. You find the book soothing, understanding and true because at that point in your life it just found its way to you.

I am glad that I read this book and that Natalie Mae's coming of age felt like my journey too.

Sam says

I love, LOVE this book. I read it during my gawky years, and even now take up on it time and again. A beautiful growing up story, a girl coming on to her own. Big hearted people, tough choices. A must read if

you liked Black beauty and Heidi. Can anybody recommend me books like these? Please, and no paranormal stuff?

Nirmala says

actually I liked the story, the narration- very simple, lucid- the story unfolds from the view point of a young girl- there is continuous slipping into the past...and returning to the present- her mother is dead, and she misses her mother terribly- she longs for her mother- and yet she feels her mother guiding her constantly- it is a kind of calm flowing story, in spite of a murder, and a bit of mystery hovering her mother's past..and yet ..there is something very placid about the story flow... when I came to the end of the story it was like, I wanted more..

Koe says

I actually really enjoyed this book. I bought it for next to nothing while on vacation in Seattle. I could really relate to Virginia and her struggle to fit in while growing up in a small town. The characters seem so real I couldn't help but like them.

A says

The first two thirds of the book move really slowly and the book was not as funny as I'd expected. The page of "Tallie's Book" that concludes each chapter seemed really contrived to me.

I did not understand the great love between Tallie and Spy. They seemed to do more making out than really hanging out with each other and getting to know each other. That part seemed really superficial to me.

The final chapters were the best of the book.

Overall, I think there are much better books out there about life in a small Southern town-books with more warmth, humor, and truth.

Verylazydaisy says

A charming story of love, friendship, and family secrets. I'm glad to have discovered this author. A coming of age tale of a teen girl in a small town who idolizes her mother, right or wrong. She goes through some awful growing pains, losses, and real tragedies. She dreams about nothing but getting the hell out of this town, but when she does, she finds more than she ever expected.
