



Hillari's Head

Tim Stutler

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Paralegal Kristina Orris has moved to San Diego seeking a new life – a normal life. She is burdened by the memory of Hillari, a sister with an oversized head and disfigured face. Home-schooled by a protective single father, Kristina herself had a vexing speech impediment and rarely left the house while growing up. But after her dad died, she knew she couldn't stay. Kristina dreamed of being a lawyer. Pursuing such a goal might prove painful for any cloistered, mumbling orphan; but it would be impossible yoked to Hillari. At 18, Kristina abandoned her home, her past – and Hillari.

Now, eight years later, Kristina meets attorney Gideon “Duck” Ducker, “the single homeliest man she had ever laid eyes on.” But she instantly bonds with the warm, self-effacing lawyer. Kristina takes a paralegal job at Duck's law firm, where the two are thrown into the most tumultuous and fascinating case of their lives. Everything is coming together nicely for Kristina. Only one thing prevents her from becoming the confident, fulfilled woman she longs to be: the swelling burden of guilt and shame over her past. But is it too late to redeem herself?

Alternately touching, humorous and heart wrenching, Hillari's Head is about family, intimacy, resilience and, ultimately, acceptance. With its intriguing characters and elements of comedy and tragedy, Hillari's Head will appeal to fans of Nora Ephron (Heartburn) and John Irving (A Prayer For Owen Meany).

More details at author website: <http://timstutler.com/>

Hillari's Head Details

Date : Published August 1st 2013 by Mill City Press (first published July 20th 2013)

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From Reader Review Hillari's Head for online ebook

Will says

A tour de force of tightly-woven yet remarkably smooth storytelling. This is a story of seemingly common lives turned adventurous by the sudden, complementing demands of love and courage. Hillari's Head is drama, humor, suspense, romance, mystery and adventure all in refreshingly tasteful proportions, each characteristic enhancing the others all the way to that brilliant wish-you'd-spotted-it kind of conclusion that only skilled authors deliver. And whichever flavor of narrative brings you to the table, Stutler serves the entire banquet with no course out of place. You'll see no clichéd story arcs, no tired gimmicks, no amateurish self-admiration bleeding from the subtext -- this novel is written for the reader, inspiring and enriching, not just entertaining.

Kate Hearn says

I WON THIS IN A GOOD READS GIVEAWAY*

This was one of those books I couldn't put down (and read in less than a day). Not only were the characters likeable, there were 3 different stand out events that made me think "WOW".

There were times that the book almost seemed like two different books. On one hand you have Kristine's (the main character) story. She befriends Judgement Day the witch (actually Judge Monday and NOT a witch lol) and Duck (a lawyer and 'the homeliest man she's ever seen'). Then there is the legal drama part of the story, which was very exciting.

I was not expecting the ending at all (and part of me was angry about it); it stirred my emotions. Overall Hillari's Head was a fantastic read.

Fox says

Thank you to Tim Stutler for sending me a review copy of "Hillari's Head".

I have literally just finished this book and am still sobbing. My heart is broken!!

You can definitely see Tim's legal background coming through in this book (as one might expect) but what I didn't expect was for him to be able to so convincingly write as a young woman. I liked the fact that Kristina isn't your "legally blonde" type woman in law, and she's also not the hard-faced, suit-wearing woman you might expect either.

I have to say, I did guess the twist very early on in the book, but that might just be me. Excellent twist, anyway!

But the part that really got me was the end. Seriously, I just absolutely was not expecting it. Brilliantly heartbreaking.

Thanks again, Tim - fantastic book!

Charlotte says

4 Stars

(I received an ARC of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.)

Goodreads Synopsis:

Paralegal Kristina Orris has moved to San Diego seeking a new life – a normal life. She is burdened by the memory of Hillari, a sister with an oversized head and disfigured face. Home-schooled by a protective single father, Kristina herself had a vexing speech impediment and rarely left the house while growing up. But after her dad died, she knew she couldn't stay. Kristina dreamed of being a lawyer. Pursuing such a goal might prove painful for any cloistered, mumbling orphan; but it would be impossible yoked to Hillari. At 18, Kristina abandoned her home, her past – and Hillari.

Now, eight years later, Kristina meets attorney Gideon “Duck” Ducker, “the single homeliest man she had ever laid eyes on.” But she instantly bonds with the warm, self-effacing lawyer. Kristina takes a paralegal job at Duck's law firm, where the two are thrown into the most tumultuous and fascinating case of their lives. Everything is coming together nicely for Kristina. Only one thing prevents her from becoming the confident, fulfilled woman she longs to be: the swelling burden of guilt and shame over her past. But is it too late to redeem herself?

Review:

This is not a book that I would normally read. In fact, if I hadn't seen the giveaway for it, I wouldn't have even known about this book. I debated on whether or not to enter, but decided to go for it. I was worried that I might find it boring and struggle to read it, but this book is an absolute gem. There are plenty of books out there that suck you in with over-the-top drama, suspense, action, or even sex, but this book didn't need any of those things. You know that an author is pretty amazing when they can write a book this simple and you just cannot put it down. Given the time, I could have read this book in one sitting. It is just that good.

The characters are very well written and you can't help but attach to them. They are so real, as are their struggles. This isn't your typical boy-meets-girl type of book. It is a story of struggle and learning to overcome the obstacles in life. Kristina's story is heartbreaking. Learning about her life and the trials she went through would make anyone step back and appreciate what they have. Gideon "Duck" Ducker is my favorite person in this book. Despite being described as "homely" and "plain", he is an extremely vibrant person. He is funny, smart, and down to earth. You can't help but love him. The secondary characters are amazing as well, no matter how small their role in the story.

Now, I'm not big on books with lawyer/courtroom type themes. If it isn't written just right, it's boring to me. In this book, however, it is one of the things that really caught my attention. My favorite scene in this book was in the courtroom and I especially loved the closing argument.

This book made me laugh and cry. It is both heartbreaking and inspiring. This is one of those books that anyone could read and love. I very much enjoyed it and hope that Tim Stutler continues to author more great

books. He has definitely made a fan out of me.

Julie McGregor says

This is an unique and touching story about the bond between sisters and impediments that they both share. One sister leaves another in order to get on with her life. There is some shame and humility involved with humor as well. I enjoyed it and would read other novels by Tim Sutler.

Neil says

Tim Stutler – Hillari's Head

A spoiler free review:

I wanted to read this book as I am a big fan of the American legal thrillers. I was not disappointed. There are some very good legal twists and turns in this read. I read the book swiftly as the story rattles along at a pace. There were some elements that were not my cup of tea (or coffee!) but the overall package was a book that I enjoyed and would recommend to someone who was a reader of legal thrillers or someone who would like the family oriented aspects. There is a good balance and its one of the rare books that I have read and now my wife wants to!

Daryl Turner says

This is an engrossing story that delves into the human psyche, but with a great sense of humor. Stutler takes sensitive subject matter and creates a work that is fascinating and entertaining. I look forward to reading other novels he has written!

Yogalife says

This is an amazing novel. I love reading drama, as well as tragedy and comedy. Tim Stutler skillfully meshes these forms together. Hillari's Head not only moved me but - and I'm a little embarrassed to admit this - is so funny in places that I actually snorted! The humor ranges from subtle irony to wicked wit to sly satire to absurdity. This author has a nice comedic touch. But Hillari's Head is not a comedy or farce. It is fundamentally a touching drama. Also the humor is not randomly thrown into the story, but actually advances the plot. And it is some plot! The book has elements of women's fiction, a legal thriller, and even a romance novel. Plus it is so well written that I was absorbed from the peculiar beginning to the startling ending. The chapter endings appeared designed to compel the reader to finish "just one more chapter" before bed. As someone else commented, I just couldn't put it down.

I sat and reflected on the story after finishing it, not just to savor it, but to look for major flaws. Sorry author that's just something I do. I don't want to give away any spoilers and will just say that I was disappointed by a major turn of events in the story. I understand why it had to happen but that didn't make it any easier. I also think Hillari's Head could easily have been fifty to a hundred pages longer, mostly because I hated seeing it

end, but I really loved this book overall.

Now for a confession. A friend loaned me Hillari's Head. However, it was enjoyable enough, and had enough subtle plot twists and elements, that I then got my own copy to read again. Unfortunately, I tend to keep books I like and Amazon doesn't offer it in hardback.

Teresa Lavender says

I am still reeling from the ending of this book. Well written, superb characters. Some minor predictability, but I did NOT expect the ending, and the way the story line played out was surprising and very well done. I will be looking for more from Tim Stutler. It is refreshing to read a story that does not focus solely on the surface beauty but the internal.

Sue says

I won a copy of "Hillari's Head" by Tim Stutler through the Goodreads Giveaway Contest. I didn't know what to expect from this novel, but I was presently surprised.

Have you ever stared at someone...that didn't look normal? Shame on you! After you finish reading this book you will think twice about doing this, or have a greater appreciation for what this person deals with.

Hillari's head was huge and she didn't have any teeth. She suffered from Oligodontia, a rare developmental dental anomaly in humans characterized by the absence of six or more teeth.

Kristina Orris,lived with her father and her sister, Hillari. Kristina didn't think there was anything wrong with her sister. From the time Hill was five, the other kids bullied her at school. Her father's only option was homeschool. When Hill went out she wore a dust mask and in winter Hill's favourite time of the year, she wrapped a scarf around her face...she could blend in and seem normal. Her mother had died when she was a baby, and her father died before Hillari's 18th birthday. He was the only man that accepted her for who she was.

At eighteen Kristina abandoned her home, her past and Hillari and moved from Pennsylvania to San Diego to pursue a lifetime dream of becoming a lawyer. She had just finished paralegal school and was looking for a position with a local firm. When she moved into her condo, while looking for a job,she started a blog, about Hill, and wrote about her life. Through her neighbour, Jennifer Monday, a retired US Magistrate, alias "Judgement Day", she joined in their cycling group, and met Gideon Ducker, a trial lawyer, who offered her a job in employment litigation, as a paralegal secretary.

For Kristina, being in the office was draining and she felt inadequate. The cases were so intense. But Duck was funny, kind and very smart. He had charisma and his own unique style conducting himself in court...it was drama. But there was chemistry going on between the two of them.

The nightmares had started soon after Kristina ended her blog.

This novel is about sadness and tragedy growing up, and what it's like not to fit in...to be different. This

novel will touch your heart and make it's mark!

Momma Frugal says

I just finished this book today.

I am a huge Law & Order junkie and I have been since the original L & O started in the 1990s! So I was really looking forward to reading this book. I love stories that have characters who overcome something in their life, that are easy to read, that cause a "say what" moment, and that have characters that make you both laugh and cry. And to top it off, if I come across a book that has ALL of that PLUS has a Law & Order feel to it, then I'm hooked.

And that is what Hillari's Head did! Tim Stutler did a great job writing this book! Hillari's Head is easy to read, hard to put down, is funny and touches your heart!

There will be no spoilers in my review because you really need to read this book! Instead I will talk about the characters.

The first character you are introduced to is Kristina. What Kristina goes through as a young child and young adult is heart breaking. After she moves to California, she becomes intrigued with one of her neighbors. The author does a great job describing this neighbor! As you read the story, you can easily picture Judge Monday! You are then introduced to Gideon "Duck" Ducker, a friend of Judge Monday's.

As you read this story, you can easily picture the characters, and you will feel like you get to know them. What I really appreciated about this book is that it was about lawyers, the practice of law, and WRITTEN by a lawyer.

Hillari's Head is a great book that talks about acceptance, embracing your past, moving on with your life, and love.

This is definitely a 5 star ***** book that you must read!

Hillari's Head will be available to purchase August 1, 2013.

Thank you to Tim Stutler for providing me with an advance copy of the book for me to review.

♥Scout Paige♥ says

This review is also posted on my blog:
<http://allwehaveisstories.blogspot.co...>

The author sent me an arc in exchange for an honest review. And being honest i'm really not sure what I expected after reading the synopsis for this book, it's not like anything I've read before and when I read the words paralegals and attorneys it brought to mind shows like Suits and Law and Order and I was a little apprehensive, because court room drama isn't really my thing. But to my delight Hillari's Head was nothing like those shows, I really enjoyed reading it and i'm definitely going to read outside my genre comfort zone more often. Hillari's Head is about Kristina a paralegal starting her new life, she's certain she is over her traumatic past, the death of her father and leaving behind her sister Hillari who suffers from Oligodontia - where six or more teeth fail to develop - and an over sized head. But when the memory of Hillairi starts to haunt Kristina she has to learn that "You can't escape the past, until you accept what has passed." - I absolutely adore that quote.

The writing was superb, the author did a great job with Kristina's character she felt very real and I really liked her. I'm always surprised when a male author creates such a realistic female character that I really connect with, Stutler must of done some research on female protagonist because Kristina was expertly developed. The story line was so original I loved the twists and I didn't see the end coming at all, Hillari's Head was a real page turner, I couldn't put it down until the very end.

I actually think i'm going to read this book again in a couple of years, it was really touching and will stay with me for awhile. The relationship between Kristina and Duck was great, he was a great character and gave Kristina more layers. I found the way that it slowly became apparent to Kristina that she wasn't as over her past as she thought very moving. I know what its like to think your past something just to have it reappear and realize it had never really gone in the first place. Kristina was a fighter, she seemed pretty fragile and vulnerable for most of the book but as we learn more about her it comes to light that she is stronger than even she knows, I like the way she comes to realize that at the end. I thought the ending was brilliant, I like the fact the author forwent the typical route for the books closing. It made the book more original and memorable to me. Hillari's Head is a highly enjoyable read, I won't easily forget. I really recommend it for anyone who loves a good original story line.

Todd says

Tim Stutler brings a renaissance perspective to the pages of Hillari's Head, treating the reader to a panoply of scenes ranging from bicycling, tea parties and e-dating to formal balls – and much more. After introducing the main characters, the story advances as a legal drama, offering the reader a glimpse into the world of high-stakes employment litigation through the eyes of a beautiful but vulnerable woman. From that vantage, the reader witnesses the talents of a litigator at the peak of his power. And he encounters sinister plotters whose nefarious machinations provide grist for a rich plot.

Although the story turns at times onto the blazed path of a legal thriller, it is much more; in many ways, it is a psychodrama of self-discovery. It is also a story of romance and courage. Stutler employs the legal drama as a crucible, testing and changing his characters – particularly the beautiful young protagonist.

Tim Stutler clearly loves to write. At times his book rips the reader with infectious humor. At other moments, it challenges the reader with intricate legal sequences. Through it all, the twisting plot of Hillari's Head compels the reader to keep turning the pages. At the end, he is surprised – surprised at the welling of his own deepest emotions.

Sharlene says

I received this book in a First Reads giveaway.

I couldn't set this book down. Oh, I tried to do laundry...I tried to load the dishwasher and I even tried working outside and painting, but two posts don't take a lot of time to paint and one can't really brag about them as an accomplishment, can they? I kept getting drawn back.

Characters seem to leap off the page and pull you inside the book with their tale. Kristine, the main character, is unsure enough to be anyone and yet, she is willing to jump in and try things. To me, this made her real, as she doesn't really seem to let anything hold her back...except, perhaps, her past.

Duck is so loveable that you can't help but forget what he looks like until it gets mentioned in the book. His personality and intelligence keeps the reader intrigued with him.

Supporting characters are well used and probably could spurn their own books...

There is courtroom scenes in this book, but I found it the best part of court room drama and much of the thrill is not only in discovering evidence but in the courtroom interrogations and antics.

The plot was unique and I think I had pretty much figured out the climax when I was hit with another one. Sneaky! I didn't see that one coming...be prepared for a roller coaster of emotions in this novel and even some laugh out loud moments.

I don't want to ruin this book for anyone, as I enjoyed it so much. This one screams awards and a movie deal to me.

Sensational, quirky, unique and thought provoking. Add this book to your reading list!

Ally says

I won a copy from Goodreads First Reads.

This review will be short because the book is short.

Hillari's Head is an entertaining book. I know it probably isn't very appealing to many readers, but it is pretty appealing to me. Probably because my brother is similar to Hillari (he has autism), but mostly because I relate to Kristina, or at least at first. Hillari's Head is great and inspiring, especially to those people or siblings of children with disabilities or unique features of physical form. It is easy for me to connect with Kristina and understand how she feels.

The beginning of Hillari's Head is amazing. I got suck right into the story and didn't stop until halfway through the book when I had to eat lunch. (Hey, reviewers have to eat too.) The plot of Hillari's Head goes up and down. Just when I think everything will be okay, it's a huge no-no and bad-bad-bad. I love how close (personal) and crazy the plot gets. The author's writing is okay. I mainly got sucked into the story by the synopsis and Kristina's blog snippets.

The ending of Hillari's Head is so sad. I almost cried, but no. I think I much stronger and resistant than I used to be, so I don't cry that often as before.

Told from Kristina's POV, Hillari's Head is an fascinating book with crazy gunman and hilarious dead lawyers.

Rating: Four out of Five
