



The Fallen Angels of Karnataka

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In an isolated mountain town in Norway, Haakon dreams of traveling the world, pursuing adventure, seeing great places, finding love. His very first trip to London with friends from university offers much promise, yet soon after tragedy strikes. Still young, and mourning the loss of his lover, Haakon is not ready to give up on his dream, so when a rich Englishman offers him the chance to join him on a tour of the world, Haakon takes it, daring to believe that his dream is finally coming true...but at what price? The Fallen Angels of Karnataka is a novel filled with adventure, life's hard-learned lessons, loss, despicable evil, and finally, love and redemption.

The Fallen Angels of Karnataka Details

Date : Published August 29th 2014 by Yaree

ISBN : 9789187561092

Author : Hans M. Hirschi

Format : Paperback 266 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Contemporary, Lgbt

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From Reader Review *The Fallen Angels of Karnataka* for online ebook

Bryn Hammond says

This book deals with dark material, in a compassionate way, without sensationalism or stereotyped evil, or sentimentality for that matter.

In the early stretches I was worried at how ordinary Haakon's story is, but that changes when he is called upon to nurse his first boyfriend through AIDS. Exacerbated by family situations: they have scarcely come out to their parents yet, and parents – along with hospitals who insist on parental presence – may only cause an extra psychological hardship at this time. I found these early parts heavy with death, as Haakon's next question is, when's my turn?

Haakon escapes ordinary life in travel, but his ignorance and naivety find him involved with those who travel the world in order to exploit and abuse underprivileged children. Things get worse before they get better. In these parts I appreciated that he doesn't paint people solid black, but writes about monstrosity more than about monsters.

For me, the travel narrative wasn't a draw in itself, and the other thing I didn't take to in particular is the writing. Mostly, I respected this book for what it looks at. I recognised in it aspects of the 80s and 90s – the early 'gay plague' scare days, but also, how blurrily we thought about sexual abuse issues. We are today hyper-conscious of certain things that passed unnoticed then, or were accepted as commonplace, or were understood as freedoms.

To pigeonhole this, I'd call it rather a novel of gay life than a romance; sex is non-explicit.

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Won through First Reads. (From Australia, I appreciate the worldwide giveaway. Still waiting for Goodreads to encourage global inclusion with a one-click world option -- instead of a click per country, which takes commitment).

Nagisa Furukawa says

This book was indeed a very different book. wow.

I mean, halfway through the book I wasn't so sure what made it so great (according to the reviews and ratings). Sure, it was the story of a guy dreaming to travel the world, falling in love, losing that love, meeting a new friend, blah blah blah... but these aren't so special! Not enough to give a book a rating of 4.39! Not in my opinion anyway.

But then things happened... Charles' truth was revealed... and at that point I wanted to put the book down and never pick it up again. But I pushed through because there was something different about this book. And I hated Charles! I hated him so much... but I don't know, as I got to know him I kinda felt sorry for him... He was a monster and not really a monster... I don't know, it's complicated...

Books like this make you wonder... about so many things.

There's one thing I'm sure of: This book is absolutely worth reading. Just read it. See for yourself.

Denny Patterson says

A remarkable story that will have readers hooked until the end :)

Debbie McGowan says

This novel is a young man's journey through life. It's not smooth; it's absolutely not pain-free, but it is a wondrous journey of self-discovery and hard lessons.

It begins when main character Haakon is in his teens. He's not ambitious, nor competitive, but he is determined and clear in his mind what he wants to do with his life, and that is to travel the world, come hell or high water. Indeed, it takes hell and high water to stop him in his tracks.

This is not your run-of-the-mill M/M romance. It's a narrative that tramples boundaries few authors of gay fiction are brave enough to even tentatively approach, because society at large (by which I mean heteronormative society) often opts for the easy, lazy route in distinguishing and defining difference. That we should accept diversity in heterosexuality and yet attempt to impose a one-size-fits-all on homosexuality is a nonsense. But part of the fight for equality, rights and freedom has always been just that: to present the oppressed minority as universally good and pure. However, evil has no respect for gender, class, or sexuality.

At once shocking and challenging how one might think about some of the West's greatest sexual taboos, *The Fallen Angels of Karnataka* is in a class of its own. I can't say more than this without spoiling the story.

Incidentally, this author is "the queen" of unconventional happy endings. You can expect a rocky ride, but you will get the resolution you require.

Ila Garg says

The Fallen Angels of Karnataka

By Hans M Hirschi

Review By Ila Garg

The Fallen Angels of Karnataka, a novel by Hans M Hirschi, is published by Beaten Track Publishing. The cover is quite a sight. One of the best covers I have seen lately... The colour is a soft shade of blue, blending towards grey. It gives the feel of an emboss. Sad part is this book is available only in kindle edition as of now, so I can't treasure the cover and flaunt it in my book shelf. But I totally loved it.

Born and raised in Switzerland, Hans graduated from High School in Arizona, worked for several years in the Swiss financial industry before pursuing his university studies in Zurich and Gothenburg.

His majors include literature, linguistics & social sciences.

Hans self-published his first book with poetry and a short story in 1991.

Nine years later, he followed up with a professional book on e-learning pedagogy and in 2010 his book Common Sense was published.

He's published ten novels so far.

The blurb reads as, "In an isolated mountain town in Norway, Haakon dreams of traveling the world, pursuing adventure, seeing great places, finding love. His very first trip to London with friends from university offers much promise, yet soon after tragedy strikes.

Still young, and mourning the loss of his lover, Haakon is not ready to give up on his dream, so when a rich Englishman offers him the chance to join him on a tour of the world, Haakon takes it, daring to believe that his dream is finally coming true...but at what price?

The Fallen Angels of Karnataka is a novel filled with adventure, life's hard-learned lessons, loss, despicable evil, and finally, love and redemption."

The Fallen Angels in Karnataka is a story of a teenager, Haakon, who grew up in an isolated town in Norway and dreams of traveling the world in pursuit of adventure, exploring great new places and finding love in his quest.

Read the complete review here - <http://www.ilagarg.com/2017/08/the-fa...>

GayListBookReviews says

Possibly the best book written by Hans Hirschi to date. Hans has never been afraid to tackle real life issues with his characters within any of his books, and in this case he shows no signs of that changing anytime soon. With 'The Fallen Angels of Karnataka' Hans takes his characters and his readers on a heart wrenching journey around the world. I like what Hans did here, in parts this story is quite shocking and certainly not for the faint hearted. What I liked is what these characters go through, how they cope, their experiences, their reactions and what they do about it. The story is tragic, frightening, real, and yet there is a good ending despite all the drama.

The story starts with Haakon Olafsen as a teenager, making plans and dreaming of his future. Here we learn of Haakon's childhood, about his upbringing, his parents and home town of Roso in Norway where he grows up. From there the story takes us on an adventure to the present with Haakon as an adult. I liked Haakon, he is sweet, adventurous, loves the outdoors and learning about the world beyond his home town. He has dreams of travel and we get to watch him grow up into a wonderful man. Haakon goes through some tough stuff, he gets hurt emotionally and he loses love, but all the while he tries to keep a level head through it all. He blames himself for the actions of others that are completely out of his control, but in the end he does what he feels is the right thing do, the only way he can.

In all of Hans' novels there are many characters and within this book it is no exception. On Haakon's journey he meets many people, but it's never too many. Hans always finds the right balance and interjects them well into the storyline. Another thing I've come to notice is that he manages to give the reader plenty of information about each character. You become knowledgeable about each character which produces a real person and easier to connect with. Some of the characters are scary, evil, murderers, selfish, manipulative, dangerous, uncontrollable and guarding while others are kind-hearted, selfless, loving, romantic and naïve.

Now because this is a heavy story, you, the reader, get to travel the world with Haakon and his friends.

Without going into detail with who they all are I won't divulge how they come into Haakons' life. What I will tell you is this story contains child slavery, child abuse and paedophilia. It also tells the story of a young man finding his way in life, the challenges of being gay, HIV, AIDS, leaving home, love and romance. Haakon's story is painful, heartbreaking, endearing and breathtaking.

My first thought was 'Oh my God', Hans what have you let yourself in for! We've all heard the phrase 'you're either very brave or very stupid' but I think Hans has been extremely brave. For some he may have crossed the line here and feel it is distasteful. Others will see it as I do, a good story showing how we get through life and the experiences that fall into our laps, whether we planned them that way or not. Hans has touched on a subject that most gay men would run a million miles from, it's not pretty. Hans is not afraid to confront the bigotry, the discrimination, the crudeness and any other immoral ideals directed at our LGBTQ friends and family members that comes with homophobia. Hans rightly states here through his characters that our sexuality and gender plays no part in the harm, we as humans, inflict on others.

This book is well written and the research is profound. Through this read the issues of HIV and AIDS are highlighted. We learn of the fears and the reactions of others towards those infected, especially way back in the eighties when it was brought to the world's attention.

This tale also brings awareness to one of the countries where children are most vulnerable, with a corrupt system where children are forced into slavery and trafficked. They are taken forcibly from their families or sold by families who are unable to care for their child due to poverty.

Warning: Although there are no graphically detailed crude scenes written in this book, some scenes may cause distress to the reader.

Reviewed by Teddy

To see more of this review and others like it please visit us at Gay List Book Reviews at www.gaylistbookreviews.wordpress.com

Chutchy says

I have read all of Hans Hirschi's books and each one is different: the theme, the story line and writing style. I was eagerly anticipating the release of this book ever since I found out he was writing it! I was not, as in the past, not disappointed. The book spanned more than 25 or so years, taking us on a journey of Haakon's life, that was filled with love, loss, utter despair and disbelief of what someone he called 'friend' did. The book also took the reader to many countries and cities around the world, a beautiful picture being painted by the author. So much detail was paid to the descriptions that one actually felt that they were personally experiencing every single place visited, every food eaten and every smell emanating from each place. The book put front and centre things that we don't usually think about because it is not really publicized in the media. It did raise such an awareness in me, I felt for each and every child.

While I didn't cry as much as I did when I read the first few pages of The Opera House, opus III, my heart felt heavy, the mother in me had the same reaction as Rose, to comfort, care for and heal. Hans is one of

those authors who can bring those feelings and others out of the most stoic of individuals, myself included. If one is looking for steamy sex scenes, graphic depictions of love scenes, then you won't find it here. I guarantee though, you will feel the intimacy almost as if one is reading explicit details. It isn't missed. What one will find is a level of writing that very few writers I have read, can achieve.

I highly recommend this masterpiece to all who want to read a book that will take you places, make you feel things, ponder issues relevant today but are not in the media spotlight.

I never describe Hans Hirschi's endings as HEA. They just end.....as they should, without fanfare, without bells and whistles, just appropriate resolutions.

In the end, Haakon was able to make good out of an ugly situation, and triumph despite the many setbacks he endured.

Well done, Hans!

Eschlane Golfview says

The Fallen Angels of Karnataka by Hans M. Hirschi is an epic novel spanning 26 years, from 1983 to 2009. It is the coming of age story of a naïve young man from Røros Norway. His story spans the globe as he learns and grows. It is a story of finding love, losing love, mourning loss and finding love again. It is a story of experiencing the most evil man can be and of finding the most good in man. This is truly a departure from your typical m/m romance. It is a story for all ages and all people. Mr. Hirschi has created a true classic piece of literature. At the end of the book I wanted to run out in search of the subjects and hear how things have gone in the last 5 years. So totally captivating, absolute can't wait for Han Hirsch's next novel.

Sasha Ambroz says

This book talks about serious issues without moralizing or futile analysing. What would you do, if one of your closest friends appeared to be criminal? How would you act? Could you call the authorities the second you learn about his crimes? Think again.

Also I really enjoyed Haakon's inability to understand love. The trope of love at first sight is so overused that readers have lost the grasp with the concept of love as it is. I sympathized with Haakon's struggle much more than I can sympathize with numerous heroes "falling in love" in the second chapter of the book.

My only grievance with the book was its somewhat superficial pace. Sometimes I wanted Haakon to stop and think about his life or simply his current situation a little bit more. Or at least for the author to write about it.

scavola scavola says

The rich englishman / tour of the world didn't start until 50% in. The crux of the story takes place from 65 - 75% in. The rest?

ScuttlebuttReviews says

Review by Lily at ScuttlebuttReviews

Another great story from Hans Hirschi.

The Fallen Angels of Karnataka focuses on Haakon, and I realised what this young boy's life was about: it was simple and free from traumas. He was loved, went to school and dreamt of travelling the world.

He first travels to London with friends from university, and that's when Haakon's life changes at a level he never envisaged. His next place of travel is France to be with his lover, and the story evolves into something that touches a lot of social issues from the 1980s era. Many people who were adults in that time will remember the media frenzy and people's prejudice as well as compassion.

As a reader, I felt like I was travelling with Haakon. The places he saw were so vivid in my head to the point I could almost smell the spices and feel the sun on my skin. Haakon even went to my country and I got to experience the wonders in my country through his eyes this time.

But Haakon's journey around the world is not only about the wonders of the world. It is about loss, love, despair, horror, grief, and joy. Everything I read in this book felt real so I found myself in tears at times and another time sobbing my eyes out.

What fascinates me the most is how Hirschi portrays the characters in his story. They all look like average people, but each character has a unique side ranging from victim, to a truly manipulative one with evil deeds, and Haakon gets to meet them all and learn what life is about.

Haakon's innocence is almost endearing, yet broke my heart just like it breaks his heart. I experienced his suspicions and horror at his discovery of what a human is capable of doing. I also come to experience his awe and determination to right the wrong.

This story is not about explicit sex or sizzling moments. It is not about fluffy romance. It is about joy, loss, horror, hurt, love and finally love and redemption.

The end of *Karnataka* soothed the ache and the hurt in my heart over what happened to innocent children, and those who struggle in life.

This book requires concentration so one does not miss the hints the writer makes throughout the story. There is a very subtle suspense which will be revealed to you later in the story. Do not miss this moment because it will rock you and shock you to your core.

The Fallen Angels of Karnataka touches a lot of current issues, so do not expect fluffy dialogue and ending. What I found at the end of this story is some happiness, resolution, justice, whilst knowing there are some awful things like this still happening in our lifetime. Hirschi shows that despite loss, trauma and harsh realities of life, one can still move forward in life.

Marc | Rainbow Gold Reviews says

Amazing, well-written gay fiction book that is extremely hard to read in parts, but absolutely worth it!!!

Dane Cobain says

Disclaimer: While I aim to be unbiased, I received a copy of this book for free for review purposes.

This is the second of Hirschi's books that I've read, and although I thought Willem of the Tafel was good, this one raised the bar. My only gripe with it is the title, which does get explained towards the end but which I also think fails to set your expectations as high as they should be, at the beginning – that said, I also can't think of a better alternative.

As for the plot, it's perfect – it's also hard to classify into a genre, but I'd go for 'literary fiction', whatever that is. It follows the story of a Norwegian guy called Haakon, as he falls in love only for it to be cut tragically short. After that, he decides to see the world a bit, and all sorts of crazy things happen. I can't give away the plot any more than I already have, but I can tell that you're in for a bumpy ride, and that paedophilia and homosexuality are both featured, as well as pretty much everywhere in the world except America.

I really can't fault this book too much, but it's just not quite good enough for a ten – that said, even if this isn't my book of the year, it's easily my book of the month, and I recommend you check it out. Tell Michel that I said hi.

Amberr Meadows says

When I dived into *The Fallen Angels of Karnataka*, I had a preconceived foreboding, based on the synopsis, of a story rife with despicable evil and a domino effect of sinister elements and horrifying events. Even the cover, in its glorious, exquisite beauty seemed somewhat creepy, because my imagination had carried me into fearful ridiculousness before even reading the first page. About my many preconceived notions, I couldn't have been more wrong. I almost didn't read the book, but I'm so glad I did now.

Elements of despicable evil certainly are present, but within darkness there's always light and a beacon of hope, and from the moment I met young, naive Haakon, I knew he'd serve as the beacon of hope and light I'd need to fortify myself for what might come. Haakon is incredibly endearing, emotionally awkward and sexually clueless in his early years, and like him, I used to fantasize about the many wonderful places I'd travel one day.

At 30% of the novel, the author already had me in tears over the loss of young love. Hans Hirschi skips the superfluous text and is a wonderful example of an author who shows more by telling less. Not much about Haakon's feeling are discussed, and the times he did had me reaching for tissues, too. The climax of evil in India left me horrified and sickened, but Mahender and those beautiful fallen angels of Karnataka brought me joy. My emotions ran the gamut with this novel, which is an impressive rarity for me.

Now for the logistics of the novel...

The Fallen Angels of Karnataka is not your typical novel, and it faces hardcore realities like the sex and slave trafficking of children and how little value is placed on those lives. There is nothing predictable in this novel, and there are no real, "in your face" "Ah ha! I knew it!" moments. The novel is beautifully written and crafted in such a way that you are living through the words on those pages and traveling to exotic places and

into the darkness and light. Quite simply, I loved the book, and I will never have to regret not picking it up and giving in to my initial fears. Life isn't always beauty and roses, but the nature of humanity and inhumanity are realities in life itself. Unlike the movies, this book is fiction, but it's eerily close to reality.

This is the first novel I've read of Hans Hirschi, but it won't be the last. I highly recommend you buy the book and read it for yourself, but don't insult it with the expectation of it being a monotonous clone in a sea of terrible reads. This novel is a jewel best experienced firsthand.

maja says

I recieved this book through a goodreads giveaway

I've been meaning to write about this one for weeks now, but truth be told, I still don't know what I thought about it. I was very close to putting this down after the first 30 pages or something, because it felt like nothing at all happened, but then things started happening and *The Fallen Angels of Karnataka* really grew on me. Still, for the better part of the book, it felt like every possible problem could be solved just by Charles' money. Which, it later turns out, they can't. This books deals with heavier subjects that will probably make you cry and feel like there is no hope left in this world, but still it ends on a hopeful note.

I really like both the plot and the characters, but still there is something about it that really bugs me and I can't figure out what it is. Still, this was a very nice read; I especially like how it switches from feel-good to heartaching in just a few pages.
