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The Memory Of Us: A Novel



Synopsis

Julianne Westcott was living the kind of life that other Protestant girls in prewar Liverpool could only dream about: old money, silk ball gowns, and prominent young men lining up to escort her. But when she learns of a blind-and-deaf brother, institutionalized since birth, the illusion of her perfect life and family shatters around her. While visiting her brother in secret, Julianne meets and befriends Kyle McCarthy, an Irish Catholic groundskeeper studying to become a priest. Caught between her family's expectations, Kyle's devotion to the Church, and the intense new feelings that the forbidden courtship has awakened in her, Julianne must make a choice: uphold the life she's always known or follow the difficult path toward love. But as war ripples through the world and the Blitz decimates England, a tragic accident forces Julianne to leave everything behind and forge a new life built on lies she's told to protect the ones she loves. Now, after twenty years of hiding from her past, the truth finds her—will she be brave enough to face it?

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Customer Reviews

The Memory of Us is a moving, at times heart-breaking inspirational romance by Camille Di Maio. There will be tears. The story opens in 1961 in a small village in England when a woman in the

process of committing suicide is called out to deliver a baby. It turns out she is a midwife, a sad, lonely woman who has given up on life. The delivery is difficult, the mother is dying and the priest arrives to perform last rites and he turns out to be someone from her past, her lost love Kyle McCarthy. The story then goes back nearly twenty-five years to when she first met the young man who would one day be that priest. The narrative goes back and forth between that night in 1961 and the past, recalling the great romance between her and the man who becomes Father McCarthy. It is a story of self-abnegation of the sort that really irritates me. Self-sacrifice and denial for the good of others is fine and dandy if they want it. Making decision for other people's good without consulting them is just wrong. And of course, that is what this story is really about, about sacrificing all on the altar of Nobody-Asked-You. Fortunately for the story, we are given enough of a back story to understand how our heroine Julianne (Does she deserve to be called that?) came to hold such shallow values and have so little trust in love. Her parents packed away her twin brother when he was born with a congenital developmental defect that left him blind and cognitively impaired. She was a teenager when she learned she had a brother and began sneaking out to visit him. Her parents never spoke of him and never visited him.

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