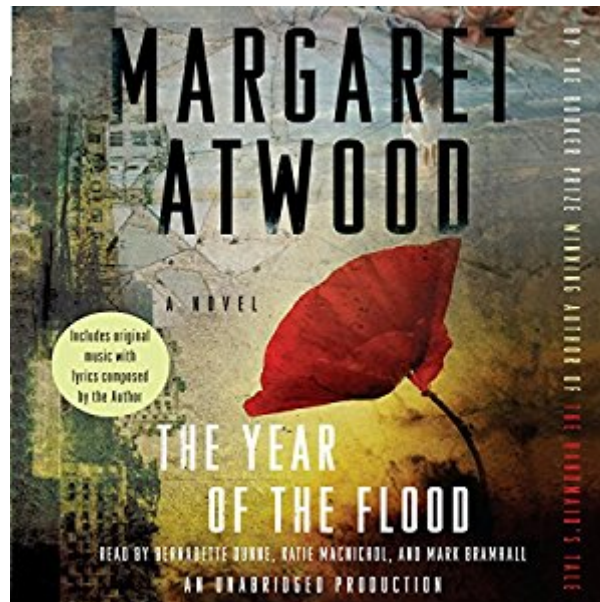


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The Year Of The Flood



Synopsis

From the Booker Prize-winning author of *Oryx and Crake*, the first book in the MaddAddam Trilogy, and *The Handmaid's Tale*. Internationally acclaimed as ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR by, amongst others, the *Globe and Mail*, the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, and the *Village Voice*. In a world driven by shadowy, corrupt corporations and the uncontrolled development of new, gene-spliced life forms, a man-made pandemic occurs, obliterating human life. Two people find they have unexpectedly survived: Ren, a young dancer locked inside the high-end sex club Scales and Tails (the cleanest dirty girls in town), and Toby, solitary and determined, who has barricaded herself inside a luxurious spa, watching and waiting. The women have to decide on their next move--they can't stay hidden forever. But is anyone else out there? --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I know that sounds bad, but her dystopian visions are so profoundly disturbing, I find they influence my thinking forever after. Say what you will--her nightmares are not easy to dismiss! Readers of 2003's *Oryx and Crake* will recognize the world of *The Year of the Flood*. Neither a prequel nor a sequel, the latter is more of a companion novel. It's set in the same world, covering roughly the same time span. Whereas *Oryx and Crake* was a post-apocalyptic narrative told from Jimmy's point of view, here the narrators are Toby and Ren. Jimmy, Oryx, and Crake make appearances in this novel, and readers of both books will discover minor characters from the former novel are major

characters in the latter. In short, the two are intertwined, but may be read in any order. It is not necessary to have read *Oryx and Crake* first, though ultimately reading them both is an immensely satisfying experience, shedding light on many aspects of the story being told. Now to the story... Toby and Ren have both spent significant portions of their lives involved with a fringe religious group called God's Gardeners. Ren was brought to the ascetic group as a child by her mother. Toby found her way there out of desperation in adulthood. Each has professed disbelief in the tenets of the religion, but the pacifistic and environmental teachings have become deeply ingrained in both. At the opening of the novel, it is Year Twenty-Five in the God's Gardeners' calendar; the Year of the Waterless Flood. From the beginning, the group's prophet-like leader had preached that a "waterless flood" was coming to wipe out humanity. In addition to their dogmatic environmentalism, the group believed in preparing for this flood with survival skills and food caches called "Ararats."

In Margaret Atwood's three compelling and quite different visions of an apocalyptic future, some things never change. There are always the powerful corporations intent on obtaining profit from every human desire: the Soul Scrolls of "The Handmaid's Tale," which turn prayer into a commodity; the Secretburger franchises of "The Year of the Flood," which dispense cheap burgers of dubious provenance. The environment is always degraded, resulting in a precipitous drop in the birth rate ("The Handmaid's Tale") and the terrifying daily thunderstorms of "The Year of the Flood." In all three stories, there is an Orwellian social structure: a tiny elite intent both on holding power at all costs and on a comfortable, even luxurious, life style; a larger group of terrified, obedient mid-level party/corporate functionaries; and a vast underclass that lives in squalor and in violence---the "pleeblands" of her newest novel. And, most important to all three dystopias, there are cold, brutal men with the most up to date weapons "who make sure--successfully, until the global pandemics in both "Oryx and Crake" and "The Year of the Flood" nearly destroy the human race-- that everyone is terrorized and that power remains with the corporate elites. Thus, it's quite amazing that her newest dystopia is so different, so inventive, and so convincing, even though elements of "The Year of the Flood" overlap with those in "Oryx and Crake" and the novels are set in parallel, time-wise, with a male protagonist in "Oryx" and two female protagonists, Toby and Ren, in "Flood." Completely original and central to "Flood" is the made-up religion (complete with made-up hymns) of Gods Gardeners, led by its fatherly chief composter, sermonizer, and philosopher, Adam One.

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