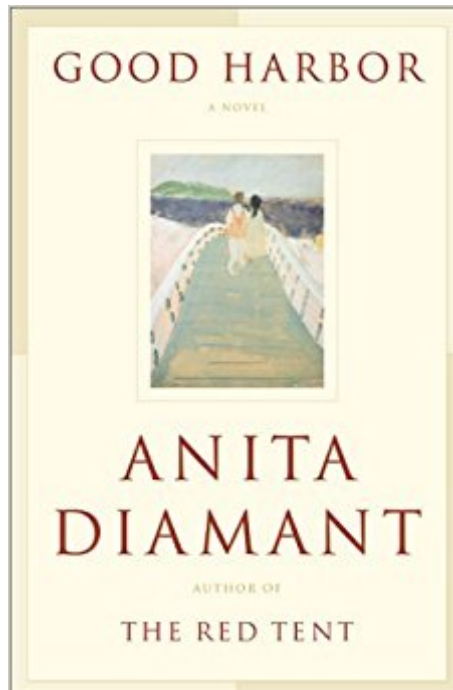


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Good Harbor: A Novel



Synopsis

The author of the phenomenal bestseller *The Red Tent* again delves into the secret lives of women, with a contemporary novel set in Massachusetts that reaffirms her gifts as a natural and resonant storyteller.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Given the breadth of Anita Diamant's bestselling biblical epic, *The Red Tent*, it seems natural that her second novel has a much closer focus. Set in the small Massachusetts fishing town of Gloucester, *Good Harbor* is a slow-paced study of female friendship. Here Diamant can luxuriate in the development of just two principal characters: 59-year-old Kathleen Levine, a children's librarian who is undergoing radiation therapy for breast cancer, and a 42-year-old romance novelist, Joyce Tabachnik, who has bought a summer retreat in Gloucester in the hope of finally writing a "serious" book. The two meet at temple after a service presided over by a newly hired female rabbi. (What joy it must have been for Diamant, who chronicled so much oppression of Hebrew women in *The Red Tent*, to casually include the presence of female clergy.) Kathleen has no real confidante aside from her husband, Buddy; Joyce is facing estrangement from both her business-minded husband, Frank, and her soccer-obsessed daughter, Nina. What the women are lacking, they find in each other. As their intimacy grows, Diamant sometimes tells us what we already know, breaking into a conversation, for example, to announce how well things are going ("They smiled at each other. They were going to be okay."). This is a moving story nonetheless--short on incident, but with carefully drawn characters and fluid, matter-of-fact prose. --Regina Marler

A well-respected author who made news with her fiction debut, *The Red Tent*, Diamant draws a portrait of a friendship between women that weathers illness and infidelity. Kathleen Levine, a children's librarian in Cape Ann, MA, is 59 years old, married, and the mother of two grown sons. She is also suffering from breast cancer, which brings overwhelming solicitousness from others and countless stories of other women's illness. She is no stranger to the disease, having lived through her sister's death from breast cancer. Joyce Tabachnik is a journalist and pseudonymous romance novelist. Now 42, she is married and has a 12-year-old daughter who bristles at anything her parents say and do. The two Jewish women Joyce by birth, Kathleen by conversion meet at synagogue one Friday evening and begin a relationship that will take them up the Good Harbor beach in Gloucester for frequent walks and talks and through the momentous challenges and fears of their varied lives. Kathleen's ordeal with cancer, especially radiation treatment, rings true, and her honest, compassionate friendship with Joyce, who is doubting her own marriage and her ability to write, will touch readers as they recognize these women's frailties and strengths. Aside from a subplot concerning drug dealing that seems out of place, this is a wonderful story that most libraries should acquire.- Bette-Lee Fox, "Library Journal" Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I loved Diamant's first novel, *THE RED TENT*, more than any book I've read in the last ten years. So I it was with great anticipation that I bought *GOOD HARBOR*. Diamant wisely chooses a topic as far from Biblical times as possible, and the two novels couldn't be more different. Two women at a crossroads in their lives and marriages meet in the small town of Gloucester, Massachusetts, and become fast friends. The setting is rich with possibilities, but Diamant's intentions are more successful than her execution. The simplicity of style which worked so well and powerfully in *RED TENT* here seems to undermine the emotional arc of the two women, Joyce and Kathleen, and we never care for them as deeply as we could. Kathleen's battle with breast cancer, and her attempt to make peace with her son's death 25 years earlier just doesn't move us as it should. And when a lonely Joyce drifts farther and farther from her husband and teenaged daughter into an affair with a handsome Irish fisherman, who will never fully consummate their physical relationship, we, too, feel unfulfilled. Diamant is a hugely talented author, but *GOOD HARBOR* just isn't in the same class as *THE RED TENT*. Let's hope her next effort proves more worthy, since she obviously has the talent and the vision to write brilliantly when the topic moves her.

I truly enjoyed this book. I have purchased other books by this author as well. Well written, I felt like I

was there with the main characters. A warm hearted portrayal of friendship.

I loved this novel. It resonated with who I am at this time in my life and it made me realize how normal I am and how important friends and family are and how wonderfully complicating life can be.

I just had surgery for the same cancer as Kathleen. A second time around for me the first was an invasive cancer. She was, understandably, dealing unresolved issues, but nowadays patients are better informed about their cancers. It is scary but I don't think she was realistic in her approach especially about the radiation. It is threatening but the author overdramatized the character's reactions. I enjoyed the friendship between Kathleen and Joyce. Friendships make all life's trials easier.

I loved "The Red Tent" by Anita Diamant so I thought I would like this book, too. I felt very disappointed by it though because it was so predictable and cliché. I felt like the characters in it were one dimensional and the ending had a too perfect, wrapped up neatly feel. The book didn't require me to think or contemplate anything, and I especially disliked that none of the relationships it portrayed felt genuine.

Really good book by a really good author. I've enjoyed several of Anita Diamant's books. I love them for the fact that they are based in New England.

Alexi never disappoints her readers. Rallou is a thinker and a doer. So when she goes on her search for Christos, she doesn't even stop to consider the tragedy she has just experienced. She is a woman who must act so she "sorts" through her past to get to her present and all the while it is obvious that she is in shock! When she gets to the light at the end of the tunnel she is in for quite a surprise (or two or three!). Lovely story but different from others in the Greek Village Series.

Anita Diamant has become one of my special authoress'. Her books have a great story line and the reader ends up rooting for the subjects. She captures the subjects in a historical time period which makes the read that much more interesting and allows the reader to have a peek into mainly the Jewish culture of the era. This period of time is more modern than the other books she has authored and depicts a summer town located along the Massachusetts coast. I would recommend this read for a summer vacation. It would appeal to women of all ages.

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