



Arcadia

By Lauren Groff



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From the bestselling author of *The Monsters of Templeton* comes a lyrical and gripping story of a great American dream.

In the fields of western New York State in the 1970s, a few dozen idealists set out to live off the land, founding what would become a commune centered on the grounds of a decaying mansion called Arcadia House. *Arcadia* follows this romantic, rollicking, and tragic utopian dream from its hopeful start through its heyday and after.

Arcadia's inhabitants include Handy, a musician and the group's charismatic leader; Astrid, a midwife; Abe, a master carpenter; Hannah, a baker and historian; and Abe and Hannah's only child, the book's protagonist, Bit, who is born soon after the commune is created.

While Arcadia rises and falls, Bit, too, ages and changes. If he remains in love with the peaceful agrarian life in Arcadia and deeply attached to its residents--including Handy and Astrid's lithe and deeply troubled daughter, Helle--how can Bit become his own man? How will he make his way through life and the world outside of Arcadia where he must eventually live?

With *Arcadia*, her first novel since her lauded debut, *The Monsters of Templeton*, Lauren Groff establishes herself not only as one of the most gifted young fiction writers at work today but also as one of our most accomplished literary artists.

Praise for *Arcadia*:

"[Lauren Groff] has taken a quaint, easily caricatured community and given it true universality...And a book that might have been small, dated and insular winds up feeling timeless and vast...The raw beauty of Ms. Groff's prose is one of the best things about *Arcadia*. But it is by no means this book's only kind of splendor."

--Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

"Groff's beautiful prose make this an unforgettable read."

--*Publishers Weekly* (Starred Review)

"I was constantly torn between wanting to gulp down this book or savor its lines. Even the most incidental details vibrate with life... *Arcadia* wends a harrowing

path back to a fragile, lovely place you can believe in."

--Ron Charles, *The Washington Post*

"*****"

--*People*

"A moving look at the value of human connection in a scary, chaotic world."

--*Entertainment Weekly*

"Lauren Groff's dazzling new novel brings the flawed visions of a '60s commune to life... At a moment when so much floating anger struggles for articulation, it's Groff's essential human empathy that gives her work its urgency."

--*Vogue*

"One of our best young novelists brings a lost Eden of hippiedom freshly to life... Groff's prismatic prose style lends itself to the darker currents that run beneath the Arcadian dream... both poetic and ambitious."

--*Elle*

"[A] beautifully crafted novel... [it] gives full rein to [Groff's] formidable descriptive powers, as she summons both the beauty of striving for perfection and the inevitable devastation of failing so miserably to achieve it."

--STARRED *Booklist*

"An astonishing novel, both in ambition and achievement."

--STARRED *Kirkus Reviews*

"Arcadia feels true, as do the characters who populate this extraordinary novel."

--Hannah Tinti, author of *The Good Thief*

"It's not possible to write any better without showing off."

--Richard Russo, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Empire Falls*

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Arcadia By Lauren Groff Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review This beautifully crafted novel follows Bit Stone, the first child to be born in the late 1960s on an upstate New York commune called Arcadia, from childhood through the year 2018. An introspective youngster who can often go months without speaking, Bit “watches life from a distance.” He can see how hard his parents work to make Arcadia successful, but he can also see that the self-indulgent commune leader frequently fails to live up to his own ideals. As the backbreaking work, continual poverty, and near-constant hunger work to undermine the once-flourishing sense of community, Bit’s family leaves the commune to make their way in the outside world. Bit becomes a photographer and teacher but is always anchored to the place of his childhood, even marrying the emotionally damaged daughter of Arcadia’s guru, but happiness proves elusive, both for him and for the greater world, as a flu pandemic sweeps the globe. Groff’s second novel, after the well-received *The Monsters of Templeton* (2008), gives full rein to her formidable descriptive powers, as she summons both the beauty of striving for perfection and the inevitable devastation of failing so miserably to achieve it. --Joanne Wilkinson

Review

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"Arcadia feels true, as do the characters who populate this extraordinary novel, which lingers on passing moments in time and highlights the importance of place in preserving not only our memories, but also ourselves." *Hannah Tinti, author of the bestselling and award-winning novel The Good Thief*

"Richly peopled and ambitious and oh, so lovely, Lauren Groff's *Arcadia* is one of the most moving and satisfying novels I've read in a long time. It's not possible to write any better without showing off." **Richard Russo, author of the novel *That Old Cape Magic* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Empire Falls***

"Part *Stone Diaries*, part *Lord of the Flies*, part something out of a Shakespearean tragedy, Lauren Groff's *Arcadia* is so uniquely absorbing that you finish it as if waking from a dream. Groff is one of our most talented writers, and *Arcadia* one of the most revelatory, magical, and ambitious novels I've read in years." **Kate Walbert, author of the New York Times bestselling novel *A Short History of Women***

"An astonishing novel, both in ambition and achievement, filled with revelations that appear inevitable in retrospect, amid the cycle of life and death. A novel of "the invisible tissue of civilization," of "community or freedom," and of the precious fragility of lives in the balance." **Kirkus (Starred Review)**

About the Author

Lauren Groff is the author of *The Monsters of Templeton*, shortlisted for the Orange Prize for New Writers; *Delicate Edible Birds*, a collection of short stories; and *Fates and Furies*, a National Book Award finalist. Her writing has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *Tin House*, *One Story*, *McSweeney's*, and *Ploughshares*, and in the anthologies *100 Years of the Best American Short Stories*, *The Pushcart Prize: Best of the Small Presses*, *PEN/O. Henry Prize Stories*, and three editions of *The Best American Short Stories*. She lives in Gainesville, Florida, with her husband and two sons.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michael Davis:

Now a day those who Living in the era where everything reachable by match the internet and the resources inside it can be true or not need people to be aware of each information they get. How many people to be smart in receiving any information nowadays? Of course the correct answer is reading a book. Reading through a book can help men and women out of this uncertainty Information particularly this Arcadia book since this book offers you rich info and knowledge. Of course the details in this book hundred per-cent guarantees there is no doubt in it everbody knows.

Martin Duval:

Precisely why? Because this Arcadia is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap the item but latter it will zap you with the secret this inside. Reading this book beside it was fantastic author who write the book in such awesome way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this nowadays or you going to regret it. This phenomenal book will give you a lot of gains than the other book get such as help improving your skill and your critical thinking way. So , still want to hold off having that book? If I have been you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

Victor Loy:

This Arcadia is great book for you because the content which is full of information for you who also always

deal with world and have to make decision every minute. This book reveal it information accurately using great organize word or we can say no rambling sentences in it. So if you are read this hurriedly you can have whole facts in it. Doesn't mean it only provides you with straight forward sentences but hard core information with attractive delivering sentences. Having Arcadia in your hand like getting the world in your arm, information in it is not ridiculous 1. We can say that no publication that offer you world with ten or fifteen second right but this publication already do that. So , this really is good reading book. Hey there Mr. and Mrs. active do you still doubt this?

Stephanie Hopkins:

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