



## The Moon Field

*Judith Allnatt*

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## **The Moon Field** Judith Allnatt

It is 1914. George Farrell cycles through the tranquil Cumberland fells to deliver a letter, unaware that it will change his life. George has fallen for the beautiful daughter at the Manor House, Miss Violet, but when she lets slip the contents of the letter George is heartbroken to discover that she is already promised to another man. George escapes his heartbreak by joining the patriotic rush to war, but his past is not so easily avoided. His rite of passage into adulthood leaves him believing that no woman will be able to love the man he has become.

## **The Moon Field Details**

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Author : Judith Allnatt

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## From Reader Review The Moon Field for online ebook

### Sascha says

[ I feel like Violet's plot didn't really get any closure, though, particularly as it seems she never receives the box of Edmund's things. I don't know if we're meant to presume she gets over his death, or she's going to end up like her mother, despondent, ill, and depressed. (hide spoiler)]

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### Darklittle says

In 1914, George Farrell, a young English postman decides to join the war in the heat of the moment when he learns that his crush Miss Violet is already promised to someone else. When George and his comrades arrive in France, they are surprised that they are to fight at the front like professional soldiers.

George soon finds himself knee-deep in mud. The cold and wet is creeping into his bones. Reading about the deafening noise of exploding shells and the stench of decomposing bodies is almost unbearable and you'll start to understand that you can't imagine what it must have been like for millions of soldiers who fought this war.

While George fights at the front, his best friend Kitty is at home doing men's jobs and she really enjoys being able to do so. She knows what she wants but has to live a life restricted by society and class. While Kitty is the hard-working girl walking straight into a modern world, Miss Violet seems like a fading picture of a past era. She's like a princess in a castle waiting for Prince Charming to come and save her.

The plot switches between George's, Miss Violet's and Kitty's view. In the beginning, Miss Violet's plotline is most gripping, but that changes as soon as George joins the war. Even though it takes a bit to get going and you'll definitely need a sturdy stomach, *The Moon Field* is a truly rewarding read.

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### Ian says

I received this book as part of the goodreads first-reads giveaway. I really enjoyed the writing and how easy it was to read. I also appreciated the story and the fact that the author portrayed grief and loss in a realistic way. Also I felt that the mistakes and misunderstandings that occur are in keeping with the youthfulness of the main characters.

However, I did feel that at times the authors own narrative dictated some of the speech, so that things were being said or explained by an 18 year old, using a vocabulary that was more meaningful than someone in his position would have used.

The ending was also a little disappointing. (view spoiler).

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## **Sue says**

This is really 3.5 stars for me. I enjoyed parts two and three more than part one as it picked up when the characters become real as the events of WW1 took shape on their lives. I liked that Violet, Kitty and George's lives were entwined with how their relationships were effected. The backdrop of the Lake District was beautiful and the authors turn of phrase was sublime. This for me wasn't quite as good as Louisa Youngs my dear I wanted to tell you but I felt for George and wanted it to come good for him as he had a soft heart. It's worth a read to see how people's lives were all touched by the war

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## **Stephen says**

coming of age novel where George is spurned so he enlists and ends up on the western front and this changes him when he returns home a totally different person in both age and character and more how when you feel in the heart stays no matter what happens also coming back not getting the hero's welcome but becoming a living reminder of the horrors of war.

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## **Hazel says**

### **My rating: 3.5**

*I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.*

*The Moon Field* is an historical romance novel set during the First World War. It focuses mainly on two people: George and Violet, although there is a wide range of characters.

Split into three parts the novel begins with George, an 18 year old postman planning on telling Miss Violet of his feelings for her, only to find out that she is already engaged. He runs off feeling jealous and ends up enlisting for the army. At first I thought the description of George made him seem more like a child than a young adult and this annoyed me a little, however this helped to emphasise the changes he undergoes as a result of the war.

Part two is mostly set in Flanders where George is involved in the fighting resulting in deaths of certain other characters for which George blames himself despite it not really being his fault. This section ends with George being hurt himself and part three begins with him being returned to a hospital in England where he begins to recover although is now deformed. Throughout this final part George suffers with depression and thinks that he is now a freak. He has to deal with lots of rejection but, thankfully, the novel ends with a more positive outlook for his future.

Knowing in advance that romance was to be involved, it appeared at first that there might be some romantic attachment developed between George and Violet. From the very beginning I personally did not want this to happen. It did not feel right particularly as they were of different social classes, which at that time was quite important. Fortunately this did not happen and I was fairly pleased with the ending.

I think that Allnatt's writing is extremely good and reflects the time period well. I quite often find when reading historical novels that authors use words or phrases that are too modern to have actually been said at

that time. There was none of that problem with *The Moon Field*. Allnatt had also researched extremely well to get across the experiences of the soldiers on the Western Front. She mentions in her acknowledgements that she read many soldiers accounts of their experiences in the Great War. All her research defiantly paid off!

All in all it is a great historical novel.

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### **Kate says**

I received a free copy of this book in a GoodReads giveaway.

This was a good book. It started out a little slowly, but picked up pace once George signed his life away to go fight in WWI. I thought George was a great character - the countryside came alive through his artistic eye, and he had a beautiful articulate-ness & thoughtfulness internally that he frustratingly couldn't translate to most of his external interactions with other people.

It seems WWII is written about in a disproportionately greater number of historical fiction books than WWI, so it was very interesting to read about the conditions, landscape and details of George's time in the war, and afterwards. The book really came into its own & was at its most powerful when George came home from the war.

I also really enjoyed the Violet storyline -- I imagine she lived in a rather Downton Abbey-esque world, though I would have liked her story to have a little bit more resolution or epilogue... It also might have been nice/consistent to see George come clean to Violet, as part of his new-found ability to stand up for himself and speak honestly to defend his intentions, near the end. But these are just wishful thoughts of a reader who likes things all tied up at the end of a book, which may not always be realistic to ask for!

I also enjoyed the little perspective shifts away from George every now and then, in to other characters' thoughts & minds. There were a few little overly-written turns of phrase or inconsistencies, but on the whole - a very good book, intriguing characters, and I found it difficult to put down! I would definitely go read other books by Judith Allnatt. Thanks, GoodReads!

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### **Tom Vause says**

I won this book via Goodreads First Reads.

This is my first ever book review on this so please forgive me if its not very well written. First of all the author gets the bleakness of the battlefields of World War One across well. The class split within the army and the pointlessness of the war is also well demonstrated within the book. I also liked the way the war changed the lives back home; in terms of coping with death, injury of loved ones and a change in station for women. The book doesn't simply focus on those fighting in the war.

Also as my parents are from Cumbria and my Aunt currently lives in Penrith I enjoyed the setting!

I thoroughly enjoyed this book and I would recommend it to anyone who is interested in war and historical fiction!

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### **Robert says**

Readability

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### **Deborah Swift says**

I absolutely loved 'A Mile of River', so when this book came up on 'Vine' I jumped at it. Beginning in 1914, the book tells the story of George, a postman who joins up after being rejected as a suitor by Violet, the lady of the Manor. George gets drunk, and then is persuaded to volunteer for active service. After that, we see the horrors of the trenches through his eyes. The strongest part of the book for me is when George returns home, with an injury he can't hide, and he then has to suffer the rejections and reactions that many returning servicemen probably felt in this situation. This part is skilfully and sensitively handled. I enjoyed Judith Allnatt's great descriptions, wonderful well-researched details, and her attempt to tackle something a little different from the usual 'man goes into the trenches' story which has been done so often before.

So why not 5 stars? The only problem for me with the book was that George was not a particularly likeable character. He does a few despicable things early in the book and he never really redeems himself. He is not particularly heroic in battle although he does endure unspeakable horrors. When he comes home he treats his friend Kitty badly, and never confesses to Violet the truth of what happened to the man she loved. I wanted to like George, and I did feel sorry for him, but never quite warmed to him and this took the edge of the book for me.

Nevertheless, a well-written literary read, well worth reading for fans of WWI fiction.

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### **Tina says**

I'm going to have to read this again as I so enjoyed it that I rushed through it - next time I'll savour the descriptions more. A thoughtful book using the items found in a soldier's tin box after his death as the chapter headings eg a dance card. So sad to think of all those women at home waiting for their loves who never returned but also for the young boys who lied about their age to enlist thinking it would be an adventure but ended up horrifically wounded both physically and mentally.

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### **Cleo Bannister says**

George is just eighteen years old, lives with his parents and his younger siblings Ted and Lilly when he first met Violet during his deliveries as a postman. Violet was out for a walk taking photos as an escape from her duties, mainly being a companion to her sick mother. The difference in their lives couldn't be greater but George was bowled over by her beauty decides to give her one of the watercolours he has painted. Unknown to George as he hurried along to meet Violet the post he has to deliver to her that day her sparks a chain

reaction that will change both their lives forever.

George goes off to war with a small group of friends and is soon dispatched to the front. Under the watchful eye of Edmund the young lads suffer the wet and the cold, the terror of the bombs and the seemingly futile push to stop the Germans advance into France.

Judith Allnatt does not sugar coat any of the horror of the war. This book eloquently shows what a generation of young men endured. There are descriptions of dead bodies left sinking in the mud and those who suffered with their injuries with no one to rescue them from the battlefield. I really feel that this book made me understand the true nature of this war, far from the statistics of non-fiction, this story about how George and his friends suffered and found their own way of coping and in doing so tells the stories of the men in an accessible, yet hard-hitting way. Despite the realities that were suffered, this is a story and a neatly plotted one at that, there are few enough characters that the author added layers to their personality over the course of the book which meant that as a reader I truly cared about so many of the fictional lives shared.

This is a fantastic book to read in the anniversary year of World War I.

This book will be published on 16 January 2013 by The Borough Press. I received an advance copy from Amazon Vine in return for this honest review.

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### **Elisabeth says**

The year is 1914 and World War One has just started. George is a young man who is a postman, delivering mail in the idyllic Cumbrian Fells. Violet is a young lady from the manor house recently engaged. Although out of his reach, George has fallen in love with Violet and wants her to reciprocate his feelings. One day George learns purely by accident that Violet has a fiancée and to escape what he sees a betrayal joins up, lies about his age and is sent to France to fight for King and Country.

The story unfolds alongside the horror of war in France whilst life back at home goes on as normal. The description in the book is superb – you are immersed in the terrifying world of trench warfare and through the description you can see, smell and sense the horror being experienced by the characters. On the other hand, the descriptions of the Cumbrian Fells are equally as vivid showing the 2 extremes that George and the others experience.

I really enjoyed this book – I got to know the characters and felt their pain and joy. It was like reading about people that I knew by the end of the book. It was a superb book!

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### **Kate says**

"I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads"

This beautifully written book is a delight to read especially if, like me, you find the world of a hundred years ago to be kinder, poignant and romantic. I really enjoyed the writing style, and how easy it was to read and follow. I read it in a matter of days. Now normally I'm not one for books related to World War II or any of

the wars for that matter, so I was quietly surprised at just how much I got into and enjoyed this book. So yeah I found it surprisingly engaging. It is in many ways a sad and heartbreakingly thoughtful story, however I found it to be tender and full of warmth and hope for the future. As I connected with George's struggle to adjust to his physical impairment and new life. I liked that Allnatt had the idea of splitting her book into three parts. Part one consisting of Georges life before he joined the army, part two was Georges journey and experiences of life in the army and the daily struggle, and part three was when George returned home and finds life to be a struggle as he tries to fit back into society but finds it hard and becomes very detached. Allnatt has obviously carried put a lot of time, effort and research into this book, which evidently shows in the subtly of the descriptions and detail throughout. I'd highly recommend this book to anyone who loves a romantic/tender WWII book, and also to anyone who like me doesn't normally read this type of genre to take a chance and just give it a go.

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### **Becky says**

As is to be expected there is going to be something of a glut of First World War novels, new and classic, being released over the next four years. This is one of the first of the new ones that I've read, and I have to say I was impressed. The concept is largely simliar to 'My Dear I Wanted To Tell You' however there are enough differences for this to feel fresh. George joins up after discovering that he has no hope with the girl he has come to love. He rejects his best friend, his actual soulmate, and leaves for France ready to do his bit. He experiences the hell of trench warfare, is injured in a manner that will constantly mark him out for life, and returns to England to rebuild his life. The beauty of this book is that George is a totally normal young man, you won't get any real heroics here, not beyond his willingness to face up to his new life once he returns home. In many respects he is somewhat contemptable, his rejection of his true friends is horrid to read. However it all seems totally natural and understandable when contrasted with what he has experienced for himself. I can imagine that this will a popular choice over the next few years, and is certainly well worth reading.

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