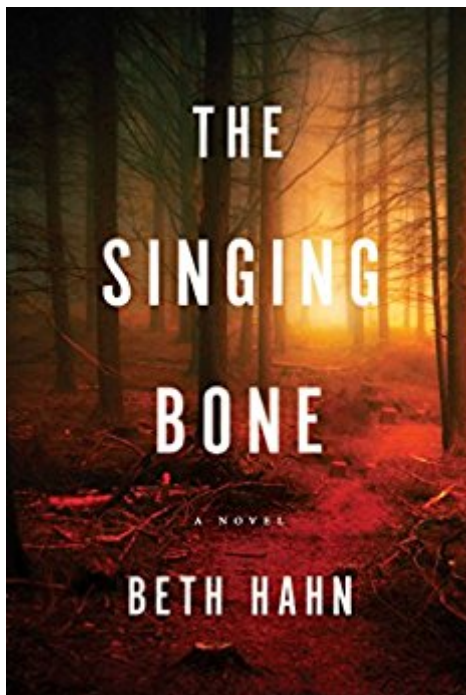


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The Singing Bone: A Novel



Synopsis

A convicted killer's imminent parole forces a woman to confront the nightmarish past she's spent twenty years escaping. I found you. That's what Mr. Wyck told her: I found you. 1979: Seventeen-year-old Alice Pearson can't wait to graduate from high school so she can escape the small town in upstate New York where she grew up. In the meantime, she and her friends avoid their dysfunctional families while getting high in the woods. There they meet the enigmatic Jack Wyck, who lives in the rambling old farmhouse across the reservoir. Enticed by his quasi-mystical philosophy and the promise of a constant party, Alice and her friends join Mr. Wyck's small group of devoted followers. But their heady, freewheeling idyll takes an increasingly sinister turn, as Alice finds herself crossing moral and emotional boundaries that erode her hold on reality. When Mr. Wyck's grand scheme goes wrong, culminating in a night of horrific violence, Alice is barely able to find her way back to sanity. Twenty years later, Alice Wood has created a quiet life for herself as a professor of folklore, but an acclaimed filmmaker threatens to expose her past with a documentary about Jack Wyck's crimes and the cult-like following he continues to attract from his prison cell. Wyck has never forgiven Alice for testifying against him, and as he plots to overturn his conviction and regain his freedom, she is forced to confront the truth about what happened to her in the farmhouse—and her complicity in the evil around her. *The Singing Bone* is a spellbinding examination of guilt, innocence, and the fallibility of memory, a richly imagined novel that heralds the arrival of a remarkable new voice in literary suspense.

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Customer Reviews

The Singing Bone is hard to put down. It begins with Hans, a controversial documentary filmmaker, who receives a package from a mysterious, legendary inmate, serving a sentence of 25 years to life: Jack Wyck. Hans's previous film exposed cults and cult leaders and provoked a deadly violent episode at its inaugural screening, and Hans begins to research Jack Wyck's story with great trepidation. When Hans contacts Alice, a professor of folklore, he unleashes ghosts that Alice has kept at bay for decades. As a teenager, Alice became entranced by the charismatic figure of Jack Wyck. At the time, Alice was inseparable from her friends, each finding refuge from dysfunctional homes, through their friendship with each other, except for Molly, whose parents and whose younger brother, Stuart, adored her and worried about her, and who is ultimately brutally punished for this. Jack Wyck usurped the love these friends had for each other, manipulated it, used it and abused it. In his words: "When you put a collar on an animal, you can't just walk up to it the first time you see it and put a collar on it. The animal has to trust you first. It has to know it is your friend. And you approach from the side, not straight on. There has to be a relationship. You should never use sheer force. By the time it happens, it's almost a celebration. It's a shared trust. It's a bond, not servitude." Now, with new evidence, Jack Wyck may be freed from jail, and it is Alice he blames for his imprisonment. Beth Hahn deftly weaves past and present with multiple points of view, as the truth eludes everyone who searches for it, or declares ownership of it.

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