

DEAR READER,

I've always been fascinated by the space between right and wrong—that nebulous gray place where good intentions blur into something else entirely. The desire to explore this shadowy place led me to write *Good Intentions*. It started not with a plot or a character, but with a question I couldn't shake: Can good people do bad things?

We like to think of morality in neat categories: Heroes and villains. Victims and perpetrators. Right and wrong. But life rarely offers that kind of clarity, and I wanted to write a story that dove into the messy heart of that truth. To take a hard look at the decisions we make when we're grieving, or afraid, or desperate to hold on to something—or someone—we shouldn't. The things we justify. The lines we convince ourselves we haven't crossed, even as we're standing on the other side of them. This became the emotional heart of *Good Intentions*. And from there, the rest of the story began to unfurl: grief, obsession, guilt, the secrets we keep even from ourselves . . .

Writing this book was uncomfortable. I had to enter, and then sit in, the ugliest corners of human nature. I had to let my protagonist make horrendous mistakes and then refuse to rescue her from the consequences. But I also found empathy in the process. Every character in this story is just trying to survive something.

I hope *Good Intentions* unsettles you in the way the best thrillers do—not with unexpected explosions or ticking clocks, but with the quiet realization that you understand why someone might make a terrible choice. I hope you root for a protagonist you're not sure you should root for. And I hope, when you finish, you're left asking the same question I did.

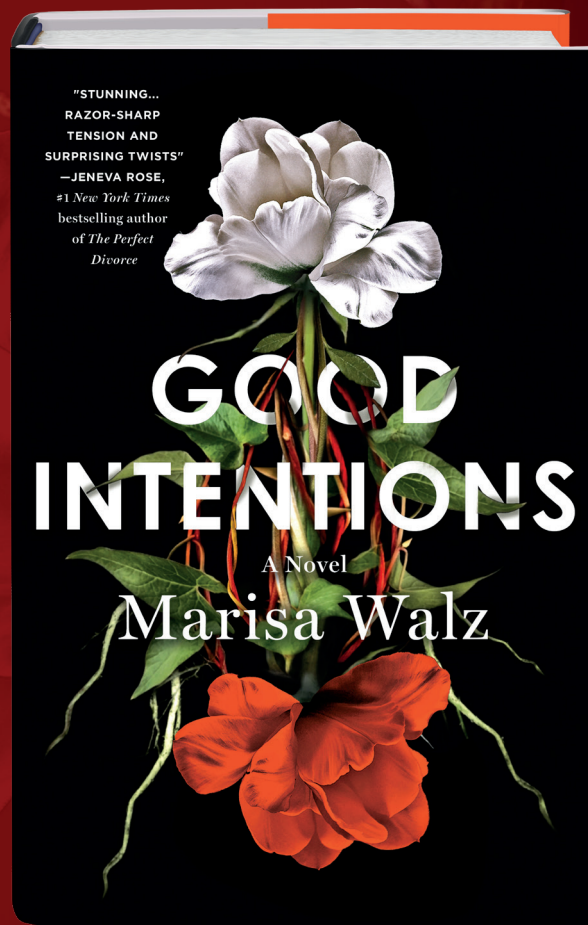
Can good people do bad things?



Marisa Walz



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