



The Summer Without Men: A Novel

Siri Hustvedt

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"And who among us would deny Jane Austen her happy endings or insist that Cary Grant and Irene Dunne should get back together at the end of The Awful Truth? There are tragedies and there are comedies, aren't there? And they are often more the same than different, rather like men and women, if you ask me. A comedy depends on stopping the story at exactly the right moment."

Mia Fredrickson, the wry, vituperative, tragic comic, poet narrator of *The Summer Without Men*, has been forced to reexamine her own life. One day, out of the blue, after thirty years of marriage, Mia's husband, a renowned neuroscientist, asks her for a "pause." This abrupt request sends her reeling and lands her in a psychiatric ward. The June following Mia's release from the hospital, she returns to the prairie town of her childhood, where her mother lives in an old people's home. Alone in a rented house, she rages and fumes and bemoans her sorry fate. Slowly, however, she is drawn into the lives of those around her—her mother and her close friends, "the Five Swans," and her young neighbor with two small children and a loud angry husband—and the adolescent girls in her poetry workshop whose scheming and petty cruelty carry a threat all their own.

From the internationally bestselling author of *What I Loved* comes a provocative, witty, and revelatory novel about women and girls, love and marriage, and the age-old question of sameness and difference between the sexes.

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