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Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea



Par April Genevieve Tucholke
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Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les
ventes : #771864 dans eBooksPubli le:
2013-08-15Sorti le: 2013-08-15Format:
Ebook Kindle

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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurA gothic thriller romance, set against a creepy summer backdrop.Nothing much exciting rolls through Violet White's sleepy, seaside town . . . until River comes along. River rents the guesthouse behind Violet's crumbling estate, and as eerie, grim things start to happen, Violet begins to wonder about the boy living in her backyard. Is River just a crooked-smiling liar with pretty eyes and a mysterious past? Or could he be something more? Violet's grandmother always warned her about the Devil, but she never said he could be a dark-haired boy who takes naps in the sun, who likes coffee, who kisses you in a cemetery . . . who makes you want to kiss back. Violet's already so knee-deep in love, she can't see straight. And that's just how River likes it.With shades of Stephen King and F. Scott Fitzgerald, this is amust-read for fans of Beautiful Creatures, The Unbecoming of Mara Dyer, and Anna Dressed in Blood.Looking

for dark and eerie read...? Look no further than April Genevieve Tucholkes YA debut, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*. EntertainmentWeekly.com Deliciously creepy. TheAtlanticWire.com *A stunning debut with complex characters, an atmospheric setting, and a distinct voice Tucholke has real talent. VOYA, starred review

Chapter 1 You stop fearing the Devil when youre holding his hand. Freddie said this to me, when I was little. Everyone called my grandmother by her nickname, even my parents, because, as she put it, Freddie, short for Fredrikke was her name. Not Mother, or Grandmother. Just Freddie. Then she asked me if I loved my brother. Luke is a damn bully, I said. I remember I was staring at the pink marble of the grand old staircase as we walked up together. There were black veins running through it, and they looked like the blue varicose veins on Freddie's white legs. I remember thinking that the staircase must be getting old, like her. Dont say damn, Violet. You say damn. And she did, too. All the time. Luke pushed me down this damn staircase once, I said, still looking at the marble steps. The fall didnt kill me, if thats what hed wanted, but I knocked out two teeth and got a gash in my forehead that bled like hell. I dont love my brother, I said. And I dont care what the Devil thinks about it. Its the truth. Freddie gave me a sharp look then, her Dutch eyes a bright, bright blue despite her age. She had given me those blue eyes, and her blond hair as well. Freddie put her wrinkled hands on mine. Theres truths and then theres truths, Violet. And some damn truths shouldnt be spoken out loud, or the Devil will hear, and then hell come for you. Amen. When Freddie was young, she used to wear fur and attend parties and drink cocktails and sponsor artists. Shed told me wild stories, full of booze and broads and boys and trouble. But something happened. Something Freddie never talked about. Something bad. Lots of people have bad stories, and if they wail and sob and tell their story to anyone wholl listen, its crap. Or half crap, at least. The stuff that really hurts people, the stuff that almost breaks them . . . that they wont talk about. Ever. I caught Freddie writing sometimes, late at night, fast and hard so hard, I heard the paper tearing underneath her pen . . . but whether it was a diary or letters to friends, I didnt know. Maybe it was her daughter drowning so young that made my grandmother turn righteous and religious. Maybe it was something else. Whatever had happened, Freddie went looking to fill the hole that was left. And what she found was God. God, and the Devil. Because one didnt exist without the other. Freddie talked about the Devil all the time, almost as if he was her best friend, or an old lover. But for all her Devil talk, I never saw Freddie pray. I prayed, though. To Freddie. After she died. Id done it so often over the past five years that it had become unconscious, like blowing on soup when its too hot. I prayed to Freddie about my parents being gone. And about the money running out. And being so lonely sometimes that the damn sea wind howling through my window felt closer to me than the brother I had upstairs. And I prayed to Freddie about the Devil. I asked her to keep my hand out of his. I asked her to keep me safe from evil. But, for all my praying, the Devil still found me.

Chapter 2 I lived with my twin brother, Luke. And thats it. We were only seventeen, and it was illegal to be living alone, but no one did anything about it. Our parents were artists. John and Joelle Iris White. Painters. They loved us, but they loved art more. Theyd gone to Europe last fall, looking for muses in cafs and castles . . . and blowing through the last bit of the family wealth. I hoped they would come home soon, if for no other reason than I wanted there to be enough money left for me to go to a good university. Someplace pretty, with green lawns, and white columns, and cavernous libraries, and professors with elbow patches. But I wasnt counting on it. My great-grandparents had been East Coast industrialists, and they made loads of cash when they were really damn young. They invested in railroads and manufacturing things that everyone was excited about back then. And they handed down all the money to a grandpa I never got to meet. Freddie and my grandfather had been about the richest people in Echo in their day, as much as being the best of anything in Echo mattered. Freddie told me the Glenships had been wealthier, but rich was rich, in my mind. Grandpa built a big house right on the edge of a cliff above the crashing waves. He married my wild grandmother, and brought her to live with him and have his babies on the edge of the Atlantic. Our home was dignified and elegant and great and beautiful. And also wind-bitten and salt-stained and overgrown and neglected like an aging ballerina who looked young and supple from far away, but up close had gray at her temples and lines by her eyes and a scar on one cheek. Freddie called our house *Citizen Kane*, after the old film with its perfectly framed shots and Orson Welles strutting around and talking in a deep voice. But I thought it was a depressing movie, mostly. Hopeless. Besides, the house was built in 1929, and *Citizen Kane* didnt come out until 1941, which meant that Freddie took years to think of a name. Maybe she saw the movie and it meant something to her. I dont know. No one really knew why Freddie did anything, most of the time. Not even me. Freddie and my grandfather lived in the *Citizen* until they died. And after our parents went to Europe, I moved into Freddie's old bedroom on the second floor. I left everything the way it was. I didnt even take her dresses out of the

walk-in closet. I loved my bedroom . . . the vanity with the warped mirror, the squat chairs without armrests, the elaborate, oriental dressing screen. I loved curving my body into the velvet sofa, books piled at my feet, the dusty, floor-length curtains pushed back from the windows so I could see the sky. At night the purple-fringed lampshades turned the light a hue somewhere between lilac and dusky plum. Luke's bedroom was on the third floor. And I think we both liked having the space between us. That summer, Luke and I finally ran out of the money our parents had given us when they'd left for Europe all those months ago. Citizen Kane needed a new roof because the ocean wind beat the hell out of it, and Luke and I needed food. So I had the brilliant idea to rent out the guesthouse. Yes, the Citizen had a guesthouse, left over from the days when Freddie sponsored starving artists. They would move in for a few months, paint her, and then move on to the next town, the next wealthy person, the next gin bottle. I put up posters in Echo, advertising a guesthouse for rent, and thought nothing would come of it. But something did. It was an early June day with a balmy breeze that felt like summer slapping spring. The salt from the sea was thick in the air. I sat on the fat front steps, facing the road that ran along the great big blue. Two stone columns framed the large front door, and the steps spilled down between them. From where I sat, our tangled, forgotten lawn sprawled out to the unpaved road. Beyond it was a sheer drop, ending in pounding waves. So I was sitting there, taking turns reading Nathaniel Hawthorne's short stories and watching the sky blurring into the far-off waves, when a new-old car turned up my road, went past Sunshine's house, and pulled into my circular driveway. I say old, because it was from the 1950s, all big and pretty and looking like really bad gas mileage, but it was fixed up as if it was fresh-off-the-block new, and shiny as a kid's face on Christmas. The car came to a stop. A boy got out. He was about the same age as me, but still, I couldn't really call him a man. So yeah, a boy. A boy got out of the car, and looked straight at me as if I had called out his name. But I hadn't. He didn't know me. And I didn't know him. He was not taller than six feet, maybe and he was strong, and lean. He had thick, dark brown hair, which was wavy and parted at the side . . . until the sea wind lifted it and blew it across his forehead and tangled it all up. I liked his face on sight. And his tan, been-in-the-summer-sun-every-day skin. And his brown eyes. He looked at me, and I looked back. Are you Violet? he asked, and didn't wait for my answer. Yeah, I think you are. I'm River. River West. He swept his hand through the air in front of him. And this must be Citizen Kane. He was looking at my house, so I tilted my head and looked at my house too. In my memory, it was gleaming white stone columns and robin's egg blue trim around the big square windows, and manicured shrubbery and tastefully nude statues in the center of the front fountain. But the fountain I saw now was mossy and dirty, with one nose, one breast, and three fingers broken and missing from its poor, undressed girls. The bright blue paint had turned gray and was chipping off the frames. The shrubbery was a feral, eight-foot-tall jungle. I wasn't embarrassed by the Citizen, because it was still a damn amazing house, but now I wondered if I should have trimmed the bushes down, maybe. Or scrubbed up the naked fountain girls. Or re-painted the window frames. It's kind of a big place for one blond-haired, book-reading girl, the boy in front of me said, after a long minute of house-looking from the both of us. Are you alone? Or are your parents around here somewhere? I shut my book and got to my feet. My parents are in Europe. I paused. Where are your parents? He smiled. Touch. Our town was small enough that I never developed a healthy fear of strangers. To me, they were exciting things, gift-wrapped and full of possibilities, the sweet smell of somewhere else wafting from them like perfume. And so River West, stranger, didn't stir in me any sort of fear . . . only a rush of excitement, like how I felt right before a really big storm hit, when the air crackled with expectation. I smiled back. I live here with my twin brother, Luke. He keeps to the third floor, mostly. When I'm lucky. I glanced up, but the third-floor windows were blocked by the portico roof. I looked back at the boy. So how did you know my name? I saw it on the posters in town, stupid, River said, and smiled. Guesthouse for rent. See Violet at Citizen Kane. I asked around and some locals directed me here. He didn't say stupid like how Luke said it, blinking at me with narrow eyes and a condescending smile. River said it like it was an . . . endearment. Which threw me, sort of. I slipped the sandal off my right foot and tapped my toes on the stone step, making my yellow skirt swing against my knees. So . . . you want to rent the guesthouse? Yep. River put an elbow out and leaned onto his shiny car. He wore black linen pants the kind I thought only stubble-jawed Spanish men wore in European movies set by the sea and a white button-down shirt. It might have looked strange on someone else. But it suited him all right. Okay. I need the first months rent in cash. He nodded and reached into his back pocket. He pulled out a leather wallet and opened it. There was a thick stack of green inside it. So thick that, after he counted out the money he needed, he could barely close the wallet again. River West walked up to me, grabbed my hand, and pressed five hundred dollars into my palm. Don't you even want to see the place first? I asked, not taking my eyes off the green paper. I let my

fingers close down on it, tight.No.I grinned. River grinned back at me, and I noticed that his nose was straight and his mouth was crooked. I liked it. I watched him swagger, yes swagger, with panther hips, over to the trunk of his car, where he pulled out a couple of old-fashioned suitcases, the kind with buckles and straps instead of zippers. I slipped my sandal back onto my right foot and started down the narrow, overgrown path through the bushes, past all the ivy-covered windows, past the plain wooden garage, to the back of Citizen Kane.I looked behind me, just once. He was following.I led him beyond the crumbling tennis court and the old greenhouse. They looked worse every time I saw them. Things had gone to hell since Freddie died, and it wasnt just about our lack of cash. Freddie had kept things up without money somehow. Shed been tireless, fixing things all on her own, teaching herself rudimentary plumbing and carpentry, dusting, sweeping, cleaning, day in day out. But not us. We did nothing. Nothing but paint. Canvases, that is, not walls or fences or window frames.Dad said that kind of painting was for Tom Sawyer and other unwashed orphans. I hadnt been sure if he was kidding. Probably not.The tennis court had bright green grass breaking through the cement floor, and the nets were crumpled on the ground and covered with leaves. Who had last played tennis there? I couldnt remember. The greenhouses glass roof had caved in toobroken shards were still on the ground, and exotic plants in shades of blue and green and white grew up the buildings beams and stretched out into the sky. I used to go there to read sometimes. I had many secret reading spots around the Citizen. Theyd been painting spots, back before Id quit painting.We slowed as we neared the guesthouse. It was a two-bedroom red brick building covered in ivy, like everything else. It had decent plumbing and twitchy electricity, and it stood at a right angle to the Citizen. If the ocean was a mouth, then the Citizen would be the wide white nose; the guesthouse, the right eye; the ratty old maze, the left eye; and the tennis courts and the greenhouse two moles high on the right cheekbone.We both went inside and looked around. It was dusty, but it was also cozy and sort of sweet. It had a wide-open kitchen, and chipped teacups in yellow cupboards, and church bazaar patchwork blankets on art deco furniture, and no phone.Luke and I had run out of money to pay the phone bill months ago, so we didnt have a working phone at the Citizen, either. Which is why I hadnt put a phone number on the poster.I couldnt remember the last person who had stayed in the guesthouse. Some bohemian friends of my parents, long ago. There were dried-out tubes of oil paint lying on windowsills and paintbrushes still in the sink, where theyd been rinsed and then forgotten about. My parents had a studio on the other side of the maze, called the shed, and had always done their art things in there. It was full of half-finished canvases, and it smelled of turpentinea smell I found both comforting and irritating.I grabbed the paintbrushes as I walked by, planning to throw them out, but the bristles that hit my palm were damp. So they didnt belong to old friends of my parents. Theyd been used recently.I noticed River watching me. He didnt say anything. I set the brushes back down where Id found them and walked into the main bedroom, moving back so River could throw his suitcases on the bed. I had always liked this room, with the red walls faded almost to pink, and the yellow-and-white-striped curtains. River glanced around and took everything in with his fast brown eyes. He went to the dresser, opened the top drawer, looked in it, and closed it again. He moved to the other side of the room, pushed back the curtains, and opened the two windows to the sea.A burst of bright, salty ocean air flooded in, and I breathed deep. So did River, his chest flaring out so I could see his ribs press against his shirt.The guesthouse was farther away from the ocean than the Citizen, but you could still see a thick line of blue-blue-blue through the window. I noticed some big ship, far off on the horizon, and wondered where it was going to, or coming from. Usually, I wanted to be on those ships, sailing away to some place cold and exotic. But that itchy, gypsy feeling wasnt in me right then.River went over to the bed, reached up, and took down the black wooden cross that hung above the pillows. He brought it to the dresser, opened the top drawer, set the cross inside, and bumped it closed with his hip.My grandfather built Citizen Kane, I said, but my grandma Freddie built this cottage. She got religious later on in life. My eyes were fixed on the dark red shape left on the wall, where the cross had shielded the paint from the fading effects of sunshine. She probably hung that cross up there decades ago and its been there ever since. Are you an atheist? Is that why you took it down? Im curious. Hence the question.I flinched. Hence? My habit of reading more than I socialized made me use odd, awkward words without thinking.River didnt seem to notice. And by that, I mean he seemed to be noticing everything about me, and everything about the room, so that I couldnt tell if he noticed my use of hence more than anything else.No, Im not an atheist. Im just somebody who doesnt like to sleep with a cross over his head. He looked at me again. So, what are you . . . seventeen?Yeah, I said. Good guess. Because my brother says I still look about twelve.Were the same age, then. A pause. My parents went down to South America a few weeks ago. Theyre archeologists. They sent me here in the meantime. I have an uncle who

lives in Echo. But I didnt want to stay with him. So I found your poster and here I am. Sort of strange that both our parents took off and left us, dont you think?I nodded. I wanted to ask him who his uncle was. I wanted to ask him where he came from, and how long he was going to stay in my guesthouse. But he stood there and looked at me in such a way and I just couldnt bring myself to do it.So wheres this brother of yours? River brought his fingers up to his hair and gave it a good shake. I stared at him, and his tousled hair, until he stared back at me. And then I stopped.Hes in town. Youll have to meet him later. And I wouldnt get too excited. Hes not as nice as me. Luke had walked into Echo after breakfast, intending to track down this girl he knew, and try to grope her in broad daylight at the caf where she worked.I pointed out the window. If you want to walk into town to get groceries, theres a path that starts back by the apple trees, behind the maze. It hooks up with the old railroad trail and leads right onto the main street. I mean, you can drive if you want to, because you have a car, but the path is really nice if you like walking. It goes by this old train tunnel . . .I started to back out of the bedroom. I was beginning to feel stupid, talking on and on like some dumb girl who opens her mouth and lets all her thoughts fall out of it. And feeling stupid made my cheeks blush. And I had no doubt that this observant boy next to me would observe my cheeks turning red, and probably guess why.Oh, and theres no lock on the front door, I continued as I sunk into the welcoming semi-darkness of the hallway and put my hands to my face. You can get one at the hardware store if you want, but no one will steal anything from here. I paused. At least, no one ever has.I turned and left without waiting for his reply. I walked out of the guesthouse, past the collapsed greenhouse, past the tennis courts, around the Citizen, down the driveway, down the narrow gravel road to the only other house on my street: Sunshines.I had to tell someone that a panther-hipped boy had come to live in my backyard.Revue de presseLooking for dark and eerie read to cap off the end of the summer season? Look no further than April Genevieve Tucholkes YA debut, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*.EntertainmentWeekly.comIf you liked *Beautiful Creatures* (the book or the movie), *Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea* is right up your alley. It has a similar gothic romance you'll be rooting for the whole book through!Seventeen.comDeliciously creepy.TheAtlanticWire.comA perfect read for stormy summer nights.The Boston GlobeMysterious hotties, eerie events and gothic supernatural romance in a crumbling mansion on the lonely coast of Maine We totally want this book to be our new boyfriend.MTV.comMagnificent prose, fascinating histories of residents in the seaside town, and a boy with a disturbing ability rarely seen in today's young adult books. Share the first of this trilogy with fans of Laini Taylors *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*.Shelf Awareness*A stunning debut with complex characters, an atmospheric setting, and a distinct voice Tucholke has real talent.VOYA, starred review*Tucholkes gothic tone, plot, and setting, complete with a deteriorating estate full of dark family secrets, is reminiscent of *Daphne du Maurier* or YA fare such as *Kami Garcias* and *Margaret Stohls Beautiful Creatures*). Give this one to fans of creepy mysteries, particularly tales that dont skimp on the violence.SLJ, starred reviewA chilling supernatural exploration of free will and realitys fluidity.Publishers WeeklyTucholke strikes just the right balance between the windswept, seaside setting and *Violets* interior struggles with right and wrong.BCCBA rich blend of gothic horror and modern romance A lush setting and provocative characters elevate this debut above others in the supernatural-romance genre.Kirkus sLavishly rendered, darkly romantic, and beautifully unsettlingTucholkes debut isn't a book you'll soon forget.Melissa Marr, New York Times bestselling author of the *Wicked Lovely* seriesLike something between a disturbed dream and a wicked fantasy, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* will slip under your skin and capture the darkest corners of your imagination. This is a hypnotic, terrifying debut that won't soon escape my mind.Nova Ren Suma, author of *Imaginary Girls*Tucholkes story of devils, innocence, and family secrets is lush and rhythmic as a song. Seductive with a capital S.Kendare Blake, author of *Anna Dressed in Blood* and *Girl of Nightmares*