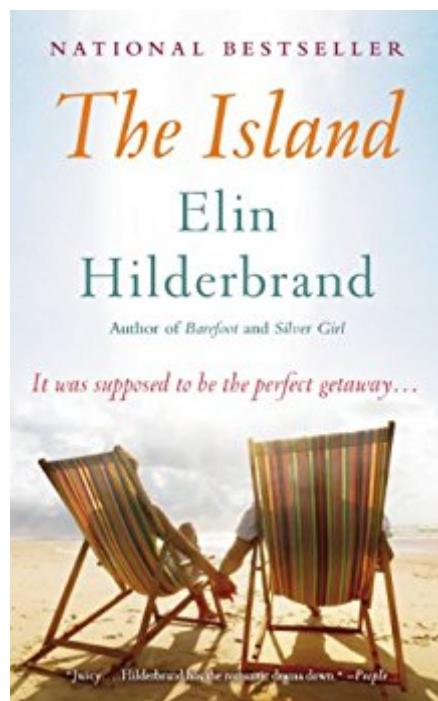


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# The Island: A Novel



## **Synopsis**

Birdie Cousins has thrown herself into the details of her daughter Chess's lavish wedding, from the floating dance floor in her Connecticut back yard to the color of the cocktail napkins. Like any mother of a bride-to-be, she is weathering the storms of excitement and chaos, tears and joy. But Birdie, a woman who prides herself on preparing for every possibility, could never have predicted the late-night phone call from Chess, abruptly announcing that she's cancelled her engagement. It's only the first hint of what will be a summer of upheavals and revelations. Before the dust has even begun to settle, far worse news arrives, sending Chess into a tailspin of despair. Reluctantly taking a break from the first new romance she's embarked on since the recent end of her 30-year marriage, Birdie circles the wagons and enlists the help of her younger daughter Tate and her own sister India. Soon all four are headed for beautiful, rustic Tuckernuck Island, off the coast of Nantucket, where their family has summered for generations. No phones, no television, no grocery store - a place without distractions where they can escape their troubles. But throw sisters, daughters, ex-lovers, and long-kept secrets onto a remote island, and what might sound like a peaceful getaway becomes much more. Before summer has ended, dramatic truths are uncovered, old loves are rekindled, and new loves make themselves known. It's a summertime story only Elin Hilderbrand can tell, filled with the heartache, laughter, and surprises that have made her page-turning, bestselling novels as much a part of summer as a long afternoon on a sunny beach.

Bonus Material: An essay by Elin Hilderbrand Photos of the Author

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

"The Island" follows a family of four women as they spend a month on Tuckernuck, a remote island off the coast of Nantucket. The women are two sets of sisters, Birdie and India, and Birdie's two daughters, Chess and Tate. The trip emerges in the midst of Chess' broken engagement and the tragic death of her ex-fiance. Although the women arrive on Tuckernuck hoping the quiet and remote place will heal Chess, each of the four women finds a type of healing and rebirth on the island that they had never expected. This is another excellent offering of smart chick lit from Elin Hilderbrand. The novel is told from the rotating perspectives of the four women, which gives the reader the opportunity to identify with each of the women and her story. Each of the women has her own internal demons that she must overcome on the island--from Chess' anguish over her fiance, to India's memories of her famous husband, to Tate's uncertainty at first love, and Birdie's challenge of starting again after a difficult divorce. The different experiences of the four women gives every reader a character that she can identify with, and makes for an never dull read. If you are a fan of Hilderbrand's brand of smart and fun women's fiction, this is a novel for you. It's light enough for a beach read but with enough genuine emotion and real life to suck you in for this genuine good read.

The Island was a really well-written, interesting take on 4 women's month at their family beach house on Tuckernuck Island, off the coast of Nantucket. The two sisters, their mother and aunt spend their summer getting to know each other better and more importantly, getting to know themselves. Each woman brings her own unique set of problems and issues and the stories interweave and make for a heartfelt summer at the shore. Each story grabs your heart and twists with a vengeance. I found myself rooting for each of these fine ladies and wanting the best for them. They seemed like people I have known in my own life and I hated that they all had internal (and not so internal) struggles. The mother in this book could have been my own, with her desire to fix everyone's problems and then cook a big meal afterwards. I have never read anything by Elin Hilderbrand before but I plan on searching out her earlier novels and reading them all. I am an educated, 40-something-year-old man and I refuse to categorize this book as chick-lit. It's not exactly "dude-lit" either. I think it would be more aptly called "summer-lit" because this is a book I

would want to read while on a sunny vacation, preferably at a locale very much like Tuckernuck Island.

This is the story of Birdie, her two daughters and her sister, who spend a month at their family home on Tuckernuck Island in Massachusetts. All of the women except one of the daughters is going through a romantic crisis of some sort, so they feel that a month away from it all will help. I could really only relate to Birdie's problems. She's divorced and is dating an older man whose wife has Alzheimer's Disease. Her daughter, Chess, is mourning the death of her fiancee, who she never really loved and didn't want to marry from the start, so I couldn't figure out why she had even been with him to begin with. I couldn't feel sorry for her. The mother's sister, India, has recovered from the suicide of her husband and is contemplating a lesbian love affair. The bright spot of the book is the youngest daughter, Tate, and her relationship with the caretaker at the house on the island. He's known the family since they were young and their relationship was fun and nice. But, the lightness of this relationship was ruined by the older sister's jealousy of her sister's happiness, so that was a little upsetting. I thought I might like reading about the island and get kind of a feel for what it was like, but the writing was not very descriptive at all. At least it wasn't for me. At the end of the book, the author says that it was difficult to write about Tuckernuck because it is pretty desolate, so maybe another location would have been a better choice for a novel. I would say that if you already know this author and like her books, you might like this book too. If not, and you are looking for a light summer read, you might want to look for something else. This was pretty much a story about unhappy women in a boring place.

What a fabulous book! I LOVE all of Elin Hilderbrand's novels but this is the best story she has written since "Blue Bistro." The stories and characters totally draw you in and the endings are totally satisfying without being too sickeningly sweet. I laughed while reading this book and I cried. I did not want it to end. The only bad part is that now I have to wait another year for her next novel. I don't need to say much else other than you will not be disappointed! You will fall in love with the Cousins women.

The Island by Elin Hilderbrand was a book that I thoroughly enjoyed. The setting of Tuckernuck Island was most interesting and I liked the fact that the ladies in the book were depicted as real women with histories. I could identify with the sisters - both sets. Birdie was a woman who was stronger than she had once thought she was. She was the mother to her daughters who at this particular

time needed her desperately. She was able to dissolve a thirty year marriage which could not have been easy. Her sister India had managed to overcome her husband's suicide and go on to be successful in her life. The younger women were facing reality as well. The best part was that they did have each other. I liked the fact that they could yell and scream at each other and still remain family. That is easier said than done. Of course, I always prefer a book with a happy ending and the author gave us one in this book. That always makes me happy. The island was described quite well. The house sounded quaint and wonderful. I liked the beach and ocean scenes. Also I enjoyed having people in the story who we were meant to dislike. That is always a good thing for me in a book (of fiction.) The younger sisters Tate and Chess had some growing up issues that they had to face, I thought, even at their age. Chess especially needed to step up and do what was right and not just dump things on her Birdie but then again Birdie needed to say to Chess, maybe it's time for you to fix your own problems. Again, easier said than done. I did like this book and I read it all the way through and will be looking for more books from this author.

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