



The Line

Teri Hall

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An invisible, uncrossable physical barrier encloses the United States. The Line is the part of the border that lopped off part of the country, dooming the inhabitants to an unknown fate when the enemy used a banned weapon. It's said that bizarre creatures and superhumans live on the other side, in Away. Nobody except tough old Ms. Moore would ever live next to the Line.

Nobody but Rachel and her mother, who went to live there after Rachel's dad died in the last war. It's a safe, quiet life. Until Rachel finds a mysterious recorded message that can only have come from Away. The voice is asking for help.

Who sent the message? Why is her mother so protective? And to what lengths is Rachel willing to go in order to do what she thinks is right?

The Line Details

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Author : Teri Hall

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From Reader Review The Line for online ebook

Bry says

"The Line took me 'away' in one page-turning gulp. Hall's writing is seamless, smooth, and compelling..."
Review by Mary Pearson

What book was she reading and where can I get a copy of it?? At the very least tell me which single page took her away because for most of the book I was still waiting for some sort of action to arise out of the multitude of pages that consisted of nothing but info dumps poorly masked as history lessons for the main character. And finally when the action really did get under way (around page 180 of 220) and I totally got into the plot THE BOOK ENDED. (Yes, all publishers seem to want series or at least trilogies so they can milk them for every penny they are worth but at least make the books full length and not just 220 pages with no ending whatsoever.) Seriously the cliffhanger totally pissed me off, and it wasn't even about the main character but a secondary character that I cared for much more than Rachel. Just when I was interested it was over.

The writing is seamless? Smooth? Compelling?

REALLY?

More like choppy. Juvenile. Boring.

You have a main character so sheltered she barely speaks to more than 3 people for the majority of her life. Her mother whose past makes her wanted by the government but instead of teaching her child to fit in, not makes waves, etc teaches her all about the corruptness and injustices. Does she want Rachel to get arrested???

You get a plot that while not original is different since it applies to a country modeled after the US - making a nation whose foundation is based on individual freedoms into a martial law type government after near world destruction from world wide wars. But instead of taking this idea of a future dystopia and making it succeed like The Hunger Games you get a a book full of potential that fails to deliver.

Also, I needed a freaking map to explain the geography to me! The US was the only country name that was familiar (except I didn't realize for most of the book that whenever they said the U.S. they weren't referring to the United States but the Unified States!) Furthermore, the Line consisted of coastline, forest, and seemed like every terrain in the US, so what part of the country was it actually surrounding?? The called the area outside of the Line 'Away' (and was supposedly affected by weapons of mass destruction) yet all the foreign countries were outside the Line yet weren't affected like 'Away' was. So were they really far away from 'Away'? Do you see how confusing this is?! I feel like I am playing Who's on First with a book!!

Who knows maybe I went into this book with the wrong mindset, or expecting too much, or....I don't know. I really thought I would love it but that just didn't happen. I have to read the second book in the series though (since it will actually be like the end of the first book) because I really want to know what happens. So annoying. The plot didn't grab my interest till the end but now I am hooked. (Yeah, yeah, you win Mr. Publisher man - but I still won't buy it! Yay for libraries!)

Basically this book had so much potential that I want to rate it higher based on that alone. The plot ended

with so many possibilities, but because of the lack of characterization and setting detail (oh and lets not forget the agonizing info dumps) I just couldn't give it 3 stars.

My review in one word: **Disappointment.**

Donald says

I've been selected as an ARC (Advance Reader Copy) reader through Goodreads. Exciting, huh? I received it in the mail on November 21st of 2009. The cover states that it is "Advance, Uncorrected Proof, Not For Resale."

The back cover synopsis for this novel lured me in; it did its job nicely.

The story concept—about the people associated with The Property, which is on the inside of the US (Unified States) border—sounds pretty cool. The border—or Line—is a force-field like barrier keeping the citizens of the country in and the Others out.

I wanted to like this one more than I did. The story starts off a bit one dimensional and flat. The simplistic names—The Property, The Others, The Line—seem like kept place-holders.

I couldn't get past the incongruities present. Near the beginning we are led to believe that glass can become old and brittle and break on its own. Incongruities such as having a greenhouse in which orchids (a type of flower) are grown, so close to the Line render the story that much less believable. And why are we growing orchids in a semi-post-apocalyptic world? Wouldn't hybridizing vegetables seem more useful? Who's buying these orchids? Another incongruity is the single-use border pass. Why? For what purpose would the government issue single-use border passes? The idea is never fleshed out. The reader is asked to suspend too much disbelief.

The characters at one point go to the local city and I was thinking, "here we go, we're off the farm now." Yet the reader gets little feel for what this post-apocalyptic city is like. The trip isn't explored, the city is barely sketched. So many opportunities to broaden what is on this canvas are left unexplored.

In the end, there is no end. None of the conflict is resolved. None of what is revealed is redeeming. The story just stops as it is getting good.

Kristi says

If you asked me if I'm a fan a dystopian fiction, I'd tell you no. Yet everything time I read a dystopian novel, I end up loving it.... maybe I am just in denial.

The Line is a very diverting novel. Maybe I'm just a dystopian newbie, but the whole concept was very intriguing. The first part of the novel was a little slow for me, the introduction of the characters, the explanation of the world. Don't let that slow start stop you from reading the rest of the novel, because you will be disappointed if you do!

The world Hall has created is both engrossing and terrifying....the supreme control of the government, its constant domination over every aspect of life, it was intensely depressing. Most of the knowledge you gain about this world is in the lessons Rachel receives from her mom, so you're getting the lesson as well. That was a little tedious at times, but it was a canny way to give the reader a lot of information!

The characters, while I found them to be a little blah in the beginning, really grew on me by the end of the novel. Especially Ms. Moore, that lady is layered like an onion! Rachel is an excellent main character, she's very easy to relate to, but she's a little naive and headstrong. The possibility for growth there is undeniable.

Not to mention the last half of this novel... was just wow. I really can't tell you anything about it without being spoilery... but wow. What an ending!

Overall, this is an awesome dystopian novel, don't let to slow start scare you away!

Tink Magoo is bad at reviews says

Really slow (like a Sloth), kinda boring (skimmed to 80% and still not a great deal was going on), the writing was also hard work to get through, so it's a DNF at 18% for me.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Karin Librarian for TeensReadToo.com

Rachel has lived on The Property since before she can remember. Her mother works for Ms. Moore, the owner, as a housekeeper of the large house. Rachel enjoys living far from town and away from the strong governmental control most other people must suffer. People living in towns deal with unfair and random taxes and, when they can't pay, are taken to jail.

Most people would hate living on The Property because it backs up to The Line, a small section of the National Border Defense System that separates the people of the Unified States from Away and the Others. The Line is an invisible barrier that can only be crossed if the government grants permission and deactivates The Line.

Rachel doesn't feel fear when she thinks of Away. She even tried to cross it once, but simply bounced back from The Line and landed flat on her back.

Rachel's quiet life is turned upside down when two things happen.

First, she finds a battered digital voice recorder with a partial message requesting help. Then, during a trip to town with her mother for the weekly supplies, they witness the arrest of a woman her mother recognizes.

Rachel discovers she doesn't know her mother as well as she thought she did, that Ms. Moore has some unbelievable secrets, and the Away and the Others are closer than she thinks. She must use her wits and bravery to get through a dangerous and exciting time in order to save an important historical document and people she doesn't even know.

THE LINE by Teri Hall is a fascinating dystopian novel full of strong female characters and a dark, creepy plot. The end, while a bit abrupt, is satisfying. Readers will definitely want to read more about the adventures Rachel is sure to find. The author leaves the story completely open for a sequel, and I for one can't wait to read it.

The synopsis isn't the only thing I found intriguing about THE LINE. Just take a look at the cover and tell me you don't want to read it! Fantastic art choice!

Debut Authors Blog says

The Line is a young adult dystopian novel set in the futuristic nation of The Unified States. Rachel lives with her mom Vivian on "The Property." A piece of land owned by Elizabeth Moore that borders the infamous "Line", an invisible and impassable defense border built by the government. The people that live on the other side serve as boogie man figures for children in the US and the media circulates stories of "the others" committing crimes.

While Teri Hall managed to create an imaginative world and a fun book, there are flaws that ruined the experience for me. The first was the introduction and naming of Hall's world. We learn about The Unified States right along with Rachel as she is learning it from her mother. The information she is learning seems out of place, something she should already know. This introduction to an otherwise extremely interesting world is a cop-out by Hall. Also, naming the country "The Unified States" is a clear attempt to draw the reader to the similarities between the future she painted for her world and the realities of ours. Instead of driving this important point home, it cheapened it, taking out a lot of room for reader interpretation.

Another issue I had was with Hall's characters. Rachel, the most dynamic of the characters, is a young girl whose motivations are not usually clear. Her transformation is shallow and a result of new information rather than any internal growth. Rachel's mother Vivian is even worse. It is clear she is hiding something for the entire first half of the novel and the reader is left with little doubt as to what the secret is. Elizabeth Moore is my least favorite character. Hall tries to give her an air of mystery by making her an aloof old woman, but leaves the reader with a cliché. I was not surprised to find that Ms. Moore really has a big heart.

I can, however, forgive those shortcomings if it wasn't for one thing. The ending. I know that this book is supposed to be part of a series, but come on. You can't make a series of novels by taking one long novel and cutting it into parts. There wasn't a story in this book; Hall left me hanging like a two-part television show

where the next episode doesn't come out for a year. I am a firm believer that each novel needs to stand on its own. There needs to be an overreaching plot that spans the entire series, but each book needs to have enough plot so that I can pick it up, out of order, and enjoy it. Jeff is angry!

Anger aside, the book was entertaining. I tore through it like a tornado through a trailer park and became absorbed in the world Hall created. The Line won't ever make one of my top ten lists, but it is worth reading and I will be buying the second one.

Jeff's Debut Novel Awards

[image error] The Page Turner

[image error] The World Builder

[image error] The Hulk Smash

[image error] No Diving

A twenty-two-year-old University student, Jeff is the founder and coeditor of The Debut Authors Blog. He is an aspiring author and a self-avowed bibliophile. Also, he is not above shameless self-promotion and talking in the third-person.

Read this review along with a full description of the awards at The Debut Authors Blog

Kim says

TBR Reduce Challenge #4 - 2011 (Lora)

My summary for this book:

I recommend this to anybody who has trouble sleeping and/or with their orchids.

sighs

Miss Clark says

Part of the 2010 Debut Author Challenge

2.5 stars (Reads like the first half of a single book, not the first book in a series.)

It was better than I had expected it to be after encountering some less favorable reviews. They were mostly concerned with plot and such.

Evil, corrupt tyrannical government set in a futuristic society? Check.

No rights and obscene, excessive taxes? Check

Girl who will somehow bring about the collapse of this unjust regime and inspire a rebellion? Check.

So, clearly we have all the makings of a dystopian society set in an America years ahead, with all the other countries having different names and borders. To ensure the safety of America's own borders from ground invasion following the passage of international laws making nuclear/missile weapons illegal, the government of the U.S. created a force field around the states and anyone who happened to be on the other side got abandoned there when a neighboring country threw some radioactive weapons at the US. Lots of people died and those that did not ended up gaining some strange abilities down through the generations. (You cannot have radioactive weapons without genetic mutation and super powers. It is some unwritten rule.)

The maps? What are they and why are they so important? How does Pathik know Daniel? Is Daniel still alive? Was not very invested in the fate of the characters, more plot driven. I'll probably pick up the next book to see what happens, but if it is dragged on any farther, I'm out. Publishers need to stop milking stories for more than they have to give.

Cover deserves a mention though because it is a lovely one. It fits the story (the greenhouse being an essential building that figures into the story frequently) and the lighting gives an appropriately mysterious and spooky feel. The font, sparse, thin and rigid speaks volumes, as does the line running down. A cover that fits the book, enhances the attraction of the book and after reading it I was not confused by the cover or feel misled.

Alisi ? wants to read too many books ? says

This is the first book, in a very very long time, that I am DNF'ing because of the prose and not story. It's just so terrible. The repetitiveness of the prose is so terrible. (See wut I did thar? ;)) The telling is even worse.

Why the hell did the author feel the need to repeat the MCs name over and over and over and (I know you're giving me side eyes for being dramatic, but I'm not) over again. In one paragraph, in a single paragraph of reasonable length (aka, not James Joyce or even single page long), the author felt the need to repeat the MCs name SEVEN times. There was no other character in the scene. I'm sorry but I can remember the characters name. I don't need the author to keep repeating herself.

As example, let me write the last sentence of a paragraph and the first of the very next one:

'Rachel made them her friends.

Rachel's favorite daydreams when she was a little girl were those in which her father, Daniel, was still alive and had come to take her and her mother somewhere fabulous.'

Was it necessary to repeat her name there? Are we going to forget from one milisecond to the next that her name is Rachel?

Emily says

The Line is a clever mix of dystopian fiction, the paranormal, a slight dash of romance, and a bunch of important lessons- it's a good way to pass the time while we all wait for the third Hunger Games book to come out.

I will say this- The Line takes awhile to get started. It starts off as a fairly typical (if there is such a thing) dystopian novel- the U.S. barely won an all out nuclear war and deals with the huge amounts of collateral damage by enforcing draconian laws, taxes, and punishments. Rachel Quillen and her mom, Vivian, live outside of town on The Property, a large parcel of land complete with greenhouse (hence the cover) that's owned by Ms. Moore, Vivian's boss and Rachel's teacher when it comes to growing orchids. Rachel is a likeable enough character- her mom warns her constantly to be vigilant and to think for herself, but Rachel never really understands why.

All that changes when Rachel makes some discoveries about her mom's past, her dad's history, and the truth of what lays on the other side of The Line, which is the boundary between the supposedly safe area and Away, the supposedly vast nuclear wasteland. This is the point in the story (about halfway) where The Line undergoes a transformation and becomes a unique book. Rachel has to make some tough choices and encounters that moment that we all go through when we realize that our parents are not perfect; the secondary characters (especially the Others) get a good share of the attention and their experiences and positions definitely stoked my interest in the next installment, since this is the first book in a series. On an unrelated note, I thought the explanations of the history behind the current political situation in the book were really interesting and, because they took the form of dialogue between Rachel and her mom, didn't bog the story down, which is always nice. A lot of thought obviously went into creating a realistic backstory for the politics and regulations of the world the story is set in.

My main criticism of the book is that the pacing of the book is just a little bit off- we get a whole lot of establishment in the beginning of the book that basically presents the themes of the book, one after the other. Then there's almost a pause, and the action of the story picked up dramatically. I think I would have appreciated a more thorough blending of the two elements. Granted, I read an uncorrected proof and perhaps there are some differences between that and the final product, but the pacing was one thing that stood out in my mind.

With that said, The Line is a good start in what certainly seems to be a promising series. I'm definitely on board for future installments and am excited to find out what happens with the Others and Rachel in the next book.

Overall Grade: B+

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Cheryl says

Book 1 of 3 in a Young Adult dystopian series. The title refers to an uncrossable section of the National Border Defense System, an invisible barrier that encloses the entire United States in the future. The first 30% of this book was a bit awkwardly written, with a lot of info dumps about how the Line and the totalitarian government that controls it came to be. The story does pick up, though, and did turn into a compelling read. It does have a cliff hanger ending, so you'll have to read the next books to complete the story. Not the best book of this type that I've read, but certainly not the worst.

Reynje says

Unfortunately for me, The Line was a definite case of a premise I loved, and execution that I did not.

Despite its recent glutting with offerings (some better than others), dystopia is still a genre I love. Because amid the lacklustre, the poorly conceived, and frankly absurd, every now and then I find a YA dystopian novel that completely blows me away.

This book was not one of them.

The Line takes some familiar aspects: a divided and reconstructed former US, war, heavy restrictions on citizens, and adds a sinister slant in the form of the invisible barrier that separates the Unified States from

Away. Away is rumoured to be populated by the bizarre and superhuman victims of weapons used during the conflict. The Line ostensibly keeps these unacknowledged beings out, while locking citizens in.

The story revolves largely around three female characters, each of a different generation, who live on The Property that backs onto the Line. Vivian and her daughter Rachel have sought the relative safety of isolation after the death of Vivian's husband, while their employer Mrs Moore harbours secrets of her own.

It was a concept that piqued my interest (*cough* along with the gorgeous cover), yet my initial enthusiasm waned fairly quickly. As with most readers, I have certain preferences when it comes to writing style. That's not to say that I'm not open to new things, but I know generally what works for me. This didn't. The writing is clinical and somewhat formal, keeping the reader distant. As a result, I simply could not engage with the characters at all. At the end of the novel, I still feel like I have no real idea who they are, what they're like as people. Hall frequently tells us what emotions they are experiencing, but at no point did I actually feel this for myself. There was something rather methodical and detached about the manner of storytelling in this case.

Also, to put it bluntly, not a lot actually happens in this book.(view spoiler) This makes me think that the perhaps the purpose here was to build an incredible amount of tension and suspense through a deceptively slow-paced plot and a richly realised atmosphere of menace, keeping readers on their mental toes and unsure of what to expect. That's all well and good, but there is a fine line between achieving this and.. not. To be completely honest, I spent a large portion of this book feeling vaguely bored and wishing something more would happen.

Despite this, and without spoiling the ending, there is some hope that things may get more interesting in the sequel. I'm keen to see some of the elements that initially drew me to this book be further developed, and I hope this is the case in Away.

Finally, my favourite thing about The Line? "Sheep-cats." Is that not the coolest thing you've heard all day?

Sheep-cats.

Becca Lee says

I had high hopes for the book, I LOVE dystopianesque (is that even a word?) books. The book is extremely gripping with its "mesmerizing prose." A review from Mary E. Pearson (Adoration of Jenna Fox) says, "The Line took me 'away' in one page-turning gulp. Hall's writing is seamless, smooth, and compelling – I can't wait for the next installment. This is a new author to keep an eye on." I couldn't agree with her more. I am anxiously awaiting book two and I found myself extremely satisfied yet wanting more when I turned the last page. The cover is fantastic, plot is catching and the author uses fantastic character development. Every couple of chapters, view point/narratives are switched back and forth to get everyone's take on the situation and learn everyone's secrets. High interest, attention grabbing and keeping, and although the main protagonist is a girl, I think boys or girls would read it and enjoy. Rachel is developing into somewhat of a Katniss character for book two I believe ...

Chels (farewell autumn) says

Reseña extraída de mi blog literario, Pouring Feelings...

El punto de partida de esta reseña es el siguiente: The Line es el primer libro en inglés que leo. Cuando comencé su lectura, no sabía qué iba a encontrarme pues no había leído ni una sola reseña. Su prometedora sinopsis fue suficiente para hacerme con él y leerlo meses más tarde. Tampoco sabía si mi nivel de inglés iba a ser suficiente para leerlo, o si por el contrario se me haría cuesta arriba. No ha sido el caso. Al principio sí miraba cosas en el diccionario pero a medida que avanzaba dejé de recurrir tanto a él. Lo he leído sin complicaciones y lo he disfrutado muchísimo, que es lo más importante.

The Line nos muestra una sociedad supeditada a un estado opresor. Un gobierno que ha dado poder a los policías, hasta el punto en que pueden detenerte por casi cualquier cosa. Basta que haya circulando un rumor sobre ti para que la sombra de la duda les haga vetar tu perfil (ficha informática con todos tus datos). Y después, te Identifican y si no tienes dinero, acabas trabajando para el Estado, viviendo en barracas con otros tantos desgraciados como tú. Por suerte, Vivian y Rachel viven alejadas de todo ese trajín. La madre es ama de casa en La Propiedad perteneciente a la Sra. Moore, mientras que su hija trabaja en el invernadero, haciéndose cargo de las orquídeas de la jefa de Vivian. En principio, todo va bien... pero hay algo que no encaja. Vivian es demasiado protectora. ¿Qué es lo que oculta? No es la única con secretos del pasado, por supuesto. La Sra. Moore también tiene los suyos, relacionados con algo que ocurrió antaño en su Propiedad, algo relacionado con La Línea. ¿Qué es la Línea? ¿Qué hay detrás de ella, en Away?

Me ha sorprendido gratamente la concepción de los Estados Unificados. Si hay algo que caracterice a una distopía, como bien sabréis, son los Estados totalitarios. Conocer cómo se ha llegado ahí, los motivos por los cuáles se crea la Línea, así como comprobar la crueldad que ese gobierno ficticio puede llegar a tener me ha gustado mucho. El hecho de que se explique tan bien la historia le da puntos a favor. En otros libros del mismo corte no lo hacen, o no en tanta profundidad.

Otra baza a favor son los personajes. El narrador usa la tercera persona para expresarse pero lo hace según los sentimientos de cada personaje. La mayoría de las veces es Rachel, la chica protagonista, pero también llegamos a conocer a su madre y a la Sra. Moore. Las tres mujeres me han encantado. Son reales. Como tú o como yo. Vivian y Moore han cometido errores, han pasado mucho tiempo lamentándose por ellos pero son luchadoras y valientes, cada una a su modo. Rachel es inocente pero inteligente y muy (pero que muy) valiente. Confía en sus actos y conoce los motivos que la llevan a ello. Os aseguro que jamás me había sentido tan orgullosa de que un personaje se llamara como yo. Las tres son buenas personas, pero Rachel tiene un halo especial, algo que me hace querer decirle "YOU GO, GIRL" <3

Y no sólo están ellas. Conoceréis a más personajes, como el viejo Jonathan o el misterioso Pathik, que es amor.

Por si estos puntos no fueran suficientes para argumentar mi puntuación, el último lo encontramos en la manera de escribir de la autora. Tiene una pluma preciosa, es capaz de traer a la vida personajes ficticios, perfectamente desarrollados. Ha sabido captar perfectamente los sentimientos contrariados de una anciana, el miedo y el coraje de una madre que lucha por sobrevivir un día más y la dulzura y la valentía de una adolescente que quiere luchar por lo que cree justo.

The Line no es una novela de acción trepidante, al menos no en esta primera entrega. Sin embargo, sabe

captar la atención del lector a través de otros muchos puntos fuertes. Estoy deseando leer los siguientes porque me he enamorado de The Line y creo que lo mejor está por llegar.

Puntuación: 4/5.

Amanda says

It's not like there was anything wrong with this book. There just wasn't anything right, either. The writing is really clunky (I am pretty sure some of these paragraphs were "what not to do" examples in my high school creative writing textbooks). The characters are flat and boring. Plus, Hall does that annoying thing where she unnecessarily makes up words to sound more sci-fi ("digim" for "picture," "creds" for "dollars"). Made-up words do not create an interesting world all by themselves. Overall, the world was not particularly well-developed or believable - when is this set? How is it possible that all of these countries (except the U.S.) have different names? How is the government simultaneously so tyrannical and so incompetent? And WHY did all of the "world-building" happen in the form of a pop quiz? The other big problem is that this book requires the reader to be concerned about the characters, which is impossible because a) we know nothing about any of them, nor believe anything they say because they are all painfully insincere, and b) you never believe that their world is actually dangerous. Oh no, they might have to wear jumpsuits? Ugh. Add to that the predictable ending and the lazy dialogue, and you're in for a real treat. I might have liked it in middle school, though, because I was a big "X-Files" fan and would have loved the over-the-top paranoia about the government.
