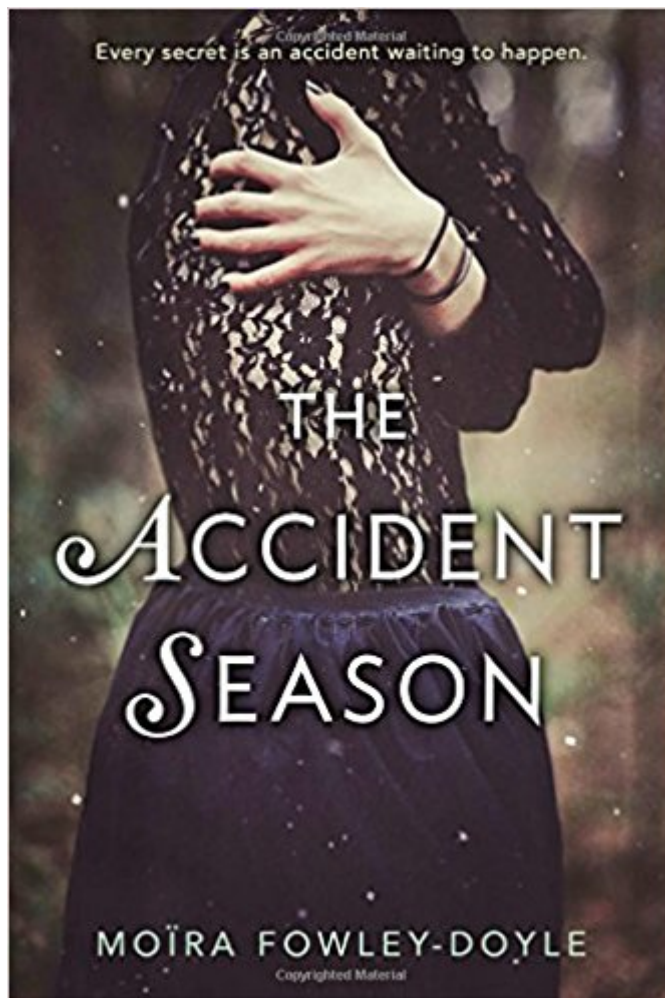




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The Accident Season



Synopsis

For fans of *We Were Liars* and *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* comes a haunting magically realistic debut about a family caught between a violent history, a taboo romance, and the mysteries lurking in their own backyard. Every October Cara and her family become inexplicably and unavoidably accident-prone. Some years it's bad, and some years it's just a lot of cuts and scrapes. This accident season--when Cara, her ex-stepbrother, Sam, and her best friend, Bea, are 17--is going to be a bad one. Cara is about to learn that not all the scars left by the accident season are physical: There's a long-hidden family secret underneath the bumps and bruises. This is the year Cara will finally fall desperately in love, when she'll start discovering the painful truth about the adults in her life, and when she'll uncover the dark origins of the accident season--whether she's ready or not.* "Fowley-Doyle's stunning debut novel weaves the temporal and the spiritual into a seamless reality, rich in emotional impact . . . This thought-provoking narrative will cast its spell over older teens and adults alike."--School Library Journal, 5-star review* "Ghosts, secrets, and magic collide in this Irish author's astonishing debut . . . a moving portrait of a fractured family, knitting itself back together with courage and love. A powerful novel from an exciting new talent."--Kirkus, 5-star review

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Customer Reviews

Gr 10 Up - Triple layers of protective clothing, padded furniture, knives locked away, and the gas turned off. It's October, the accident season for Cara's family, but all her mother's precautions will not be enough to protect them from the cuts, bruises, broken bones, or worse. Cara's sprained

wrist and her sister Alice's concussion are minor compared to previous years, though Bea's tarot cards indicate that this will be one of the worst accident seasons yet. Cara has just discovered that her elusive former friend, Elsie, mysteriously appears in every photo in her scrapbook, past and present. Unfortunately, Elsie has disappeared from her usual spot in the school library and, other than Cara's best friend Bea and her ex-stepbrother Sam, no one seems to know who she is. As the last week of October commences, finding Elsie takes on a sense of urgency for Cara, who senses she may somehow be connected to the yearly turmoil in her family's lives. With Halloween fast approaching, all the horror of accident seasons past begins coming back to haunt them, and the lies and secrets that each family member has locked away gradually come to light. Similar in style to Alice Hoffman's *Practical Magic* (Putnam, 1995), Fowley-Doyle's stunning debut novel weaves the temporal and the spiritual into a seamless reality, rich in emotional impact. Devastating loss and abuse are balanced by romance, teen hijinks, and spine-tingling discoveries. Provocative content adds to the intensity and will keep readers riveted. VERDICT This thought-provoking narrative will cast its spell over older teens and adults alike. —Cary Frostick, formerly at Mary Riley Styles Public Library, Falls Church, VA --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

* "Fowley-Doyle's stunning debut novel weaves the temporal and the spiritual into a seamless reality, rich in emotional impact. Devastating loss and abuse are balanced by romance, teen hijinks, and spine-tingling discoveries. This thought-provoking narrative will cast its spell over older teens and adults alike." —School Library Journal, starred review* "Ghosts, secrets, and magic collide in this Irish author's astonishing debut. A moving portrait of a fractured family, knitting itself back together with courage and love. A powerful novel from an exciting new talent." —Kirkus, starred review "Haunting" —Entertainment Weekly "A moving portrait of a fractured family, knitting itself back together with courage and love. A powerful novel from an exciting new talent." —Kirkus, starred review "Entirely unique." —Bustle.com "Amazing." —Holly Black, New York Times bestselling author "Atmospheric and magical." —VOYA "Sensuous, eerie, lyrical." Fowley-Doyle's *The Accident Season* reads like a poem. The mystery is intriguing, the writing is gorgeous, and the characters are vivid. A lovely debut. "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea" Readers will be swept away by Fowley-Doyle's lyrical writing and entrancing premise in this tale of forbidden love and magic. "A lyrical and sometimes chilling exploration of the ways in which we manipulate memories to fall in line with our present narrative—the lies we tell ourselves to keep our brains safe and happy. Cara's narration brilliantly, sometimes brutally conveys

the unraveling of both Cara and her family . . . and the bittersweet ending will haunt readers as much it does Cara." —BCCB

Every October Cara and her family become accident-prone. And not just a little either. Things like broken bones, stitches, concussions and more. Some years are worse than others, like when her father died. This year Cara, her sister, her ex-stepbrother, Sam, and her best friend, Bea, are in for a bad season, but not for the reasons they think. Even though they will all suffer serious physical injuries they learn that not all their scars are physical. The family has a long-hidden secret that lies beneath the bumps and bruises. The adults in the family have kept secrets and they are dark. There will be love and loss this season and some of it will scare them all worse than any year before. I picked this up thinking it was going to be another great YA read. The premise sounded very interesting and I went into it ready for a great story. I have to say I was disappointed. It started out ok but then I found myself disinterested and lost to a lot of what was happening. The main characters become annoying very quickly and I found myself skimming more and more the further I read. Maybe this was just a little unusual for my taste, but I did not enjoy it. There were several points where it seemed like the author wasn't sure what genre she was writing. It went in one direction and then would switch and then back again. For a YA, the themes went in the wrong direction for me and I was turned off by the harsh language, that may not bother a lot of people but for me, with YA especially, I prefer not to read that. While this was an original story with an interesting premise it just didn't work for me. I know a lot of people have really loved it, I just can't say I did.

4.75 stars. This was so close to getting 5 stars! There were just a few things I didn't understand/didn't make sense. Cara and her family experience what they call "the accident season," which means that for the month of October, they're all more accident prone. Scrapes, broken bones, near misses, and tragedies. Cara's also trying to track down Elsie, a girl she used to be friends with, but whom no one outside her family remembers. Is it coincidence that all her photos all shown Elsie, flitting at the corners? This book is almost perfect. It's lyrical and shot through with magic, and each of the main characters ring true. Cara's family has secrets, lots of them, but it doesn't mean that they're not close, and you can feel that love throughout the entire novel. I just wanted the mysteries more solidly resolved, a little less ambiguous

I've been reading a lot of series lately so I was looking for a standalone to get a break from the

exhaustion of reading multiple books to get a full story. Having an Irish father and a mother with French heritage admittedly I was drawn to Fowley-Doyle because I wanted to give someone with a heritage like mine some press. I was glad I did even if it started as a superficial reason because she's a great writer. She writes beautifully as if she's creating a piece of art with words. If you like haunting mysteries you should give this a chance. I couldn't put it down because I was hooked by the way she pieced words together and even when I could see some of the plot points as being obvious I was so enthralled with her descriptions I still enjoyed the journey.

Every year for as long as seventeen-year-old Cara can remember October has been disastrous for her, her sister Alice, her mom, and her ex-stepbrother Sam. Even though they wrap their bodies in layers of clothing and their house in padding and bubble wrap, they have accidents. Some are as minor as a cut, scrape, or bruise, but others break their bones and threaten their lives. Cara's father and uncle Seth both died from October accidents, and her Tarot-card reading friend Bea says this accident season will be one of the worst. Another October casualty is Cara's childhood friend Elsie who has inexplicably gone missing, and no one seems to know where to look for her. Mystery and otherworldliness paint the atmosphere of this story. Early on it's clear the characters are keeping secrets from themselves and each other. To work the secrets out, readers have to be able to read between the lines and read between those lines, too. The bond between Cara and Sam makes them the easiest characters to connect with, but it's hard to empathize with them when they make one dangerous choice after another. Readers looking for a spooky Halloween book will find one here.

Thanks to NetGalley and Penguin for the arc of *The Accident Season* by Moira Fowley-Doyle! Cara and her family (her mother, ex-step brother Sam and her sister Alice) suffer annually from an extreme bout of accident proneness. While looking through her entire photo collection, she sees Elsie in each of the pictures. Elsie is a mysterious and quiet girl Cara has known throughout her lifetime. Cara's best friend Bea has a knack for tarot cards and other supernatural talents. The story has a British feel - smoking outside of the school, tea, Irish class - which gives it more interest to American readers. Spoiler Alert: After reading other reviews on *The Accident Season*, I feel the need to point out that the main focus of the story is not on Cara and Sam's relationship or even on the awful stepfather, but on the entire strangeness of events happening, now and in the past, to Cara's family members, separately and as a group. The mom explains Elsie towards the end of the story, even though she doesn't want to believe it herself.

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