

The Memory Police

By Author, Yoko Ogawa

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The unnamed protagonist is a young novelist who lives on an island where things suddenly disappear, not just physically but from people's memories. Disappeared items hold no emotional value anymore, as the memories associated with them fade. However, some people on the island have the power to remember and hold on to the precious memories. The Memory Police is in charge of making sure the disappeared items stay forgotten by hunting out all the people that still remember. The protagonist's editor, R, is one of those who can remember, seeks protection from the Memory police. His fate lay in her hands.

The Memory Police is a novel that I found deeply intriguing! This novel was reflective of basic human nature and how objects shape our everyday lives. The writing style was very descriptive and created a vivid representation of what the protagonist was seeing and feeling. The hidden ominous feeling created by the writing helped form the scary yet dreamy mood of the novel. In addition to the main story, the chapters are accompanied by the novel the protagonist in the book is writing (since she is a novelist). It was interesting to note the parallels in her life and in her writing. The character dynamic between the protagonist, R and the old man who helps her was also really enjoyable to see. They were all generally likeable characters who kept their common goal of protecting R in their minds at all times. I also really enjoyed how the book was able to seamlessly transition from calm scenes to more intense ones.

The novel was a very entertaining read however, I wouldn't exactly call it a "feel-good" story. The novel almost never strays away from its serious nature, and I wished it could've incorporated some humor or more lighter scenes. Additionally, I felt like the plot was slow to move at times. However, the novel allowed me to reflect on myself so I would recommend to anyone 14 or older. I think this book would best borrowed from the library, because as I re-read the book, I lost some of the experiences I had the first time I read it, such as the suspense and trilling nature of the story. For the most part, reading this piece was a gratifying experience that allowed me, as the reader to be able to contemplate the meaning of memories, what it means to forget, and the power of remembering.

Recommended Titles:

The Housekeeper by Yoko Ogawa

The Diving Pool: Three Novellas by Yoko Ogawa

Scythe by Neal Shusterman