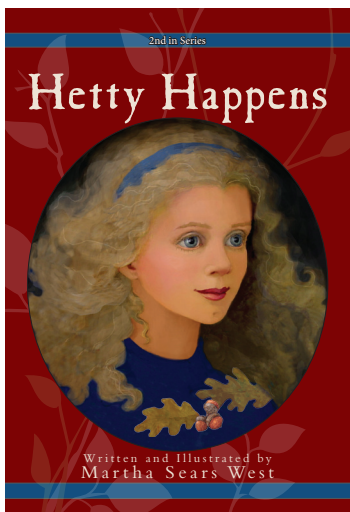


KIRKUS

REVIEWS



HETTY HAPPENS

by [Martha Sears West](#)

KIRKUS REVIEW

Hetty, now 17, struggles with her promise to rally around the marriage of Morgan Morgenthal in the second installment of a 1950s-set YA trilogy.

During a party in the home of schoolmate Melinda Morgenthal, Hetty Lawrence, 17, is mortified to overhear glamorous Katrinka Wallace chatter about her intent to marry Melinda's older brother, Morgan. Hetty also accidentally spills food onto Katrinka, although Morgan, as always, is kind. Hetty later muses on this new development to "Hannah," the forest oak that serves as this dreamy girl's refuge. Morgan comes to the tree to return a schoolbook, and the couple is clearly entranced with each other, even if they don't outwardly express it. The crossed signals continue as Hetty blurts out support of the marriage and even offers to plan a premarriage event. She gets Melinda's moody father, Max, who runs the circus where he met Katrinka's former clown father, to attend a father-daughter dance and become closer to Morgan while she helps care for a mistreated elephant. Hetty also guides her biological father (revealed in the first installment) to navigate his romance, only admitting her true feelings during a fateful meeting at Hannah, sparking a final chain of events and an exciting new path. West (*Hetty*, 2013, etc.) expands into more mature elements, including mention of Max's AA meetings and Hetty's growing longings, in these follow-up adventures. The new activities are engrossing, although this novel's illustrations of a childlike Hetty now seem out of sync. West notes that this tale picks up Hetty's life in 1955, yet the setting remains rather unreal and misty, with its fairy-tale environs now including a circus. Still, Hetty's world is quite charming, as is the central love story, with this book, like West's last, mirroring the realm of *Anne of Green Gables*. Best of all, West hints that Katrinka, the full-size daughter of a dwarf and a marvelously maneuvering yet sympathetic character, returns in a third book. Overall, an enjoyable continuation.

Entertaining, edgier ramp-up of a sweet heroine's transition into adulthood.