

First Impressions of Lake Heaven: “You will fall in love with Lake Heaven...hook, line, and sinker.” “A whopper of a fish story” “A tour de force about a tourist trap” “A romp!” Book Description: “Find heaven on earth. Enjoy your vacation in placid and picturesque Lake Heaven,” proclaims one of the old man’s tourist ads in the first chapter of this comic novel. Once again Andrew Thornton’s father is telling a lie—a whopper. What else is new? Lake Heaven is actually more like “Hell on Earth.” The alleged “vacation hotspot” is not the perfect travel destination. It is not a rustic resort for family vacations. It is not a pristine lake for fishermen who want to rough it in the wilderness and catch that trophy bass. And it is certainly not a honeymoon hideaway for romantic couples. Lake Heaven is a tourist trap. Fifteen-year-old Andrew has long despised the rundown Michigan resort, where there’s always a whiff of dead fish in the air. The local boy thinks of Lake Heaven as “nature at its most unnatural,” and not untouched wilderness, but “bewilderness.” “For the time of your life visit scenic Lake Heaven!” the old man declares in yet another of his glossy travel brochures. It’s another lie. However, over the course of one unforgettable summer, Andrew actually begins his own quest, not only for signs of life—any kind of life—in the resort, but also for the “time of his life.” It all begins with a fraud when he is duped into going on a blind date by his very own brother. Normally, Andrew is reluctant to dip a single toe into the murky waters of Lake Heaven. But his romantic rendezvous turns out to be unlike anything he could have ever imagined. For the rest of that roller-coaster of a summer, Andrew and his younger brother “Willy the Kid” embark on a rollicking and unrelenting campaign for the hearts of two foster girls in need of a home who have recently had to move to the ramshackle resort—to live in the local bait shop, of all places. Will Lake Heaven actually become a “romantic getaway” for these young lovers, as the old man promises in his tourist ads, or will it turn into an unholy battleground? In this comic novel, you will be caught up, if not ensnared, in the tourist trap and the upbeat lives of the two young locals, Andrew and William Thornton, who strive to find “true love” in the most unlikely of places. In their noble Quixotic quest, the pair of mismatched brothers must confront and do battle with a cast of oddball characters, ranging from their own parents to the proprietors of the local bait shop and the miniature golf course. And, of course, they occasionally scrap with each other. Will the brothers eventually triumph in the troubled waters of the “resort of last resort?” Will they not only get the girls, but also keep them, along with their own sanity? Most crucially, will Andrew and William be able to rescue the two girls who find themselves increasingly in grave danger? Lake Heaven is the ultimate “what-I-did-on-my-summer-vacation” story. It is a humorous parody, a sweet, funny, and offbeat story of love and loyalty, hard work and youthful heroism, told in a fresh and original voice. Anyone who has ever been lured into a tourist trap—and escaped to tell about it—will get a kick out of this comic novel. Anyone who grew up in the fifties and early sixties will enjoy the nostalgic touches of a time gone by. Anyone who enjoys a good laugh will love this spoof of coming-of-age stories that veers from the wry to the raucous and from the sacrilegious to slapstick. Anyone who has ever been in love will appreciate this inspiring tale.

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