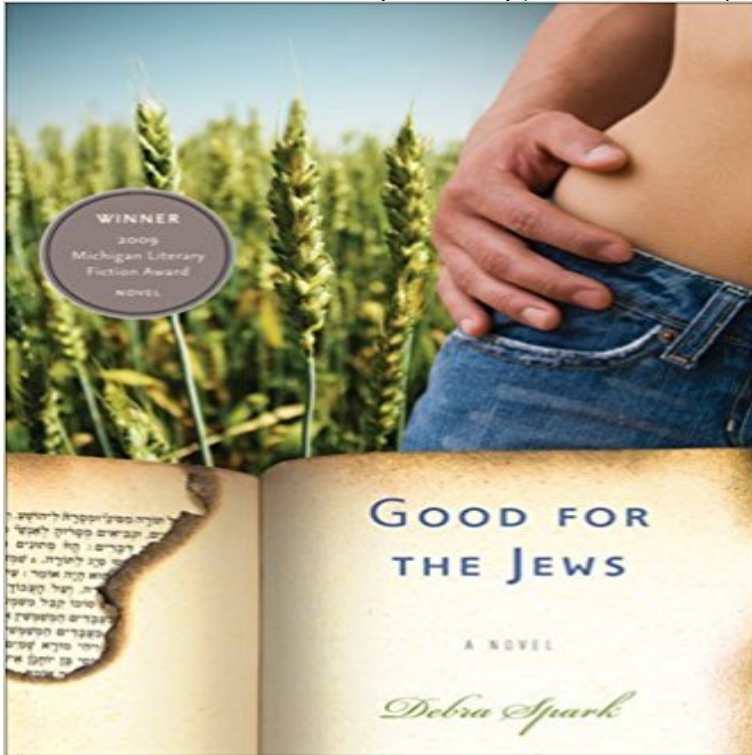


## Good for the Jews (Michigan Literary Fiction Awards)



. . . a smart, sprightly, sex-drenched, and neatly plotted novel . . .---Alan Cheuse, National Public Radio and the Chicago Tribune Spark is at her sly, funny, and cutting best in her third novel, a clever and affecting variation on the biblical story of Esther.---Booklist Sparks prose is tight, funny, insightful and occasionally heartbreaking as it probes the current education system, the arts and societys ills.---Publishers Weekly Good for the Jews is a smart, funny, sexy novel set in Madison, Wisconsin, during the Bush administration. Part mystery and part stranger-comes-to town story, Good for the Jews is loosely based on the biblical book of Esther. Like Esther, Debra Sparks characters deal with anti-Semitism and the way that powerful men---and the women who love them---negotiate bureaucracies. At the core of the story of right and wrong are young, attractive Ellen Hirschorn and her older cousin Mose, a high school teacher who thinks he knows, in fact, what is good for the Jews---and for Ellen, too. Their stories intertwine with those of the school superintendent, his ex-wife and son, and a new principal. Workplace treachery, the bonds of family, coming of age, and romantic relationships all take center stage as the characters negotiate the fallout from a puzzling fire. Sparks evocative writing style and sharp, understanding treatment of her diverse characters draw the reader into this surprising page-turner, a finalist for the 2009 ForeWord Magazine Book of the Year Award. Debra Spark is the author of two previous novels, *The Ghost of Bridgetown* and *Coconuts for the Saint*, as well as *Curious Attractions: Essays on Fiction Writing*. Shes been a fellow at Radcliffe Colleges Bunting Institute and a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts award. Her short stories, essays, and reviews have appeared in publications including *Food and Wine*, *Esquire*, the

New York Times, the Washington Post, and Yankee. She is a professor at Colby College and teaches in the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College. She lives with her husband and son in North Yarmouth, Maine.

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