
Ann Patchett

The Magician's Assistant



Title: The Magician's Assistant

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Description

"A secretive magician's death becomes the catalyst for his partner's journey self-discovery in this "enchanted" book" *San Francisco Chronicle* **"that is something of a magic trick in itself"** *(Newsweek)*. When Parsifal, a handsome and charming magician, dies suddenly, his widow Sabine—who was also his faithful assistant for twenty years—learns that the family he claimed to have lost in a tragic accident is very much alive and well. Sabine is left to unravel his secrets, and the journey she takes, from sunny Los Angeles to the bitter windswept plains of Nebraska, will work its own magic on her. Sabine's extraordinary tale, "with its big dreams, vast spaces, and disparate realities lying side by side" captures the hearts of its readers and "proves to be the perfect place for miraculous transformations" (*The New Yorker*). "

Insightful reviews

Dayna: I have read other books by Ann and really liked them, she is a great writer and I will continue to read more by her. The main character in this book is a woman who has been in love with a gay man, the magician to her magician's assistant, for over 20 years. The man and his lover have just died of AIDS and she is left behind in the house the three of them had shared. She is a bit of a pathetic creature, I had to really work sometimes to respect her, even though I think she is intelligent and grieving. I found it sad that she wasn't able to own more of her own life, that she lived so vicariously through her "husband" Parsifal (they got married shortly before he died so she could inherit everything) and his lover Phan. The main character in the book was really Parsifal and you just learn everything about him through her, but she really doesn't have a voice of her own - until maybe the very end. I definitely liked this book, but I feel like if she was my friend I would get very annoyed with her as a person.

Natalie: Despite feeling like the ending was a bit of an anticlimax, I thought this was a beautiful and tender book. The main character, Sabine, is very likable but difficult to get to know--both for other characters, and for the reader. So while she does have wonderful, real love in her life, she is also profoundly lonely, especially after losing her husband/best friend. Her grief leads her down a road she never imagined, to unlikely friendships, and that was more than enough for me. I love how Patchett's characters are layered--you may feel you have them "pegged" for a bit, but just as in life it's never that simple. The journey itself was so nicely done that how it all ended wasn't as important to me.

Barbara: In my analysis of this book, I have to remind myself that Patchett had written it prior to her amazing, "Bel Canto" and her most recent, "Run". The latter included flat characterizations, and was filled with implausible coincidences and did not meet my expectations for "suspense", as was publicized. In this novel, Patchett had already demonstrated her talent for fashioning her language to convey the complexities of her characters' emotions and actions. She was so adept at this in "Bel Canto", one could almost hear the music!

"The Magician's Assistant" is Sabine, recent widow of Parsifal, a talented, complex magician.

Following his death, she discovers that he had a family, the existence of which he had never revealed. In the midst of Sabine's deep grief, she then has to contend with a new aspect of dealing with his absence. Throughout this book, Sabine's grief and sense of loss is poignantly felt. Patchett has written a tender, sad, often symbolic and sometimes humorous tale. Sabine is obviously downcast, but warm and likable. Other characterizations are vivid, varied and, for the most part, engaging.

Although the subject of mourning and grief would appear unappealing, Patchett has created a compelling, warm novel.

Elizabeth: This used to be my first Ann Patchett book, even though i have been informed i need her for years. i actually did like this, too; her writing is shrewdpermanent in a not-trying-too-hard form of way. the basis used to be interesting (the magician's assistant Sabine going off to Nebraska looking for her lately deceased homosexual husband's secret kin that he by no means advised her about) and that i notion it was once fascinating how she reacted and interacted to and with them. My in basic terms criticism used to be the connection that Patchett created for Kitty, the sister-in-law, and Sabine. thoroughly unrealistic, I thought. that is asserting whatever in a booklet the place the most personality knowingly marries a homosexual guy simply because she has enjoyed him for thus long. But overall, nonetheless an exceptional book.

peeper: This morning, my belligerent son used his well-honed fingernails to pierce a gap in my hand, drawing blood. whilst I felt the pain, I smacked his hand away in self defense. i do not suppose like chatting with him, or maybe taking a look at him, for a week. i feel he feels the same. he's six, and he has attractive eyes. Of course, have been he to be clinically determined with mind cancer, my middle might explode and die, and my will to stay could wane speedier than you may say intentional overdose. Can anyone overdose on Advil? it is all i have within the house. I have no idea what I need. Rather, what i need is impossible. What i would like is to begin over, not only today, yet everything. Sorry, i do not fairly have some degree here, so i believe i will simply finish this aimless publish mid-thought. Anne Patchett did. Why cannot I?

Michael: Went down like pabulum. Bland, yet healthy, similar to an indicator movie. everyone seems to be sturdy and lovely and existence declaring with the exception of a few family abuser men. Sabine's magician husband, Parsifal, has simply died initially of this story. It quickly turns into transparent that she has enjoyed him for the twenty years that she has served as his assistant on stage, regardless of understanding he was once gay. She lived with Parsifal and his lover for a very long time in l. a. and purely married him lately as his lengthy sickness turned worse. This tale i'd have beloved to benefit much more about. by means of what miracle may any such courting work? Instead, the tale makes a speciality of her grief. After Parsifal's loss of life she learns he has a family members in Nebraska she by no means knew about. She spends many of the ebook coming to phrases with a depressing mystery from Parsifal's early life and sharing her love and grief over wasting him with the kinfolk he attempted to forget. The tale is touching, and the characters are good drawn. yet I didn't snort and that i didn't cry. I didn't achieve detectable knowledge approximately being human. and that i wasn't struck sufficient through the prose to contemplate writing a few passages down.

Again, growing to your costs, the ratio problem has overwhelmed to operate from these

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