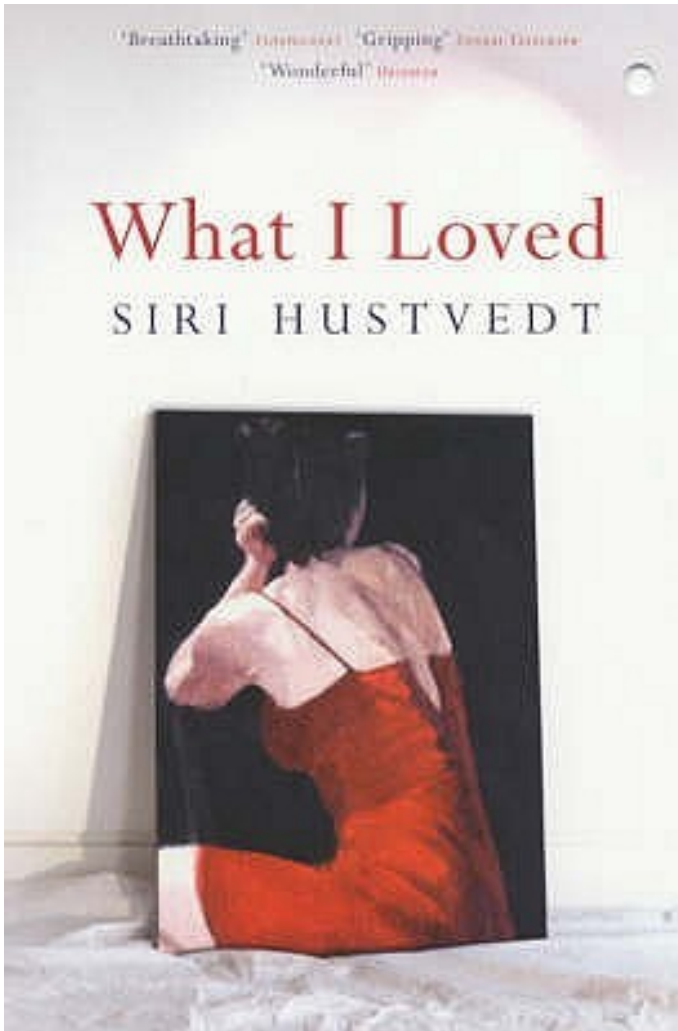

Siri Hustvedt

What I Loved



Title: What I Loved

Author: Siri Hustvedt

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Description

This is the story of two men who first become friends in 1970s New York, of the women in their lives, of their sons, born the same year, and of how relations between the two families become strained, first by tragedy, then by a monstrous duplicity which comes slowly and corrosively to the surface.

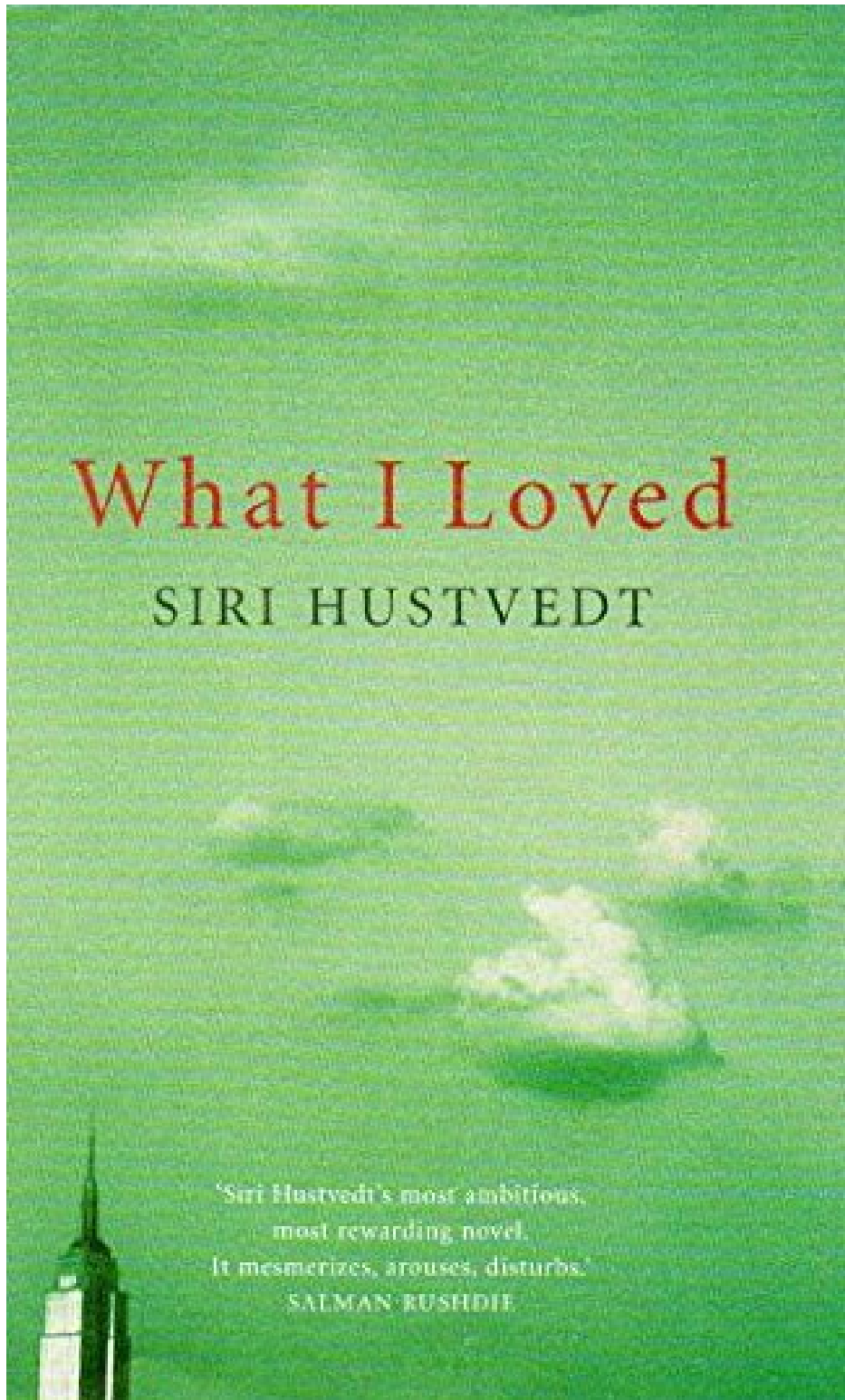
Insightful reviews

Carolee Wheeler: Because I've been engaged in a book club with three others--one who likes fiction, one who likes it with reservations, and a third who views it with trepidation--I've been thinking about why I like fiction so much. Modern fiction, classic fiction, whatever--what always draws me is the way human nature is portrayed. What does it mean to be human? Is it sad, broken, lonely, joyful, complicated? Yes.

This book is, for me, the dream of fiction, in that it tells us a story, and transports us, while at the same time tells us something about ourselves and our kind. The protagonists talk about friendship, loss, lust, grief, regret, art, and lies; they are betrayed and left behind and injured just as they are loved and buoyed and nurtured. They are beautiful and imperfect. On every page I found something to love, something tender, bold, or poignant.

I won't bother giving you a synopsis, because you can get that nearly everywhere else. What I will give you is my heartfelt recommendation. Siri Hustvedt places each word, each sentence, with the deliberate deftness of someone who understands the gorgeous twisting combined pain and pleasure of being alive.

Camille Stein:



...

Pero todos vivimos aquí, pensé para mis adentros, en esas historias imaginarias que nos relatamos sobre nuestras vidas.

Escribir es un modo de localizar mi hambre. Y el hambre no es sino un vacío.

...

Leo Hertzberg, el observador que atisba a través del agujero de su propia vida, reordena una y otra vez los preciosos objetos que atesora en un cajón, frutos y huellas de una existencia que se le escapa entre los dedos, tratando de conjugar a través del lenguaje el torrente de la memoria que los acompaña. Porque el que recuerda renuncia a la verdad: 'ya no somos actores de la historia sino espectadores que se han decidido a hablar.'

El tiempo no es circular, tampoco transita en línea recta; deambula errante entre espejos rotos y frágiles cofres de cristal. Consciente de esta originaria e irremediable transgresión de las perspectivas, Leo Hertzberg cuenta...

Una conmovedora reflexión sobre el arte, sobre la complejidad de las relaciones humanas, sobre el paso del tiempo.

Shovelmonkey1: I love Paul Auster. Having discovered him through the joys of the 1001 books list, I've now read almost everything he ever wrote and just when I was getting to the end of his stuff and wondering how I could get my hands on more Paul Auster stuff (short of holding a gun to his head and forcing him to write faster), along comes the literary off-shoot of Auster that is Siri Hustvedt. What!? I hear you yell in supportive indignation for Mrs Auster and her right to be recognised as a successful and talented author (who is not and should not in anyway be perceived as being in the shadow of her husband)... oh come on you've got to admit the similarities in style, references and imagery are pretty close. Jewish male narrator? Tick. Based in NYC. Tick. Artsy and creative writer types? Tick. Even allusions to the same artists (see William de Kooning in Oracle Night). Yes, I appreciate as husband and wife they will in many ways be exposed to the same social situations, stimuli and inspiration and I'm not criticising. I really loved this book. The best elements were the real sense of impending danger whenever the story line turned to Mark and Teddy. I really felt like Leo was in danger and felt a little bit worried for him. Beyond the day to day storyline, Goya was the real star of this book whether he was meant to be or not. Everyone in the book has a little bit of Goya in him. A little bit creative, a bit wild, a bit restrained and a little bit bloodthirsty and destructive. Was this book really a story about Goya but in some sort of hidden code? Whatever. After reading this book I decided to refresh my memory on Goya's work and yes, he was clearly mad as a box of frogs but that doesn't stop him being brilliant at the same time.

Alan: here's a big, formidable novel approximately 4 talented, clever humans -- artists and intellectuals in big apple -- who first locate love and friendship after which vast suffering. Bill, a skilled and unique artist, leaves Lucille, his emotionally stunted wife, for Violet, his passionate, vivacious model. in the meantime their acquaintances Leo and Erica stay upstairs pursuing their very own ecstatic marriage. the 2 have sons nearly while -- Mark and Matt. They holiday jointly in Vermont, they make love, get pleasure from nutrition and strong fellowship -- existence is good. after which acts of insufferable tragedy take place (I will not exhibit them) and every little thing is broken. One tragedy occurs immediately and gives the jarring fulcrum round which this

e-book turns. the opposite happens slowly over the process years. The protagonists fight to maintain their loves, the lives they've got built, their sanity -- however the fact they face is just too powerful. every little thing falls apart; nearly not anything survives the wreckage. this is often an soaking up and in lots of methods an admirable book. it's a novel of rules that takes artwork heavily and brings it to life. There are dozens of alternative rules woven via it -- in regards to the nature of sickness, of reality, of truth. The writing is vivid, the characters psychologically convincing for the main part. but there's a religious vacancy on the middle of those lives, a feeling of lifestyles imitating paintings instead of the opposite direction around. i discovered this novel remarkable and infrequently stunning yet i used to be now not eventually moved by means of it. It saved me at an emotional distance. I spoke back intellectually instead of feeling the enjoyment and the pain. I well-known its artistry a bit too much.

Gemma: I reflect on this e-book to be actually wonderful. My fellow London commuters basically suggestion i used to be loopy as I cried over passages on a couple of trains. i believe the earlier stressful within the identify succinctly communicates the loss handled via Hustvedt. I did not at the beginning just like the descriptions of the artwork installations, and had hassle visualising them. As I stepped forward throughout the novel i started to take pleasure in them more.

Deea: between different things, Siri Hustvedt questions during this publication the idea that of up to date art. obviously a gourmand and an admirer, i feel she desires to spotlight via her imaginary international that there's a distinction among actual artwork and what humans take for paintings nowadays: Teddy Giles, "a wanna-be artist" whose portrait is insisted upon within the moment half the book, bases all his initiatives on people's reactions to violence and to issues which are basically intended to shock, instead of have a creative value. So, the query might be: is it moral that violence should be used for inventive results and why don't humans draw a line among artwork and violence? Bill, however, whom we see via Leo's eyes, our narrator during this book, is a true artist. In his art, "nothing is clear. Feelings, principles form what's in entrance of us", he says. In his work, he desires to create doubt "because that's what we're convinced of". And he does so exquisitely. His first number of work is the aspect which creates a strongest liaison among him and Leo, the 1st customer of his art, the 1st one that particularly recognizes his expertise sooner than each person else does. Leo is a qualified critic of artwork and the person that is ready to render such a lot hidden meanings to Bill's works of art. during this first number of paintings, invoice makes use of Violet, his quickly to-be moment wife, as a model. The portray which Leo buys is a really eloquent metaphor, just like the remainder of Bill's art. It's known as Self Portrait even though the painter is a male and the version is a woman. What's fairly attention-grabbing approximately it's the incontrovertible fact that the viewer can become aware of himself in within the gigantic shadow depicted in first plan during this painting, truth which implies that not just the painter can give a contribution to a piece of art, but in addition the admirer (which is admittedly true: it really is our viewpoint that matters, the best way we see things, instead of how they honestly are). All Bill's work are packed with hidden meanings: they're all attempting to inform stories. I keep in mind that at one aspect he intentionally paints a bruise at the personality from certainly one of his work and afterwards, whilst Leo asks him approximately it, he explains that seeing a bruise there tells a story, the tale of the way the bruise acquired there within the first place: was once it via violence or perhaps due to a random „encounter" with the furnishings in one's room? The viewer can't recognize the reason, yet he can ask himself the way it bought there and doubt is for this reason created

again. Going throughout the book, we immerse ourselves thoroughly within the tales and the standard lifetime of the characters: Leo and Erica and their son Matt; Invoice and Lucille after which Invoice and Violet and Mark. The writer analyses their lives, the lives in their mom and dad and siblings indicating the influence of the previous and of the current on Bill's works of art, on Leo's existence and at the improvement in their friendship. Hustvedt performs with the concept „we're constantly blending with different people". Blending is a search term and is the reason „what humans not often speak about, simply because we outline ourselves as isolated, closed our bodies who bump up opposed to one another yet remain shut. Descartes was once wrong. It isn't: I feel for this reason I am. It's: I'm since you are. That's Hegel – well, the quick version.". „What concerns is that we're regularly blending with different people.", says Violet who feels that Lucille, Mark's mum, is there, and each time she spends time with him, she interferes tacitly in every little thing she does with him and she's never, now not for one moment, leaving them. The surroundings surrounding Invoice turns out to undertake his frame of mind and all Bill's happiness and sadness, his stories transpire via his work: „The studio had an oppressive, approximately smothering atmosphere, as though Bill's unhappiness has leaked into the chairs, the books, the toys, and the empty wine bottles that piled up lower than the sink. Within the work of his father, Bill's sorrow took on a palpable good looks that was once finished with rigorous, unflinching hand, yet in existence his soreness used to be purely depressing." Bill's mystery dream is to have many, many children, to populate Earth along with his children. Violet can't provide him young children however the Universe seems mocking him: his in simple terms child, Mark has such a lot of personalities that having him as a son is like having plenty of children, each one of his personalities accounting for one. This evaluation is easily not likely to make a lot feel to anyone who hasn't learn the book. I wished to jot down an overview for this e-book for therefore lengthy and because I haven't controlled to take action instantly after completing the booklet end result of the loss of time, I can't appear to be capable of positioning my principles so as and write in an extra systematic fashion. I'd say even if that what I attempted to do used to be placing the main interesting facets of the booklet like random shades on a canvas and commenting on them like critics of paintings do with their paintings, like Leo does during this e-book along with his reviews on „what he loved". And to cite Hustvedt further, „despite those temporary insights right into a life, the canvases and their fabrics had an summary caliber to them, an final blankness that conveyed the strangeness of mortality itself, a feeling that no matter if each scrap of an existence have been saved, thrown right into a sizeable mound after which rigorously sifted to extract all attainable meaning, it's going to now not upload as much as a life." (in this case, regardless of how whole my overview might be, it would not make justice to this sort of finely crafted publication as this one, „it wouldn't upload as much as this book").

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