



The Illusionist

Dinitia Smith

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The Illusionist is the sensuous and haunting tale of Dean Lily, an amateur magician whose arrival in Sparta, New York, upsets the landscape of this small town on the wane. Dean, a master of the sleight of hand, is also a master of seduction and charm—which becomes apparent as he woos and wins the hearts of more than one of Sparta's female citizens.

But the enigmatic newcomer has more to hide than the tricks of his trade—his mysterious identity as a transgendered person, and his closely guarded privacy arouse suspicion and jealousy—and while he cures Sparta of its midwinter ennui, he also unleashes a destructive force that rocks the foundations of this town to its core. Inspired in part by a true story, *The Illusionist* is a fiercely erotic novel that thwarts conventions of gender and love.

The Illusionist Details

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Author : Dinitia Smith

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From Reader Review The Illusionist for online ebook

Jana says

This book is very similar to the movie Boys Don't Cry. A good read, tormented souls, and the never ending question of how gender is defined in our society.

Paul E. Morph says

This is a heartbreakingly tragic story that chronicles the events in a small US town one winter that begin to unfurl after the arrival of one Dean Lily, the eponymous Illusionist. What starts with some amateur magic tricks in a bar ends up visiting some very dark and distressing places.

I'm very tired and emotional so I'm not going to go into masses of detail but I do want to say that this book moved me deeply and connected with me on a very personal level. I don't know if I'd say this book blew me away, exactly, but it certainly hit me where I live, if you know what I mean. Smith's writing has a touch of poetry to it without becoming overly lyrical and I'll be reading more by her in the future.

If only I could remember who recommended this book to me, I'd thank them. Stupid sieve-like memory...

Ellie says

Really, really, really incredible sad. Just... ridiculous.

John says

Darkly woven and wonderfully rendered ... a sensual suspense that bewitches the senses, melding disorder and desire in a way that is both disturbingly keen and stunningly sensitive.

Lois Duncan says

This is a dark and disturbing book, but I have to admit, I couldn't put it down, especially when I realized that, despite the disclaimer, it was based on the true story of the hate murder of Brandon Teena. I don't think I've ever before read a story in which I wasn't certain which sex the protagonist was, and the protagonist didn't know either.

Misti says

I read this book for insight into the topic of gender confusion. It was not well written but is a fictionalized recounting of the hate crime murder of Brandon Teena from Falls City, Nebraska.

Sissy says

An incredibly predictable book that used tired metaphors and over done shock cliches to not grab anyone's attention. I was not impressed. The characters were cliched small town women who allowed a "man" to save them from their dreary town. It screamed of "Boys Don't Cry" with a hint of "As Good As It Gets" and never had me actually care about what happened to anyone.

Debs says

Not, as I had hoped, the novel upon which the new movie starring Ed Norton was based. Instead, based loosely on the hate crime committed in Humboldt, Nebraska (re: Boys Don't Cry).

Chantel says

This book blew me off course. Honestly, I had in my head picking it up from a thrift store shelf that it could be the book that the movie (titled with the same name, featuring Edward Norton), was based off of. It was not. Definitely not. An extremely riveting storyline, if not fleshed out enough for a more intense praise from me. Regardless, I am glad I picked it up off the shelf.

Ashishg says

It's difficult to like a book where you dislike all characters. In fact, only character I ended up being ambivalent about was villain. Even in narrative, book is repeatative and boring and didn't catch attention of reader.

Dawn says

Wasn't too happy with this one. It sort of plods along without much happening. The focus is on one character and his oddities. Something big happens near the end, but I never felt for any of the characters. And the end is not satisfying at all. I gave it two stars because the writing itself was pretty good, but honestly I wouldn't recommend this to anyone.

Cindy says

Seems to be a thinly veiled account of Brandon Teena's life, yet no acknowledgement made of that fact. Still,

well-written.

Eric Rohr says

Good book, couldn't put it down. I'm a little conflicted about the ending, the climax to which felt a bit sudden and rushed, but I'd recommend it.

Andrea says

interesting, but...

and perhaps even a 1 1/2

Daria says

Anyone I've ever recommended read this book was completely awed by it. I highly recommend it. It moved and saddened me.
