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The Last Magician



Synopsis

A New York Times bestseller “Splendid.” Kirkus Reviews “Vivid and compelling.” BCCB “A smart and feisty female protagonist in whom readers will delight.” Booklist “Will keep you guessing until the very last page.” Cinda Williams Chima, New York Times and USA TODAY bestselling author Gangs of New York meets Six of Crows in this captivating new series about a girl who must travel back in time to find a mysterious book that could save her future. Stop the Magician. Steal the book. Save the future. In modern day New York, magic is all but extinct. The remaining few who have an affinity for magic the Mageus live in the shadows, hiding who they are. Any Mageus who enters Manhattan becomes trapped by the Brink, a dark energy barrier that confines them to the island. Crossing it means losing their power and often their lives. Esta is a talented thief, and she’s been raised to steal magical artifacts from the sinister Order that created the Brink. With her innate ability to manipulate time, Esta can pilfer from the past, collecting these artifacts before the Order even realizes she’s there. And all of Esta’s training has been for one final job: traveling back to 1902 to steal an ancient book containing the secrets of the Order and the Brink before the Magician can destroy it and doom the Mageus to a hopeless future. But Old New York is a dangerous world ruled by ruthless gangs and secret societies, a world where the very air crackles with magic. Nothing is as it seems, including the Magician himself. And for Esta to save her future, she may have to betray everyone in the past.

Book Information

Hardcover: 512 pages

Publisher: Simon Pulse (July 18, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1481432079

ISBN-13: 978-1481432078

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 38 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #10,542 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #12 in Books > Teens >

Romance > Historical #14 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues >

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Time Travel

Customer Reviews

"This twisty tale of alchemy and magic in Gilded Age New York will keep you guessing until the very last page." — (Cinda Williams Chima, New York Times and USA Today bestselling author)"A gorgeous, timeless, all-consuming tale." (Wendy Higgins, New York Times bestselling author of the Sweet Evil series)"A twisty, spellbinding romp. Inserting feuding magical factions into an already tumultuous time in American history, Maxwell — —s The Last Magician — — mesmerized me until the very last page." — (Janet B. Taylor, author of Into the Dim and Sparks of Light)"Intriguing, romantic, and full of twists, THE LAST MAGICIAN kept me reading late into the night. The richly imagined alternative version of 1901 New York City pulled me in, but the fascinating characters had me turning the pages, desperate to find out what happened to them." (Anne Blankman, author of the Prisoner of Night and Fog duology)Gangs, immigrants, and the rich keeping the poor down, with a twist. In an alternate New York, magic is wielded by the Mageus, whose innate affinities vary widely, and the Order, who disdain but use magic in rituals that limit the Mageus' freedom. For centuries, Mageus have entered but cannot leave Manhattan thanks to the Brink, a magical barrier surrounding the island. Esta's affinity involves manipulating time, and the professor who raised her has sent her from the present day to 1901 to stop the destruction of a book that could potentially destroy the Brink. Shifting third-person perspective follows Esta into the past as she infiltrates Dolph Saunders' gang and becomes involved with Harte Darrigan, the handsome magician who destroyed the book. Crisp pacing and plenty of details tell the story of engaging, if selfish, characters in their late teens and early 20s working at cross purposes for big reasons. The past is slightly romanticized but largely realistic: the Mageus function as a stand-in for any immigrant group subject to prejudice, and Esta's contemporary attitudes shine a light on outdated attitudes, while through the experiences of Chinese Jianyu (the only nonwhite member of Dolph's gang), some of the racial prejudices of the past are confronted. A doorstopper with a total shakeup of an ending: don't miss this splendid series opener. (map) (Historical fantasy. 12-adult) — (Kirkus Reviews 5/1/17)In the present day, those with an affinity for magic, the Mageus, remain in hiding, but it has long been speculated that if someone can go back in time and get a significant book, then the fates of the Mageus across history would be changed. Esta, a talented thief, has been trained for the job, so she — —s sent back to 1901 and Old New York to snatch the book and save the Mageus. She — —s distracted by what she believes is a tragedy that happened just as she time traveled away from the present, and by the brooding, mysterious, and handsome magician she resists loving in 1901, but she never fully loses track of her ultimate goal. For a capable thief, Esta is surprisingly bad at reading others, but the author effectively paints her as someone whose

understanding is limited by the role for which she was raised. As there are significant plot reveals all the way through (we actually learn a secret about Esta's dad, for example, only about twenty pages from the end), the book never loses urgency, and readers will likely hit the final page wishing for more. Hand this off to fantasy buffs who appreciate historical fiction, since a good deal of the novel takes place in the early twentieth century, and Maxwell's attention to detail makes that time period seem vivid and compelling. (BCCB June 2017) The age-old battle between the Order of Ortus Aurea, who think magic can be created, and the Mageus, whose magic is innate, is intensifying; and each side is trying to collect magical tools to gain control—including the powerful text known as the Ars Arcana. Esta (Mageus), trained as a time-traveling thief, is sent back to early twentieth-century New York to prevent the book's destruction at the hands of a mysterious person known only as the Magician. This stripped-down plot summary does no justice to the captivating and complicated story created by Maxwell. A mix of historical fiction, romance, fantasy, and magic, the well-plotted and tightly paced story moves between present day and 1901 New York, a time of gangs, tenements, turf wars, and a fascination with science and technology as a cure for society's ills. A few historical figures make an appearance, J. P. Morgan, for example, but this is definitely Esta's story, and she is a smart and feisty female protagonist in whom readers will delight. (Booklist online May 31, 2017)

Lisa Maxwell is the author of *The Last Magician*, *Unhooked*, *Sweet Unrest*, and *The Gathering Deep*. She grew up in Akron, Ohio, and has a PhD in English. She's worked as a teacher, scholar, editor, writer, and bookseller (at Little Professor Book Center in Alabama). When she's not writing books, she's a professor at a local college. She now lives near Washington, DC, with her husband and two sons. You can follow her on Twitter @LisaMaxwellYA or learn more about her upcoming books at Lisa-Maxwell.com.

Interesting read with many plot twists and turns. The ending (a cliff hanger) spiraled and accelerated at a mind blowing pace, maybe too fast for me to accept totally. I did enjoy it, though.

Can we just take a minute to appreciate that cover and the thickness of the book. So beautiful . If you love time travel, Magic and little romance this the book for you. This book had me side eye everyone and like I didn't know who to trust. Highly recommended

I bought this book as a mass market paperback - I am not even sure why it was in the bookstore, since I'd never heard of the author before - and have read it at least a dozen times. A few other reviewers said it was confusing, but I found it fascinating. The author presents the story in pieces and readers have to put it together for themselves - that's why it's worth at least a second reading. Also, the book is really more magic-realism than mystery, and people who want a unambiguous ending probably won't like it, as the loose ends in this book trail past the finale. Very much worth reading if you enjoy puzzles and ambiguity.

Just ok for me.

This is the heist book I wanted from Six of Crows but never got. This is the people wielding magic book with deception that I wanted from The Night Circus but never got. This involves time travel (which I love), a cast of characters well developed that leaves you guessing on who to trust and an atmospheric New York (both past and present) that draws you in and doesn't let go. It's not a fast read. It's a chunk of a book that made me savor every time I sat down to read. Not all five star reads have to be books you can't put down but for it to be five stars for me I need to want to reread and I would do that immediately. When is the release of the next book in this series and how soon can I get my hands on it?

I knew I was going to love this book. Maxwell has taken us for a trip in the past where New York is still New York, just a tad more magical. I've never been to keen on time travel books but I'm not sure I would classify this one as such (sure, it has time travel in it but I wouldn't say that's the main purpose of the story). But I'll get to that in a sec. This book is longer than many of the young adult novels I've read recently, and you really need all that space. The story builds up from the beginning, starting with the first part of alternating points of view throughout history. A lot of this felt more like backstory, filling in the details for the bulk of the story to come later on (the part that I was eagerly awaiting for after reading the synopsis). Once everyone's in the same time, the PoVs still alternate but I found it easier to follow and much more interesting, especially when the action picked up. In terms of all the time traveling, it wasn't done in a way where the protagonist spent lots of page time moving through history and I found that the scenes moved fairly seamlessly between time periods so if time travel isn't your thing, don't let that push you away from The Last Magician. Esta was a fun thief to follow.

Though she's not the only character, I enjoyed her scenes the most (except one personality trait that seemed to run rampant in most of the cast). I found her both intriguing and refreshing. She has a hidden courage and isn't above doing work to get things done. But I did get tired of the distrust between all the characters. A lot of the tension from this book seemed to come from the fact that no one trusted anyone else. In some cases it worked, in others it seemed illogical after a while because nothing was happening. This was especially true with the romance (though I did quite enjoy it); it was a bit odd that they continued to distrust the other even after growing closer. Also, okay, so maybe I'm just trying to see things that aren't really there but the gang leader Dolph TOTALLY reminded me of Kaz from Six of Crows. Like. A lot. First thing I thought of when I read his scenes. Which totally isn't a bad thing and, in fact, if you liked that book you'd probably like The Last Magician too so there you go. This book is the perfect combination of history and fantasy wrapped up in a box full of surprises. I loved how everything came together and each twist and turn only added to the adventure. I would absolutely recommend The Last Magician to, well, anyone really, but especially readers of young adult, fantasy, and historical fiction. It's time to join the Devil's Own, y'all!

First - this is a gorgeous cover and, combined with the description, immediately intrigued me. Second - at over 500 pages, it's a chunk, and I hesitated to request it because of time limitations. Third - the time commitment was completely worth it, as this is one of the better books I've read this year. The author has created a unique world, unlike any other I've read involving magic, and from the first page, I was captivated. Esta is clever, impulsive, and a skilled thief and the friction between her and cunning magician Harte is born from the moment they see each other. The supporting characters are all well-drawn and untrustworthy and through Esta and Harte's eyes, the reader gradually learns who is reliable. With grand heists, sleight of hand, time travel, and wicked, unexpected twists, this didn't seem as hefty of a book once I got into it. I was somewhat disappointed at the end when realizing this isn't a standalone, but honestly don't mind spending more time with these characters. Thanks to the publisher and Netgalley for the digital ARC.

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