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The Magician King: A Novel (Magicians Trilogy)



Synopsis

Return to Fillory in the riveting sequel to the New York Times bestseller and literary phenomenon, *The Magicians*, now an original series on Syfy, from the author of the #1 bestselling *The Magician's Land*. Quentin Coldwater should be happy. He escaped a miserable Brooklyn childhood, matriculated at a secret college for magic, and graduated to discover that Fillory—a fictional utopia—was actually real. But even as a Fillorian king, Quentin finds little peace. His old restlessness returns, and he longs for the thrills a heroic quest can bring. Accompanied by his oldest friend, Julia, Quentin sets off—only to somehow wind up back in the real world and not in Fillory, as they'd hoped. As the pair struggle to find their way back to their lost kingdom, Quentin is forced to rely on Julia's illicitly learned sorcery as they face a sinister threat in a world very far from the beloved fantasy novels of their youth.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I enjoyed the first book despite its shortcomings and looked forward to reading this sequel. I even paid full price for both. Now that I have read the sequel, I can't say that I feel the same way about its inevitable follow-up. We start with Quentin and the three people who picked him up at the end of the last book (Julia, Eliot, and Janet) well established as the rulers of Fillory. Like Narnia, which Grossman rips off even more blatantly in this book than he did in the last, Fillory has two kings and two queens. We skipped over exactly why or how this came to be and no explanation is offered in this book. We DO get a detailed explanation for how Julia became a magician without an

acceptance to Brakebills. The story is interesting, but I disliked it for personal reasons. I just take umbrage with any person, fictional or non, who blames their failures on other people. Julia's story is filled with whining about how she deserved to get into Brakebills and she blames everyone except herself for flunking the exam that got her rejected in the first place. INCLUDING QUENTIN, which suddenly becomes a major plot point in the last ten pages of the novel. And since Grossman never establishes that she even WANTED to be a magician in the first place, her attitude is even harder to deal with. Why is she so determined to get into a world she never had much desire to join in the first place? She just wants it because she can't have it. And [BIG SPOILER ALERT!!] that story ends with a crazy rape scene that just pops out of the blue with zero warning and zero context or relevance. There's much to be said about a male author who subjects a female character to rape and then tries to use that as some kind of empowerment.

Not as good as *The Magicians*. This book felt rushed to publication, as the author seemed to default to "the item magically appears so that quest could be completed..." theme over and over and over. My impression of the first book was that the reader would come to that same conclusion (that fortuitous events mystically occurred occasionally in order to move the quest along), but in the first book, such intervention of "fate" seemed indirect and subtle. In the sequel, the appearance of the missing items doesn't surprise the reader (or the characters within the story) and appeared to be the norm and not the exception. I still love the author's books and his numerous references to modern events and terminology, but overall, the book was mildly disappointing. The first book seemed so "meaty," with exhaustive portions of the story containing riveting explanations of unusual people, places, events, emotions and relationships. (Who didn't love the development of friendships and antagonistic relationships at Brakebills?). The sequel, on the other hand, seems rushed, with very little for us to sink our teeth into. In the first book I found myself loving (and rooting for) many of the main characters and I empathized with so many of the characters in so many of the scenes. Who wasn't heartbroken when primary and secondary characters died in the first book? In the sequel, the characters seemed to simply be scenery. They just seemed emotionally checked out and disconnected from each other (none of them seemed to rely on each other for anything in the least). I didn't find myself emotionally invested in the characters in the sequel.

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