

Glimpse into March – April book club book DISCUSSION – Winter's Tale

The time has come! Our first book club online discussion is here :-). We have the next two weeks to discuss, and then we will start reading our next book on May 1st (the next book will be named on the blog today also!).

Winter's Tale is a book which was published in 1983, written by Mark Helprin. It is a story set in New York and follows a man, Peter Lake, during his troubled life, and his meeting of a young, dying woman.

Now, I am ready to be honest! I did not finish this book! Not a good start for our first book club book! I only made it to page 41. In choosing this book, I made a change from my normal genre selection, but was taken by the blurb. I decided this would be our first book to read, without determining the page count, or whether it was available on audiobook. Currently, I struggle to read for long, and hence rely on audiobooks for the pleasure of stories, which I know a lot of you do too. Winter's Tale, however, is sadly not available. My close friend decided to record herself as she read the book and send it to me. This amazing and thoughtful plan worked for a while, but then stopped! I assume (but wait to hear her side in this discussion!) that this may have something to do with the storyline! She is an avid reader, so it tells me a lot if it didn't grab her enough to keep reading and recording. I have learned from this experience that from now on, the books we read for bookclub will be shorter and available on audiobook, as well as freely available in bookstores, libraries or as an ebook. Feel free to put your ideas below on what our page limit should be.

As I did not get far into this book, I missed out on a lot of the story. I was intrigued by where the story was going. I did find that the background set up was dragged out too much though. I feel this may be why I struggled to get into the book (and I know I am not alone!). I felt the writing was descriptive and created amazing imagery for me. I enjoyed the introduction of various characters, told from their own perspective, instead of another's. I found the choice of language added to the character's personality and description of their background. I do want to find out what is going to happen, so it did hook me in, and I do hope to finish it one day (I believe that I would have finished it had it been available on audiobook).

What are your thoughts about the writing in this book? What do you think Mark Helprin did well? What did he not do so well?

Did you finish reading it? If not, why do you think that was? If you did, were you immediately interested, or did it take you a while to get hooked?

Did you enjoy the characters? Who did you like the most? Who did you not like? How has their past and backgrounds effected them today? How does that effect others?

Do you feel any characters developed themselves during the book? Did you enjoy the romance? Did you find yourself heartbroken?

Did you learn anything in this story; for example about life, or love, or history?

Did you enjoy the ending?

What would you ask Mark Helprin, given the chance?

In the comments below, leave your thoughts and ideas about this book. Feel free to be honest and open! We have two weeks to talk about it, so jump in and get chatting!

