

Practical Magic



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Reviews of the Practical Magic

Camper

This novel is not easy for me to review since I've seen the movie first. In truth, I didn't even know it was a book until I seen it on the shelf in the library a few years back. I wished I would of check it out then. At the same time, I'm not sure that having done that, I would have read *The Rules of Magic* because while this story is great, there are years (22 years) of storytelling experience between *Practical Magic* and *The Rules of Magic*. Don't get me wrong, it's still well-written, but there is a difference. Overall, it's still another great story of the bonds of sisterhood, the tragedy, and triumph of love. Another great adventure by Alice Hoffman.

In this novel, you get all the great magical prose as you do in *The Rules of Magic*. The storyline is similar, but with drastically different life experiences, content, and events. I loved that as it added to the whole Owens women are all destined for an enchanting life vibe.

I'm sure some want to know how it compares to the movie. You can't compare the two. They are peas and carrots. I can't say I like one better than the other because this novel is very different from the movie. With the novel, there is more depth about Sally and Gillian's life from childhood to adulthood. Even better, there is more narrative for Antonia and Kylie as they grow into their teens.

I love the movie and I always will, but I love the book differently. Either way, I adore this family of sincere and driven women and the final page brought on the same dread as the last page of *The Rules of Magic*. I simply didn't want it to end.

Elildelm

To preface my review I felt it necessary to mention that I read the prequel to this book titled, *The Rules of Magic* by Alice Hoffman prior to reading *Practical Magic*. Since Fall had finally begun and Halloween (my favorite holiday) was right around the corner reading *Practical Magic* just felt right. In my opinion reading the prequel helped me to better understand the history of the Owens family curse and the role it has played for generations. You cannot help but fall in love with ALL the Owens women including the ancient and mysterious aunts Francis and Jet (the main characters in the prequel) who took up residence in the infamous Owens family home established by their ancestor Maria Owens Hundreds of earlier. The aunts also took over the "family business" of magic...creating potions, remedies and of course the art of spell casting that has been passed down from generation to generation. The main characters in *Practical Magic*, sisters Sally and Gillian find themselves parentless and orphaned with only the aunts to turn to. Their world is completely turned upside down in a single evening and when the girls arrive at their aunts they soon discover the truth of who and what they really are. It seems that through out history the Owens women have tried to deny, hid and run away from who they really are, but fate always has its way of bringing out the truth and bringing the sisters and their aunts back together. Sally and Gillian are complete opposites from day one, but blood, family, the curse and of course love brings this family closer and closer. This book is a true testament to the powerful bond of sisters, the importance of family and the dangers that await along the road to self acceptance. There is also a movie called *Practical Magic* that is based on this book, if you love the book I would recommend watching the movie as well...but read the book and/or books first. Honestly, you should read both books: *The Rules of Magic* (prequel) and *Practical Magic* prior to watching the movie *Practical Magic*. This was a fast but great weekend read. I highly recommend reading both books in this series by Alice Hoffman and if you enjoyed them watch the movie. The book of course was better than the movie with a few different twists. Nicole Kidman (Gillian Owens) and Sandra Bullock (Sally Owens) bring this story to life in the movie *Practical Magic*, they could not have picked 2 better women to play these fabulous characters Alice Hoffman worked to hard to create.

Mushicage

I was excited when I found out this book was real. I grew up watching the movie and I had fell in love with how in the MOVIE the sisters had an unbreakable bond and the aunts were they type of aunts I desperately wished I had growing up. Aunts who let the girls eat chocolate for breakfast, did magical spells in the kitchen, wore purple and made midnight margaritas. However, aunts in the book are very different from the film. They are much older and much creepier. The book doesn't really talk about a family curse that the Owens women are plagued with but as you read you find the sad truth of just how the "cruse" started and how it trickled down to Sally and Gillian.

The book is almost the opposite from the film in every way. Sally and Gillian are sisters that lose their parents and are sent to live with their aunts who are the local witches in a very small and close-minded town. The aunts pretty much let the girls raise themselves which causes Sally to become the logical one who always had to think and calculate every step before she takes it and Gillian who throws caution to the wind and wears her heart of her sleeve. In the book, Sally is very resentful of her sister and at times hates her. The book is well written but tends to drift off in places. One moment you're reading about how difficult of a time Sally is having raising her teenage daughters and the next you're reading about the thoughts of a pizza delivery boy who makes a brief appearance in one paragraph.

Sally loses her husband in a freak accident and then spends a year basically as a mute who ignores her daughters and responsibilities as a mother. Gillian marries many times and leaves her husbands heartbroken because the sparks has gone out for her and she finds herself in a bored. Hoffman describes the way the sisters fall in love with their "true loves" like being struck by lightning. When Gillian shows up at her sisters place - after having not seen each other for many years - with her dead boyfriend she is in desperate need of help. The book and film are two different types of stories. The movie leaves out so much and changes important plot points. The book in its own way is beautifully written and a very different type of love story. Not my usual cup of tea...but I defiantly would recommend it.

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