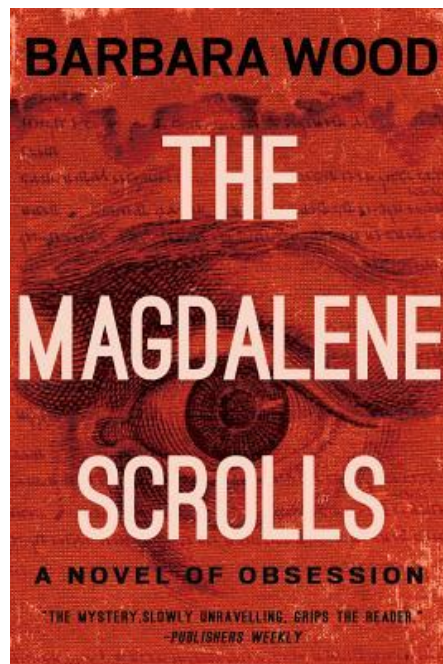




The Magdalene Scrolls

Barbara Wood

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Barbara Wood's 1978 debut novel is now back in print in a new edition from Turner Publishing. When the first of the Magdalene Scrolls arrives, Professor Ben Messer is puzzled, intrigued, excited. What scholar of ancient languages wouldn't be, when he held in his hands something even more astonishing than the Dead Sea Scrolls a scroll just discovered to contain the life story and last confession of a man who had lived in Jerusalem just after the death of Christ.

By the time the second scroll arrives, Ben's interest has begun to be more than professional. For it seems that David, the writer of the ancient scrolls, is in many ways very much like Ben and he seems to be speaking directly to Ben, across nearly 2,000 years of history. Before long, the terrifying transformation has begun, and there can be no turning back.

What do the words of a Jew who lived 2,000 years ago have to do with today, and with Ben Messer, a man who had forsaken his Jewish identity years ago or thought he had. And why does David's life suddenly seem so much more real and powerful than Ben's own? Why does Ben suddenly shut himself off from the beautiful woman he intends to marry and become involved with Judy Golden, a very different kind of woman? And what will happen if Ben surrenders completely to the power of the scrolls?

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The Magdalene Scrolls Details

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Author : Barbara Wood

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From Reader Review The Magdalene Scrolls for online ebook

Telaara Dunwin says

Es gibt nur zwei Punkte, warum ich dem Buch (bzw. in diesem Fall: dem Hörbuch) noch ein "it was ok" gebe. Zum einen ist zumindest die Handlung, die die Erlebnisse des Schreibers der Schriftrollen, David Ben Jona, im 1. Jahrhundert u.Z. wiedergibt, spannend und mitreißend erzählt. Zum anderen sind die Informationen über das Leben in dieser Zeit, über die Religion an sich und über Herangehensweise und Schwierigkeiten beim Übersetzen der Schriftrollen überaus interessant. Inwieweit das allerdings der Realität/dem Stand der Wissenschaft entspricht, kann ich nicht einschätzen, es wirkt aber zumindest gut recherchiert. Zum Hörbuch selbst ist noch zusätzlich zu sagen, dass der Sprecher eine ausgezeichnete Arbeit geleistet hat.

Den Rest kann man allerdings vergessen. Die Charaktere sind platt und stereotyp; mir waren allesamt absolut unsympathisch. Ihre Beweggründe und Handlungen - durchaus dramatisch in Szene gesetzt - sind häufig einfach nur banal, dumm, sinnlos und absolut nicht nachvollziehbar. Besonders die in der Gegenwart spielenden Teile waren schlicht und ergreifend nervig, mir ist nicht nur einmal ein 'Was für ein Schwachsinn' durch den Kopf geschossen.

Der Titel des Buches gaukelt eine mysteriöse Handlung vor. Was man bekommt ist ein Einblick in das Leben zweier mehr oder weniger durch seelische Misshandlung/Religion wahnsinnig gewordener Haupthelden.

Kelly says

Intense awesome read about a guy who interprets ancient scrolls. Entertaining and drama filled as well as educational as far as learning about ancient times. I never put it down, started at 7pm and finished at 2:30 am.

Beatriz Rosales says

Un viaje misterioso por dos épocas distantes y cercanas a la vez, en el cual se mezclan dos culturas y creencias. Es un relato en el cual se entrecruzan dos vidas, una la de Ben en la época actual y otra la de David en el siglo I d.c. Te captura la lectura porque quieres saber que relata cada una de las traducciones de los manuscritos que van llegando poco a poco y que conducen a una mezcla de las vidas de Ben y David, y te apremia llegar al final del secreto que debe ser revelado en el último manuscrito

Justreadin says

loved it. hard to put down. ending 3/5

Tracey says

This was awful and the writing well let me quote 'They both sipped their wine for awhile, listening to the darkness beyond the periphery of light.' How do you listen to darkness??

Moriquen says

The beginning of this book reminded me again why I like this 'genre' (if you can call it that) so much. I was immediately immersed in the lives of Ben Messer and David Ben Jonah. I was really hoping for new scrolls together with them. However somewhere in the second half of the book my enthousiasm lessened a bit. Ben's obsession with David became just a bit too much for me, especially later on in the story. And that kind of killed it for me a little. The ending left me wondering, but not in a good way. (More in a bored kind of way, not believing that this was the complete explanation for all Ben's irratic behaviour.)

Lesley says

Not my favorite Barbara Wood book, but intriguing.

sakura_txell says

Desconcertante

Esta autora no termina de convencerme, y eso que aún tengo un montón de libros suyos para leer... pero encuentro desconcertante que te mezcle algunas cosas que parece que no tengan cabida en la trama, y aún así aparecen...

No deja de ser entretenida, y no se hace pesada.

Leonor says

Reseña

El profesor paleógrafo Benjamín Messer trabaja en la universidad de California en Los Ángeles, impartiendo asignaturas relacionadas con Oriente Medio. También hace traducciones de papiros e inscripciones que los arqueólogos recuperan de sus excavaciones, del arameo y hebreo al inglés.

Le llegan por correo certificado las fotografías de unos papiros que parecen ser del primer siglo de nuestra era, para que las traduzca. La historia que narran no se parece a nada que haya visto antes; de hecho, parece ser la autobiografía (y confesión) de un hombre hacia su hijo, que realizó antes de morir. Lo que le llama la atención, aparte de lo raro de su descubrimiento, es que el hombre que escribe guarda muchas similitudes con él mismo, Ben.

Esto provocará que se retraiga cada vez más en su departamento, ignore a su preocupada novia Angie, con la que está prometido, y se acerque cada vez más a su estudiante Judy Golden.

Crítica

La historia iba bastante bien, muy interesante en especial la narración de los papiros, pero cuando la obsesión de Ben alcanza ribetes de locura, comienza a perder el encanto para mí. Claro que uno sigue queriendo saber qué pasa con David Ben Jonah (el escritor de los papiros), pero lo que pasa con Ben es desconcertante y verdaderamente repulsivo.

(view spoiler)

Valoro la forma de escribir de la autora, de hecho he leído varios libros de ella que me han gustado, sabe mantener la tensión (y en éste también). Pero el tema quizás no fue el adecuado para mí, ni la forma que adquiere la enfermedad de Ben.

Sólo recomendaría esta novela a los fans de Barbara Wood, porque el final para mí no tuvo nada de satisfactorio, aunque la mayor parte de la novela es interesante.

3 / 5 estrellas

Velvetink says

Finished now.

Most of the book takes place in Benjamin's apartment where he is translating ancient scrolls, apart from a few days where he is either lecturing at college or out with his girlfriend or waiting for the postman.

There are two narratives. That of the scrolls author David written about 70AD and Benjamin the translator. As Ben works through 11 scrolls his personality is transformed by not only the content of the scrolls but he is periodically possessed by David. Ben's possession is barely scary, and reads more like he is having some kind of multiple personality attack. There are great chunks of historical data in narrative form by David in the scrolls in the form of a confession. This is perhaps the most readable part of the book if you are interested in Jewish and early Christian history, but it wasn't supergluing me to my seat. In fact it did quite nicely as a Mogadon replacement. If it were not for the history I'd rate it one star. A plausible idea of possession that didn't quite come off and was confused with reincarnation. After one or two early mentions about the Curse of Moses there were no plagues, brimstone or raining frogs - I was disappointed. There's romance in the present and past times which some might like although I felt it was just a device to pull the story together. Honestly can't think who I would recommend it to.

up to p.100 approx. Ben's relationship with his airhead model girlfriend is falling apart as he gets more and more involved with translating the scrolls. He's also being drawn to one of his Jewish studies students who is more orthodox than he is. He's developing a limp like the narrator David of the scrolls and having memory lapses - that part is painful to read, overly drawn out with the GF freaking out about, so far just minor changes in Ben's personality. Meanwhile David's story in the scrolls unfolds. Some interesting Jewish/Hebrew history in the mix so far.

(one of 24 books found today at 2nd hand shop...24 for \$10!)

Betty says

Wieder mal eine gute Idee, leider wieder mal nicht gut umgesetzt. Der Beginn ist vielversprechend. Auch wenn sich die Geschichte nur langsam weiterentwickelt, bin ich am Ball geblieben, habe mich gefragt, welche Art von Buch es wirklich wird und wie die Lösung aussehen könnte. Doch kann der Schluss nur als echte Enttäuschung bezeichnet werden. Die Spannung wurde aufgebaut, zerplatzt aber plötzlich wie eine Seifenblase und lässt nichts zurück. Schade.

Tsukiko Haruka says

Pomalý rozjezd a náhlý konec... ale n?jakou ?ást uprost?ed jsem si dost užila. U ?eského p?ekladu m? nezastavovaly chyby... po dlouhé době. 2,5* - 3*

Jess the Audiobookworm says

4.25 ★ Audiobook? The first 75% of this story was adequately entertaining. I'm a sucker for anything dealing in Biblical lore and I think I have watched every historical documentary out there that focuses on biblical times, including several about the Dead Sea Scrolls. This interest also extends to written works and Mary Magdalene's role in *The da Vinci Code* is what initially caused *The Magdalene Scrolls* to grab my attention. Although I am disappointed that Mary Magdalene is not featured (and is hardly even mentioned) in this particular story, I still found it to be quite enjoyable and engulfin.

Until the last 20 or 25%, that is. From that point on, things got kind of bizarre. There are times when I am listening to a story and think "This is weird... but I like it" and then there are times when I just think "This is plain weird." The latter fourth of *The Magdalene Scrolls* was just plain weird to me. I understand that this is a novel about obsession (it clearly states that on the cover), but this author seems to have confused obsession with possession or possibly even reincarnation (it's never clear which). From my point of view, it seemed to be more about psychosis. The author is very vague about the bizarre twist the end of the book takes and fails to offer any sort of reasonable explanation. I'm not averse to the plot's bizarre turn, just how it was written. The ending of this novel quite literally left me scratching my head. I immensely enjoyed Barbara Wood's writing style in the rest of the book, however, and would not be opposed to giving her work another try someday. My final feelings on this story can be summed up by saying that I generally liked it, even if I didn't always understand it.

Narration review: Upon first beginning this audiobook, I mentally dubbed Norman Gilligan "documentary-voice dude" and thought how appropriate it was that he narrated this historical fiction audiobook. Judging by his voice's tone, Gilligan seems like the perfect narrator for this type of story. The richness of his voice

definitely enhanced the atmosphere of the story, although his characterization for male roles was definitely stronger than it was for the females, who tended to sound alike. ♣?

→ This audiobook was graciously gifted to me by its publisher, Cherry Hill Publishing, in exchange for a review containing my honest thoughts and opinions and can be purchased here. Thanks, Cherry Hill!

Rosbel says

An intense book: it's a good read, although historically it could have deepen a little more... As a narrative, it's quite interesting and easily keeps you going. A con for me was the characters; they are very plain and it's hard to identify with them, so at some point, they are very very predictable.

Marti says

Hat mich leider gar nicht mitgerissen ...
