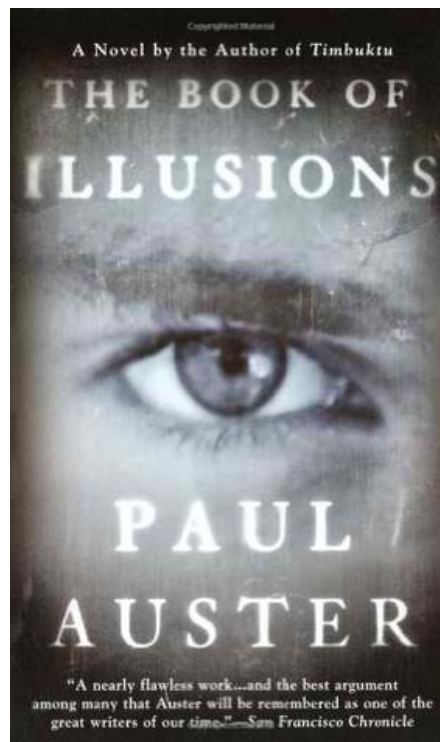




The Book of Illusions

Paul Auster

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Six months after losing his wife and two young sons, Vermont Professor David Zimmer spends his waking hours mired in a blur of alcoholic grief and self-pity. One night, he stumbles upon a clip from a lost film by silent comedian Hector Mann. His interest is piqued, and he soon finds himself embarking on a journey around the world to research a book on this mysterious figure, who vanished from sight in 1929.

When the book is published the following year, a letter turns up in Zimmer's mailbox bearing a return address from a small town in New Mexico inviting him to meet Hector. Zimmer hesitates, until one night a strange woman appears on his doorstep and makes the decision for him, changing his life forever.

The Book of Illusions Details

Date : Published July 13th 2003 by Picador Paper (first published 2002)

ISBN : 9780312990961

Author : Paul Auster

Format : Paperback 288 pages

Genre : Fiction, Mystery, Contemporary, Literature, American

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From Reader Review The Book of Illusions for online ebook

Dimitris Passas says

"?νιωθε κ?ποιο ολο?να και μεγαλ?τερο τι?μα του μυαλο? του να διαλ?εται μ?σα στο κραν?ο του. Η ζω? ε?ναι ?να ονειρικ? παραλ?ρημα, ανακ?λυψε, και η πραγματικ?τητα ?νας μετ?ωρος κ?σμος γεμ?τος με επινο?σεις και παραισθ?σεις, ?νας τ?πος ?που ?λα ?σα φαντ?στηκες ποτ? πραγματοποιο?νται."

Το "Βιβλ?ο των Ψευδαισθ?σεων" δεν προσθ?τει, αλλ? ο?τε και αφαιρε? κ?τι απ? το προσωπικ?, καλλιτεχνικ? κεφ?λαιο του Πολ ?στερ, ο οπο?ος καταπι?νεται, για μια ακ?μη φορ?, με το θ?μα που φα?νεται να τον κατατρ?χει απ? την αρχ? της συγγραφικ?ς του σταδιοδρομ?ς και δεν ε?ναι ?λλο απ? το πρ?βλημα της προσωπικ?ς ταυτ?τητας και τα ?ρια που διαχωρ?ζουν το εγ? απ? τα υπ?λοιπα υποκε?μενα, τους "?λλους". Η πλο?σια λεξιλογικ? και υφολογικ? αφ?γηση του ?στερ ξεκιν? την εξιστ?ρηση της παρ?ξενης σχ?σης εν?ς καθηγητ? πανεπιστημ?ου των Η.Π.Α., ον?ματι Ντ?ιβιντ και εν?ς αστ?ρα του βωβο? κινηματογρ?φου που ?χει αποσυρθε? απ? την μεγ?λη οθ?νη εδ? και δεκαετ?ες, τον ?κτορα Μαν. Το βιβλ?ο δεν διακρ?νεται απ? τη δαιδαλ?δη πλοκ? του, εν? η αν?γνωση κυλ?ει αργ?, τουλ?χιστον αυτ? ε?ναι η προσωπικ? μου εμπειρ?α, και ο ανανγ?στης που ε?ναι εξοικειωμ?νος με τη γραφ? του ?στερ νι?θει ?τι βρ?σκεται σε γν?ριμο ?δαφος με αποτ?λεσμα αυτ? να δρ? αρνητικ?, καθ?ς αισθ?νεται κανε?ς ?τι διαβ?ζει για μια ακ?μη φορ? το ?διο βιβλ?ο. Το γεγον?ς αυτ?, ?πως και μια ?ντονη και εμφατικ? αυτοαναφορικ?τητα του συγγραφ?α θεωρ? ?τι αποτελο?ν τα μεγ?λα με?ον του "Βιβλ?ου των Ψευδαισθ?σεων", χωρ?ς αυτ? να σημα?νει ?τι δεν αξ?ζει τον κ?πο να το εντ?ξει κανε?ς στη βιβλιοθ?κη του, ειδικ?τερα ε?ν ε?ναι η πρ?τη του επαφ? με τον ?στερ. Ο Αμερικαν?ς συγγραφ?ας ?χει τον τρ?πο να σε β?ζει σε μια ιδια?τερη κατ?σταση πνευματικ?ς εγρ?γορσης, η οπο?α ε?ναι απρα?τητη για να συλλ?βεις τις, συχν? ?ξυπνες και ιδια?τερα ενδιαφ?ρουσες, ιδ?ες που αποτελο?ν τον πυρ?να των περισσ?τερων βιβλ?ων του. Προσωπικ? θεωρ? ?τι το καλ?τερο εισαγωγικ? βιβλ?ο για κ?ποιον που θ?λει να γνωρ?σει τον Όστερ ε?ναι η "Τριλογ?α της Ν?ας Υ?ρκης", το καλ?τερο, ?σως, ?ργο του.

Annet says

I have changed my mind about this book. The first pages were tough to read and I wasn't sure if I could make it to the end. But the story grew on me. This book has been on my shelves for a long time, the first Auster I bought. I just love Brooklyn Follies, was intrigued by Man in the Dark and Auggie Wren's Xmas story is great as well. The story line is intriguing: A man loses his wife and two children in a plane crash. In sorrow, he is fascinated by a silent movie actor, who disappeared from the face of the earth a long time ago, and writes a book about him. Then he receives a letter that the actor wants to see him... I guess you either like Auster or you don't. Paul Auster is not an easy read, always troubling in a way, but his style is beautiful, poetic and his stories always fascinating. 3.6 stars. Need to reread!

Parastoo Ashtian says

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Will Byrnes says

After having lost his wife and children in a plane crash, writer and teacher David Zimmer is on a path of self-destruction, drinking, behaving badly around people, rejecting any and all understanding and sympathy. But seeing a bit of silent film comedy on TV, he takes up the task of examining and writing a book about the work of one comedic genius from the 20's. Soon after the book is published the wife of the supposedly dead film-maker contacts Zimmer to ask if he might like to meet the man himself.

There is much parallelism here, Zimmer with both Hector Mann, the ancient film-maker and Chateaubriand, the author of a lengthy autobiography that Zimmer is translating. In a way all three are dead. Zimmer and Mann had both attempted suicide. And a character in the book ultimately succeeds in such an attempt.

What is real and what is illusion? Hector had been in the business of illusion, then had to present an illusion of himself for most of his life. His film The Life of Martin Frost echoes the book's theme of illusion. Sometimes an illusion can be a helpful thing, as when Zimmer is comforted by Alma on the plane (see below). There is a passage in which Mann spots what he believes to be a blue stone on the street. He has a detailed plan of what he will do with it, alive with human connection, only to find that it is a gob of spit. Yet the imagining was enough to alter his life course. Maybe illusions are what we tell ourselves, what we need, in order to survive.

I enjoyed the book very much. It was a fast read, engaging, with interesting characters and enough suspense to sustain a level of tension. There was, perhaps, too little told of Hector's wife and why she does what she does. Well, Auster does explain, but I found it unconvincing. I wish that I had kept better track of characters. No, there are not hordes of them. I just wish that I had tracked the braiding of the stories. There is much interweaving here, much that occurs for some that also occur for others. I was too tired while reading this to devote adequate attention to that. C'est la vie. I was encouraged, however, to read more of Auster.

Daniel Polansky says

This sucked. Sucked sucked sucked sucked sucked. Utterly mediocre. Shoddily written, never pretty and often not even competent (a rough third of the book consists of the narrator describing movies which don't exist). The characters are paper thin, their motivations largely nonsensical. Its got Auster's usual obsessions about identity, and writing as a form of creation, and blah blah blah, but it doesn't lead into anything meaningful. This was my third Auster book, as mentioned, and I feel confident it's going to be my last. One more exhibit that the modern critical establishment just doesn't have a goddamn idea what they're doing.

Doug says

I just recommended this book to someone stranded in the Minneapolis airport. I had forgotten how much I liked it until I saw it sitting there quietly on the shelf, minding it's own business.

This is why real books are so much more awesome than ebooks--they come back to tickle your mind. That, and when you spill wine on them (like I did on my copy of The Book of Illusions) they don't give up the ghost in an electric funeral.

Anyhow. Take that, Minneapolis.

Schuyler says

Oh Mr. Auster, what are we to do with you? This might have been the last book I end up reading by Paul Auster. It's been a nice ride, but I think he's run his course in my literary life. He's not doing anything great with language, though that's not really his "thing" anyway...he's more about playing with narrative and building pseudo-complex plots whose ideas aren't fully realized.

There was a lot in this novel that I found almost laughably cliché, but the bath tub sex scene towards the end stands out in my mind. I think it's best for writers to stay away from sex scenes in 'literary fiction', and if you are going to attempt such a thing, better keep it nice and vague.

The creation of the silent film star Hector Mann is one of the redeeming qualities of this novel.

Erik says

Paul Auster, you bastard!

The man writes such depressing stuff. As with the other Auster I've read (I know I've only read 2 Austers, I am such a failure at being pretentious), I finished this and I was like... what, why did I read this?

To explain myself I should say that I follow the Roger Ebert school of criticism. Roger Ebert cares more about how a movie makes him feel than on its technical merits. Granted, this is rather less valid in the medium of words on a page than the sound and fury of film, but I still stick to it. I have no problem trashing Plath's Bell-jar, regardless of its supposed literary merit or historical significance, because it bored and annoyed me.

But getting to the point of this book, let me break it down for you literary thugs: there is a man whose family dies in an accident. He is depressed, but then he sees a silent comedy on TV and laughs for the first time in long while. He then decides to write about the star of this silent comedy, a man named Hector Mann. In the course of this, he finds out that Hector Mann disappeared, but he may actually still be alive!!! Stuff ensues, there are some themes brought up, there's some angst, there's some sex, you know the drill. And don't worry none of that's spoiler material, all on the first page basically.

Worth reading for a few pieces of stellar writing. I was particularly impressed by how Auster writes about a film that doesn't actually exist. I bought into it, I was convinced. It's a story within a story (within a story within a story ad nauseam), and it's true that the inner stories are better told than the outer ones. I'm cool with

that.

In summary, though: "Paul Auster, you bastard!" is my review. If you likewise enjoy calling famous authors bastards, then I recommend this book to you highly.

As a side note, a result of this novel, I had to add a new shelf called "bepretentious." Just read some of the other, actually useful reviews and you'll see what I mean.

Chris_P says

Paul Auster obviously has a thing for men who linger between reality and nothingness. Men whose realities take a turn towards the vague, so much so, that they seem to dress themselves in the vagueness that surrounds them. Men who lose everything or men who never really had anything to begin with. Men who seem to be caught for good inside an illusion along with everyone that surrounds them. Now they're here, now they're not. There are two of those men in *The Book of Illusions*: the narrator and Hector Man. Bound to each other, they meet only for an hour toward the end but the echo of their meeting is present after as much as before the event.

What strange time for me to read this particular book! By the end of the first chapter it had grabbed me by the neck. What's weird is that my present state has something of the book's essence. As a result, book and reality mixed in an almost hurtful way. I regret, however, that my own illusions take up much of my mental capacity nowadays, which proved unable to fully embrace this haunting novel. Not that I regret the illusions themselves. Where would the point in that be, after all?

It's haunting, intense, and filled with a melancholy that sticks on your fingers with every page that you turn. There's a kind of sadness in the very idea of illusions, and Auster sure took great advantage of that. It's the idea that everything you have can disappear in the blink eye. Something precious falls into our arms and we call it a miracle. One day, we open our eyes and it's gone. Then, it's a tragedy. The worst is that, once it's gone, one can never be sure if it was ever even there.

Don't be fooled, *The Book of Illusions* is so much more than my clouded mind can produce right now. A story of lightnings that strike the same place twice against all odds. As for me, I'm becoming a fan.

Jill says

By reading this book I have become a die-hard Auster fan. The man is amazing. So clever, so imaginative, so poetic and almost profound. This book rambles, and in doing so touches on so many intertwined narratives that one almost gives up on what was assumed to be the original plot and assumes the opening catch phrase was just another Paul Auster smoke screen story line. But this one, even in creating such an intricately woven network of a character experiences, never loses sight of its ultimate goal - to explain how the supposed disappearance of a silent film actor affected the life of a professor and widower from Detroit. The world created in this book is done with such care and is so full of unexpected and tangential details that I found myself wondering if I wasn't perhaps reading a work of historical fiction rather than just a plain old novel. It's an amazingly well crafted narrative, heartwrenching and hopeful at the same time. A man's life is an illusion to all except those who share in it.

Steven Godin says

Being drawn into Paul Auster's fiction was one of the reasons my reading became more widespread. This story grabbed me from the off, and was indeed difficult to put down. Ok so he is an acquired taste, but there is just something about his writing that hooks you in and doesn't let go so easily. The story here is both captivating and strangely mysterious. It's all about digging into the past in quite an obsessive manner, just who was Hector Mann?, what happened to him?, is he still alive?, gripped by intrigue, professor David Zimmer makes it his life's goal to discover the truth, and step by step he pulls back the blanket on an enigmatic life that no body else would even bother about. Could the great silent film star have been pulling the wool over everyone's eyes all this time?, as we enter deeper and deeper into a cocktail of deceit and dissimulation, his quest for answers starts growing like a cancer. Traversing through the American mid-west and finally New Mexico, nothing could prepare Zimmer for just what is about to follow...

This could be viewed as the brother to 'The New York Trilogy', covering roughly the same sort of ground in places here, but whereas TNYT had cold complexities that either sucked you in, or drove you away, this although complex, has a warmer feel to it and by far is easier to read. Hardcore Auster fans may view this as not his best, but I was totally immersed from start to finish, even if it wasn't the ending I was crying out for.

A dazzling masterpiece of fiction!

Richard Derus says

Rating: one furious, disgusted star of however many stars there are in a galaxy

I've never been fond of pompous writing, the kind that checks its look in the mirror of acclaim and piles on the self-satisfied smirking smugness that makes me want to torch all the MFA schools I can reach.

My review, which I've moved to my blog, says that and more. Apparently the hoi polloi slithering in from the Internet's more sanctimonious quarters don't agree with me, therefore I must be wrong.

Ingrid says

Primo romanzo che leggo di un autore, Paul Auster, di cui ho letto sempre bene, special modo per il suo romanzo più famoso, vale a dire "Trilogia di N.Y".

Psicologicamente sopravvissuto alla morte della famiglia in un disastro aereo, David Zimmer attraversa un normale periodo di depressione e sconforto assoluto interrotto, quasi magicamente (o, per l'appunto, in modo illusorio), dalla visione di un film muto alla televisione. In questa pellicola, che lo fa ridere fino alle lacrime, c'è un attore, il protagonista, Hector Mann, al quale decide di dedicarsi, vedendo e studiando i suoi film. Da lì si aprono un ventaglio di storie, di matrioske di emozioni e frammenti di vite vissute, in un incalzare sempre più vorticoso.

La trama principale e' apparentemente lineare e anche un po' scarna, ma il vero nucleo del racconto sono il lungo flashback sulla vita di Mann prima e dopo la sua scomparsa e due descrizioni dei suoi film. Questi ultimi in particolar modo sono così dettagliati e descritti alla perfezione, che ti lasciano la sensazione esatta di aver visto anche tu quel film.

E' un romanzo che rapisce e incanta, una storia dolorosa raccontata da un amico, che ti si confida e si apre via via che il romanzo prosegue. Ogni pagina è dolorosa, misteriosa e incantevole. La scrittura di Auster è

davvero incisiva, diretta, senza il benché minimo fronzolo, scandaglia le angosce e le nevrosi dell'uomo in modo fin troppo spietato, descrivendo la solitudine dell'uomo e i demoni che lo abitano con assoluta lucidità.

Krenzel says

WARNING FOR SPOILERS

If a tree falls in the forest and no one hears it, does it make a sound or not? This famous question is closely examined in "The Book of Illusions," by author Paul Auster, as he tells the story of literature professor David Zimmer, who copes with the death of his wife and two sons by shutting out the real world so that he can inhabit the "silent world of Hector Mann," an obscure actor from the 1920s. After leaving a dozen movies behind that nobody seems to know about, Hector disappeared in 1929, presumed dead. However, it turns out he is actually alive in New Mexico, paying penance for the role he played in the accidental death of his girlfriend – vowing never to make another movie and eventually only agreeing to make movies if they will be destroyed immediately upon his death and never be seen by an audience. According to Hector's rationale, if he makes a movie and nobody sees it, then his movie does not exist. But is this true? Does an idea have to be shared – and experienced by others – to exist and take on meaning? Although he provides confusing answers throughout the work, first suggesting that Hector's greatness can be achieved on his own, ultimately Auster seems to conclude that Hector's works only become important when they are shared and experienced by others.

At first, Auster suggests Hector can attain greatness on his own, even without an audience. When Hector Mann disappears, his film career is pretty much over due to the invention of sound in movies and his heavy accent. His last major film, "Mr. Nobody," is a response to the frustration he feels about his career, as, in the film, his character takes a magic potion that makes him invisible. Eventually, he is reborn as a new person, and, facing himself in the mirror, he confronts the fact of his own annihilation with an exuberant smile – the last image of Hector Mann that will be seen by audiences, seemingly content with the idea he is "no longer the Hector Mann who has amused us and entertained us." Similarly, in his own life, Hector is forced to disappear after his girlfriend is killed, and, to disguise himself, he loses his trademark mustache, so that he is "the spitting image of Mr. Nothing himself." In his new life, Hector no longer makes movies, but instead works odd jobs and focuses on reading, writing, learning English, and planting trees. In his journals, Hector writes, "I talk only to the dead now. They are the only ones I trust, the only ones who understand me." Hector no longer shares himself with an audience – Hector Mann has been annihilated – but, according to his biographer and friend Alma, he is closer to greatness than ever before: "[T]he further he traveled from his point of origin, she said, the closer he came to achieving greatness. [. . .] Even now, he still talks about the trees as his greatest accomplishment. Better than his films, she says, better than anything else he's ever done." In this reading of Hector's life, based on the interpretation of "Mr. Nobody," Hector is the only voice that matters; even without an audience, he can still attain greatness.

However, a later film, "The Inner Life of Martin Frost," questions this notion that artists can attain greatness without sharing their work with others. In this movie, which Hector made after his disappearance with the promise it would never be released to an audience, is different from his earlier work: it is serious, not a comedy, and Hector does not act in it. In the movie, Martin Frost, a writer, must destroy his work to save the life of his girlfriend Claire. After she is brought back to life and realizes what has happened, she erupts in tears, asking Martin if he realizes what's he done and desperately wondering what they are going to do now. The movie ends ambiguously with her questions and no answers from Martin. Similarly, after Hector's death, his wife Frieda destroys everything – his movies, his journals, and even the manuscript of a biography his friend Alma had been working on for seven years – in a "precise reenactment of the final scene of Martin Frost." Pondering Frieda's actions, David thinks about Hector's sacrifice of "the one thing that would have

given his work meaning – the pleasure of sharing it with others," but then realizes that, in Frieda's mind, "It was about making something in order to destroy it. That was the work, and until all evidence of the work had been destroyed, the work would not exist. It would come into being only at the moment of its annihilation." In Frieda's interpretation, work was not created for others; in fact, sharing Hector's work with others would cause it to lose its meaning.

However, ultimately, both of Auster's protagonists – David Zimmer and Hector Mann – seem to repudiate Frieda and believe that Hector's work does not lose meaning if it is shared with others. When Alma had first told David about her biography of Hector, he was initially skeptical: "It's one thing to unburden himself to you, but a book is for the world, and as soon as he tells his story to the world, his life becomes meaningless." In other words, a book exists not for the author or subject but for readers, and by sharing himself with them, Hector could lose himself. He would exist as they saw him, and not as he really was – their illusions of him would become reality. When David questions Hector about why he would want to give himself away like that, Hector answers, "Why should it bother me to turn myself into an example for others? [. . .] You laughed, Zimmer. Perhaps others will begin to laugh with you." These words – the last Hector speaks in the book – show his realization of the positive impact his work can have on others, as he comes to the conclusion that his earlier films, if they made David laugh, were "perhaps the greatest good" he had done. David ultimately seems to embrace Hector's viewpoint, hoping that others will laugh with him, as he takes pleasure when Hector's silent comedies are put out on video and becomes an honorary member of a fan club, the International Brotherhood of Hector Manniacs. Most of all, he hopes that someday the lost films of Hector Mann – the ones that Frieda destroyed – will be found somehow so others can enjoy them like he did, "and the story will start all over again. I live with that hope." In order to have meaning, Hector's films must be shared with others. Unlike Frieda, David believes that Hector's films should be shared with the world.

Although he provides confusing answers throughout "The Book of Illusions," first suggesting that Hector's greatness can be achieved on his own, ultimately Auster seems to conclude that Hector's works only become important when they are shared and experienced by others. Like the confusing answers to the question of the movie that nobody sees, "The Book of Illusions" is full of other confusing themes and contradictions. For example, one major theme of the book is the effect of chance and how small circumstances can have a significant impact on our lives. However, while there are some small circumstances which impact the action in the book, for the most part, the major events are more like contrived and implausible plot devices – an ex-girlfriend killed by a current girlfriend, a wife and two sons lost in a plane crash, David held at gunpoint so that he will watch a movie, a tough fall resulting in another death, a suicide, a possible murder. Are these really "small circumstances" of chance? Moreover, while this issue of fate is explored in depth like the meaning of one's work, the two themes are never tied together. In Auster's telling, both Hector and David cope with loss by turning to art but they are not reborn again except through accidents of fate, so that the one seemingly resolved idea in the book – the issue of the movie nobody hears – becomes irrelevant compared to the greater themes of fate and rebirth. The interplay between the various themes is never explored, and it is easy to get confused as all of these ideas are presented, but are often contradicted and never fully resolved, leading a reader to ponder the 2001 Atlantic Monthly article's criticism of Paul Auster: "[He] knows the prime rule of pseudo-intellectual writing: the harder it is to be pinned down on any idea, the easier it is to conceal that one has no ideas at all." In light of the questions asked in "The Book of Illusions," it is easy to wonder: if an author throws out a lot of different ideas but never resolves them, so that readers can't understand what those ideas are, do the ideas actually exist?

The Reading Bibliophile says

I read this more than ten years ago, so I cannot write a detailed review. But I can still remember the feeling of eagerly reading this book. And that's a good memory.

George Georgiadis says

Μου θ?μισε εκε?νη τη φρ?ση που ειπ?θηκε δια στ?ματος Μ?θιου Μακ?ναχι στην πρ?τη σεζ?ν του True Detective: "To realize that all your life, all your love, all your hate, all your memories, all your pain, it was all the same thing. It was all the same dream, a dream that you had inside a locked room, a dream about being a person". Μεγ?λος Auster και π?λι.

Alika Yarnell says

A surprising book that is riveting through to the final words. I say "surprising" because at first it's not clear as to what kind of book this is going to be. As with some of Auster's other work, the novel is told through a first-person narrator who happens to be a writer. We get long accounts of the book he is writing (about a silent filmmaker who went missing some years prior) and almost forget that there is a narrator involved, that we aren't reading a third-person account of this filmmaker's strange life. But the book takes several turns and we get our narrator back--with interest--as a series of events unfold in a haunting and devastating way. Auster is a master at seamlessly weaving complex themes into his prose without being heavy-handed or at the sacrifice of a good and entertaining story. Hats off to you, sir.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

The Book of Illusions, Paul Auster

The Book of Illusions is a novel by American writer Paul Auster, published in 2002. It was nominated for the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award in 2004.

Set in the late 1980s, the story is written from the perspective of David Zimmer, a university professor who, after losing his wife and children in a plane crash, falls into a routine of depression and isolation. After seeing one of the silent comedies of Hector Mann, an actor missing since the 1920s, he decides to occupy himself by watching all of Mann's films and writing a book about them.

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Blair says

David Zimmer is a teacher and writer whose wife and two young sons have been killed in an aeroplane crash. At his lowest ebb, suicidal and alcoholic, David sees a silent film on television and laughs for the first time since the tragedy. Thereafter, he develops a fascination with the actor featured in the old movie, Hector Mann - a minor star of silent comedies who vanished in 1929 and was never seen or heard of again. Travelling around the world in order to visit the film archives containing Hector's few movies, David

channels his obsession into a book about the actor's work. However, the story really begins some time after this, when David receives a mysterious letter containing some startling news about Hector.

The Book of Illusions displays many characteristics of Auster's typical style, most noticeably the constant presence of symbolism, the perceived significance of art and the line between reality and (as the title suggests) illusion. Here, rather than the emphasis being on language and writing, the focus is on Hector's films and their visual impact, though of course the power of storytelling is still key. When David discovers that Hector made some films that were never seen by anyone else, he questions whether art has any importance if it is not shared with and experienced by an audience. David's ruminations are mirrored in various ways throughout the narrative - David withdraws from life, shuts himself away and becomes invisible, so it seems ironic that he becomes obsessed with a silent movie star; Hector makes a film called 'Mr. Nobody' in which he *literally* becomes invisible, and then, in his real life, he disappears; another character, Alma, is made *more* visible by a large birthmark on her face, yet she feels this gives her the ability to instantly see others' true characters through their reactions to her appearance.

There are elements of the story that are, from a distance, completely implausible. The manner of David and Alma's first meeting is really quite ridiculous, and certainly unbelievable, as is the speedy development of their relationship. But I think this is where the genius of Auster's writing really lies, in suspending the reader's disbelief and immersing you so deeply into the story that these strange events seem believable. I can imagine that the book won't work for everyone - some may find the lengthy descriptions of unseen, nonexistent films dull (I really enjoyed them), and there's a curious... quietness about it all - a very subdued feel. This is not a deeply thrilling novel, more of a restrained but haunting little tale. On balance I think I personally prefer *Oracle Night*, but there is plenty to recommend this story, especially for fans of the author. (If you're not already acquainted with Auster, I'd still recommend *The New York Trilogy* as a primer.)

Benay says

Okudu?um ikinci Paul Auster kitab?yd?.

Yine ad?m ad?m beni avu?lar?na ald?.

Okuduk?a sevdim, sevdik?e okudum.

David Zimmer'in, kendisi gibi ölüm ve ya?am aras?nda bir yerlerde var olmaya ?al??an bir komedi oyuncusunun hayat?n? inceleyerek ba?lad??? hayata geri dönü? yolculu?unu seveceksiniz. Çünkü hepimiz bazen kayboluruz, bizi mahveden olaylar ya?ar ve yolumuzu bulamayaca??m?z? san?r?z. Ama hayat ya?amak için var ve görmeyi istersek bir sürü ç?k?? yolu gözlerimizin önünde.
