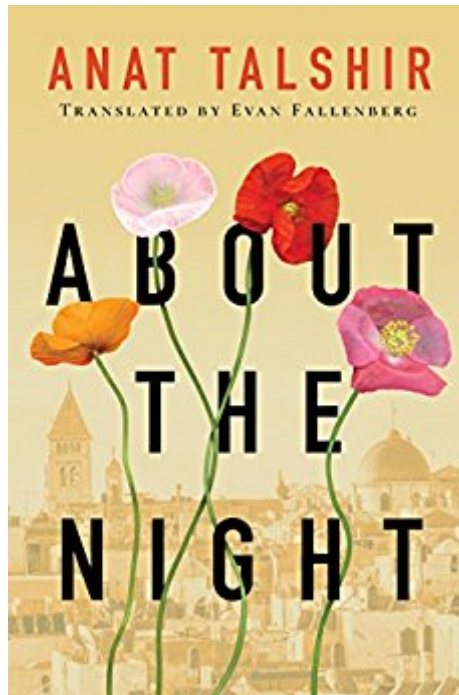




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About The Night



Synopsis

On a hot summer day in 1947, on a grandstand overlooking Jerusalem, Elias and Lila fall deeply, irrevocably in love. Tragically, they come from two different worlds. Elias is a Christian Arab living on the eastern side of the newly divided city, and Lila is a Jew living on the western side. A growing conflict between their cultures casts a heavy shadow over the region and their burgeoning relationship. Between them lie not only a wall of stone and barbed wire but also the bitter enmity of two nations at war. Told in the voice of Elias as he looks back upon the long years of his life, *About the Night* is a timely story of how hope can nourish us, loss can devastate us, and love can carry us beyond the boundaries that hold human beings apart.

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Customer Reviews

I wanted to love this book, unfortunately it fell short. I rated it 2 stars. One star for a compelling plotline. One star for beautiful imagery. Now here's where the author lost me. I wanted more history. I read mostly historical fiction. A great HF novel makes you feel like you are living in a place in time right along with the characters. This book left me wondering about Israeli history. I actually had to

Google a timeline so I knew what was happening, and left me wondering why the author didn't just tell me herself. Then there's the format. Yikes! Characters reflecting on previous occasions. Flashbacks abound. Character in 2006 thinking about 1967, but wait now it's 1947. Its all over the place, and no wonder the historical record was hard to grasp. Lastly, the characters themselves. Again, I wanted more. A sweeping epic that spans 60 years needs more. Nomi's family is there then written off in a paragraph. Hey, I didn't need all these characters, but the author introduced them, so develop them! I bought the romance, the longing. I just longed for more.

This is an enjoyable read that had a lot of good qualities and a few I didn't follow as well. I've tried to list my thoughts without spoilers as best as I could below. Good qualities: 1. The written language is beautiful and artistic. Descriptions are wonderfully visual and inspire the reader to rise to a higher level of communication. 2. The storyline is a wonderful take on an old classic with a much happier ending for the couple in love. 3. There is no foul language, and although romantic scenes are described in the book they are tasteful and nothing to blush about. If my mother were to read this book as well, I would have no problem discussing it with her comfortably. The same cannot be said about some romantic novels I've purchased. 4. The characters resonate with you. This is the highest praise I can offer an author. I cared about the main characters. You feel their pain, take joy in accomplishments, understand their hesitations. 5. I wanted to read this book. If I had a few spare minutes, I would open up the kindle app on my phone and read. I spent extra time at night reading when I could have been sleeping. It was compelling, you wanted to know where it was going and how certain things were going to happen. Qualities I was not as in love with: 1. This book seemed choppy at points. It was obvious that the author has a clear storyline in mind, but the flow of the book wasn't always smooth. There were introductions of characters that I didn't understand why we cared about at first placed randomly throughout the book. Some of the relationships/character developments appear strained and lacking in depth. These relationships appeared to be there for a convenient purpose and never developed. This was also an issue for me with the lovers. Their love didn't develop, it just was. The time period of "what ifs" that most books explore more in depth was skipped over entirely and referenced briefly. The couple went from not knowing each other to lovers very quickly and somewhat unconvincingly for the time period. 2. The book jumps around a lot. It's not the standard time line, but starts at the end and mostly is looking back at time. The main character relaying most of the story is the hero, however the story follows the heroine. How would the hero know her thoughts and actions during a time they weren't together. How did he know and understand the relationships of others from an area he was forbidden to visit while they were

happening?3. People of high moral standings involve themselves in not moral situations. I was not convinced that the character developed in the story would behave the way they did in certain circumstances. There were chapters dedicated to convincing the reader of a certain quality that was completely contradicted by an action later on.4. Writing style: there was beautiful description in parts, and matter of fact reporting in others that didn't align well with a novel writing style. Overall the book was a compelling read and I enjoyed it. I grew fond of the characters and even spoke of the book with my husband. The love shared inspired warm feelings within my own life of gratitude and love. Thus, I don't believe a book could deliver a better outcome than changing a simple detail in reality. I would highly recommend this book for others to read.

This is a beautiful story. There's so much to love and appreciate here. This is one of those stories that really make me love historical fiction. The setting as a big part of what I loved about the story. People try to do stories of this kind in made-up scenarios and though some work, using the events that transpired in Jerusalem in the middle of the last century is just genius. There were so many things that I never quite understood about that era that can't really be described in a typical history class type setting. It was so well addressed here while never allowing the events of the day to interfere with the story or seem like it existed solely to explain the conflict. It was just a part of the world, the way the tension was between the two groups, the way that lives were destroyed. I loved the characters. I feel like I really understood them and their motives. They had a level depth that is rare in any story. I'm sure that this is in part due to that the reader knew most of their entire lives by the end, but none of that was delivered in a strained way. It just flowed naturally through the story. The writing was just amazing. It made the shifting points of view and times feel natural. I'm not a fan of frame type stories, and this one could have been written that way, but the style was just a bit different. Elias was telling the story to Nomi, but they're written as flashbacks and not one person explaining it to another, which I thought worked much better. This was the first book I finished during this year's Women in Translation month, and it's actually my first translated fiction ever. I don't quite know what I was expecting, but it never felt translated or like the language was forced in any way. Fallenberg, the translator, did a great job and he seems has done at least nine other translations.

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