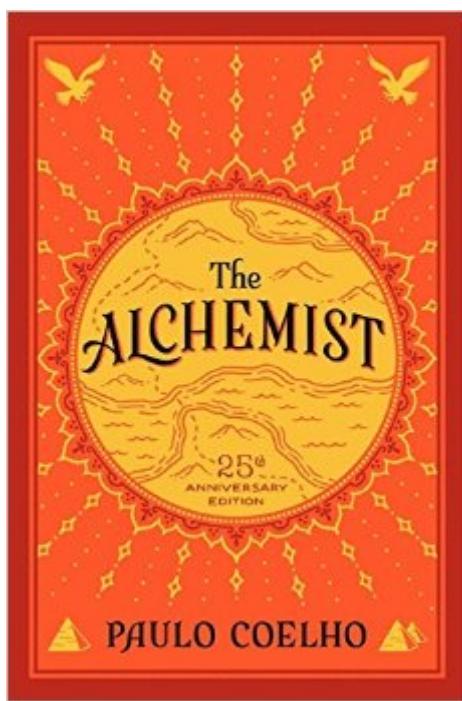


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The Alchemist



Synopsis

A special 25th anniversary edition of the extraordinary international bestseller, including a new Foreword by Paulo Coelho. Combining magic, mysticism, wisdom and wonder into an inspiring tale of self-discovery, *The Alchemist* has become a modern classic, selling millions of copies around the world and transforming the lives of countless readers across generations. Paulo Coelho's masterpiece tells the mystical story of Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy who yearns to travel in search of a worldly treasure. His quest will lead him to riches far different "and far more satisfying" than he ever imagined. Santiago's journey teaches us about the essential wisdom of listening to our hearts, of recognizing opportunity and learning to read the omens strewn along life's path, and, most importantly, to follow our dreams.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Yes, much of what negative reviewers of this book have to say is true: the writing is blunt and simple, the characters lack depth and complexity, it is quite male-focused in its subject matter and language, it has a bunch of quasi-religious mumbo-jumbo, and so on. This book should not be put on the list of great literature for the ages. There are doubtless many novels that cover subject matter from this book far more artfully. As I read the book, I was aware of its hokeyness and lack of redeeming literary qualities. I am, in fact, usually the first person to criticize books that read like this. And yet, I have to say - and I feel a bit sheepish about this - that I found it meaningful, even profound at times. How can I say this, given my criticisms? First of all, unlike many reviewers, I did not approach this book with great expectations. No one told me that this was Shakespeare or Tolstoy; I had never even heard of it until it was recommended to me recently. And by the end of

page 2, I had adjusted my expectations further. This clearly was not going to be winning the Booker prize. But I found the book moving in its simple way. The characters deliver their statements without subtlety, but subtlety is more a literary virtue than a philosophical one. In fact, I essentially came to view this work as a life philosophy expressed as a fable, so I didn't particularly mind that its messages were not buried far beneath the surface. Are those messages novel? No, but what of it? Novelists have been recycling themes for centuries, because many themes are of enduring interest and relevance. The point is, the messages are worthwhile and deserving of consideration.

October 26, 2012A review of the Alchemist by Paulo CoelhoThis review is written by Anthony T. Riggio. After reading the above book, given to me by my youngest sister, as a gift, during a recent visit, I promised her I would read it. My sister, who suffers from a mental illness, said the book had impacted her and thought it a spiritual work. Mental illness is certainly a stigma in our society but I have come to see it as a blessing by God to allow my sister to see things in an unvarnished way. She has lost everything and lives a most simple life in a therapeutic family care environment. She lives there because neither of her siblings are ill prepared to handle things when the chemical unbalance occurs, which it inevitably happens at the unscheduled moments. Even in her limited world, she has been able to see the spiritual where most of us cannot. That she spent the full publisher's price infuriated me but then I stopped to think about the genuineness of her generosity and love she has for her older brother, I decided to graciously accept her gift. The Alchemist is a simple story which some might refer to as a fable. It is however the story of a boy, Santiago, who search for the meaning of a dream which hopes to lead him to a treasure. It is the story of one finding his/her Personal Legend (roughly destiny and/or meaning for life). The book emphasizes the reason for each living in the now as opposed to one's past or future. This is often a difficult task but a profound spiritual experience when fully accomplished because in that now moment we experience ourselves and get a glimpse of God. This book however is not a religious book because as the author advised religion provides the discipline for the community experience in its devotion to God.

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