

<<The Marriage of the >>

图书基本信息

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## 内容概要

Lovers part, strangers meet and fall in love, ambitions turn to desperation, hopes are betrayed, promises sundered and-in two cities slowly sinking into the sea-new beginnings blossom. The fulcrum of this novel is Oswaldo, a frail, elderly, and very rich Venetian. He funds a foundation that gives grants to artists. One recipient, Anton, a struggling architect nearing 40, reluctantly leaves his wife in New Orleans and goes to Venice on a grant to teach architecture. In Manhattan, artist Lach abandons his lover, Vera, and flees to Venice for a romantic rendezvous. But Vera has won a prize from Oswaldo's foundation, so she also embarks for Italy. Meanwhile, Max quits London for New Orleans, ostensibly to accept a chair in the History of Food, but primarily to woo Lucinde, an events planner. As soon as Max arrives, however, Lucinde flies to Venice to stay with Oswaldo, an old mentor of hers. Alison (The Love Artist) interweaves their stories in quick segues, each vignette succeeding the other like mounting waves in "the heedless sea." The narrative is suffused with sensuous references to art, architecture, food and the atmosphere-damp, moldy, mildewy-of both cities. Each of the characters is emotionally unmoored as well as physically in transit. The reader learns about each of them incrementally from the observations of the other characters; Shakespearean misunderstandings occur and suspense gathers. Alison's poetic sensibility reveals itself in lyrical, intense prose and surprising juxtapositions. Each character's feverish thoughts rise to a crescendo of emotional turmoil and release, and in the process, carry the reader on a sinuous journey of discovery. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Alison's debut book, *The Love Artist*, was an interpretation of the demise of Ovid that was lauded for its fine detail and grace. Here, Alison applies her interests in history and excavation in a different manner, using the metaphor of "the sea" to uncover truths about her characters. Reviewers complained that Alison's gorgeous flair (and attentiveness) for the small details sometimes left the reader with too little information about the characters' motivations. Critics praised her talents with form, metaphor, and poetic language. Copyright © 2004 Phillips & Nelson Media, Inc.

Water dominates the imagery of this unorthodox and complex novel, which takes the reader inside the minds of six characters and blends them fluidly into interaction. Oswaldo's beloved Venetian villa is decaying around him, and his aging body is also in the throes of its own irreversible transition. Anton and Josephine are distraught over the watery blackness of Josephine's womb, which rejects all of their efforts to begin a family. Lach and Vera have reached the end of their marriage, and thoughts of a life in Venice with his newly found lover are at the forefront of Lach's plans. Max has traveled across the world from London to the misty banks of Louisiana to pursue the elusive and beautiful Lucinde. A kind of cleansing washes over the lives of Alison's characters, which is in keeping with the liquid landscape she has crafted for them. It is Alison's razor-sharp technique for incorporating the essence of her backdrop into the personalities dominating her fiction that makes this a uniquely flavored novel drawn from a refined talent. Elsa Gaztambide

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