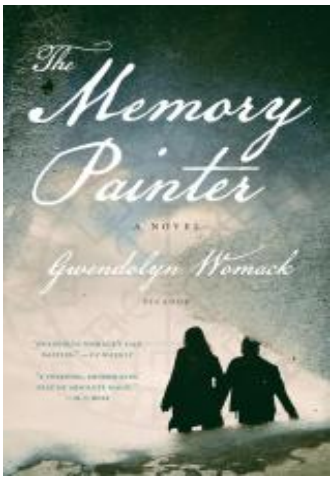
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The Memory Painter

by Gwendolyn Womack



About the Book

Two lovers who have traveled across time. A team of scientists at the cutting edge of memory research. A miracle drug that unlocks an ancient mystery.

Bryan Pierce is an internationally famous artist whose paintings have dazzled the world. But there's a secret to his success: Every canvas is inspired by an unusually vivid dream. When Bryan awakes, he possesses extraordinary new skills...like the ability to speak obscure languages and an inexplicable genius for chess. All his life, he has wondered if his dreams are recollections, if he is re-experiencing other people's lives.

Linz Jacobs is a brilliant neurogeneticist, absorbed in decoding the genes that help the brain make memories, until she is confronted with an exact rendering of a recurring nightmare at one of Bryan's shows. She tracks down the elusive artist, and their meeting triggers Bryan's most powerful dream yet: visions of a team of scientists who, on the verge of discovering a cure for Alzheimer's, died in a lab explosion decades ago.

As Bryan becomes obsessed with the mysterious circumstances surrounding the scientists' deaths, his dreams begin to reveal what happened at the lab, as well as a deeper mystery that may lead all the way to ancient Egypt. Together, Bryan and Linz start to discern a pattern. But a deadly enemy watches their every move, and he will stop at nothing to ensure that the past stays buried.

A taut thriller and a timeless love story spanning six continents and 10,000 years of history, THE MEMORY PAINTER by Gwendolyn Womack is a riveting debut novel unlike any you've ever read.

Discussion Guide

1. Bryan and Linz return to Boston at the same time, and they feel the urge to go to the museum on the same day. Where

do you think the intersection lies between coincidence and predestination? Were they destined to meet on that day, at that time?

2. Bryan and Linz respond to each other powerfully at their first encounter. Even though Bryan remembers more than Linz, do you think he feels more than she does in the beginning?

3. How has Bryan been damaged by the continuous stream of memories he is experiencing and how has he been fortunate?

4. Why do you think Linz became a neurogeneticist? Is she trying to continue the work Diana began in the past?

5. How do you think Linz truly feels looking at all of Bryan?s paintings? Does she have a spark of recognition to certain images? What do you think is the underlying cause to her suppressing her feelings?

6. Why do you think Bryan is so angry with his mother? Were you surprised by the Bjarni lifetime connection?

7. Which lifetime that Bryan has remembered do you think has had the most profound effect on him in this present life? Which lifetime prepared him the most for this life and ?fulfilling his mission??

8. Describe your first impressions of Conrad with three words. Then describe your last impression of him by the end of the book with three words.

9. At what point in the story did Conrad recognize Bryan was Michael? Which lifetimes of Linz?s do you think Conrad already recognized within her?

10. Why did you think Bryan was painting the miniature of Layla? Did you know who she was in the past before Bryan did?

11. Why did you think Bryan was so compelled to go to Newfoundland? What did you imagine he would find? Who did you think Claudette and Martin were, since Bryan couldn?t recognize them?

12. Who did you think the Egyptian Goddess was that was appearing in Bryan?s dreams? When she boarded the train and told Bryan, ?See your soul outside of time and you will arrive at your destination,? what message was she trying to impart?

13. What was your favorite lifetime in the book?

14. Do you believe in reincarnation? Have you ever met someone you felt you knew before, or visited a place you felt you had been to before?

15. Bryan recognizes many people in his life as people who have been close to him in previous lives. If you do believe in reincarnation, do you think people reincarnate again with the same souls?

16. Conrad says, ?History isn?t so grand when you?ve lived it.? If you could be anyone in history, who would it be?

17. How has Bryan been damaged by the continuous stream of memories he is experiencing and how has he been fortunate?

Author Bio

Originally from Houston, Texas, Gwendolyn Womack began writing theater plays in college while freezing in the tundra at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. During that time she lived in St. Petersburg, Russia on an independent study working with theater companies. She went on to receive an MFA from California Institute of the Arts in Directing theater and film where she was encouraged to write all her own material. After graduating she focused on writing feature screenplays and was a semi-finalist in the Academy's Nicholl Fellowship. In 2009, she moved to Japan and began to write THE MEMORY PAINTER, her first novel, the following year. Currently she resides in Southern California with her husband and son where she can be found at the keyboard working on her next novel.

Critical Praise

"It?s best not to try to analyze the ambitious plot of this thriller, which combines romance, fantasy and adventure; just hang on for a wild and entertaining ride around the world and through the centuries back to ancient Egypt."

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Publication Date: July 5, 2016
Genres: Fiction, Suspense, Thriller
Paperback: 336 pages
Publisher: Picador
ISBN-10: 1250095778
ISBN-13: 9781250095770