



The Plastic Magician

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Wall Street Journal bestselling author Charlie N. Holmberg returns to the enchanting world of The Paper Magician.

Alvie Brechenmacher has arrived in London to begin her training in Polymaking—the magical discipline of bespelling plastic. Polymaking is the newest form of magic, and in a field where there is so much left to learn, every Polymaker dreams of making the next big discovery.

Even though she is only an apprentice, Alvie is an inventor at heart, and she is determined to make as many discoveries—in as short a time frame—as she can. Luckily for her, she’s studying under the world-renowned magician Marion Praff, who is just as dedicated as Alvie is.

Alvie’s enthusiasm reinvigorates her mentor’s work, and together they create a device that could forever change Polymaking—and the world. But when a rival learns of their plans, he conspires to steal their invention and take the credit for it himself.

To thwart him, Alvie will need to think one step ahead. For in the high-stakes world of magical discovery, not everyone plays fair...

The Plastic Magician Details

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From Reader Review The Plastic Magician for online ebook

BAM The Bibliomaniac says

Netgalley #65

Ness says

I love Alvie. She's weird (I'm weird too) perhaps that is why I loved her so much. I can't express how much I truly love this series.

Erika says

I received this from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

I adored the world created in The Paper Magician Trilogy and am super excited to be able to return to it.

Alvie is adorable and believable as the heroine and new plastic magician apprentice and her brain and smart thinking are admirable. Bennet was also cute and his and Alvie's interactions had me cheering for them from the start.

Love, love, love this edition to the series.

Lauren says

Oh dear...this was somewhat disappointng. It lacked the sparkle, the flirtatious fun and the thrill that made up The Paper Magician series. Alvie and Bennet weren't a patch on Ceony and Emery. Not sure whether I will continue with this series now.

RTC

Steven says

Thanks to Netgalley and 47North for providing me with a copy in exchange for an honest review!

Holmberg's Paper Magician series did something really cool: it introduced a very unique and very fun magic system. This standalone follow-up/spin-off book follows the adventures of Ceony in the first three books and this time, it's through the very poor-sighted eyes of Alvie, a fledgling Polymaker (plastic magician) who is taking an apprenticeship in England, far across the sea from her home in the US. She's smart as a whip, and she's strong in her own way, but she doesn't suffer from the same quick-to-jump-into-trouble nature as Ceony

did. She's logical and methodical, and a very good protagonist.

While the twist wasn't all that shocking (I mean, we'd figured out the twists pretty early on, hadn't we? *wink*), the magic was a fun ride, and the story had some cool ideas.

All in all, I enjoyed it.

Stacee says

I had really enjoyed the Paper Magician series, so I was pretty excited to see there was a spin off.

I liked Alvie well enough. She's super smart and passionate and I enjoyed reading her dedication to her magic. Ethel and Bennet were fantastic and supportive secondary characters and I could have read a million more scenes with them. Oh and the brief scene of Ceony and Emery was just perfection.

Plot wise it was just okay. I didn't get caught up in this branch of magic. And while the idea of getting a discovery stolen made for a good {but quite mild} villain, there wasn't a sense of urgency. The build up was slow and the confrontation was fairly lackluster.

Overall, it was a quick read and an interesting start to a spin off. I did like it, yet I'm not sure I will be reading any of the others.

****Huge thanks to 47North for providing the arc free of charge****

Mavence [semi hiatus] says

There's a new book???? ohhhmyyyyy I've been reading the Paper Magician Series ohohoho I do hope this would turn out to be a gem! Though this also reminds me that I still have to finish The Glass Magician first (almost DNF'd it proly why I already forgot to continue w/ the third book)

Jonmontanavega says

6 October 2017. There are 12 reviews for a book that won't be published for 6 months, according to the blurb. What's wrong with this picture?

PS I enjoyed the first 3 books in the series, so it may turn out to deserve the stars.

Jenny Lee says

Thank you Charlie Holmberg and NetGalley for the opportunity to dive back into this magical world. This is truly one of my favorite series, and I am so happy I was able to read another story.

The Plastic Magician is a spin off, which takes place after the events of The Plastic Magician trilogy. I believe that you could read this as a stand alone, but wholeheartedly recommended doing the trilogy first.

We meet a brand new character (Alvie) who is leaving her home in Ohio to travel across seas to apprentice under the prestigious Magician Praff.

Magician Praff is a prior attendee of the Discovery Convention, where he gained lots of attention with his last creation. He's been stumped for something to showcase this year, but as luck would have it, it seems like Alvie was just the person he needed to make things happen. Together they work on an invention that will shake the magical and medical world. However, there are issues that arise that no one anticipated, and Alvie's got to find a way out of a very tough situation.

Alvie is an absolutely wonderful character. She's smart, ambitious, confident (except when it comes to cute boys) and is a giant clutz. She's adorable and everything you'd expect from a main character in this series. Magician Praff also amazed me. He is so supportive and attentive to Alvie, and I loved their dynamic together. The supporting characters that Alvie builds relationships with are adorable, I love her interactions with them.

For fans of the trilogy, this has everything you love about the series. There is magic, there is love, and there is mischief.

There's also the painful feeling at the end that this simply wasn't enough, and you need more!!

Maygin at Not Quite a Literary Critique says

Note: While this is listed as part of The Paper Magician Series, this novel can stand on its own. While the world-building isn't as extensive in this novel, there is still enough information that one could start with this book not having read the full Paper Magician series. Characters from that series do pop up in this book, but none of the main characters have major roles in this book.

Probably more like 3.5 stars. Full review to come.

I received this eARC from Netgalley in exchange for a honest review. Thank you 47North and Charlie Holmberg for the opportunity to read an advance copy of this novel

Elysa says

I received this book through Netgalley and am providing my honest review. I haven't read the Paper Magician trilogy before reading this book, but I feel like the book was separate enough from the trilogy that I could easily read it and understand the world. The first 10% or so of the book I was confused (mostly curious) about what the magic system was like and I think that reading the other books would have helped with that, but I learned quickly enough.

Alvie, who dreams of becoming a great plastic magician, travels to London from America to study plastic magic under Magician Praff, one of plastic's leading magicians. While there, they work on a ground-breaking

discovery to show at a magician convention. She makes friends, finds romance, and gets into some trouble.

I did appreciate that the main character is 20 years old. While I enjoy YA, sometimes it's nice to read about characters closer to my age. It could be considered a "New adult" book in that way, as the main character, Alvie, is 20 years old and moves away from home to further her studies (not unlike the typical college experience). Speaking of Alvie, she is absolutely adorable. She's highly logical; she thinks in numbers, math and equations. She knows she's very intelligent, but this is usually a turn-off for guys, who she doesn't have much luck with. She doesn't like her appearance and her appearance is often described as being a bit drab and unkempt. This sort of sucked for me because I too have plain brown hair, brown eyes and large glasses. So, thanks, Alvie. Thanks for that.

The writing was nice and adorable, just like Alvie. Although one small thing bothered me. She called her parents "mater" and "pater" and I had no idea why. I thought she may have a German accent, but she's been described as having an American accent. Also, she was able to say other "th" words clearly. When I looked up the words, I found that they were British slang, but she had been using those words before she lived in Britain, so it confused me. It wasn't a big deal or anything, just something which distracted me a bit as I read.

Ultimately, it was a sweet, cozy book. There are some parts of the book which are a little dark (view spoiler), but for the most part it was a fun read. Definitely more so than what I typically read. I did predict much of the mystery and small twists, but I didn't mind. I wasn't reading it for its mystery. I was reading for its unique magic system.

Kate (BloggingwithDragons) says

I received this book for free from **NetGalley** in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

This review does contain marked spoiler. However, the book has not been released yet, so read at your own risk.

I really enjoyed revisiting the much beloved world of the *Paper Magician* in this triumphant sequel to the original trilogy. In the *Plastic Magician*, main character American-German Alvie Brechenmacher, delves into the newly discovered magic of Polymaking, the magical discipline of plastic, and finds herself across the pond in England, apprenticing with world-renowned Magician Marion Praff in what is another quirky and dear adventure. This book has everything, a marvelous heroine, romance, magic, creative world-building, action and mystery, and an all-around positive message.

I love that Alvie is a sensible slacks-wearing American, complete with an accent, face-eating glasses and untamable hair. She is clearly a genius, adding large sums in her head, but is helplessly clumsy and so devoted to her new magic that she forgets what time it is. Alvie also has a heart of gold, choosing to volunteer in a hospital and using her new magic to create a prototype plastic arm for a friend who lost her arm in a factory accident. She is truly every bit as lovable and feels just as authentic and relatable as her *Paper Magician* counterpart, Ceony Twill, (view spoiler).

I also adore her romance with Paper Magician, and all around cutie, Bennet. The very description of the

two's developing romance makes the reader feel butterflies! "His eyes [find] hers and he smile[s] a bright smile that made Alvie feel like a magician already or perhaps something even better." It is purely delightful that Alvie found an Englishman who loves her for all of the things that make her Alvie, something that didn't get her many suitors back home. He forgives her for missing their dates due to working on her Magic, doesn't blame her for running off mid-conversation to jot down a new idea or for wanting to take apart his Benz's engine to simply appreciate it, and genuinely cares for her just as she is. Bennet even informs her early on that he had a feeling he'd never be bored with her. I thought it was utterly adorable that he told her not to wear a skirt to his (view spoiler) because "it just [isn't] Alvie."

Alvie's relationship with his sister, Ethel, the one for whom Alvie is inventing the Plastic arm prototype, is just as precious. As a reader with multiple disabilities, this scene between these two really touched me:

"Ethel took her hand. 'You're a good friend Alvie. Even without all the magic.' Alvie squeezed back. "'You are too, Ethel. Even without the arm.' The older woman's eyes watered just a bit. 'I think that, today that's something I needed to hear.'"

This exchange demonstrates how magic touches all of the relationships in the book, but isn't defined by it. In the magical world of this book and the others in the series, people travel by mirrors, send mail via Folded mail birds, text each other via Mimic spells, and see their imaginations come to life not on movie screens, but through Imagidomes. I love how Alvie's growing up in America, showed the different laws traditions, and attitudes towards magic throughout different countries. For example, in England public transportation via mirrors is not allowed, but in the United States it is quite the norm. And as Alvie grew up as the daughter of the true inventor of the light bulb, she has a unique and grounded viewpoint on how technological advances may affect magic. But these are just two of the many ways author Charlie N. Holmberg builds a complex and immersive world that I would personally love to inhabit.

Though the book emphasizes that all Magicians should, "Treat [their] magic with respect and loyalty and it will do likewise. Leave this world a better place than it was when you entered it," Alvie soon finds that not all Magicians uphold this creed. There is intense competition for new discovery, especially in the newest magic—Polymaking—leading to violence, and the stealing of ideas. I love that in the face of danger, Alvie is able to use her intelligence to stay quick on her feet, rescue herself repeatedly, and is able to put together the pieces to solve a crime even before the Police. She's not even traumatized by her brushes with danger, but instead uses her experiences to hypothesize an entirely new field of magic, which I have a feeling we'll be seeing a lot more of in future installments. After all she says, "It [isn't] about the magic. It [is] about the discovery."

And if you haven't yet discovered the magic of the *Paper Magician* series, I urge you to do so at once.

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Lena says

These stories are delightful. I was cheered to return to the world of The Paper Magician in this spin off that follows a Plastic Magician on her adventures in magic and love.

The bad guys conspiracy was weak but I'm hopeful that this will become a series with stronger plot.

It makes me want to reread the previous books.

Fiona says

[One of my favourite lines happened to be the last and it sums her up perfectly; *After all, it wasn't about the magic. It was about the disco*

Jodie Humphrey says

I have to admit, I enjoyed this installment the most out of all the books in the series thus far.

Alvie was such a great character and I found her so much easier to connect and relate to than the character of Ceony in the other books.

Ceony seemed to mostly annoy and frustrate me, whereas Alvie was delightful!

She's smart (like, really really smart), clumsy, bold, adventurous, hardworking, plucky, brave, curious, and most of all - she really, REALLY likes to wear trousers *gasp*

I loved that she was a little bit different and didn't really care what people thought about her.

She was wonderful.

I also enjoyed being able to take a break from paper magic and folding for a while (though there is a sweet little cameo appearance hidden in here which was lovely).

I found Polymaking and plastic magic to be fascinating and it was refreshing to learn about something so completely different from the paper magic we've had in the other books.

The Polymaking gave this book more of a sciencey edge and almost gave it a kind of steampunk vibe somehow.

The story was also lovely, if a little obvious and predictable.

It's a lovely little adventure to carry you away for a few hours, just don't expect any Earth-shattering plot twists along the way.

All in all this was a very enjoyable book and I'm looking forward to seeing what Alvie gets up to next!
