



## Water & Glass

*Abi Curtis*

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In the lower depths of a massive submarine, ship's zoologist Nerissa Crane takes an ultrasound of a heavily pregnant Asian elephant. The elephant conceived off-ship but, it transpires, was forced on board – along with Nerissa and a hastily assembled collection of humans and animals – by an apocalyptic environmental disaster that has flooded the earth. Nerissa is calm and solitary in her work and in navigating the trauma of her husband's presumed death in the floods; but when one of her animal charges escapes, she is reluctantly forced to enter the ship's thrown-together communal world where she uncovers a shocking conspiracy that causes her to question who and what she is. Water & Glass is a thrilling dystopian tale about human nature – and the animal world – under great pressure and in enclosed spaces.

## Water & Glass Details

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Author : Abi Curtis

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## From Reader Review Water & Glass for online ebook

### **Maryann says**

The world has flooded and only a few got away on boats. Nerissa was invited aboard the Baleen, a submarine, to care for the ship's animals. Nerissa has studied animals her whole life. The sub is looking for new land, and the community settles into a routine. There are rumors of a stowaway.

It feels as though most of this book is exposition, and we don't get to the crux of the story until it's nearly over. We learn a lot about Nerissa and her past, but the connection between past and present isn't obvious, in light of revelations near the end. The conflict feels rushed and underexplained and I wanted more story in that part and less in the beginning.

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### **Ellen says**

I really enjoyed this dystopian book where we join zoologist Nerissa on board the ark inspired Baleen; a submarine loaded with a collection of animals and humans destined to be a brand new start for all after an environmental apocalyptic disaster. It doesn't take too much imagination to envisage this version of our possible future with the current issues we are facing in the world. It is no surprise that the author of Water & Glass is an award winning poet, her words are lyrical and poignant.

When one of Nerissa's animal charges goes missing she is forced from her solitary life into the other decks of the vessel and discovers all is not as it seems aboard the Baleen and that not everything she and the other passengers have been told is true. The story is told from various POV's, one of my favourites was Molloy; a wooly brown rat who is very tame and shows no fear of humans. All Molloy wants is food, warmth and partnership and isn't that what we are all after!?

This is a book about human (and animal) nature; how far will we go to ensure our survival? I hope there will be more I the series as I really got involved in everybody's stories!

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### **Tena says**

I'm not sure how to explain this one: set in the future; a sort-of dystopia due to global flooding; the main character Nerissa is the arc/ship's veterinarian. The writing is almost poetic; I could actually visualize the scenes. It was slow going; mostly reading like a memoir: mainly from Nerissa's thoughts, feelings, and perspective.. well and the Rat's... (yup, you need to read it to believe it!). **HOWEVER**, the twists tossed near the end were not the ones I expected! As slow as it got sometimes (truthfully, I put it down a few times) the twists made up for it. My advice: plan to read it in one sitting or you'll regret it when you're through. The author, Abi Curtis, needs to make this story line into a series because this book is really just a peek into a slice of time of one person, Nerissa, but there was so much more... 4 solid stars. \*\* This review was written for LibraryThing Early Reviewers.

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### **Cheri says**

I liked this well enough, though I can't say this book really grabbed me like it could have. The idea behind the novel is pretty great (which I, of course, won't spoil here), but it seemed very flat to me. Things happen, secrets discovered, and there is a great reveal (which was more bewildering than powerful), and then things happen that may or may not point to a sequel. Foreshadowed events were anticlimactic. I finished with a "Hmmm. Okay." And started wondering what I'd start next.

I should have felt horror in this story. I should have been appalled. I should have been afraid for the protagonist. Instead, I just kind of watched.

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### **Alex Hill says**

Good writer, was a bit disappointed with the ending

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### **Marius says**

This is an interesting and good enough attempt at a debut novel. The underlying apocalyptic assumption is a familiar Trojan horse used to propel either a mystery or a deeper narrative about human meaning. I think the author spent too little time deepening the mystery and left the deeper human drama Under developed. However I think she has a good writing style, and I will be interested to see her next book. If I could have I would've given this a 3.5.

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### **Bookread2day says**

Review on Twitter@favouritenovels A beautiful unusual story. The words and writing is stunning. I was totally gripped from the first page. I loved the words Nerissa soothes, running a hand down Reva's trunk. An Asian elephant is heavy pregnant. Reva has been carrying the baby for fifteen months. As this story was about an elephant I decided to take a special photo of the book on Twitter. Happy reading to all involved in the blog tour this week.

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### **Orlando Ortega-Medina says**

Water & Glass is more literary than SciFi; more meditative than action-packed. It feels organic, direct to the page from the mind of the award-winning poet that penned it, rather than contrived to fit a hackneyed genre-formula. Water & Glass will frighten you with its descriptions of an increasingly flooded planet (picture Venice under water); it will inspire you with its reimagined society of humans and animals trying desperately to carry on as normal in the cramped quarters of the Noah's ark type submarine bearing it to an unknown future; it will break your heart as you follow zoologist protagonist Nerissa Crane's efforts to continue with her work while at the same time mourning the sudden loss of her husband in the floods just hours before she boarded the ship. And then, there's that giant woolly rat. This novel is a guaranteed winner for fans thought

provoking, intelligent speculative fiction in the vein of Margaret Atwood. I wholeheartedly recommend it and eagerly look forward to Abi Curtis's next novel.

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### **Jamie Dale says**

Enjoyed it until the end - felt the twist was a little left field and the ending underdeveloped.

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### **Breakaway Reviewers says**

"In the mornings, for the first few seconds, after she wakes, she never remembers where she is. And when she does realise, she thinks of how they are never in the same place twice, but pushing through the dark blue sea as if moving deep into the heart of a shadow."

Water & Glass is a wonderfully imaginative work of fiction where the protagonist "Nerissa Crane" finds herself along with a rag-tag bunch of other survivors on a submarine adrift in a post-apocalyptic world - one where the sea has destroyed all. Nerissa's reason for being there is as the vet for a random assortment of animals deep within the hold. Here she befriends another survivor named Herman as they struggle to adapt to their new surroundings on the "Baleen" as well as find a mischievous woolly rat that has escaped.

Water & Glass is a brilliantly imaginative piece of fiction but sadly fails to find any real direction with which to capture the reader's attention. The end is finally reached without any build up in tension or stimulation.

The main characters are all deeply motivated, as indicated by an interesting backstory narrative that enriches the characters' motivation for their existence on the Baleen. This backstory is so beautifully presented by the author it almost warrants its own book. However, because of this, far too much time is spent reading about Nerissa's past and not enough time is spent on her present situation. Additionally, the time that is spent on the present, aboard the Baleen, is devoted to giving life to the living conditions, the ship's economy and food production. Whilst these enriching details are essential to a good book it should not be to the detriment of any direction in the narrative. It was not until three-quarters of the way through the book that we were presented with any focus, by which point, my interest was severely waning.

Once there was focus and direction became clear, which admittedly was presented in an interesting and unforeseen way, it should have been gripping and enthralling but turned out to feel like a rushed and poorly explained conclusion, maybe perhaps to meet a deadline.

This is the first book by Abi Curtis and it feels exactly that- a first attempt- this book would have been far richer in the narrative if two books were written, which would have provided justice to what is no doubt a thrilling imagined world which sadly doesn't exist outside of Abi Curtis' mind. Two books spanning the post and current Baleen era would have provided a far more captivating space in which to explore the narrative of Abi's world.

This is not a great read but it does provide some insight into a unique and relatively unexplored version of a post-apocalyptic world. Abi Curtis has great potential for writing a narrative (as evidenced by elements in this book. I look forward to her future books but perhaps this one is better left on the shelf.

Alex

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review

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### **Alex Lockwood says**

This author's imagination is both inventive and compassionate. *Water and Glass* is a dystopian literary novel that is about the formation of relationships, what might be worth holding on to in our threatened future, and the ways we all see the world differently. That includes, I'm pleased to say, the non-human world. The protagonist is a vet and one of the sections of this book is narrated from the point of view of an animal, as they all ride out the storms and floods of our future in a floating community. It makes us ask those important questions of how much more deeply we need to think about the shared habitats of our world. There are beautiful passages in the novel -- you can tell Curtis is also a poet -- and both the description and narrative are presented in a way to heighten the tragic force of the story, which is all too likely to be our own, unless we heed the messages we are hearing in books such as these. It's not polemical in any way, but reading this book pushes you to ask if we're doing enough now to look after our common future.

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