

The background features a complex network of white nodes connected by thin purple lines, set against a gradient background that transitions from dark purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with some forming larger, more prominent clusters.

# The Dutch House

Written by Ann Patchett

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Published by griefconvention

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# The Dutch House

By Ann Patchett

## The Dutch House Book

At the end of the Second World War, Cyril Conroy combines luck and a single canny investment to begin an enormous real estate empire, propelling his family from poverty to enormous wealth. His first order of business is to buy the Dutch House, a lavish estate in the suburbs outside of Philadelphia. Meant as a surprise for his wife, the house sets in motion the undoing of everyone he loves.

## The Dutch House By Ann Patchett

The story is told by Cyril's son Danny, as he and his older sister, the brilliantly acerbic and self-assured Maeve, are exiled from the house where they grew up by their stepmother. The two wealthy siblings are thrown back into the poverty their parents had escaped from, and find that all they have to count on is one another. It is this unshakable bond between them that both saves their lives and thwarts their futures.

## The Dutch House Review

Set over the course of five decades, *The Dutch House* is a dark fairy tale about two smart people who cannot overcome their past. Despite every outward sign of success, Danny and Maeve are only truly comfortable when they're together. Throughout their lives they return to the well worn story of what they've lost with humor and rage. But when at last they're forced to confront the people who left them behind, the relationship between an indulged brother and his ever-protective sister is finally tested.

## The Dutch House A Novel

The Dutch House is the story of a paradise lost, a tour de force that digs deeply into questions of inheritance, love and forgiveness, of how we want to see ourselves and of who we really are. Filled with suspense, you may read it quickly to find out what happens, but what happens to Danny and Maeve will stay with you for a very long time.

4.5 stars

Sometimes in a novel, a place is such a strong and integral part of the story that it deserves as much attention as if it were a character. The house in this novel exerts so much influence over the lives of the characters, sometimes more so than the other people in their lives. The house, with its big windows and ornate design is a symbol of success for Cyril Conroy, the self made real estate developer. To his wife Elna, it is everything that is wrong with the world, when so many others

4.5 stars

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This is in so many ways about the past, the past they can't let go of, the past that shapes who they become as adults. "Do you think it's possible to ever see the past as it actually was?" Danny asks his sister Maeve. "I see the past as it actually was," Maeve said. Danny responds "But we overlay the present onto the past. We look back through the lens of what we know, so we're not seeing it as the people we were, we're seeing it as the people we are, and that means the past has been radically altered." \*\* It's also about sibling love and sacrifice as the brilliant Maeve gives up so much of her life to care for Danny, to make sure he is okay. I was so emotionally connected to them and I loved their relationship. It was at times heartbreaking to see how deep seated these wounds of the past are for both of them .

The plot, which captured me from the beginning is one the reader should discover for themselves, so no spoilers here. The bottom line is that I loved pretty much everything about the book - the writing, the characters, the story. I found it nearly perfect and it is 4.5 stars because of something in the end that I found hard to reconcile. I keep a list of favorite writers and Ann Patchett has been on that list for quite a while now. I've read every novel she's published. Her characters always feel fully developed and making an emotional connection is easy because she allows us to know them. Definitely recommended!

The Dutch House

I read this with Diane and Esil as one of our ongoing buddy reads and as always appreciate their thoughts.

\*\*Quotes are from the advanced copy.

I received an advanced copy of this book from HarperCollins through Edelweiss. ...more

## The Dutch House Release Date

### Attached

The Dutch House is a story of siblings, Danny and Maeve Conroy, their obsessive connection with the iconic family house they lived in as young children and how their lives unfolded over the years. The story is narrated by Danny over multiple non-linear time periods. The various time jumps and reflections back to important events felt like a jigsaw puzzle being built, where there is the uncertainty of the next piece but once it is placed, the complete picture becomes clearer and clearer. Attached The Dutch House is a story of siblings, Danny and Maeve Conroy, their obsessive connection with the iconic family house they lived in as young children and how their lives unfolded over the years. The story is narrated by Danny over multiple non-linear time periods. The various time jumps and reflections back to important events felt like a jigsaw puzzle being built, where there is the uncertainty of the next piece but once it is placed, the complete picture becomes clearer and clearer. This is a wonderful skill Ann Patchett possesses and you never feel lost or confused as she manages the time transitions so deftly.

The other major hallmark of Ann Patchett is her development of amazing characters and relationships. Maeve is Danny's older sister of 7 years, she is very intelligent, a diabetic, caring to the extreme for her brother, and a character that captivates. Danny is much more emotionally reserved and his development into adulthood is interesting to watch. While he takes advantage of top-class education in medicine he can't shake his love for his father's business in real estate. Their mother is a memory, having left them when they were young and the story starts with their father bringing Andrea home to visit. Andrea eventually becomes his wife, their new mother and the force that shapes the future relationships and living conditions. "Mothers were the measure of safety, which meant that I was safer than Maeve. After our mother left, Maeve took up the job on my behalf but no one did the same for her." It's not too long before Andrea's own two daughters become her sole focus and ambition, and the existing family and staff are unwelcome reminders of a past she wasn't part of. Andrea is an intriguing character, dispassionate, harsh, and greedy, and heir to the Dutch House mansion. Early in the marriage it also seemed pretty clear he had married the wrong woman. If we all kept to our own corners it was easier for everyone.

After only a few years of marriage, their father dies and leaves the house and business to Andrea who repays his memory by putting both Maeve and Danny out, to never set foot in their home again. This starts an obsessive periodic pilgrimage for Danny and Maeve where they return to the street to sit in a car parked across from the Dutch House and gaze at it recalling memories and wondering how life would have panned out "if only". The emotional baggage they carry together drives them forward but also restricts their successes and paths taken. The psychological burden of seeking happiness and fulfilment, while tied to past commitments and motivations is cleverly layered throughout the story.

I didn't feel any great pace in the novel and at times wished it would move along in a more compelling rate. The house, while a connecting point, didn't really have any character and



## The Dutch House

increasingly the story is told away from it. It may be suggested that the house is the central aspect of the story but I would disagree feeling it more appropriate to consider the deep, caring, loving and supportive relationship between a brother and sister growing up with only each other to depend on and if that connection in itself had a restricting effect on how their lives developed.

I would recommend this book and I'd like to thank Bloomsbury Publishing and NetGalley for providing me with an early ARC copy in return for an honest review. ...more

Patchett is way up there on my, can't wait for next novel, list. Her characterizations, her insight into flawed families and her wry observations of human nature, are always top notched. In this, her soon to be published novel, she follows a family for five decades, a family that is broken apart, for reasons that I cannot at this time share. Brother and sister, Maeve and Danny, are extremely close, not unexpected since they are the only ones that are there for each other through thick and thin. Patchett is way up there on my, can't wait for next novel, list. Her characterizations, her insight into flawed families and her wry observations of human nature, are always top notched. In this, her soon to be published novel, she follows a family for five decades, a family that is broken apart, for reasons that I cannot at this time share. Brother and sister, Maeve and Danny, are extremely close, not unexpected since they are the only ones that are there for each other through thick and thin. Danny is our narrator, and from a young age, we are let into his thoughts and the actions of the other characters.

Dutch House, a house that their father bought to surprise their mother, is as much a character in this story, as are the actual characters. It is the cause of much of what happens here, a house with huge window that allows one to see all through the house. We follow not only the house itself, but the brother and sister as they grow, through their triumphs and losses. Sibling strength and family loyalty.

It is a novel of obsession but also of acceptance and forgiveness. The end, in a way comes full circle, but not without much heartache and loss. There were a few things that sparked the doubting Thomas in me, but all in all this is a wonderful read.

Another read with Angela and Esil, and though our ratings do differ a bit, we all enjoyed this novel.

ARC by Edelweiss. ...more

## The Dutch House Restaurant

Ann Patchett's latest novel proves to be a absolute delight to read with its echoes of the darkest of fairytales with the requisite wicked stepmother in the form of Andrea. We are provided with Patchett's acute understanding and keen observational insights of what it is to be human, the complex nature of family and the dysfunctional dynamics that proliferate. Shortly after WW2, Cyril Conroy's life catapults from poverty into wealth which propels him to buy the architectural jewel that is the Dutch House with its many windows in the Pennsylvania suburbs for his wife, Elna, a house that is to splinter his family apart. As the narrative moves back and forth in time through five decades, the house turns out to be an integral part and trigger for the dramas that ensue, the highs and the lows. Danny grew up with little memory of his mother who left so early in his life, and his father is a distant figure, contributing to the strong bond with his older sister, the bright and determined Maeve, a woman of substance who takes on the mantle of caring and protecting him.

Cyril brings Andrea into the lives of Maeve and Danny, and goes on to marry her. Andrea, with her children, is driven by ambition that inform her behaviour and decisions, catalysts for how events pan out in the house and family interactions until Cyril's dies, leaving Andrea with everything. Andrea reacts by throwing Maeve and Danny out. The siblings are pushed out of their privileged and comfortable lives, finding themselves facing a life of poverty and challenges with only each other to rely on. Maeve dedicates her life to Danny at the expense of her own life and ambitions, with both positive and negative outcomes, although their future lives are to be shaped by their constant obsession with the house and their inability to let go of the past.

Patchett writes a compulsive novel of family, sibling relationships, secrets, memories that can so often turn out to be unreliable, coming to terms with what life can throw at you, grief, loss, love and forgiveness. It is beautifully written, with rich, atmospheric vibrant descriptions and with Patchett's stellar and skilful characterisation and development, she has an uncanny capacity to give us pictures of emotional and meaningful depth of her characters interior lives. This is a brilliant, thought provoking, multilayered, complicated and well crafted book infused with a wryness and humour that made it such a memorable read. Many thanks to Bloomsbury for an ARC. ...more

A grand house with grand siblings inside

A house? Really? I want people, not inanimate objects! I thought the house would be bigger than the people in it, but thank god I was wrong. I ended up loving the place. Hell, I'd go to an open house there any day. Damn straight I'd like to snoop around.

## The Dutch House

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The cover and the title scared me. A painting of an uptight, upright woman on the cover, and “Dutch House” as the title “sounds like we might have some snooty going on here. Is reading this going to feel like being held prisoner in a museum? Because I’m here to tell you, museums are famous for keeping it dull, and I definitely smelled a museum. It just hit me that I wouldn’t have been putting on the brakes if the house were some funky, colorful place (with a chartreuse washstand and a periwinkle china cabinet) “in other words, a house I’d like to explore. A rich person’s house “high ceilings, mature rugs, huge art? Yawn city. But let’s face it, I would read anything Ann Patchett writes “uptight, upright, museum-y or not, I was all in.

So I sighed and dug in, already mad that I was going to be dropped into dens of description! I needed an attitude adjustment, because of course this huge house, as I predicted, was being described in huge detail. Chill! I sat there all tense, poised and ready to jump ship if I had to. But immediately the writing adjusted my attitude, as Patchett did her typical skillful thing and grabbed me into her story. And we’re talking two pages in. I was hooked.

This is the story of Danny and Mauve, a brother and sister who are joined at the hip. Danny is the narrator, and he’s just a kid when the story starts. I liked him immediately. Mauve takes care of Danny, and he adores her. All they have, really, is each other. When two siblings are alone against the world, they are imprinted on each other for life; the bond is greater than any other. Danny and Mauve fit the bill. Watching their devotion to each other was so touching.

Their lives change suddenly (and the house is big during this fateful moment) and they need each other even more. The book follows them through five decades. As the kids became adults, I got more and more attached to them; I was invested in the choices they made and cringed more than once at their behavior. Patchett knows how to make you believe them, trust them, love them.

The house is at first a grand place but all the sudden it isn’t. The house means different things to different people and it’s a constant in the book, always there for people to react to. Throughout the book, we have Danny and Mauve sitting in a car in front of the house, reminiscing. Right there, Patchett has me in the palm of her hand. Why on earth are they just sitting there? Can’t they go in? Why do they sit there time and again? Slowly the story gets revealed.

I’ve been a Patchett fan for a long time, and every time I finish one of her books, I feel so completely

## The Dutch House

satisfied (with the exception of Bel Canto). Yet I always sort of frown and try to figure out Patchett's secret. Well, of course, there's the fact that her writing is dynamite. And she creates nuanced characters, has a lot of insight into the human condition, and keeps the story moving along, usually rather quietly (there's never over-the-top melodrama"never). Her presentation is complicated but smooth. We go back and forth in time, but she sets it up in a way that lets me happily accept the jumps.

Patchett's tone is pretty formal, which always puts me off at first because I worry it will keep me from feeling close to the characters; it will create a distance. But here's the scoop: Maybe I can't get super close because she's got a wall up, but she gets me to peek over the wall to see the fascinating party she's throwing, and it's as good as a front-row seat. With all of her books, the formality soon becomes invisible to me and I am all in, attached to the characters and wanting to find out, right that minute, how they are going to fare. I desperately wanted to know how Danny's and Mauve's life would turn out. The story didn't disappoint.

In terms of scope, tone, setting, and depth, this book seems like a throwback to masterpieces written in the 1700s and 1800s; there is a classic and epic feel to it. Having a grand mansion as the setting helps. As in classics, Patchett does give lots of details of things that by themselves aren't interesting, but she ends up painting a vivid picture that sets a perfect stage for the action going down, and you feel like you're right there.

This editor twitches a couple of times. There are a few tiny problems, which might be fixed by publication date:

- Mauve's workplace is described twice. Haven't I read this before?
- Kids don't talk this way! Way too mature-sounding! Happened enough times to annoy me.
- Common error: she said she "could have cared less" when she meant that she "couldn't have cared less."

The reason I'm giving this book 4 stars instead of 5 is that I had trouble believing the mom. I just didn't think what she did was realistic (plus I bigtime didn't approve of it). Also, there is a theme of forgiveness at the end, which I also didn't buy (or like). Even though there isn't a religious theme going on, I think religion is a very tricky undercurrent.

All in all, a good read, though. Patchett is a master.

Thanks to Edelweiss for the advance copy. ...more

## The Dutch House Kirkus

Awfully close to 5 stars!

The Dutch House is full of the stuff I love in fiction. It's really well written, has great characters, is original and feels like a big meaty story I could get lost in. Danny is the narrator. He grew up in the grandiose Dutch House with his sister, Maeve, and his father. What happens to his mother is a mystery that unravels over time. But the fallout from her disappearance is a very strong bond between Danny and Maeve, and a cascade of emotional and other consequences for everyone. At the centre of the novel is the house "loved and reviled depending on the character. In the end, there is a symmetry to the story that is emotionally wrought and complex. This is not an easy story with straightforward characters. But it's very readable. I read this one as a buddy read with Angela and Diane, and it definitely works well as a buddy read because there's much to discuss " especially the end. Thanks to Edelweiss and the publisher for an opportunity to read an advance copy.

...more

For no reason, I've never read Patchett and I've been missing out. This is an intelligent novel that is almost a fable including an evil stepmonster but it's the house that looms large. A house that represents success, greed, loss, sadness and, ultimately, forgiveness. A wife is desperately unhappy, close siblings are eventually ousted and many lives are deeply affected by the house and what it means to each character. Patchett has a deft touch and now I'll have the pleasure of reading her other work.

...more

## The Dutch House Audiobook

This was a great book with Ann Patchett's signature writing. She's the queen of family sagas and this is no different.

'The Dutch House' refers to a mansion Meave and Danny live with their parents. We go through the lives of these siblings from their childhood to quite late in their lives. Their mother leaves suddenly without a word one day when they were children, and they never knew why. We go through the next phase of their lives after this event till they are old basically.

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If you haven't read Ann Patchett before, you need to know that her books are very much character driven, not plot driven. We go through the life span of a family and witness their lives. In this book, the focus was the 2 siblings and their tight relationship. Meave and Danny were a delight to follow. I even envied their unshaken closeness and love for each other as an only child :) They go through a lot together and their support for each other helps them achieve in life. Of course there are lots of other characters, but they are revolving around this brother & sister.

I love Patchett's writing. It's very slow, but very immersive. Before you know it, you're drawn to these characters and want to know what's going on in their simple lives. I was thinking of the book when I wasn't reading it, and wanted to return to it for sure.

I gave this book 4 stars because I think the mystery around the mother who left was cast aside for a very long time in the story, and it would be a bit better if she was included a little earlier.

But, in general, for people who love slow, character driven stories that goes on for a lifetime, Ann Patchett is the address :)

And, the book cover is exquisite. Not only it's beautiful. but it's very related to the book, so it makes it extra special. ...more

### 4.5 Stars

This is the third book of Patchett's that I've read, the first being *State of Wonder*, the second, *Commonwealth*, and this is one adds to the proof that she was born to write these complex family dramas where each character equally shares the wounds of all involved.

A little like a fairy tale flipped upside-down, this story includes an imposing, castle-like house, which seems to affect each character differently, as though abiding inside these walls seems to create an entirely different 4.5 Stars

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A little like a fairy tale flipped upside-down, this story includes an imposing, castle-like house, which seems to affect each character differently, as though abiding inside these walls seems to create an entirely different relationship between the house and each character. It begins as World War II is ending, and this then poor young family who have been living in base housing, living a happy, if simple life find their world upended when the father, Cyril, buys a house " unbeknownst to his young wife and young daughter, Maeve. The wife, Elna, is " well, impressed by the house, but the impression isn't a good one, and she can't imagine how this house could be theirs when they are poor. Something must be wrong beyond her feeling that this is far too ostentatious for her to ever feel comfortable living in.

As the story moves along, the house becomes more and more like another character, creating tension as time passes, and representing the failures of the past as well as the shattered hopes and dreams for the members of this family, as well. As time passes, it continues to pull both Danny and his sister Maeve back time and again to confront their feelings of anger and their regrets over the past.

Narrated by the son, Danny, it seemed as though these were stories shared by and about real people, and imparted with the grace and dignity offered to cherished loved ones.

Pub Date: 24 Sep 2019

Many thanks to HarperCollins Publishers, Harper ...more

## The Dutch House Synopsis

A HUGE thanx to Netgalley and HarperCollins for a review copy of this book, in exchange for this honest review.

I've only read two other Patchett books, but she has already become a favorite author, and I was very excited to be granted this ARC months prior to its publication in late Sept., since her last novel, Commonwealth, made it into my top 5 reads for 2016 - and I am fairly confident this one will do likewise for 2019.

The storyline follows somewhat similar ground as that previous book, bei A HUGE thanx to Netgalley and HarperCollins for a review copy of this book, in exchange for this honest review.

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The storyline follows somewhat similar ground as that previous book, being, more or less, an intricate family saga covering decades of the ins and outs of the Conroy family, and in particular, how the titular family manse outside Philadelphia impacts and impedes various relationships. The focus is primarily on a pair of siblings, with younger brother Danny doing the narrating, and once again Patchett does not follow a linear chronology, but weaves the stories back and forwards from the late 40's to the early 2000's. I sometimes had trouble following this in her previous book, since there was a plethora of characters to keep straight, but this is an easier go, since there are really only about a dozen characters in total. Although Patchett's prose is not fussy or overtly calls attention to itself, it always flows beautifully and is a pleasure to luxuriate in. Just the kind of lovely, leisurely read one wants/needs for the beginning of summer. I hope it is a tremendous success for her. ...more

This is only the second Ann Patchett novel I read.

The Dutch House is aptly named - the majestic house at its centre was built on the outskirts of Philadelphia by the VanHoebeek's who had immigrated to the US before the WWI.

The business-savvy Cyril Conroy buys the house and everything in it to surprise his wife, Elma and their young children, Maeve and Danny. Overwhelmed by the huge change from living frugally in a very small house to living in a grand old house, with a cook, a cleaner and a nan This is only the second Ann Patchett novel I read.

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Written from Danny's point of view, this is a novel about family, abandonment and its effects, hanging on the past and not letting go. Danny's sister, Maeve, seven years his senior, becomes his mentor and protector, while the two sisters working as cook and cleaner, respectively, take on the caring roles.

When things get worse for the two siblings, their relationship is what gives them strength, their intelligence and ambition what propels them further to outward success.

The Dutch House features prominently throughout the novel. Detested, loved, admired, longed for, the house pulls at the hearts and memories of those who lived in it.

Spanning over five decades, at times, the story sags as it becomes quite mundane. But it's very readable; the details, the little scenes and recollections make it very lifelike. You know how it is, you're a teen, then you study, begin your grown-up life and then, bam! you wonder what happened to time, when did you get to be forty, fifty etc. The last quarter picks up the pace, quite a lot happens.

I thoroughly enjoyed this novel, the characterisations were excellent, the descriptions, of the house in particular, were quite vivid. The siblings' relationship was incredibly tight and unique.

This was different, in a good way.

Highly recommended.

I've received this novel via Edelweiss, in exchange for an honest review. ...more