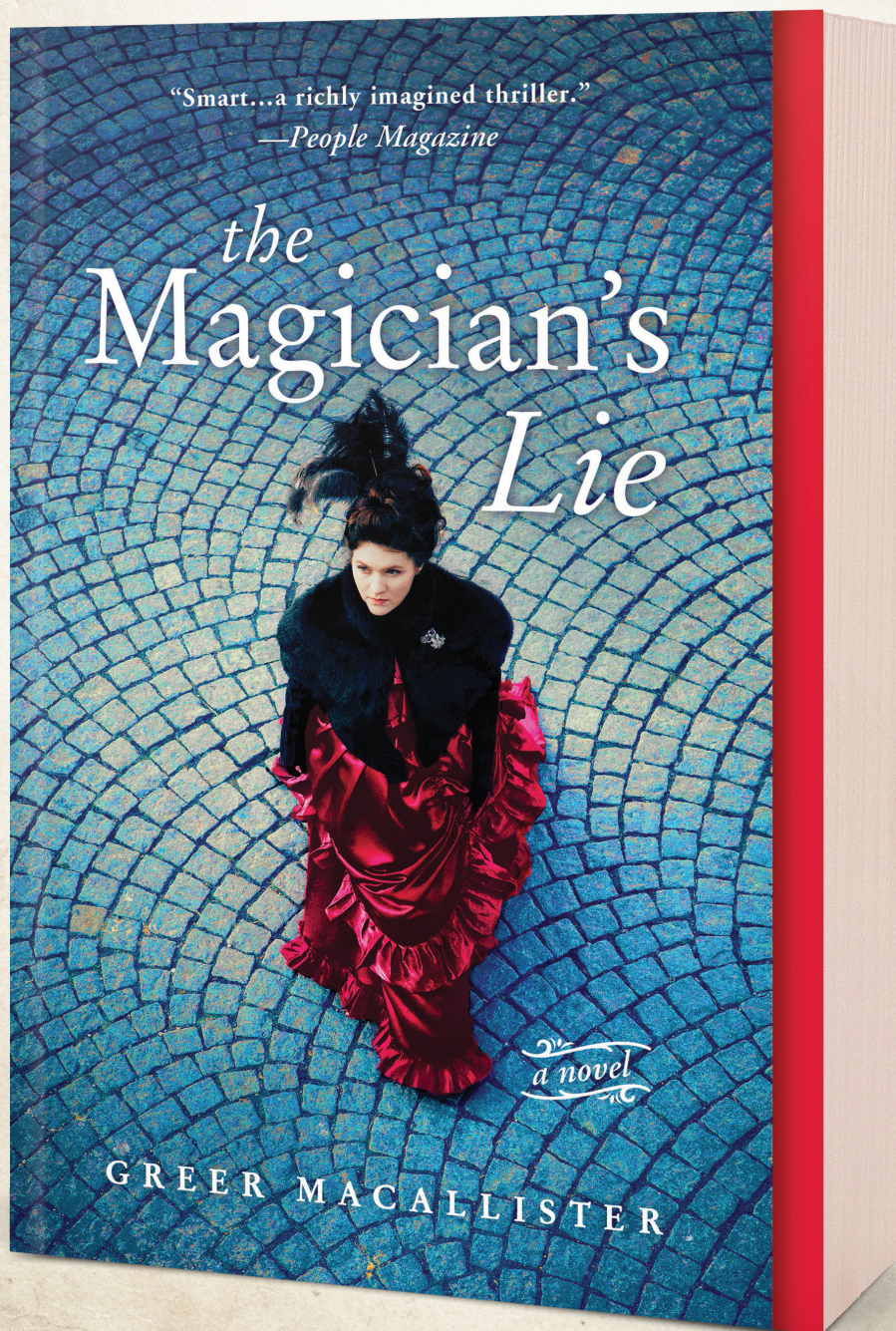




# *The Magician's Lie*

## EVENT GUIDE







## *The Magician's Lie*

### BOOK CLUB GUIDE IDEAS

#### **A NOTE TO THE BOOK CLUB LEADER:**

Bring *The Magician's Lie* to life for your book club! Just read through our handy packet and discover delicious recipes, tasty cocktails, and fun magician-themed crafts and activities. For more ideas, look up Sourcebooks on Pinterest and follow our Magician's Lie board for more ideas!

Start off by sending your fellow book club members a copy of the invite below (you can make copies, or download the invite at [books.sourcebooks.com/magicians-lie](http://books.sourcebooks.com/magicians-lie))

*You are cordially invited*

TO PARTICIPATE IN A *MAGICIAN'S LIE* PARTY WITH FELLOW KINDRED SPIRITS.  
GAMES, CRAFTS, AND SNACKS WILL BE PROVIDED.



DATE: .....

TIME: .....

LOCATION: .....

RSVP TO: .....



## Recipes

### EASY GOURMET CARAMEL CORN

From: *SomeThingSwanky.com*

#### INGREDIENTS:

8 cups popped popcorn  
¾ cup brown sugar  
6 tablespoons butter  
3 tablespoons light corn syrup  
½ teaspoon vanilla extract  
¼ teaspoon baking soda  
Pinch of sea salt  
Melted chocolate for drizzling



#### DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 300°F. Prepare a baking sheet by lining it with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.

Pour the popcorn into a large bowl and remove any unpopped kernels.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, stir together the brown sugar, butter, and corn syrup until the butter has melted and the mixture reaches a slow bubble. Allow the mixture to bubble for 4 minutes.

Remove from the heat immediately and mix in the vanilla extract and baking soda.

Pour the caramel mixture over the popcorn. Using a large rubber spatula, gently stir to coat.

Spread the popcorn evenly onto the prepared baking sheet and sprinkle with the sea salt (adding more to taste if desired). Bake the popcorn for 10–15 minutes. A 10-minute bake will yield a chewy popcorn (my preference if we're eating it same day, not so good for packaging and storing). A 15-minute bake will yield a crunchy popcorn (PERFECT for packaging and storing).

Let cool in the pan for 10 minutes before transferring to a bowl to serve.

Drizzle with chocolate if desired.



## Recipes

### MINI CARAMEL APPLES

From: [Athomeinlove.com](http://Athomeinlove.com)

#### INGREDIENTS:

3 extra-large apples  
Caramels (individually wrapped or caramel bits)  
2 tablespoons of milk  
Lollipop sticks

#### DIRECTIONS:

First, prepare a cookie sheet or some plates with wax paper on top. Peel the apples, then scoop balls out of them with the metal coffee scoop. Push a lollipop stick into the middle of each ball. Pat them dry with a paper towel and put them in the fridge or freezer while you make the caramel.



Unwrap the caramels and melt them in a pot over medium-low heat, with the milk. You can buy bags of caramel bits too if you don't want to go through the trouble of unwrapping them. Once the caramel is smooth and melted, remove it from heat and dip the apple pops one by one, letting the excess caramel drip back off them into the pot. Place the dipped apples back onto the cookie sheet, and repeat.

Warning: because peeled apples are a lot more slick and wet than apple skin, you might want to pat the apple pops dry with a paper towel one more time before you start dipping them, and you should put them back in the freezer right after dipping to let the caramel set. Otherwise, it will just slide off. Leave them in the freezer for about 15 minutes, then transfer to the fridge for another 30 minutes or until the caramel is hardened.

Once the caramel is hard, take them out of the fridge and peel them off the wax paper. If you have a lot of caramel pooled around the bottom, you can cut it away with a knife. Then, enjoy the sweet fruits of your labor (hardy har).

You could also dip these in nuts, chocolate bits, crushed pretzels, or salt for fun variations. I think they would be really cute for a party! But don't wait too long to eat them, because the caramel will eventually slide off...



## Recipes

### CHOCOLATE-COVERED COFFEE BEANS

*From Intimateweddings.com*

#### INGREDIENTS:

1 cup whole coffee beans  
12-ounce package semisweet chocolate chips

#### DIRECTIONS:

Pour your chocolate chips into a double boiler. Melt chocolate.

Add coffee beans. Stir coffee beans into chocolate until coated.

Remove each bean with a fork. A bit tedious, but worth the hassle. (If you want to take a less tedious route, create coffee bean clusters by placing the melted mixture into paper candy cups.)

Place beans on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Place in refrigerator for 30 minutes. Voilà!





## Cocktails

### KIR ROYAL SPARKLING WINE COCKTAIL

*From Laylita.com*

#### INGREDIENTS:

Chilled champagne or sparkling wine

Crème de cassis or black currant liqueur, about 10 ml crème de cassis to 90–95 ml champagne

Berries to garnish

#### DIRECTIONS:

Pour the crème de cassis or black currant liqueur into champagne flutes.

Top with chilled champagne or sparkling wine.

Garnish with fresh berries and serve immediately.





## Cocktails

### POMEGRANATE GINGER CHAMPAGNE COCKTAIL

*From Littleferrarokitchen.com*

#### INGREDIENTS:

##### COCKTAIL

½ cup pomegranate juice  
1 tablespoon ginger syrup (See website for recipe)  
1 ounce orange liquor  
Splash of champagne or sparkling water  
Pomegranate seeds, for garnish  
1 orange peel, for garnish  
Ice

##### CRYSTALLIZED GINGER

1 two-inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled and sliced thin (or more ginger if you'd like)  
1 ½ cup sugar + more for dusting  
1 ½ cup water



#### DIRECTIONS:

In a shaker, add ice, pomegranate juice, ginger syrup, and orange liquor. Shake well and pour into a chilled martini glass. Garnish with pomegranate seeds and orange peel and top with a splash of champagne.

To make the crystallized ginger: In a small pot, add the water and sugar and bring to a boil. Add the peeled ginger and allow the ginger to cook in the sugar syrup for 20 minutes.

When done, ginger should be tender. Gently pour onto a parchment-lined baking sheet and allow to cool for 10 minutes, then roll ginger in reserved sugar so it coats all over evenly.

Serve with cocktail or save in an airtight container or give as a gift!





## *Magic Tricks*

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### LEAVE YOUR FELLOW BOOK CLUBBERS IN AWE BY:

- MAKING A TOOTHPICK DISAPPEAR
- SAWING A (PAPER) LADY IN HALF
- MAKING A RING RISE
- LEVITATING A RING

**LINKS TO ALL OF OUR SUGGESTED MAGIC TRICKS CAN BE FOUND HERE:**  
**[BOOKS.SOURCEBOOKS.COM/MAGICIANS-LIE](http://BOOKS.SOURCEBOOKS.COM/MAGICIANS-LIE)**

#### **THE VANISHING TOOTHPICK**

[magic.about.com/od/libraryofsimpletricks/ss/041608toothpick.htm](http://magic.about.com/od/libraryofsimpletricks/ss/041608toothpick.htm)

#### **SAWING A LADY IN HALF (PAPER VERSION)**

[magic.about.com/od/libraryofsimpletricks/ss/122406sawing.htm](http://magic.about.com/od/libraryofsimpletricks/ss/122406sawing.htm)

#### **THE RISING RING**

[magic.about.com/od/libraryofsimpletricks/ss/122406ring.htm](http://magic.about.com/od/libraryofsimpletricks/ss/122406ring.htm)

#### **THE LEVITATING RING**

[magic.about.com/od/libraryofsimpletricks/ss/080908ringrise.htm](http://magic.about.com/od/libraryofsimpletricks/ss/080908ringrise.htm)



## Crafts

### DIY RIBBON BOOKMARKS

From: *IntimateWeddings.com*

#### YOU WILL NEED:

- 16MM OR 5/8 INCH RIBBON CLAMP END CRIMPS (2 PER BOOKMARK)
- 5/8-INCH-WIDE VELVET RIBBON (A LENGTH OF NINE INCHES PER BOOKMARK)
- JUMP RINGS
- FLAT-NOSE PLIERS
- ROUND-NOSE PLIERS
- RULER
- EARRINGS, PENDANTS FROM OLD JEWELRY (I USED EARRINGS AND PENDANTS FROM THE {STYLED} BY TORI SPELLING LINE OF JEWELRY)



#### DIRECTIONS:

1. MEASURE RIBBON AND CUT INTO 9 INCH LENGTHS.
2. PLACE RIBBON CLAMP ON ONE END OF THE RIBBON.
3. PRESS DOWN ON RIBBON CLAMP UNTIL IT'S SECURE USING FLAT-NOSE PLIERS. REPEAT ON OTHER END OF RIBBON.
4. USING YOUR ROUND-NOSE PLIERS, CAREFULLY OPEN A JUMP RING AND ATTACH PENDANT.
5. ADD PENDANT TO OTHER SIDE OF RIBBON. THAT'S IT!



## Crafts

### DIY BOW TIE

From *HonestlyWtf.com*

#### YOU WILL NEED:

- A 6" X 3.5" PIECE OF VELVET
- A 0.75" X 2.5" PIECE OF VELVET
- A 1" PIN BACK
- A GLUE GUN
- A RULER
- A PEN



#### DIRECTIONS:

1. START BY DRAWING A VERTICAL LINE AND A HORIZONTAL LINE, DIVIDING THE RECTANGLE INTO 4 EQUAL QUARTERS. PINCH THE INTERSECTING LINES AND PICK UP THE VELVET.
2. FLIP THE PIECE OVER, WHILE STILL PINCHING THE BACK SIDE, AND PLACE A DROP OF HOT GLUE IN THE CENTER. FOLD THE VELVET IN HALF LENGTHWISE, PRESSING THE TWO SIDES CLOSED. PLACE A DROP OF GLUE ON BACK SIDE, ALONG THE VERTICAL LINE AND CLOSE TO THE FOLDED EDGE. FOLD THE FABRIC BACK AND PRESS THE TWO SIDES CLOSED. THIS IS THE ACCORDION-LIKE FOLD THAT WILL BE REPEATED.
3. PLACE ANOTHER DROP OF GLUE ON THE FRONT SIDE AND FOLD THE FABRIC CLOSED. CONTINUE THE STEPS ON BOTH SIDES.
4. TURN THE BOW ON ITS BACK SIDE AND GLUE THE TIP OF THE VELVET STRIP TO THE CENTER. WRAP THE STRIP AROUND THE BOW AND SEAL IT CLOSED.
5. GLUE A PIN BACK TO THE BACK OF THE BOW.

### DIY MINI TOP HAT

[www.fleecefun.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/fleece-fun-mini-top-hat-small.pdf](http://www.fleecefun.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/fleece-fun-mini-top-hat-small.pdf)







## Games

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### TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

From Ehow.com

#### SETTING UP THE GAME

Get the players to sit in a circle and explain the rules. Each person will make three factual statements about themselves—two will be true and one will be a lie. Typically, statements cover likes/dislikes, experiences, skills, or habits. They can be common or unusual facts. Liking the color red is a common statement; bungee jumping off the Rio Grande Bridge is a bit more unusual. Give the group a few minutes to come up with ideas. If you wish, give everyone a piece of paper and a pencil so they can jot down their statements and keep score if you're playing a competitive version of the game.

#### HOW TO PLAY

Pick a person to take the first turn. He tells the group his three statements. The group then discusses the statements and decides which one is the lie. If the group does not agree on which statement to choose, have a show-of-hands vote. The player then reveals whether the group guessed correctly by revealing which of his statements was not true. Move on to the next player and continue until everyone has had a turn.

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### RING TOSS

From [www.twoshadesofpink.blogspot.com/2011/07/make-your-own-old-fashioned-games-make.html](http://www.twoshadesofpink.blogspot.com/2011/07/make-your-own-old-fashioned-games-make.html)

**YOU WILL NEED:** One six-pack of bottled root beer and three small embroidery hoops

#### DIRECTIONS:

1. Arrange bottles in an X formation
2. Write a number on a piece of paper for each player. Put the piece of paper into a hat. Let each player draw a number out of the hat. They will play in the order dictated by the number they pull out.
3. Mark off the line behind which the players must stand to toss the rings. There is no official distance in the rules, so the players can determine the level of challenge for each game.
4. Stand behind the line. Toss each of the three rings, aiming for the root beer bottles. If the ring lands on one of the four bottles that are at the ends of the X, the player earns five points. If the ring lands on one of the two bottles in the center, the player scores 10 points.
5. Take the rings off of the bottles so that the next player can take his/her turn. Each player tosses all three rings. Everyone should take three turns. Whoever has the highest number of points at the end is the winner.





## Activities

### COME UP WITH YOUR OWN MAGICIAN NAME:

(Or use the online generator at <http://books.sourcebooks.com/magicians-lie>)

Based on the first letter of your first name, add the following adjective before your first name. Write your new magician name on a name tag for your book club meeting!

**A: ASTONISHING**

**B: BREATHTAKING**

**C: CAPTIVATING**

**D: DYNAMITE**

**E: EXTRAORDINARY**

**F: FEARSOME**

**G: GRAND**

**H: HONORARY**

**I: INCREDIBLE**

**J: JAZZY**

**K: KINGLY**

**L: LOVELY**

**M: MAGNIFICENT**

**N: NOBLE**

**O: OUTSTANDING**

**P: PHENOMENAL**

**Q: QUEENLY**

**R: REMARKABLE**

**S: SPECTACULAR**

**T: THRILLING**

**U: UPROARIOUS**

**V: VIBRANT**

**W: WICKED**

**X: XENIAL**

**Y: YOUTHFUL**

**Z: ZEALOUS**

*Hello, my name is*



sourcebooks  
landmark





## Discussion Guide

1. The action of *The Magician's Lie* alternates between a single night in 1905, with Arden imprisoned by Officer Holt, and the story of her life that Arden is telling him, which ranges over a number of years. Did you find one story line more intriguing than the other? Were you eager to get back to one or the other?
2. As the novel opens, Virgil Holt has just received the bad news that the doctor won't operate on the bullet lodged near his spine. How does this affect his actions? Do you think he would have behaved differently if he were uninjured?
3. "The law is perfect. The men in charge of executing it are not." Officer Holt decides early on that if Arden is innocent, it's his responsibility to free her instead of turning her in, since the courts can't be trusted to determine guilt or innocence. Do you believe this? Do you think he should have turned her in either way?
4. Before her mother runs away with Victor Turner, Arden lives in splendor at her grandparents' mansion in Philadelphia, but is raised mostly by tutors and household servants. Do you think she would have been better off if her mother hadn't taken her along to Tennessee?
5. After Ray breaks Arden's leg, preventing her from dancing for Madama Bonfanti and having the chance to enter ballet school, she says, "There were so many what-ifs." What do you think would have happened if he hadn't done this?
6. Misunderstandings and difficulties arise from Arden's differences of opinion with other characters, but she also has a great deal in common with some of the same people. Who else in the book is most like her? Her mother? Ray? Clyde? Adelaide? Who is she least like?
7. When Arden confesses that Ray has hurt her, her mother tells her, "You must be mistaken...we all depend on that boy's father, for our lives, for everything...I think you know Ray won't be the one he'll punish. We will all suffer instead." Do you feel Arden's mother bears some responsibility for what happened to Arden at Ray's hands? Should she have spoken up, even though it could have endangered their family's well-being?
8. Fleeing Tennessee for Biltmore is a huge, pivotal moment in Arden's life. Do you think it was the right choice? Should she have stayed with her family and tried to find another way to fight Ray?
9. In a key scene, the master of Biltmore tells Arden, "We all have agency," and she later repeats it to Holt. What does this quote mean to you? Do you think it applies to your own life, and if so, how?





10. Arden is surprised that Holt easily believes in magic. Did this surprise you as well? Did you believe from the beginning that the disappearance of the bruise on Arden's throat was magical, or did you suspect some sort of trick?
11. Ray pursues Arden for years, eventually finding her, first in Chicago and then again in Savannah. "My God, Ada, I've missed you so much. You're my other half. The only one like me. I haven't felt complete without you." Why do you think he was so obsessed with her?
12. During their romance at Biltmore, Clyde is a slightly shadowy figure, and Arden learns that he's not entirely trustworthy during their trip up the coast. Is Arden right to distrust him when they meet again years later? How hard is it to reevaluate your relationship with someone you've known for a long time?
13. Arden is suspicious of rich people at several points in the book, and feels she can only fit in at Biltmore as a servant. Yet she was raised in wealth by her grandparents. Why do you feel she identifies so strongly with the life she led starting at age 12 instead of her life before that?
14. Adelaide Herrmann isn't close to the people who work for her, except for Arden. Why does Adelaide choose Arden as her protégé?
15. Adelaide Herrmann is a huge success as a female magician. Yet she maintains emotional distance from everyone who works for her, except for Arden. Does she seem satisfied with her life, up until the ill-fated Second Sight act? Does she seem satisfied after her retirement, when Arden visits her many years later?
16. Virgil is convinced that he was his wife's second choice, after her childhood love Mose married another girl. Do you think this prevents him from being honest with her about his fears and hopes?
17. Arden's near-death experience at the Iroquois Theatre, including her unhappy reunion with Ray, frightens her deeply. Yet she doesn't share the full extent of her feelings, or the truth of what happened, with Clyde. Why do you think she keeps this from him? Does it contribute to their problems later in the story?
18. Arden's illusions, such as the Fair Shake, comment on gender relations in a time when that would have been very controversial. How would the same illusions be received today? Do you think a woman cutting a man in half on stage would still be shocking to some audiences?
19. When Clyde asks her to marry him, Arden refuses, telling herself, "It was a trap...We were too strong-willed to be locked together in marriage, a permanent institution. If we tried to hold each other too close, it could destroy us." Did you believe this reasoning? What other reasons would she have to accept or refuse his offer of marriage?





20. "I let him damage me and try to heal that damage, with his delusions of magic. I talk a good game about risk, but when it all came down to it, I chose something awful and safe." When Ray threatens Clyde, Arden gives up and allows him to hurt her and essentially keep her captive. Did you feel she had other options? If so, what should she have done instead?
21. Arden claims that "in different circumstances, she might have liked Officer Virgil Holt, and he might have liked her." Do you think this is true? What about their interactions makes it seem more or less likely?
22. Arden isn't guilty of the murder of Ray, but she did cut his throat in Chicago, and she tells Holt she was "ready to kill him" before Clyde did so. In your mind, does this compromise her claims of innocence?
23. As the book ends, Holt has resolved to begin living his life anew, without letting his fear of death get in the way. Do you feel he has been profoundly changed by his experience with Arden? Or do you think these resolutions will fade in the harsh light of day?
24. Where do you think Arden and Clyde's story might go from the ending onward?
25. Whether or not Arden is telling Officer Holt the truth is a key question throughout the book. When did you most believe her? Were there times where you were sure she was lying?





## Conversation with the Author

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### WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WRITE *THE MAGICIAN'S LIE*?

In the beginning, it was a very simple idea: I realized that I had read and seen countless references to male magicians cutting a woman in half but had never heard of a woman cutting a man in half. I decided to research it and found that stage magic is one of those fields that has really historically been dominated by men all along, with a few interesting exceptions. One of those exceptions was Adelaide Herrmann. I decided that her performance of the Bullet Catch in New York City in 1897 (a real event) would be the perfect inspiration for my protagonist to enter the world of magic. And the Amazing Arden was born.

### WAS THAT THE REASON YOU DECIDED TO SET *THE MAGICIAN'S LIE* AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY?

Yes and no. Integrating Adelaide into the story intrigued me, but the main driving force was the place in culture I wanted Arden to occupy. In the present day, we're intrigued by professional stage magicians, but they don't occupy a central place in popular entertainment. Most people could probably name a couple of magicians: Criss Angel, David Blaine, David Copperfield, maybe Doug Henning (am I dating myself?). I wanted Arden to have true fame and true infamy because of the Halved Man. And for her to be a real pioneer in the field, I decided that right at the turn of the century was the best possible time.

### SO ADELAIDE HERRMANN IS REAL. WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER CHARACTERS? FICTIONAL, INSPIRED BY REAL PEOPLE, OR SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN?

George Vanderbilt, of course, was a real person, though I've played a little fast and loose with what we know of the early days of Biltmore. "Somewhere in between" fiction and fact would describe how I've integrated history throughout the book. The guests I mention attending that first Christmas party at the Biltmore—like the future President McKinley—are on record as visiting Biltmore, but not necessarily on that date. The prima ballerina assoluta Madame Bonfanti was real, though there is no evidence she visited Biltmore or even traveled seeking students for her school.

Some of the magicians Clyde and Arden discuss are real players of the time, and some aren't. Same with the theaters in which she performs. The Iroquois Theatre fire, tragically, was very real, resulting in more than six hundred deaths due to the exact conditions described in Arden's retelling—doors that opened in instead of out, locked gates between the levels of the theater, really terrible contributing factors that made the disaster so much worse. That was hard both to read about and to write about.

My intent throughout the book was to integrate history in a way that enriches and expands the story I wanted to tell, without feeling hidebound by exactly what happened to whom and when. After all, Arden has a magical power of healing her own wounds. This is a novel and not a historical document, clearly.





### **SPEAKING OF THAT, WHERE DID ARDEN'S HEALING POWER COME FROM?**

Actually, there were drafts of the story both with and without the magical element. But I was fascinated by the idea of a magician who really does have magical powers, and even more, by the idea of a man of the law who is practical and realistic, but also has no problem believing that supernatural things can happen. I wanted Arden's power to have limits. She's not a superhero. So her healing power only goes so far.

### **YOU SAID THERE WERE DIFFERENT DRAFTS OF THE STORY. WAS THE ENDING ALWAYS THE SAME?**

That was one of the few parts that stayed the same the whole time! The beginning changed, the characters changed, the magic changed, nearly everything changed. But I always knew what I was working toward: the reveal to the audience and Holt alike that Ray was the dead "husband" we saw at the beginning of the book, followed closely by Arden's successful escape. I just love that kind of pit-of-the-stomach realization as a reader, so as a writer, I wanted to deliver on that for my readers. Arden was never guilty of the crime in any draft that I wrote. I did want the reader to have lots of doubts about her along the way, but I always wanted her to get her happy ending, or as close to it as possible.

### **HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO WRITE THIS BOOK?**

Sometimes it feels like forever! I think from the first "what if a female magician cut a man in half onstage?" moment to turning in the final draft to my editor was about five years. Part of that was the research. I'd been writing fiction for years, but never historical, and it really changed my writing process. I kept getting distracted—if there was a scene where I wanted a character to put on a hat, I wanted to know what kind of hat it would have been, so I'd stop writing and go to the Internet. And you know what happens with the Internet. Two hours later, you know everything about hats of the 1890s, but you haven't written a single word. Eventually I found a way to put in placeholders and come back later with details, but that took a while. There were also a couple of major revisions, and I'd set myself a pretty serious task by interweaving what happens in the "present" story (the 1905 police station scenes) and the story that Arden is telling in the "past" (from 1890 onward). Every change rippled through the whole book. I'm really thrilled with the result, but there were some tough days in there. Writing is rewriting.

### **ARDEN IS VERY CLEARLY THE CENTRAL CHARACTER OF *THE MAGICIAN'S LIE*. IS SHE THE CHARACTER YOU FEEL MOST CLOSELY CONNECTED TO?**

Well, yes and no. Arden keeps most people at arm's length throughout the story, and I felt like she was doing that to me a little too. I knew she was telling the truth to Holt, but I also knew she didn't entirely trust him, and even Clyde, who she loved desperately, she could sometimes be suspicious of. That's not really me. In a way, I identified more with Adelaide. She's brusque and sharp and imperfect, but you know where you stand with her. I admired her courage and intelligence just as much as I admired Arden's. Most of my early readers pick Adelaide out as their favorite character. I'm actually thinking about giving her her own book next.





**WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT WRITING?**

I love creating something out of nothing. It starts with just the spark of an idea, some small inspiration, and grows into this entire world of the novel. A full cast of characters who feel real, all the words they speak, all the actions they take. It's all just words on the page. And then to have a real effect on readers? That's the most amazing thing. It's the closest thing to magic I think we really have in life, other than love. Writers are illusionists who work in words. I love being that kind of magician.