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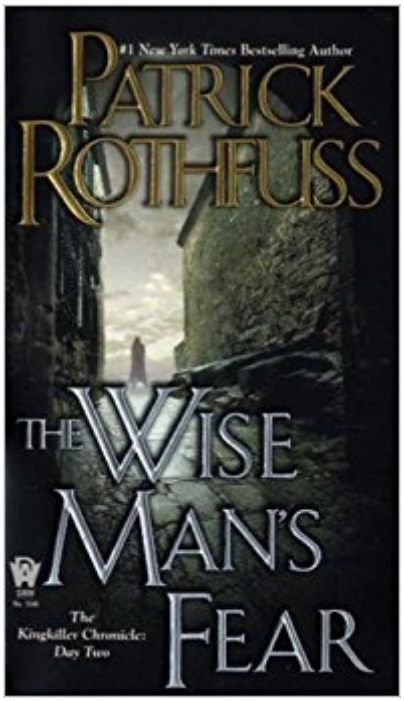
The Wise Man's Fear: The Kingkiller Chronicle: Day Two



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Synopsis

â œThere are three things all wise men fear: the sea in storm, a night with no moon, and the anger of a gentle man.â •My name is Kvothe. You may have heard of me.So begins the tale of a hero told from his own point of viewâ ”a story unequaled in fantasy literature. Now in The Wise Manâ ™s Fear, Day Two of The Kingkiller Chronicle, Kvothe takes his first steps on the path of the hero and learns how difficult life can be when a man becomes a legend in his own time.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I love The Name of the Wind. In fact, I've been able to make myself a hero on oodles of occasions by recommending Name of the Wind to people "looking for a good book." The only person I've recommended it to who didn't really care for it was my wife. So figure that one out.I received Wise Man's Fear from early Tuesday morning and devoured it. I was never bored while reading it - the characters were sharp, Rothfuss is a ridiculously skilled writer, and there's plenty in this book to keep you engrossed and entertained.So why three stars? Why am I not falling all over myself to praise this one?Because it's kind of a mess. An engrossing, brilliant, hot and swanky mess, but a mess just the same.My biggest problem is that, with some minor, token exceptions, I know exactly as much about the Chandrian as I did before I read this book. Same goes for the Amyr and the Valeritas door in the archives. I actually feel like I know less about the framing story with the Scrael and Kvothe's slow-mo death wish. All the new things Rothfuss reveals in Book II are things that are kind of cool and groovy in their own right, but they seem fairly inconsequential to the overall story, and often they feel as if they've been dragged in from the Kvothe band's inferior opening act. It's like

I've watched an entire season of a Kvothe TV series that is saving all the good bits for sweeps, which presumably doesn't arrive until Book III.And, to dangerously and alchemically mix metaphors, Book III is going to have to do a whole lot of heavy lifting to tie up all the loose ends. I would not be surprised if the Kingkiller Chronicles isn't really as trilological as Rothfuss initially intended. (No, trililogical isn't really a word. Shut up.

The first half of Wise Man's Fear is an improvement over the previous book in the Kingkiller Chronicles. There is intrigue, mystery, complex interpersonal drama, great writing, and great pacing. Then halfway through the book, Rothfuss decides to let us in on the fantasies of his fifteen-year-old self, and the book goes downhill from there.The book picks up precisely when the previous book left off, sparing little time to catch people up or re-explain everything in case a reader started with book two. I'm glad about that. I hate it when a series is up and running and the author or publisher feels that they need to throw in some exposition for people who didn't read the earlier books. Seriously...who starts a series at book two? Anyway...It goes great for a long while. I found the second half of the first book to be the best, and this seemed like a continuation of that. A lot happens, mostly having to do with Kvothe's adventures at the University and then on to a different land, where Kvothe gets some experience dealing with nobility and goes on an adventure with a ragtag group of adventurers.Then...just over halfway through the book, the plot comes to a grinding halt. Don't want to spoil anything. So I'll just say that something happens that is totally unrelated to what had been going on in the first two books. It is mentioned in book one (I think), but only as one of Kvothe's many legendary accomplishments. Funny thing is, what happens is very similar to one of the fantasies I used to dream up before bed when I was a nerdy, lonely, sex-crazed teenager. I don't mind the occasional bit of self-indulgence from an author, but this goes on way too long, further emphasizing just how juvenile it is.

Maybe the review title sounds like a pan, and I guess it is, but as much as I was absolutely enchanted by "The Name of the Wind", Rothfuss's followup "The Wise Man's Fear" left me tired and ultimately frustrated, and yet all the while I couldn't put it down. Many have spoken about how 1000 pages of story barely advanced anything in the grand scheme of things, and it's a sound argument. As pointed out by another review I read, WMF feels like Act 1: Part 2 rather then Act 2 of 3. It's a ***, maybe a *** 1/2 whereas the first one was a full *****.*** SPOILERS FROM THIS POINT ON ***My main problem was that every time it felt like the story was advancing and evolving in an organic way, Rothfuss slammed the breaks on the plot and sent Kvothe off in another disappointing

direction. The transition from the University to the Maer's palace was fine enough, if you don't mind several chapters worth of plot excised (the shipwreck, pirates, etc.) I can see why it was removed -- anything to move the story along, right? We needed to get Kvothe to Vintas. OK, cool. And everything in that section of the book, the palace intrigue, political maneuvering, Kvothe's cunning and observation really felt like it was pushing Kvothe towards a new chapter in his life. And it was. And just as things got interesting and were leading towards a culmination of several hundred pages worth of plotting... Rothfuss decides to send Kvothe out on an elongated, drawn-out bandit hunt.I felt the air draining from the novel's lungs. So now we have to start a whole new plotline just when things were getting REALLY good in Vintas. The Bandit Hunt. Great. What was the overall purpose? To introduce Kvothe to Tempi AND to show a brief glimpse of a Chandrian (who makes a hasty exit to no last impact).

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