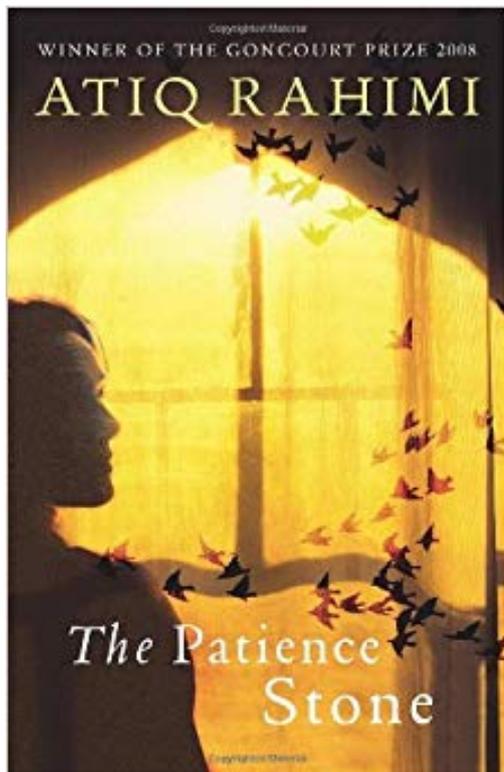


## The Patience Stone *by* Atiq Rahimi



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## Reviews of the *The Patience Stone* *by* Atiq Rahimi

Lanin

This little novel will stay with me forever. The strength and courage of women in a society that places them behind men and with little appreciation for their purpose other than birthers is revealed in this lovely sparse novel. Irony prevails after the protagonist, wife of a wounded soldier, is cared for patiently and daily as she tells her life and experiences many changes of emotion and learning peaks is astonishing. Truly a must read about a novel set in war torn Afghanistan.

Rochelle L Holt

Vikus

A perennial question of literature asks whether an author has "borrowed" an element or perhaps two from another author. Given the number of stories, authors, and elements used throughout the ages,

borrowing or emulation is bound to occur. One cannot read Atiq Rahimi's *The Patience Stone* for more than a few minutes without becoming aware of a great similarity between his work and Dalton Trumbo's *Johnny Got His Gun*. Whether the similarity is intentional or not is another aspect of the question. This is especially true because while a severely wounded soldier in essentially a vegetative state is central in both books, Trumbo's soldier is the protagonist; it is his thoughts and opinions we hear. Rahimi's soldier while in a similar physical state is the antagonist who provokes/evokes the thoughts and opinions of an unnamed woman (his wife) who attends him.

Trumbo's novel was essentially anti-war; Rahimi's is anti-oppression and repression. While *Johnny Got His Gun* is disturbing for the extreme circumstances the protagonist is in, his views and the issues are not unfamiliar to most readers. On the other hand, *The Patience Stone* is disturbing for the views and the issues that are elucidated by the unnamed protagonist. I think it is disturbing to most non-Arab readers because we in the West are unfamiliar with and/or naïve about Arab culture and the roles of religion, men, and women in that culture. I think the novel may also be disturbing to conservative Arab readers for the shocking substance and style of the unnamed woman's monologue.

*The Patience Stone* that I read (on my Kindle2) was in English. It was written in French by a native Afghan and then translated into English. Only Atiq Rahimi would know if something was lost in the translation, but the novel is still striking for its prose. "Striking" is a compromise word. My initial thought was "compelling prose" because I felt so compelled to keep reading that I finished this short novel (160 pages) in a few hours. It is sparse prose that seems quite suitable to convey the brutality of the circumstances and events.

*The Patience Stone* is a good novel - a good read. Perhaps its brevity adds to the reader's fascination, shock, horror, incredulity, and outrage. I like it because it left me with a lot to think about.

BORZOTA

Atiq Rahimi is a brilliant writer. As I started reading the book I was immediately drawn to the plot, subconsciously my mind started to visualize the story and I felt I was right in the middle of the scene. As I progressed into the book I couldn't stop reading and I was addicted to get to know the rest of the woman's secrets. There are some interesting cultural, religious and historical references in the book that can educate the reader and also relate to the plot of the story. The fascinating thing for me about this story was how after reading the book, the images were imprinted in my memory and as I watched the trailers of the movie it was exactly the same as I had visualized it while reading. *The Patience Stone* is a must read and I highly recommend it to anyone.

Jazu

One cannot deny the beauty of the language of the book. It quickly draws you into to an intense situation where in all likelihood, you don't want to be. That's what makes it hard to like the book, so the little stars ratings captions Amazon provides don't really apply here. It's not pleasant to be faced with so much anger in the midst of a dangerous and complex situation, and you do tend to feel that you are also in that room with the comatose body of the woman's husband, awash in the stream of hopelessness, panic and even apathy at some points. There's little in the way of relief even when new characters enter, and no good decisions available for the character to make. Well written as it is, I didn't feel comfortable reading it much of the time, but I did feel compelled to read it anyway, and was both grateful and disappointed that it was so short.

Phobism

While the life of the woman was very moving to me, I was left wanting more detail about her life. I found it interesting that she seemed to really love her husband (or was it just desperate need?) as well as despise him for his coldness.

Also, I found the ending fairly unbelievable, as though the author didn't know what to do as a conclusion, so he just made up a quick little fight to end our wondering about what becomes of her,

him, her girls...

All in all, a decent way to spend a couple hours, a story that will blend in with the other books I've read about womens' suffering in Afghanistan, but not one that will really stand out in my memory on its own.

Silverbrew

The setting might seem like hard to pull off but it actually adds to the story...having everything happen in just one room. The main character is well developed and she grabs you...I feel like I know her and want yo save her.

Kakashkaliandiia

This story had a lot of potential. I wish the author would have given more of a background story to the characters. The soldier, where did he come from? Perhaps a page or two from his point of view would have added the extra level of intrigue this book in my opinion was missing. Same goes for the aunt,how did she feel when her niece showed up and left her daughter's for the aunt to watch over? The ending was predictable so one would expect more to it but it simply ended. A Seldom has a tale been as breathtakingly moving as this one. Told in stark, simple prose, it resonates with beauty and horror and honesty. A tour de force.

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