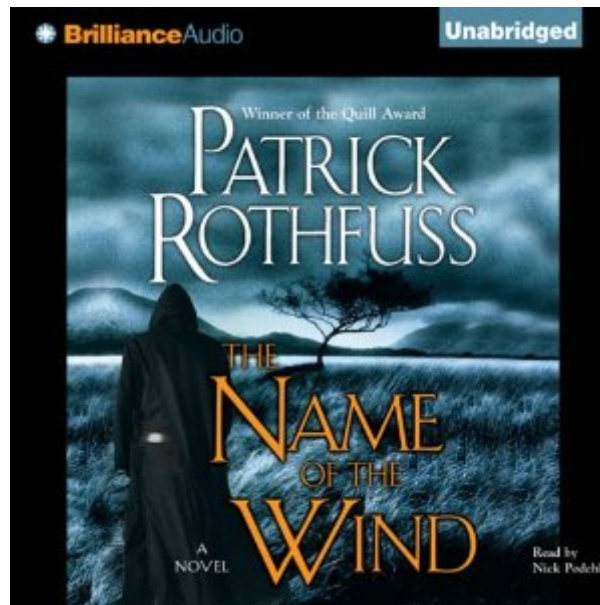


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The Name Of The Wind: Kingkiller Chronicles, Day 1



Synopsis

My name is Kvothe. I have stolen princesses back from sleeping barrow kings. I burned down the town of Trebon. I have spent the night with Felurian and left with both my sanity and my life. I was expelled from the University at a younger age than most people are allowed in. I tread paths by moonlight that others fear to speak of during day. I have talked to Gods, loved women, and written songs that make the minstrels weep. You may have heard of me. So begins a tale unequalled in fantasy literature—the story of a hero told in his own voice. It is a tale of sorrow, a tale of survival, a tale of one man's search for meaning in his universe, and how that search, and the indomitable will that drove it, gave birth to a legend. It is a rare and great pleasure to find a fantasist writing with true music in the words. Wherever Pat Rothfuss goes, I'll carry us with him as a good singer carries us through a song. — Ursula K. Le Guin, bestselling author and winner of the National Book Award

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Customer Reviews

It seems to me that every year there are more books I want to read and less time for me to read them. Because my time is limited, I'm guilty of picking up the books by my favorite authors first, and fitting in new authors only when it's convenient. Due to a stroke of luck, I've had an advance copy of *The Name of the Wind* by my bedside for over six months, just waiting for me to open it. Unfortunately, deadlines of my own kept getting in the way. But in a way, it's lucky that I didn't crack this book until just a few days ago. If I'd had this tale to distract me, I'd have been even later getting

my work done. I loathe spoilers, so I'm not going to discuss the plot of this book. I will say it has all the things that I demand of a book. The characters are real, the action is convincing and it has a compelling story to tell. One of the things I like best about this book is that the magic is absolutely rooted in the book's world. Nothing seems contrived; the consistency is excellent. The characters are very well realized. That means that when the protagonist does something clever, it's believable. And when he does something youthfully dumb, it rings just as authentically true. Because the characters are real and the magic is true to its own world, I closed this book feeling as if I'd been on a journey with an entertaining new friend, rather than sitting alone looking at words on a page. This one is well worth some of your precious reading time. I'll wager that the books to follow it will also be. Robin Hobb

I've spent the past hour and a half reading all the negative reviews for this book and I've seen some patterns emerge. First, people criticize the book on matters of preference, not literary quality. Second, people have had a bad reading experience because they expected something different than what the book really is. The truth is, there are many 5 star reviews (that I think the book deserves) that are not written in 5 star fashion. Many people do not know how to properly describe the book in a way that helps possible readers know if they would like it or not. Here's the thing. I like this book a lot. I think it is one of the best books I've ever read. Here is what it's not: A fast-paced novel, a novel about the epic world-changing deeds of a hero, completely original, for everyone. The novel is not about world-changing feats of heroism. It is a slow-paced book about the development of an incredibly intelligent, but relatively normal boy, how he becomes a legendary figure, and some of the problems he faces in fostering that reputation and living up to it in the end. It is not the most original fantasy novel to ever hit shelves. It's originality comes not from its world or characters (for goodness' sake, look at the map with the book. It's obviously an adaptation of Europe. Just like middle earth or countless other fantasy settings). The originality comes from subject matter more focused on the coming of age of a young boy and how, due to the existence of his impressive intelligence and the existence of a logical type of magic, certain events shape him into a legendary figure. There are plenty of cliché plot points, but not ones that I couldn't fully relate to. That said, the character is a very intelligent, but often foolish and arrogant, teenage boy. Not everyone can relate to him, but that also doesn't make it a bad book. What I loved about this book was the main character. I have read many fantasy books with unbelievable characters. Often times, their behavior seems overly emotional or angsty. When I think about the people I know, I feel like people are often times as irrational as characters in those books, but I tend to not be. I can't stand when character

conflict is built up on small disagreements that would easily be solved if one person cleared up a misunderstanding by simply talking to the other party. Very few such situations arise in this book which makes me happy because I seldom let those situations arise in my own life. The love story, while simple puppy-love is something myself and all of my friends went through at some point in our teen years, and I love that the main character is afraid of failure and making mistakes. Often times his problems come from lack of action rather than stupidity or brashness. Almost every man, whether he admits it or not, has a deep fear of failure. Kvothe is so real on so many levels, and his actions follow logically with his personality. It was impossible for me not to get fully immersed in the story. All of that said... one last thing. I would be remiss if I didn't also say that this is the first book I have read that made me cry since I read "Where the Red Fern Grows" in 5th grade. And I cried like a freaking baby.

I always read the negative reviews of books I liked. For one, I think people can be much more detailed about what they don't like than what they did. Second, I just want to know what made people dislike something I liked. There seems to be an overall theme amongst the negative reviews that Kvothe is unlikable--but most of these reviews contradict themselves. They don't like him because he's arrogant, but then also complain that he's too perfect to be realistic and has no flaws. I think Rothfuss's intentions were to make Kvothe's arrogance one of his biggest flaws. Imagine you caught on to many subjects in school very fast, were number one in your class and had a relatively quick wit. You'd probably be arrogant, too, as I know the smart, popular people in my high school were. And it's Kvothe's arrogance that constantly gets him into trouble. The theme of Rothfuss's book, to me, is the difference between the reality of a man's life and his actions, and the stories other men tell about him. That's why we begin with him in a quiet inn, then cut to local patrons telling wild tales. We are introduced to a character, The Chronicler, whose sole purpose in "life" is to find the truth about stories, to debunk myths and legends. But fantasy books *are* the stuff of myths and legends--dragons, fair maidens, faeries, wizards. So how do you tell the story of a renowned magical hero without the requisite exaggeration and outright lies? Without turning the hero into an unrealistic beacon of flawless unrelenting perfection? You tell both stories--the ones people want to believe, and the story that comes closest to the truth. And the truth is Kvothe is a rash, impulsive, sometimes selfish and very often stupidly arrogant man. These traits get him into endless trouble, which he sometimes weasels his way out of through his wit and talents. You are given Kvothe's many legendary titles (like Bloodless) and then learn the slightly less-than-mystical reason why he was given that quasi-true moniker. What's masterful about Rothfuss's work here, however, is that

even when you tear down the myths about Kvothe and get to the "real" story, Kvothe still emerges a hero. If that is too unbelievable for you, if it's not realistic for a character to be truly heroic and truly talented and truly great despite his flaws, then you won't like this story. It's just not cynical enough for you.

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