



The Marriage of Sticks

By Jonathan Carroll

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This novel of a woman's breakdown after a high school reunion has “a wonderful strangeness reminiscent of Fellini” (*Publishers Weekly*).

Miranda marches into her high school reunion with the confidence of a professional at the top of her field. But inside she is lost, disenchanted with her career, and as alone as a person can possibly be. As a teenager in Crane's View, she fell in love with unrepentant bad boy James Stillman, and though they never slept together, he thrilled her as no man has since. She returns to her hometown hoping to reconnect with him, but learns at the reunion that he was killed in a car crash years ago.

In the weeks that follow, Miranda is haunted by visions of the past. First she sees James, alive and healthy, and more chilling hallucinations follow. Seeking distraction, she dives into an ill-advised love affair that turns darker than she could ever imagine. To find peace, Miranda must learn to walk the razor-thin line that separates this world from the one that follows.

This ebook contains an all-new introduction by Jonathan Carroll, as well as an exclusive illustrated biography of the author including rare images from his personal collection.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Jonathan Carroll is a writer other writers envy. He's been described as a "cult favorite" whose works go out of print too quickly in the USA, despite his popularity in Europe and the admiration of reviewers. It may be because Carroll uses fantastic elements, but doesn't write genre fantasy; his books are often haunting, even frightening, but they're not horror novels. He puzzles you, surprises you, and always makes you think about how what he's saying might apply to your life.

In *The Marriage of Sticks*, Miranda Romanac is a thirtysomething dealer in rarities who loves her work and lifestyle, but feels unfulfilled. As her friend Zoe says,

you don't expect anything better to happen because you've lived too long and seen too much to have any more hope. I'm luckier than you. I don't think life's very friendly either, but I know we *can* control hope. You can turn it on and off like a spigot. I try to keep mine on full blast.

Miranda struggles to change her life after upsetting revelations at a high school reunion. She has an affair with a married man who leaves his wife and children for her. She lives with ghosts of her past and future, with what might have been and could be. She's forced to face the consequences of her actions and the effect she has on others' lives by being who she is. Finally, she learns "to live without everything" and be content.

--*Nona Vero*

From Publishers Weekly

In the first half of Carroll's new fantasy (after *Bones of the Moon*), there is little to prepare readers for the surrealism of the second half. Over one hundred pages of aged protagonist Miranda Romanac's memoirs of quotidian high school and yuppie romance drag by. Although there are wonderful insights and poetic phrases, the whole is drowned in eldersprache: actual scenes are far outweighed by a distancing voice heavy with reflection. Then, in the midst of Miranda's passionate adulterous affair with a New York art dealer, very strange things start to happen. Miranda's lover suddenly dies. Apparitions haunt and bloody her in the house given to her by Frances Hatch, a former mistress of Kazantzakis and Giacometti. Alternate worlds open before her, and Frances helps Miranda navigate: they have an ancient connection, it turns out. The writing abruptly shifts in the second half, becoming poetic and magical, dense with a wonderful strangeness reminiscent of Fellini and urgent with inklings of horrors around the corner. Miranda must discover the awful truth of what she is, while weird ancients watch and guide. Carroll often startles with the deftness of his insights, both personal and metaphysical, and there are many lines that, for their poetry, one wants to cut out and frame. But this book is alarmingly full of shoehorns and ad hoc explanations. It feels as if Carroll drafted part one at a gallop, then crafted part two as an improvisation, reincorporating and reinterpreting the opening material as fantastic: too many rabbits from too many hats. But for all the overweening cleverness, beauty and wisdom reside here. (Sept.)

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From Library Journal

Miranda Romanac's life changes forever when she falls in love with a married man and moves with him into an old house near the Hudson River. As ghosts of the past begin to intrude upon her life, she soon realizes that her visions come not from a world beyond but from myriad past selves. The author of *Bones of the Moon* evokes an eerie world of hidden meanings in this compelling tale of a woman's journey to the edge of reality. Carroll writes with a stark elegance that infuses the everyday world with a hint of surrealism and a

taste of the unreal. Highly recommended for fantasy and general fiction collections.
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Rodney Hussey:

Do you have favorite book? In case you have, what is your favorite's book? E-book is very important thing for us to know everything in the world. Each reserve has different aim as well as goal; it means that book has different type. Some people really feel enjoy to spend their a chance to read a book. They are reading whatever they have because their hobby is definitely reading a book. Consider the person who don't like reading a book? Sometime, man or woman feel need book once they found difficult problem or maybe exercise. Well, probably you will require this The Marriage of Sticks.

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