

Talented Bankers Literary Panel
Book Introduction 137

By Madhavi V K
State Bank of India
TFPCPC, Ernakulam.

THE SILENT PATIENT
ALEX MICHAELIDES

Alicia Berenson, an artist married to Gabriel Berenson a celebrated fashion photographer. She had almost everything in her life. She had an enviable career, perfect husband and a beautiful house in an expensive area of London. But one evening she shot her husband five times in the face and goes silent. Police found her near his body with slashed wrists and a gun nearby. Her trial attracts lot of attention due to the fact that Alicia does not utter any word. She is whisked away to a criminal psychiatric facility name the Grove.

All this happened six years ago. She remains silent and engima to all.

Theo Faber, a forensic psychotherapist joins the Grove who is determined that he could break the silence of Alicia and treat her. He believes that only he could make her speak.

From there the suspenseful story begins- of a woman who murdered her husband and has gone silent and a therapist who is determined to treat her and break the silence.

The book is divided into parts where some parts are the writings of Alicia in her diary. Others show the life of Theo Faber outside Grove with his wife Kathy and we get to know the motivation behind treating Alicia. Other characters like Professor Dioemedes head of the Grove, Christian a fellow psychiatrist at grove, Paul – Alicia's cousin, Max Berenson- Gabriel's brother, Jean Felix Martin whose gallery represents Alicia all play their own roles to unfold the story even though they dont have a major role in the story. The book is about the mysterious silence of Alicia.

Alicia has painted a painting during her time of house arrest which is a self portrait and she has named it ALCESTIS.

Alcestis - story

Alcestis is an ancient Greek play by Euripides.

Alcestis has sacrificed her life to save her husband Admetus from death. Heracles a friend of Admetus fights with Thanatos(Death) and brings back Alcestis from underworld to Admetus. But the Alcestis who came back is silent and she chose not speak.

Theo finds similarity between Alicia and Alcestis as both are silent. He believes that Alicia is trying to communicate through that painting. He tries hard to get her to open up. For that he digs up secrets from her past like her unhappy childhood.

There is no twists and turns until the end when Alicia decides to open up...Does she really open up? Does Theo succeed in his attempt?

I will leave for you to find out.

If you are interested in psychological thrillers then this book is for you. An intrinsic travel through the emotions of the main characters with an intelligent plot which leaves an impression on the readers mind.

Alex Michaelides is a scriptwriter who has penned for movies like the Devil You Know and The Con is On. This is his first book but the reader never feels so while reading.

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