

The Confessions of Max Tivoli: A Novel

Andrew Sean Greer



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Today Show Book Club Pick

An extraordinarily haunting love story told in the voice of a man who appears to age backwards

We are each the love of someone's life.

So begins *The Confessions of Max Tivoli*, a heartbreaking love story with a narrator like no other. At his birth, Max's father declares him a "nisse," a creature of Danish myth, as his baby son has the external physical appearance of an old, dying creature. Max grows older like any child, but his physical age appears to go backward--on the outside a very old man, but inside still a fearful child.

The story is told in three acts. First, young Max falls in love with a neighborhood girl, Alice, who ages as normally as any of us. Max, of course, does not; as a young man, he has an older man's body. But his curse is also his blessing: as he gets older, his body grows younger, so each successive time he finds his Alice, she does not recognize him. She takes him for a stranger, and Max is given another chance at love.

Set against the historical backdrop of San Francisco at the turn of the twentieth century, Max's life and confessions question the very nature of time, of appearance and reality, and of love itself. A beautiful and daring feat of the imagination, *The Confessions of Max Tivoli* reveals the world through the eyes of a "monster," a being who confounds the very certainties by which we live and in doing so embodies in extremis what it means to be human.



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James Hubbard:

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Terry Myers:

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