



The Book Glasses

Arthur Bozikas

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The Book Glasses is a science fiction novel in which a previously unlucky woman discovers the joys and dangers of knowledge.

An extraordinary artifact changes a woman's life, but also puts her in grave danger, in Arthur Bozikas's science fiction novel *The Book Glasses*.

After her boss's murder, Sam, a lab cleaner at a prestigious museum, finds herself in possession of a strange artifact: glasses that allow the wearer to read and understand any text. For a dyslexic high school dropout like Sam, the glasses are a miracle. She uses them to achieve dreams she long thought impossible, earning a college degree and becoming a powerful businesswoman. As her confidence and accomplishments grow, so do the dangers she faces in order to keep the glasses—and her life.

The book glasses are fascinating in concept; they set off a series of life-changing events that are wonderful and terrifying. Sam's reaction to the glasses is empathetic—they represent the first stroke of good luck she's ever had, and she relishes the small, ordinary moments that the glasses allow her to enjoy for the first time.

The secrets of supporting characters lead to new opportunities and new heartache for Sam, complicating her use of the glasses and leading her to employ illegal methods to keep and benefit from them. As years pass, she becomes arrogant and ruthless, prioritizing her business over her boyfriend, and enjoying the looks on her employees' faces when she frightens them.

While her development is compelling, Sam's story is also moved along by conveniences that cannot be explained by the glasses alone. Further, the rushed, distant narration obscures the wonder that Sam feels when she has new experiences, like visiting the Australian Museum, and the book's prologue is not made to not connect with the rest of the story. The book's focus is uneven: much more time is devoted to Sam's use of the glasses than is to the dangers they present. Continuity issues and leaps in logic are present throughout, and some developments, as with Sam's boyfriend's addiction, come out of nowhere.

Tragedy strikes just as Sam comes to feel unstoppable, but even this has a sense of inevitability. With the ruthlessness and new knowledge imparted by the book glasses, she takes on a personal vendetta. Just as it seems all of the problems have been solved and all of the secrets have been revealed, new information arises, leading to a cliffhanger ending upon which future installments can build.

The first in a series, *The Book Glasses* is a science fiction novel in which a previously unlucky woman discovers the joys and dangers of knowledge.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (April 24, 2021)

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