

## The Path Keeper

**N. J. Simmonds**

BHC Press (May 28, 2019)

Hardcover \$26.95 (416pp)

978-1-947727-80-9

In *The Path Keeper*—the first book in N. J. Simmonds's fantasy trilogy *The Indigo Chronicles*—angels rule the world, love spans across lifetimes, and unexpected choices change your destiny.

When Ella starts at university, all she hopes for is to make friends and maybe find a boyfriend. But Zac, the boy she meets on her first day in England, turns out to be an angel who has been in love with her for two thousand years. Ella's seemingly perfect life is revealed to be as precarious as a house of cards.

The story, set mostly in present-century London with some flashbacks interspersed, is ambitious. It crafts an interesting world where archangels rule all beings and every soul chooses its path. Some questions are unanswered, such as: if every soul chooses who they'll be, why are there cruel people in the world?

Zac's perspective is scarce, and he appears far younger than his two millennia. Some of his comments fly against his characterization as an immortal being who hasn't spent much time on Earth, like his reference to *Thelma and Louise*. Ella functions as a credible teenager who's suffering horrific trauma, but she's often so wrapped up in Zac that her character is limited.

Leaning heavily on the couple's connection through lifetimes, Zac and Ella's relationship is blunt: they are in love because they were in love before, not because they get to know one another that well in this lifetime. Their romance is weak against a story of Ella's previous life, which is explored in strong detail.

*The Path Keeper* sets the foundation for a story of immortal love, wherein groups of souls find each other again and again, raising questions about life and fate.

CAROLINA CIUCCI (May/June 2019)

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