

The Silent Note

Patrick Davis

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The problem with most romance novels is that they follow the publisher's outlined formula; planned conflict and resolution do not cause the plastic characters to grow and experience true romance. Many readers are disappointed with the tiny moments of escape provided by soulless faceless and heartless Ken and Barbie dolls. Patrick Davis's *The Silent Note* is the exception to this rule.

"His world of gadgets and hardened machines now included the soft internal sophistication of the nonschematic based-woman" Davis writes about Grant Ford a young man from 1915 in love for the first time. "The way to her heart was unmapped—diagram-less. Though the engineering student understood the sciences of electromagnetic propulsion and the mechanical workings of complex machinery the path leading to her soul remained hard to find."

Such conundrums are certainly shared by millions of modern men. Nothing frustrates young men and women more when they're in love than trying to "figure each other out." Maturity brings comprehension not of the secret inner workings of the male/female dynamic but of the fact that the "figuring out" is not as important as the journey of being together. Patrick Davis allows his characters to discover this on their own and thus in the throes of the murky depths of their frailties innocence and revelations the reader falls in love with the characters.

The Silent Note begins with the unfortunate death of John Weisman's wife Maria an antiques dealer and lover of music. To ease his daughter Melissa's grief about her mother John signs her up for piano lessons. Melissa becomes smitten with the rare but beaten piano that her mother had purchased before her untimely demise. While it is being repaired John stumbles across a box of letters photographs and other memorabilia may have been hidden inside the piano in 1915 by a young woman named Elsa Thompson. John finds himself so absorbed by the vivid letters that he and the reader are transported into Elsa and Grant Ford's love story. His quest to track down the origin of the letters takes him to Kingston New York where he finds more than just answers to the mysteries invoked by the letters; he discovers how to rise above his sorrow and catch up with a wonderful world that has been speeding by.

Davis incorporates his experiences and abilities as a filmmaker to tell the story of *The Silent Note*. His novel begins like certain movies in which the director shoots scenes through the eyes of secondary characters to introduce describe and emphasize the protagonists. Through these characters he builds layers of emotions over a mystery and still maintains an important pentimento beneath the surface that will keep readers guessing. His transitions between the present to the past are seamless and never lose momentum. Readers will be thrilled to know that Davis is writing a sequel called *Return to Kingston*.

LEE GOODEN (February 12, 2009)

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