



# Look Away Silence

*Edward C. Patterson*

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## **Look Away Silence** Edward C. Patterson

Martin Powers wanted an ironing board for Christmas. Instead, he got . . . Matthew Kieler, a non-returnable gift, but a gift that kept on giving. Chance encounters are sometimes the ones that most change our lives. He sold Matt a tie, but got more in the bargain - more than most people would want and more than anyone deserved. Although these lovers may not have had the pink American dream, they had it better than most, even as they faced a crisis that would change us all. Look Away Silence is a romance set in the time of AIDS, when ignorance could spell trouble and often did. It encompasses the author's experiences in volunteer community service and personal friendships during a tragic period in American history. The novel is dedicated to the Hyacinth AIDS Foundation, the NAMES Project and to the author's own fallen angels. "Mothers, do not shun your children, because you never know how long you have to revel in them."

## **Look Away Silence Details**

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Author : Edward C. Patterson

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## From Reader Review Look Away Silence for online ebook

### John says

Curiously engaging, this book. Shifts of character and of tone mark the progress as much as events, so themes are less presented to the reader than they grow on one. I couldn't begin to write anything objective about *Look Away Silence* however, because it mirrored my own life during that time so closely. I was a southern boy in Maine, then, not New Jersey - but Edward Patterson caught the feel of that joyful and horrific time. Is it a difficult read? Perhaps, depending on your experience, it is. Not because of any maudlin sentimentality, certainly, as I don't think any of that is there. If you survived the 1980s and 90s in the life, however, expect to see some familiar ghosts.

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### Mary Gresham says

Excellent book, but it was very hard for me to even finish. I realized halfway through what was going to happen and i didn't want it to. Made me realize just how lucky I am to have made it through being a teenager in the 80's, doing some of the stupid stuff I did, not to have gotten HIV or something else, unlike my friend Mark. I applaude you, Edward, for a very eye opening book, however hard it was for me to read.

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### Rosie says

How can you love something that hurts so much? I don't know, but I do. Maybe it's because I met Martin and Matt. The characters grabbed me from the very first page, then I grew to love them dearly, and they will stay with me for a long time to come. It's a beautifully written, but oh, so VERY heartbreaking story. It's definitely going on my keeper shelf.

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### Emma Sea says

I'm not rating the book, because I'd feel really bad giving any book about the battle against HIV only 2 stars. Sadly I just didn't like it a whole lot, however that doesn't mean it isn't an important book. It *is* an important book. Very moving and tragic, and covers an important part of the history of human rights. Made me cry an incredible amount at the end.

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### ♥Lynn ♥ says

[Just reading about how Matthew slowly dies was killing me. (hide s

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## **Todd Fonseca says**

Look Away Silence – A Beautifully Written Novel

Rating: 5 of 5, TMBOA Recommended

Author: Edward C. Patterson

Available: Paperback, Kindle

Every Christmas, Martin Powers found love. Unfortunately, it rarely lasted beyond New Years day. That is, until he met Matthew Kieler - a southern transplant, complete with cowboy hat, drawl, and enchanting blue eyes. Theirs was a love that transcended the moment and as time marched on, their love grew deeper and deeper and Martin realized he'd found the love he'd always longed for. But just when everything seemed it couldn't be any better, their world was turned upside down as both come face to face with the specter of AIDS.

Look Away Silence by Edward C. Patterson is a beautifully written novel. Honestly, I'm not sure I can write a review that will do it justice. As in all of Patterson's novels, his characters are incredibly well developed. In Silence the reader is taken on a journey of Martin and Matthew's romance, from their "meet cute" first encounter in the department store, to the tragedy that befalls them during a family Thanksgiving dinner. Patterson lovingly describes the very real and conflicting emotions of commitment, hardship, anger, anguish, and love one must manage while watching the person they love slowly die in before their very eyes.

Holding out hope for a cure all the while intellectually knowing it unlikely torments the soul and anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one, especially one stricken by a chronic disease or cancer that robs them slowly of their former self, experiences the very heartache that this book so eloquently conveys. I remember the 1980s when AIDS was very much a part of everyday discussions and life, but honestly this has not gotten nearly the press it once had and Patterson's book is a great reminder of a tragic disease that is still in need of a cure. However, Patterson does not play to politics or get preachy in any way. This is really a story of Martin and Matthew, of love, of tragedy, of commitment, and of hope. Few books can touch such a strong emotional chord and I would put Look Away Silence up there with books by Nicholas Sparks such as The Notebook.

Well done Mr. Patterson, well done indeed.

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## **Melissa says**

I'm not sure if I can put my feelings into words....this book was beautiful, funny, hopeful, tearful, heartbreaking...my stomach hurt through at least half the book...my eyes hurt because I have cried so much. The Author writes with such realism, it felt like I was reading a memoir. I'm angry. I'm angry that it took so long for our government to acknowledge this pandemic. I'm angry that the drug companies have so much control. I'm angry that the insurance companies turned their backs. I'm angry that this disease became a "gay" disease and was used to promote homophobia and hate. I'm angry that many partners were denied hospital visitation and survivors benefits.....and this continues in far too many states to this day. Too many people died. Too many people lost loved ones. And the fight continues.....

I'm glad I read this very difficult book. I think it should be mandatory reading.

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### **Lucas Grandkoski says**

Extremely powerful read. Because I saw the word AIDS in a review on Amazon.com, I ultimately new how it would end, and it was, of course devastating. Having not lost anyone personally to AIDS, I still can't imagine how it was "back in the day" for these men. This is a wonderfully well written book about love and death, which we all, inevitably face - doesn't mean it isn't hard to read.

I typically read all books more than once - but I'm not sure I can read this one again. Not because it wasn't excellent, but because it's heartbreaking. I see a lot of myself in Martin. I love Christmas, and I can't wait to share that with someone I love - it hasn't happened yet, but when it does, I pray that won't turn out like Martin's - even though the time he had with Matthew was perfect.

I can't write anymore :( But please read.

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### **Shanna says**

This is the most powerfully poignant book I've ever read and I doubt I'll be able to read it again. But it's a book that needs to be read, it's a story that needs to be remembered. It brings into focus a period in history that many were just spectators for, and lets us witness two men falling in love and letting go. It's about love and loss and what comes after. This book had been recommended to me and I was warned that I'd need my tissues handy. I had no idea how powerfully I would be moved. The author's straight forward and unembellished story telling set the perfect tone for this love story set during a time of fear, ignorance and loss. The author never preaches or politicizes, he tells it like it was and that is what makes the story hit home because these two men represent so many broken lives. I will remember Matt and Martin for their love and all that they represent. Pumpkin will never quite mean the same to me. I highly recommended this book and I'd like to say prepare yourself for the impact but there really is no way to prepare yourself. It's an emotional journey but one that you'll be better for having made.

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### **Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says**

Looks horribly sad but... kindle freebie today, 9/28/13!

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### **Kat says**

A surprisingly good read.

While I'm not really into books of such topics, it was a nice change of pace.

It brought something new into my knowledge: HIV and AIDS. Oh yes, I've heard about it enough before, but never really knew how this condition affected people. It was eye-opening in that sense.

I sort of admired Viv, the main character's mom. She has a very interesting personality. The main character Martin too. Funny how he would refer himself as a girl. I don't know any gay people in real life (well, no, I

know a few, but just in an "I know who he is but he doesn't know me" type of know) so I don't know how they think...

Some small errors in grammar and typing throughout the book though. At one point it was the "there" vs "their" and there was some 3 or 4 points where the conversation didn't go right. As in, where it should have said "Matt said", it said "Martin said"... that was a blatant mix-up of the two characters and that stilted the reading flow for a little bit.

Other than that, a great book!

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### **Manuela says**

This is an amazing story. It's difficult to say something about books like this. Words like "I like it" or "it's great" feel kinda wrong, because of the dramatic subject of the story. I'll just say this is a book that made me cry, because Matt and Martin are such lovable characters and their love for each other is so strong that I just wanted them to be happy, but that is not always possible for them. But in good and bad times, they are there for each other and their love never waver. I think the author did an amazing job with this book. I really appreciate that he wrote about the reality of AIDS without trying to romanticize everything and without running away from the worst parts of it, as it often happens in books that deal with this subject.

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### **Kassa says**

This is an intensely emotional story about a young couple that falls in love, only to face the AIDS crisis instead of matching pink rockers on the porch. At a time when the government was refusing to acknowledge the crisis and the immortality of youth cast a protective pall over young gay men, this couple must cope with a horrible disease and the ramifications within their family and larger community. A very intensely moving story that packs an incredible punch, the last half left me crying all the way through it and beyond for some time. This is not a light-hearted tale but combines several important themes and a deeply romantic and fulfilling, yet heart breaking relationship that will resonate and stay with the reader for some time.

Martin Powers meets Matt, a shy blue-eyed cowboy on Christmas eve and although Martin expects the relationship to barely last to New Year's, it turns into a permanent partnership. Their happiness in each other create a small bubble around their love and world that is all too soon popped when the horrible specter of Matt's dead lover and the crisis of AIDS invades their world. All of a sudden Martin is confronted with issues and problems he has never imagined and struggles with the intense emotions that come along.

The book is divided into four parts. The first depicts how Martin and Matt meet and the first year and a half of their relationship followed by the second part dealing with the AIDS crisis and how it becomes personal and affects their happy world. The third part covers Martin and Matt as they cope with illness and the intense emotions that impact both men and their friends and family. The final fourth part is an epilogue. Each of these is moving and intense as the story is told in first person narrative from Martin's point of view. The writing is instantly engaging and engrossing as Martin's character is likable and relatable. The pacing is well done and the book is incredibly easy to read, even for all the intense emotion elicited.

There are numerous technical errors in the writing unfortunately. The names Martin and Matt are confused

several times and punctuation is sometimes misplaced or dropped. There are also a few misspelled words and misused words. These are noticeable and sometimes distracting but don't take away from the emotional connection and impact of the story, which for me is the best part. The choice of first person narrator makes the story intimate and engrossing, as the reader is able to connect with Martin through his humor, whimsy, fears, and later strength. Although this leaves the other characters with less of a well defined characterization, most notably in Matt, Martin is a strong and sympathetic voice.

Martin is a wonderful character as he is first introduced through his love of laundry and cleaning attachments through his surprising affection and love for a small, blue eyed cowboy that loves snow. Martin's maturity, humor and intelligence are at odds with his young age, only twenty years old. Martin is not perfect and struggles through the story with his jealousy, fears, manipulation, and selfishness. His dysfunctional childhood has changed the way he views relationships and although he can look back on his faults, he makes numerous mistakes. However, for all his faults he truly and deeply loves Matt and that love is returned, creating the first solid and meaningful relationship young Martin has ever had. As Martin matures and finds strength and courage where he fears none exist, it's easy to forget that he is only twenty three by the end of the story, and Matt was only twenty five. These are incredibly young men who should have been able to grow old together but instead live a full, loving life as best they can.

Woven into the romance between the men are multiple themes about the gay community and the impact AIDS has upon the country and various individuals. Several couples from past works by the author make brief cameos in this story, although the focus never waivers from Martin and Matt. Martin slowly becomes aware and involved in activism and a support group for AIDS caregivers and patients. There are several brief but moving stories told from strangers as they deal with the impact this devastating epidemic had at that time. The supporting characters from both families, their friends, and the perfect stranger all give context and help both men understand the far reaching impact beyond their tragedy. Along side are the realistic concerns about money, insurance, hospital bills, drug costs, jobs, and the reality that life almost stops to care for someone debilitated with AIDS. Although this is fiction, it easily is a depiction of so many couples.

This is certainly not an easy book but undeniable emotionally masterful. The depth of the characters and their story is an important tale that transcends gender and race, highlighting a time that had and continues to have devastating effects. The title is so appropriate and fitting to the characters and the topics, even if I hate the cover. Be sure to have some tissues handy as Martin's story is sure to move you to tears numerous times while also giving laughter, love, joy, and happiness beside the sorrow. This is one story that will resonate for a very long after the incredibly beautiful final page.

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### **Barb ~rede-2-read~ says**

Powerful! This is a beautiful, emotional, moving tribute to those who died of AIDS during the 80's, the early years when our country looked away from the men and their families who suffered from this incurable disorder.

When I first started reading the story of Martin, a funny, happy-go-lucky gay man in New Jersey who got most of his pleasure from warbling with the NJ Sparrows, a gay singing group, I wasn't sure if I was going to like it. I didn't see then that the author was setting me up to see that this supposedly shallow man, the unbrave, as he referred to himself, was beginning a journey where he would become the antithesis of that. He'd become the center of his partner's world, a very strong very brave but fallible man who would support his man to the end, despite his own shortcomings.

Matt, a cowboy from Houston, showed up at Martin's workplace one Christmas Eve and charmed Martin into a date. The date became many dates and ultimately became their marriage, in their eyes only, since gay marriage wasn't legally recognized anywhere. Matt's former partner had died from a gay bashing but he didn't share that Luis also was HIV positive. And he didn't share that he was as well, until it was too late, and Matt developed full-blown AIDS.

This story is so well done, so meticulous to detail and yet so very humorous in places, that I felt that I knew these men and their families and extended family. It's told in first person POV and the author mentions that it is based on his own experiences and those of others. I don't know if it's an autobiography, but it certainly reads that way. Whether it is or isn't, I want to meet him and hug him and thank him for this wonderful story.

I have read several hundred M/M romances over the past year and some have been very emotional and very sad, but I have never cried out loud, sobbed in fact, until this story. The scene at Thanksgiving at Matt's family's house toward the end of the story just did it for me, and it continued through the final four chapters. Seeing the AIDS Memorial Quilt (1987) on the Mall in Washington, D.C. through Martin's eyes reminded me so much of how I felt when I first saw the Vietnam War Memorial. I couldn't even breathe through the emotion, not then, not now. I don't want to say goodbye to Matt and Martin. I hope everyone who has a chance to read this story will do so. You won't walk away unaffected.

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### **Kaye Kelly says**

In all honesty, after reading the blurb for this book I thought it was about an orphan being taken in by a single bloke - sort of Maeve Bincheish. Imagine my surprise when it turned out to be the story of two gay men and the AIDS epidemic when it first burst upon the scene in the States. I won't tell you more about the plot line as that last sentence says it all. What I will say is that it's not a worthy story as one would think, but a story full of wit and humor liberally laced with tear-jerking emotion and hard to put down. Highly recommended.

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