

[PDF] The Tennis Partner

Abraham Verghese - pdf download free book

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Author: Abraham Verghese

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Description:

What is it about sports that makes some men wax as mystical as a Castanedan Yaqui? In the hands of writers such as and , the simple, repetitive motions of baseball, fly-fishing, and golf have acquired almost numinous significance. In *The Tennis Partner*, Dr. Abraham Verghese takes on his own fascination with tennis and comes up with as good an explanation as any: "In the way we controlled the movement of a yellow ball in space, we were imposing *order* on a world that was fickle and capricious. Each ball that we put into play, for as long as it went back and forth between us, felt like a charm to be added to a necklace full of spells, talismans, and fetishes, which one day add up to an Aaron's rod, an Aladdin's lamp, a magic carpet. Each time we played, this feeling of restoring order, of mastery, was awakened."

For both Verghese and his tennis partner, a fourth-year medical student named David Smith, the game is a much-needed island of order in the midst of personal chaos. Both men are struggling to rebuild their lives, Verghese undergoing a painful divorce, Smith struggling with an intravenous

cocaine addiction. For a brief, idyllic period, their friendship flourishes; Vergheze mentors Smith in the examining room, while Smith, an Australian who competed briefly on the pro circuit, ends up Vergheze's teacher on the court. But there are dark corners to David's personality, and under the mounting pressures of medical school and his increasingly complicated love life, these come to the fore. Even as he learns how to inhabit his new life, Vergheze watches with horror as his friend relapses, dries out, then relapses again. The author of the powerful , a chronicle of caring for AIDS patients in rural Tennessee, Vergheze once again proves that the skills of a good doctor are strikingly similar to those of a good writer. Careful observation, compassion, restraint: these are the instruments Vergheze uses to stunning effect in *The Tennis Partner*. A paean to the healing powers of tennis, this book is also a moving meditation on friendship, fatherhood, love, addiction, and the particular loneliness of physicians. --*Mary Park* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly In his eloquent memoir, *My Own Country*, Vergheze described a parallel story, that of a stranger (himself) and AIDS both becoming part of a rural Tennessee town. Once again, Vergheze weaves his own story with that of a place and another person to come up with something moving and insightful. As he tries to cope with a new job on the faculty of Texas Tech School of Medicine, the move to El Paso and the breakdown of his marriage, he meets David, a medical student and former tennis pro. Tennis matches with David reawaken Vergheze's passion for the game, and soon the two become regular partners. Their connection is complicated by their shifting roles: Vergheze, David's teacher in the hospital wards, becomes his student on the tennis court. For Vergheze, the matches offer an escape from loneliness; for David, a recovering drug addict, even more is at stake. Only on the court can they reach a state of grace: "our tennis partnership was special, different, sacred like a marriage." Ultimately, as David's life takes some disturbing turns, Vergheze finds himself forced to choose between his role as friend and that of authority figure. While David's story provides the main narrative drive of the book, it's interwoven with Vergheze's descriptions of his AIDS patients, his relationship with his sons and meditations on El Paso's distinctive landscape. It's a hard trick but Vergheze combines all these elements into a cohesive whole, moving easily between moments of quiet reflection and anxious anticipation. If, as he writes, "to tell a life story [is] to engage in a form of seduction," then Vergheze is a master of romance. Agent, Mary Evans. Author tour.-- to engage in a form of seduction," then Vergheze is a master of romance. Agent, Mary Evans. Author tour.

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