

## The Last Enchantments

Charles Finch

Young man studies abroad, falls in love with his new surroundings, and meets a beautiful woman: that sounds like the gist of every campus story ever told, but Finch's charming effort distinguishes itself with its personal touch. After graduating from Yale University and working on the doomed John Kerry presidential campaign in 2004, Will Baker leaves his girlfriend and political aspirations behind to study at Oxford. Quickly falling in with a vibrant group of housemates who help him acclimate to British life, Will soon is ensnared in a romance whose intensity surprises him, forcing him to ask how temporary his yearlong excursion really is. In prose that glides effortlessly from scene to scene, Finch captures the fleeting time in people's lives when their every decision, from career to lover, seems freighted with eternal consequence. VERDICT A vividly evocative love letter to his alma mater, Finch's first contemporary novel (following his acclaimed historical Victorian mysteries starring MP Charles Lennox) often reads less like fiction than as memoir, and will be enjoyed by readers of both. Highly recommended for all collections.

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