



Whom the Gods Love

Kate Ross

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Alexander Falkland hasn't an enemy in the world. Young, talented, charming, he shines in every field he enters: law, architecture, the investment market. But one night his luck runs out with a vengeance. In the midst of one of his famous parties, he is found in his study with his head smashed, a blood-stained poker beside him. No wonder the inscription on his gravestone reads: whom the gods love die young. When the Bow Street runners fail to solve the crime, Alexander's distraught father turns to Julian Kestrel, elegant dandy and intrepid amateur sleuth. Soon Kestrel is up to his ears in suspects. But the greatest enigma is Alexander himself. Who was he really? Social reformer or butterfly, devoted husband or rake? In this, his third murder case, Julian must peel off one mask after another, till at last he discovers an Alexander no one knew - except, perhaps, the killer.

Whom the Gods Love Details

Date : Published May 1st 1996 by Penguin Books (first published 1995)

ISBN : 9780140247671

Author : Kate Ross

Format : Paperback 382 pages

Genre : Mystery, Historical, Historical Fiction, Historical Mystery, Fiction, Regency

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From Reader Review Whom the Gods Love for online ebook

Taryn says

So. Disturbing.

I wish I could wash my brain with soap.

Nicole says

Number 3 in the doomed Julian Kestrel series. I've already said that #4 is my favorite of the series, and maybe it is, but depending upon the day, *Whom the Gods Love* is actually my favorite, and not just because it was the last one I read. I thought this book was the most poetic in its structure and had the best mystery of the series. It's the one I want to read again the most, but every time I go to start it, I feel too sad at the thought that there are no more books in the series and stop.

Beverly says

My first read from the Julian Kestrel series (and I hate to read out of order). This was for my Mystery Book Club this week and I really enjoyed it. Kestrel is quite the detective and I was amazed at all the various "seemingly" unrelated bits and pieces that came together to make a whole. Alexander and his wife are the cream of society and couldn't be happier until one evening at a party they are hosting, Alexander is murdered by a blow to the head. Who could have wanted to kill this handsome, successful, intelligent young man, leaving a grieving widow? Turns out Mr. Kestrel suspects almost everyone and there's more than one suspect that had a reason to do it. Great read. I'll have to go back and pick up the first two.

Eileen says

I read the first book in 2013 and quickly bought and read the second. Then I found the author, had passed at an early age, and there were only four Julian Kestrel books. As I was getting hooked on the series, I decide to stop there. Recently, while browsing, I saw book #3, and decided to finish the series.

I'm so glad I did. This was well done and well written. I found it was hard to put the book down. It is reminiscent of the way CS Harris writes. The depth of the characters, the plot, the twist, the turns. This certainly, to me is the best of the three I've read.

Jamie Collins says

A good read; I liked this more than the second book, and I look forward to the last one. There are sadly only four of these, as the author died young.

Kestrel is a late-Regency dandy who has acquired curiously strong reputation as a detective after solving two murders amidst the English aristocracy. The mystery is a decent one, if a touch melodramatic, but it would have worked better for me if I hadn't recently read another book with a very similar plot twist.

The writing is quite good and Kestrel is a compelling protagonist. I wish that the reader could witness more of his dandy lifestyle, since it does not seem to entirely fit his personality, but at least in this book we get to see him tie a cravat.

Text Addict says

Picking books off the shelves in the used bookstore often leads to great discoveries. I have a quibble or two with the plot that keeps me from giving the book 5 stars, but overall it was excellent. Julian Kestrel is a fascinating viewpoint character/investigator, the later Regency setting is well realized without larding on extra detail for its own sake, the cast in general is very interesting and well-drawn, and the basic writing is very fine indeed.

It's the third volume in a series, but that doesn't do it any harm. Charming Alexander Falkland, the victim, is already dead when the novel begins, which is just as well because I really think I didn't want to get to know him. Kestrel is definitely very lucky in his employer - the victim's father - almost but not quite unbelievably so, in fact. For once, characters from this time period are actually willing to face the truth and suffer at least some public scandal, which was refreshing.

The middle of the book did bog down a bit in collecting more and more details that didn't seem to add up to anything, but was saved (as mysteries often are) by the characters and a few teasing, if confusing, revelations. The improbable aspect(s) (depending on how you count them) of the whodunit are nearly overwhelmed by the other revelations and, again, the characters.

I wondered how I'd missed this author before, until I looked at the author info in my copy: Ross only had four books published before she died in 1998. She was the same age I am now, and that was a big splash of cold water over my enthusiasm, let me tell you. F*ck cancer, as they say.

H says

The mystery of Alexander Falkland's murder was my introduction to Julian Kestrel. It is a good mystery with an entertaining set of suspects.

Kimberly Shephard says

Loved it. Best of the series so far,

Mel says

This is the best mystery! Every time I thought I knew what's what I was wrong! It was wonderful to follow along as Julian made his discoveries! Excellent, excellent novel, Kate Ross was a genius.

Heather says

So good, it totally made me forgive the author for the "romance" in the previous book in the series.

Hirondelle says

I read the series all out of order, so this turned out to be the last one I read. And it is perhaps the best, though I do mean to reread #4 The Devil in Music just to make sure.

Julian Kestrel, regency dandy turned detective (though really this is much better written than one would think from the description) investigate the murder of society's golden boy. And wow, I loved this book - the plot is complex and very strong (I did see one small plot point, but then again there was no way around that), the characters very deep, a believable note of hope. Perhaps the best of the series, though all 4 books are excellent.

Spiderorchid says

Kate Ross really outdid herself with the third of the Julian Kestrel mysteries: suspense, humour, heartbreak and a well-constructed who-done-it (and why-done-it) that has you turning the pages. The early 19th century setting and atmosphere are perfect and the characters are interesting. Ross not only wrote excellent historical crime novels, she made you care about the characters and that's all the difference between a good book and a great one.

I have a new favourite.

Ruby Bibi says

Truly one of the best written mysteries

-Extremely well done and very interesting mystery presented to Julian Kestrel by Sir Malcolm. Sir Malcolm's son, Alexander Falkland, has been killed. Alexander was a wonder child. He was only about Julian's age, about 25, but he was loved by everyone. He wrote letters of deep philosophical and legal arguments to his father, who was a judge; he was a socialite who held lavish parties; he was an accomplished investor who made a good deal of money; and was a loving and devoted husband to a beautiful wife.

-It was during a party that he was throwing, where Alexander's wife, Belinda, had complained of a headache, and Alexander said he would check on her. For some reason, though she was upstairs, he went to a lower

level study, and it was there where he was found dead, with his head fractured and hit by a heavy fireplace poker. There were over 80 people invited to the party that evening, not including the staff, so that there were a multitude of suspects. Sir Malcolm wanted justice for the death of his son and he approached Julian Kestrel with a request that he come and look into the matter. Kestrel was known in their social circles, and his reputation as a solver of crimes was growing. In addition, Vance, one of the Bow Street Runners who was assigned to the case, also was in need of help, as the case was far too difficult for him to pursue, not least of which for the fact that he would be unable to properly question those members of high society who attended the party because of his lower position in society.

-It seemed to be an impossible case, but Kestrel, accepting that he has a talent for ferreting out the truth, accepts. A wager in the clubs is also made and Kestrel accepts a wager where the crime must be solved in a week's time for him to either win or lose a sum of 500 pounds, which was a huge amount of money at the time.

-The standard initial investigation is done and a list is compiled of those guests or servants without alibis at the time of the killing. Kestrel questions the staff and some additional information comes out of Falkland and his wife, which all seems strange. Stranger still are the testimonies of the various guests as Kestrel knows that certain information is being withheld, as the pieces don't fit. As we read along, the difficulty of exactly how to formulate a plan to proceed leaves the reader stymied, but once Kestrel proceeds in his investigation, you realize his plan is viable. His examination of suspects is done with tact and he proves himself to be very witty.

-The case takes many strange turns as Kestrel realizes that whatever something appears to be may not be what it actually is. This happens very often. With Kestrel's brilliance at deducing the truth, there's so much that makes this one of the most interesting mysteries I've read. His uncovering of the true nature of the murder victim, is only part of the maxim within this book that what you see is not what is.

-There's a large cast of characters that each contribute to the revelation of the events that took place on the night of the killing and events preceding that night. There are so many possibilities as to who the killer could be, but an attack on the victim's wife only increases the confusion. There were enough clues to lead Kestrel to formulate an idea of what happened, but it's only with additional investigation that leads to more concrete facts, that more bits of the story are revealed, which leads to more questions.

-The author has done a truly masterful job at presenting this story. The gradual way that both revelation of facts and additional clues are revealed and followed up upon is proof of her exceptional writing ability. Very enjoyable writing and very interesting characters.

Lynn Spencer says

My favorite Julian Kestrel book so far. This book centers on a mysterious killing that took place during a party at the victim's home. Alexander Falkland, who sounds like he was the up and coming golden boy of London society, was bludgeoned to death in his own home. While almost no one has an airtight alibi, the house was crawling with people- who don't seem to have seen anything. Mysterious indeed.

Enter Julian Kestrel to solve the mystery. Julian finds a house full of people who aren't quite what they seem and as he investigates, the threads of clues take him far into Alexander's life and into the secret lives of others around him. It's all very engaging reading and as with all Kate Ross' books, the prose is more than a few cuts above the average. I loved how finely crafted the various plotlines were - Ross wove them together quite well. I also enjoyed the additional glimpses into Julian Kestrel's own life. With each book, I feel like I know him more and more. Now I face a dilemma - do I read the 4th (and last) Kestrel book now or save it to savor later?

Ann says

So many twists and turns. A great romp.

Christy B says

London dandy Julian Kestral is fast becoming known as a successful amateur sleuth. He has already solved two separate murder cases. However, those murder cases were cases that Julian took upon himself to solve. This time, he is actually being sought out to solve a murder.

Sir Malcolm Falkland has reached out to Julian to help solve the murder of his son, Alexander, who was found with his head smashed in by a fire poker in his own study. Julian is hesitant, not sure if Sir Malcolm will be able to see it though, but agrees to help.

Julian comes across a vast variety of interesting characters, all it seems with something to hide (what fun would it be if they didn't?). We have Alexander's wife, her half brother, a few mysterious friends and some secretive servants.

Through his investigation he discovers that the Alexander the world saw was not the real Alexander. He also suspects that Alexander's death is connected with another murder that occurred a week before, a murder of a woman who had her face smashed in, making her unrecognizable.

Julian realizes that the real Alexander has crossed someone, and that someone paid him back. Julian has to race against time to solve the case - he has 500 pounds riding on it!

Ross perfectly captures 1820s London. We see all aspects of life, from the upper to the lower class, and everything in between. I can't explain how absorbed I get while reading her books. It's almost like I'm there, following Julian around on his investigation and before I know it, an hour has gone by! These are the kind of books I never want to end, but yet, I can't wait to find out the ending, because I can never see it coming!

This is definitely an A+ historical mystery series. Unfortunately, only one more book to go, and from what I hear, the fourth installment is the best of the series!

Elizabeth says

This book was excellent! The author's writing is a delight - I found myself rereading passages just to enjoy her turn of phrase a bit longer. Took me 9 days to finish this book, as I was savoring the experience. The plot is quite complicated - 2 murders and a life-threatening accident. I was kept in suspense throughout and enjoyed the thrilling (though somewhat drawn-out) conclusion.

SarahC says

The best mystery I have read in years. The characters are interesting and the mystery plot is solid and carries through well to the end. It is has a period setting, but I believe the writing is so well-constructed that many readers of good mystery would enjoy it even if you usually prefer more modern settings.

Ross made her detective Kestrel a charming mover in the high society of London, but his true more moderate backgroup shows through in the character. The story has humor but it is also a compelling literary mystery.

Princessjay says

[It feels kind of a cheat that the victim turned out to be *such* a terr

Bridget says

Witty and charming sleuth solving mysteries, yes please. A great summer read.
