



The Ninth Stone

Kylie Fitzpatrick

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A jewel thief is on the loose in old London town and is murdering his victims. Sarah O'Reilly, who works as a typesetter in a newspaper office, becomes embroiled in the mystery that will eventually lead to India and a jewel with terrifying and occult powers.

The Ninth Stone Details

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From Reader Review The Ninth Stone for online ebook

Kylie says

Well, this book took me ages to finish. I suspect it was because I wasn't really drawn in to the plot, and I kept waiting for the 'occult' part of the novel to kick in, which it doesn't really do. There is some mild spiritualism (which given that the novel is set in the Victorian period, I would be more surprised if it didn't feature in it somewhat), and discussion of Hindu beliefs in particular to the energies of gemstones. Kali and her thuggees make an appearance, but for me it just wasn't enough.

That being said, the book is decently written. The three female main characters are interesting and were different enough to keep me reading; an artist's widow who is an aesthete, writer and proto-feminist; a practical housekeeper who is also a spirit medium; and the primary character (especially in the last half of the novel) is a teen girl/young woman who dresses as a boy and works in a newspaper printer's, later becoming a writer herself. To my eyes the Orientalism seemed kept to a minimum - but I am not Indian, so I may well have not noticed something which they would pick up on.

Overall though, this did not meet the expectations I had for the plot. Too much of it is down to human action and too little to any occult power that the synopsis trumped up.

Clare O'Beara says

A prince in India is set upon finding nine jewels of different hues and he has all but the most rare. We first pick up the tale in historic London where we learn about gems, then the second part of the book moves to India.

We see that the prince or rajah has set the whole village to scouring the streams for gems washed out of a mountain vein and while anyone finding a gem is rewarded, this is a pittance compared to the value of jewels and to the prince's wealth.

The trouble is, the old tales say that the ninth stone and the combination of all nine stones, brings a curse.

I was more interested in the portrayal of the period and social settings than in the supernatural, but the tale should interest a variety of readers.

Karen says

I thought the first half of this book was much better than the second half which seemed to lose its way, particularly the part of the story set in India.

While I liked this I don't think I'll be in a hurry to read more books by this author.

Trisha says

A good story that has history, murder and mystery as its elements.

an orphan girl, Sarah O'Reilly has disguised herself as a boy so that she can work in a newspaper office. There she meets a young widow, Lily Korechyna, who writes a column for the paper, under another name. The time period is 1864 and ladies were frowned upon for being "outspoken and independent". Lily is asked by Lady Cynthia Herbert to catalogue her collection of jewels. Lady Cynthia has recently returned from India, where she met with the Maharaja of Benares - and he entrusts her with a number of jewels, so that a special charm can be made.

It would appear that the jewels have a curse on them, as 3 people die, who have come in contact with them (including Lily).

A few years after Lily's death in India, Sarah decides to travel there and come to terms with the past events.

Jeannie Mancini says

Unusual Victorian Intrigue

Orphaned on the streets of London at a young age, Sarah O'Reilly has the weight of the world on her shoulders. She struggles to keep her and her little sister Ellen out of the workhouses, and to avoid prostitution, or street begging to keep a roof over their heads and food in their bellies. Disguising herself as a boy, Sarah gets a job as a messenger at one of the local newspapers. Seeing her intelligence and potential, the paper's editor finds a soft spot with Sarah and keeps her working to encourage her self improvement. Sarah's ideal role model is a widowed writer named Lily Korechnya who pens articles about exemplary women for the newspaper under a man's name. Endearing her heart to Sarah, Lily takes her under her wing and befriends the two sisters giving them a new home and teaching Sarah to become the writer she always dreamed of.

Friend to Lady Cynthia Herbert, a collector of exquisite gems and jewels, Lily tells Sarah of a mysterious and sought after set of nine colored diamonds that Lady Herbert brought back from India to have set in an amulet for none other than the Maharajah. Set in a specific design that in Hindu Mythology would bring extreme power and destruction, no jeweler in India would do the job. Lord and Lady Herbert had agreed to take the jewels back to London for the maharajah to be created properly. Giving the glittering gems to a recommended artisan with nothing but a drawing he must memorize on sight and immediately hand over, the jeweler agrees to take on the job. While Lily is there at the jewelers with Lady Herbert, she also commissions a necklace piece for herself, a mourning locket that will hold a lock of her late husband's hair close to her heart.

Days later the diamonds are stolen and three people are murdered. Local London police are unable to make heads or tails; a curious case unfolds and a relentless manhunt is unleashed. Lily, Sarah, and Ellen find their lives entwined with much mystery, mischief and mayhem that will lead them from the streets of London across the sea to the exotic realm of 19th century India. Lily and Sarah both, at different times in their lives will encounter many baffling conundrums and come face to face with a host of wicked enemies that at first do not show their true colors but all have connection to the London crimes.

The author's ability to evoke marvelous period detail that takes the reader on a curious and enchanting

journey from the depraved gutters of London's underworld to the markets of India where the scents of spices and yards of diaphanous silks abound. From proper English tea parties to Indian temples that spin dancing girls into voluptuous temptations, this book is a unique blend of historical novel and international mystery. Steeped in the lore of diamonds with the added pleasure of Hindu mythology that gets sprinkled hither and yon throughout the book, we are immersed in gods and goddesses both wondrous and fearsome that add spicy ingredients to this exceptional novel. I really enjoyed this innovative and clever plot finely crafted.

Vivienne says

I felt this was an excellent first novel that married a compelling mystery against the dual backdrops of Victorian London and the early years of the British Raj.

It had interesting and engaging characters and kept my attention. I particularly appreciated that she didn't sensationalize elements such as spiritualism and the cult of Kali but blended the mysticism into the overall text.

In terms of characters it is very much a woman's book with men as supporting characters.

Debrah says

Quite good :) A cross between a murder mystery and a historical fantasy story.

Arati says

This was a very disappointing read! The story started on a really strong note, but just lost steam half way through. The second half consists of pages and pages of rambling that has little connection with the first half. It's like the author had a couple of good ideas but had no clue how to resolve the mystery... So she just wrote a whole lot of pages to bore the reader into quitting the book before she would have to reveal a solution.

da-wildchildz says

Desire itself gives me life; its actions form my fate, for an action without desire has no destiny.

Last line from The Ninth Stone by Kylie Fitzpatrick. This was a book of two halves. Usually when a novel splits its time between England and India, I prefer the time it spends in India. However, on this occasion, Victorian England (first half) proved to be a more exciting setting than India's harems and opium dens (second half,) which frankly bored me.

The Ninth Stone began with interesting ideas but they didn't develop and the 400 pages just dragged out the plot, which could have been concluded in England in less time. Didn't like the use of letters scattered

through the book, they felt pointless, would have preferred to just read a ‘story.’

Loved the protagonist; Sarah O’Reilly’s fearless and strong. Ellen O’Reilly, Lily Korechyna and Holy Joe were intriguing characters too and it was a pity they weren’t featured more prominently. The Indian characters weren’t particularly inspirational, so I won’t spend any more time on them.

Linda Fast says

One of the best books that I have read in quite awhile. Mystery, intrigue and murder travels between England and India.

LJ says

First Sentence: On principle, Lord Herbert was content to leave the governing of everyday affairs to his wife.

Sarah O’Reilly disguises herself, not very successfully, as a boy to work setting type for ads at a newspaper in order to support herself and her younger, rather fey, sister and keep them off the streets. She is befriended by Lily Korchnya, writer of a column on “exceptional women” and widow of an artist.

Lily has been asked by Lady Cynthia Herbert, whose husband was murdered in India, to catalogue her magnificent collection of jewels. Among them are large colored diamonds she has promised to have set in an unusual pendant for the Maharajah of Benares. But it seems the gems bring death and other murders occur and the gems disappear. The trail, after several years, leads back to India and the vengeful goddess Kali.

The opening chapter is a wonderful mix of metaphor and murder. Fitzpatrick is an amazingly descriptive writer whether the setting is the slums, workplaces or mansions of London or the streets, temples and palaces of India.

Her sense of time and place are so strong and writing so visual I felt part of the scene rather than viewing it. The dialogue is very well done with just the right feel of the period. I also very much appreciate an author who understands the value of well-done chapter headings.

All the characters were wonderful and very well developed. I had a real sense for who they were and liked the inclusion of the letters as it did make the story seem very personal.

The story is not a mystery in the traditional sense, although certainly there are murders and there is resolution in the end. The story incorporated myths, superstition, philosophies, and spirits which all add to the richness of the story.

This book has been sitting on my shelf for several years. In that time, I’ve picked it up, read the fly leaf and put it back thinking I wouldn’t enjoy it. I am delighted to say I was very wrong. It was a beautifully written book and a wonderful read.

THE NINTH STONE (Hist Mys-Sarah O’Reilly-London/India-1864/Victorian) – VG

Fitzpatrick, Kylie – Standalone
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Anne says

One of the Amazon reviews hits it on the head for me - "Some nice ideas, but they weren't fully developed". I felt like I should've loved it, but it was just a little bit flat - and very much a novel of two halves, the first in the London slums and interesting stuff about the newspaper trade, the second in India almost a different book. Good characters, excellent descriptions, touch of the supernatural, whisper of romance ... it just didn't "fly" for me...

Jan Greer says

Alas not as good as this authors previous novel, still an interesting read

Okidoki says

En spännande bok, inte märkvärdig men läsvärd. Det är den unga Sarahs historia som fånglar mig.

Ber says

Would have liked a more sinister ending or at least a more sinister villan... Still characters were well rounded, believable. The myths included in the story were very interesting and I liked the quotes at the start of every chapter.
