



Island of a Thousand Springs

Sarah Lark , Sharmila Cohen (Translator)

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London, 1732: Nora Reed, the daughter of a merchant, falls hopelessly in love with her father's clerk, Simon. Despite their differing social class, the star-crossed lovers dream of a future on a tropical island - until tragedy strikes, and Nora must face a life without her soulmate. Hopeless, Nora enters a marriage of convenience with Elias Fortnam, a widower and sugar planter in Jamaica. Even without Simon, she is determined to somehow fulfill their tropical fantasy. But life in the Caribbean doesn't turn out as Nora had dreamt.

Nora is deeply shocked by the way plantation owners treat the slaves and decides to shake things up on her own sugar cane plantation - for the better. Surprisingly, her adult stepson Doug supports her in this endeavor when he arrives from Europe. However, his return also puts things into a state of turmoil - especially Nora's feelings.

Just as Nora seems to be settling into her role as lady of the house, one harrowing event rips everything from her but her life...

A gripping tale of love and hate, trust and betrayal, and a thrilling destiny set against the pristine beaches and swaying palmtrees of the tropics.

-- For fans of Kathleen Grissom, THE KITCHEN HOUSE, Alex Haley, ROOTS: THE SAGA OF AN AMERICAN FAMILY, and Sue Monk Kidd, THE INVENTION OF WINGS.

Island of a Thousand Springs Details

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From Reader Review Island of a Thousand Springs for online ebook

Catalina Manriquez says

You can learn about history and what happened with slaves and also have an amazing plot that'll surprise you.

Moradus Warden says

Muy buen libro! me gusto mucho! te atrapa en la historia y quieres seguir y seguir para ver que pasa! Espero la segunda parte!! Y aprendes sobre esa epoca!

Carina Carvalho says

Tanto para dizer sobre este livro! A história decorre na Jamaica, uma terra maravilhosa que já tive o prazer de visitar. A escritora descreve a de forma esplêndida, areias brancas, mar maravilhoso e uma natureza fenomenal. Tive o prazer de ver o pôr do sol mais lindo que alguma vez pensei ser possível. Um bocado do paraíso na terra.

A história desenrola se nos tempo da escravidão, e realmente o ser humano pode ser muito desumano independentemente da sua cor de pele. Nora tem uma história de vida impressionante! Agora fico á espera do segundo volume.... Ansiosamente

Austra says

Šis ir ne pirmais S?ras Larkas romantiski v?sturiskais rom?ns, kas non?cis man?s ?epi??s. T?d?? es jau zin?ju, ko gaid?t, un ko ne. Neesmu Jamaikas un vergtur?bas v?stures speci?lists, t?p?c nevaru diskut?t par gr?mat? min?to faktu saist?bu ar realit?ti. Dažas raduš?s šaubas autore pati izskaidroja p?cv?rd?, par to vi?ai žetons.

Visum? jauks un, protams, dramatisku pav?rsienu pilns st?sts zem tveic?gaj?m Jamaikas debes?m. Par sliktajiem, labajiem un piln?gi trakajiem. Par vergturiem, vergiem, cukurniedr?m un p?der?t?m par?k?m. Un par m?lest?bu drusci??s ar?. Bet visp?r diezgan bag?t?gs v?sturiskais fons, kas ir ?paši jauki. Las?j?s ?tri un ar interesi. Ja kiwi trilo?ij? man bija par daudz dr?mas (nu cik var moc?t tos galvenos varo?us?), tad šeit bija nu t? ok, paciešami. Drusku gan bes?ja tie tiep?gie un aps?stie cilv?ki, bet t?di jau vi?i laikam ar? dz?v? ir. Bet beig?s visi (relat?vi) laim?gi. Las?šu ar? otro da?u par jaun?s paaudzes priekiem un b?d?m. Vair?k par 3 zvaigzn?m gan kaut k? nepras?s likt, jo tom?r gana daudz klišeju, bet savam žanram - labi.

María Valero (Mecomenloslibros) says

Me ha enganchado muchísimo, desde el principio. Y la historia me ha gustado bastante; sin embargo, aún

hay algo que todavía no me llega a cerrar del todo...

Caro says

Popsugar 2017 reading challenge:

11. Un libro por un autor que use un seudónimo - *Nombre original: Gohl, Christiane Gohl*

El problema con este libro es que sí, me enganchó muchísimo las primeras 550 páginas pero el final me pareció terrible (de malo). Aunque en general me gustó bastante, varios personajes se me hicieron insufribles.

Me aventaré a leer la segunda parte porque a fin de cuentas no me desagradó el libro, claro siempre y cuando mi madre tenga a bien prestármelo (por cierto, gracias por prestarme este XD)

Zsofi says

No character development, slow, boring.

Sophia says

A historical saga beginning in 1730's Georgian London and continuing on to the island of Jamaica following the lives of colonials and slaves alike was rather enticing to me. This was a ponderous book much in the general way of sagas, but the colorful and dynamic story was worth it.

Island of a Thousand Springs is told in parts. Part one is of a very young and naive Nora Reed with her first love and under her wealthy merchant father's gentle care. She goes through first heartbreak, scandal and comes through it to move on with sugar plantation owner, Elias Fortnum to his island home.

On Jamaica, Nora's life is a balance of dues and rewards for accepting Elias' hand. She is faced with the very real reality of slavery for the first time. And then she is faced with disillusionment, another chance at love, betrayal, hardship, and a new reality.

The story is told mostly from Nora's perspective, but many others get quick narrative moments which helps to see motive behind actions. This saga is a well-written historical piece, but also offers the story of people from both slave, free, and master classes. Life, love, hardship and hope bring these people alive. I connected with several and loved how the author worked their story into the time of history well.

I started out without much connection to Nora. She was so young and sheltered. She was in love with a man who lost his family title and lands due to his father's debts. Simon was aesthetic and a dreamer and too delicate for hard life. His family ran him into the ground demanding what he did not have to give (clothes, dowry, niceties) while he's in poverty dwelling in a leaking, freezing attic in the deplorable east in. Nora wasn't much better at first with her ideas of courtship and her refusal to understand that Simon could not just approach Mr. Reed with a marriage offer based solely on 'we love each other'. But then hardships came and

she grew and had a core strength and dignity that had my respect and need to see her through the bad times.

Each stage of the book could be defined by Nora's time with the different men in her life: Simon, Elias, Akiwasa, and Doug. They each wanted her for very different reasons and for the longest time she clung to her Simon and their dream. It's where she went inside her head when she needed an escape. She was not like the other planter's wives in that she was anti-slavery and came from merchant stock so she was hardier and more practical. I loved seeing her quietly come into her own on that plantation.

Speaking of this historical time period, the terminology of this book reflects the thinking and way of talking back then. It makes a modern reader cringe with the 'N' words, the way a whole ethnic group was de-personalized even down to refusing them baptism if they wanted it or marriage because the preferred thinking was that the slaves had no souls and were not people. Ugh, it was hard to read.

I had much to ponder as I read. A curious part was the stratus within the black community. The tribes represented on the plantations and in the free Maroon communities were as diverse from each other as from the whites. There weren't mass uprisings because some of those mixed together on the plantations were sworn enemies and would rather work the white man's fields than consort with their hated enemies from Africa. Many saw enslavement as just bad luck because back in Africa losing at tribal war or war with other groups on the continent resulted in being taken as slaves. The difference was that the slavery within Africa wasn't a de-personalization like this situation. There were all sorts of ways of thinking on the part of African slaves, Maroons, and whites that were discoveries for me.

On a side note, I read this as a translated story. The author is German and the book was not written originally in English. The translator, Sharmila Cohen, did a fantastic job. If I didn't already know this was not written in English, I wouldn't have guessed that and kudos to her since there was a lot of tricky historical terminology specific to time, region, and ethnic group.

So this is a huge historical saga about Nora and the plantation there on Jamaica. It's slow to get rolling, but this changes once she's in Jamaica. Those who enjoy the bigger stories with broad casts of characters where history and individual character stories are woven together should give this a try.

I received this book from Net Galley in exchange for an honest review.

Ruth says

Es entretenido, aunque también tiene algún que otro tópico y personaje estereotipado. Me ha costado empatizar con la protagonista (demasiado superficial, muy idealizada, poco "humana"...). En general, me ha gustado.

Lydia says

Okay um ehrlich zu sein lese ich lange nicht so viel wie ich sollte, deshalb habe ich was das Lesen angeht eventuell noch nicht so viele Erfahrungen sammeln können wie andere User hier...Aber: als ich dieses Buch schweren Herzens und mit den unterschiedlichsten Emotionen geladen wieder aus der Hand gelegt habe stand eines für mich fest: Ich will noch mehr solch gute Bücher lesen wie das von Sarah Lark! Angefangen

von den traumhaft schönen Landschaftsbeschreibungen die den Leser gerade zu fesseln über die so gut konstruierten Charaktere bishin zu einer einmaligen Geschichte einer jungen Frau vor einem wahrlich interessanten geschichtlichen Hintergrund. Dieses Buch lädt buchstäblich zum Tagträumen ein und offenbart die Sehnsüchte die in einem Jeden tief verborgen schlummern.
Tolles Buch!

Floripiquita says

El protagonista masculino me ha encantado.

Leonor Lopes says

Neste livro, a autora retrata e narra na íntegra, o tema da escravatura vivida na altura. Consegue transportar o leitor para as plantações e fazer sentir sentimentos vividos pelos personagens, de dor, de indignidade, desrespeito. De igual modo, leva o leitor a reflectir sobre a importância da liberdade, coragem e respeito pelo ser humano. Porque no fundo, 'há bondade e maldade, não negros e brancos'...

Foi o meu primeiro contacto com esta autora. Adorei e recomendo.
Depois deste livro, há valores que ficam mais sublinhados, sem dúvida!

Emma Crowley says

Nowadays lots of books are described as being sweeping sagas and I have to say having read Sarah Lark's novel *Island of a Thousand Springs* this definitely fits that category. Sarah Lark's writing is similar to the stunning novels written by Lesley Pearse. If you are a fan of Lesley's (like I am) you will certainly love this wonderful, exciting novel. At over 500 pages long you will savour every page as you are taken on a voyage of discovery and transformation.

We first meet Nora Reed in 1700's London at a time when the merchant trade was reaching its height. Born into a life of privilege her father Thomas Reed has had plenty of success with his business and employs numerous men, one of whom Nora falls over head over heels for. Simon a desk clerk came from a wealthy background but his father had died leaving numerous debts which Simon is struggling to repay. Nora knows Simon does not meet the marriage standards her father desires for her but matters of the heart often rule over the head and they embark upon an affair. Sadly forced to live in the East End Simon contracts consumption and despite Nora's best efforts at nursing him Simon passes away. Nora is exposed to the poverty and depravation the people of the East End are forced to endure and it is here her caring nature first comes to light. The stark contrast between the rich and poor at this time is demonstrated when Nora gives up everything to care for Simon as we read in great detail the daily grind and struggle these people are forced to cope with.

Nora's one true love has gone and after two years of grieving she meets Elias Fortnam a sugar cane planter from Jamaica. Yes he is older than her but the one wish Simon and Nora had had was to travel to Jamaica and live there in a hut by the sea. Nora agrees to be married, it is clear she is not marrying for love, it is more a business arrangement but in this way she fulfils her dream. Once we are transported to Jamaica the novel takes on a whole new meaning. There are endless fabulous, evocative descriptions that really made me feel I was there walking in Nora's footsteps as she lived, breathed and experienced life on a sugar cane

plantation and became aware of the harsh realities the slaves were forced to struggle with on a daily basis. This novel is clearly one of contrasts- in England we see the differences between rich and poor and in Jamaica we see the divide between blacks and whites. Nora truly comes into her own once she settles into life with Elias. She really understands that in order to feel some sort of happiness she must make it for herself and so she begins to care for some of the slaves who are injured while working. Nora goes against tradition and wants to learn how the house slaves work and she establishes tentative connections with them in order to build up their trust. Nora really has a caring, considerate nature, she is sympathetic to the plight of others less fortunate than herself. She seems to be a woman ahead of her time as she sees how things can work better through change. Nora transforms from a timid, shy young girl to a strong, determined mistress of a plantation who is eager to see changes enforced. Changes which will ultimately see the working conditions and the lives of the slaves improved.

Just as Nora begins to settle into her new wondrous life Douglas Fortnam (her stepson) arrives back in Jamaica after studying abroad. This new arrival alongside a destructive hurricane is a huge turning point in the novel and the pace really picks up even more. I don't want to divulge any more except to say the slaves do really do come to the forefront in the later half and we see exactly what they felt during this time. The action moves away from the plantation and this part of the novel was amazing and so interesting to read about. There are plenty of twists and turns as we race towards an epic conclusion.

I didn't want this book to end at all, I loved everything about it, there were no lulls or boring bits and I liked how each section was clearly marked where it was going to take place and the years involved. I think I may have just discovered a new favourite author to add to my list as the writing was just fantastic. This would make a superb film and maybe some day we may see this incredible novel on the big screen. After finishing this book I was delighted to discover that Sarah Lark had already written a different trilogy also in the saga vein. I will certainly have to check this out because if these books are anything like *Island of a Thousand Springs* I am in for a real treat.

Paloma says

La novela se lee bastante rápido, pues es muy entretenida y con bastante acción. La historia comienza en Inglaterra, en 1732, cuando Nora Reed, una joven muy adelantada a su época, desafía las convenciones y a su familia para cuidar al hombre que ama, y al que termina perdiendo por tuberculosis. Juntos habían soñado con las islas del Caribe, con un mundo distinto al del Londres lluvioso y de las convenciones sociales. Por medio de lecturas y de las conversaciones con ingleses que ya habían hecho fortuna en las colonias, Simon y Nora habían creído que sería posible llegar a ese nuevo mundo y ser felices. La muerte de Simon acaba con todo ello y Nora se vuelve una chica seria aunque diligente. El destino la lleva a conocer a un hombre que justo es un rico comerciante de caña de azúcar en Jamaica... y es así como se casa con Elias Fortman, más por ser práctica que por amor y llega a la isla de los sueños de su amor pasado, a Jamaica, a la isla de las mil fuentes... Ahí es cuando todo se empieza a complicar: Nora no ama a su esposo y pronto se da cuenta que la llevó a Jamaica para cubrir las apariencias -el tener una mujer que dirija la vida doméstica, que sea una muñeca inglesa. Y eso no le cuesta trabajo a Nora, que pronto comienza a hacerse notar entre los esclavos domésticos y los del campo y a su manera, proteger a los esclavos tan maltratados y humillados. El problema obviamente surge cuando el hijo de la primera esposa de Elías, Douglas, regresa a casa y la atracción entre ambos inicia. Al tiempo, se genera un triángulo amoroso entre Manuh y Akawaski, dos trabajadores de la casa y Nora, sin que ésta sea consciente y ahí es cuando, como se dice en México, "la marrana torció el rabo" -ataques de cimarrones, pérdida de la plantación, raptos. En fin, pronto Nora vive entre los negros libres, aprendiendo de las culturas africanas en sí pero también dándose cuenta que tantos malos tratos de los blancos han endurecido el corazón y el alma de los negros -esclavos y libres.

Como mencioné, es una historia entretenida, pero la calificué con tres estrellas porque, como en muchos de estos libros de sagas, a nivel literario no me parece nada espectacular. Se lee rápido, es claro, pero más allá de ellos es una novela bastante estándar. Asimismo, creo que algunos de los personajes me parecieron inverosímiles, en cierto sentido -por ejemplo, que el malo más malo al final decida o cambie de parecer, y no concluya su venganza; o por ejemplo, incluso la protagonista a veces peca de inocente, con todo y lo que ha vivido. No sé. Si bien no son personajes sosos, tampoco me parecieron complejos en su totalidad -buenos y malos, y al final los buenos siempre triunfan.

Sin embargo, es una historia interesante y bien investigada para retratar la vida en las colonias inglesas a mediados del siglo XVIII. Creo que en definitiva le daré la oportunidad al siguiente volumen de esta trilogía.

Lois says

!!!Gran inicio para la trilogía del Caribe!!!

Siglo XVIII. El destino llevará a Nora Reed a las plantaciones coloniales de azúcar de la Isla de Jamaica. Allí descubrirá que el exotismo de ese lugar, contrasta gravemente con las dolorosas condiciones de vida de los esclavos que viven y trabajan esas tierras.

Presa a su vez de un matrimonio sin amor, Nora luchará con valor por mejorar la situación de los esclavos; sin embargo, la rebelión de los cimarrones dará un giro de 180° a su vida.

Puntuación: 5/5
