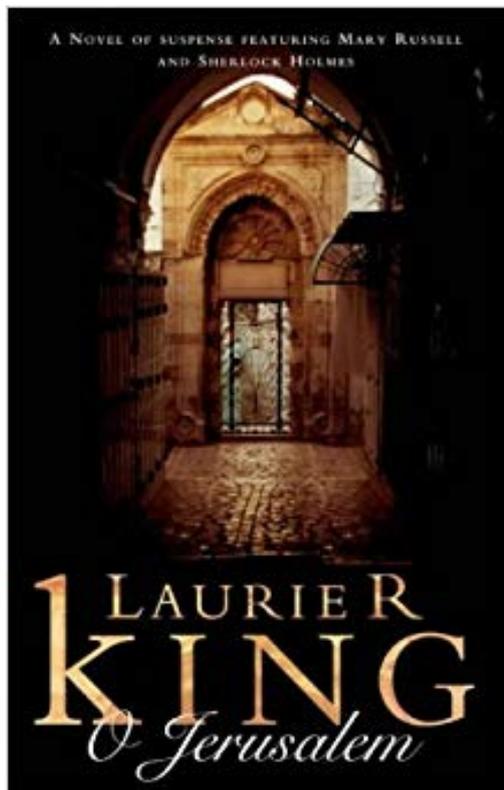


O Jerusalem by Laurie R. King



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Reviews of the O Jerusalem by Laurie R. King

Purestone

Big fan of the Russell/Holmes series. Not crazy about the Kate Martinelli series, but then, I don't like police procedurals, which I think the Martinelli fits into. King's writing is great. Lots of wit, and excellent pacing that unfolds the story in teasing glimpses, building to a crescendo as all the pieces begin to fit together. Wonderful character development. Like Mary Russell, we go from annoyance to grudging respect, then admiration and even affection for the complex characters of Mahmoud and Ali, who are more than the simple nomadic Arabs they seem. In life, if one is open to looking beneath the surface, you will see people and events in more and more complexity. That is what I like about King's writing...there is the same growing complexity, an unfolding that keeps your interest. If you follow the series, you see the incredible growth of the two main characters, in their relationship, as well as their own personalities, as a result of that relationship. I only hope she keeps writing these

forever!

Araath

"O Jerusalem" is Laurie King's fifth book in her Holmes-Russell series; however, time wise it takes us back to the plot and time period of her first book "The Beekeeper's Apprentice." It's 1918. Nineteen-year-old Mary and her fifty-something mentor (Holmes) are forced to flee England to escape a deadly adversary. Sherlock's well-connected brother Mycroft sends them on a mission to Palestine. Here, a series of murders threatens the fragile peace. Disguised as itinerant Muslims and paired with two Arab spies, Mahmoud and Ali (fascinating characters in their own right). With their somewhat reluctant guides, Russell and Holmes travel through the Holy Land trying to figure out exactly why Mycroft has sent them. A pair of seemingly unrelated murders sets them on the track of a brilliant and power-hungry killer. Only Holmes and Russell (along with some unexpected allies) can stop their adversary from destroying Jerusalem.

I am a bit surprised by some of the negative reviews of this books. The characterization of most characters is well developed, and especially those of Russell, Holmes, and two marvelously imagined Arab guides Mahmoud and Ali. King, like her scholarly protagonist Mary, is knowledgeable in biblical history, which adds to the realism of the story. Through King's personal study and research, she connects the reader with details of language, custom, history, and religion to this mysterious area of the Middle East. Strong use of descriptive phrases and sense imagery let us feel the heat and cough from the dust. King's knowledge and her affinity for this area of the world and people she is portraying make the story more compelling.

Laurie King has quickly become one of my favorite authors. After reading the first three of the Holmes-Russell series which I loved, I grabbed King's first Martinelli mystery, "A Grave Talent," and I quickly realized that it is King's writing, and not just the Holmes-Russell series that I love! If you have NOT read any of the Holmes-Russell series yet, do start with "The Beekeeper's Apprentice;" it provides necessary background and sets the tone for the rest of the series, and especially for "O Jerusalem"!

tref

My favorite so far! While I was confused a bit at first as to how we went from The Moor back to Palestine (glad I read the forward), the story quickly took off and grabbed my attention. I love the history that threads through these tales and this was a joy to read. The characters were vivid and complex, while the story moved along at a nice pace. The dangers seemed realistic and imminent and there was a sufficient level of suspense. Fantastic read!

Whiteflame

Some readers seem to prefer to read the Russell-Holmes mysteries solely in terms of a murder solved, with Mary Russell and Sherlock restricted to Great Britain. O Jerusalem, in contrast, takes the reader to the Middle East, a current hotbed of turmoil as well a history of conflict through the ages. The pair are in Palestine and eventually in Jerusalem in 1918, when British rule covered a large portion of the world's geography. Their search for the killer of a British citizen, a suffocating tour of underground waterways and efforts to avoid explosive devices, protected by friendships with Arabs of the area combine to keep Russell and Holmes in danger during much of the story. Spies populate this story that places Russell and Holmes in their midst. Disguised as Arabs they keep company with their cohorts, acquiring enough of the Semitic language to keep them alert to dangers. The near-explosive ending resolves this adventure before the pair leave for home. Laurie King has done her homework and the reader is educated about a land that today demands our understanding of its ancient and modern history. I learned much of that background and found this adventure, situated as second in her Holmes series chronologically, to be well worth the reading.

Jean Rodenbough -- author of Rachel's Children: Surviving the Second World War, by All Things That

Matter Press, and a number of other books of poetry and prose.

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