



# Secret of the White Rose

*Stefanie Pintoff*

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The murder of Judge Hugo Jackson is out of Detective Simon Ziele's jurisdiction in more ways than one. For one, it's high-profile enough to command the attention of the notorious new police commissioner, since Judge Jackson was presiding over the sensational trial of Al Drayson. Drayson, an anarchist, set off a bomb at a Carnegie family wedding, but instead of killing millionaires, it killed passersby, including a child. The dramatic trial has captured the full attention of 1906 New York City.

Furthermore, Simon's assigned precinct on Manhattan's West Side includes the gritty Tenderloin but not the tonier Gramercy Park, which is where the judge is found in his locked town house with his throat slashed on the night before the jury is set to deliberate. But his widow insists on calling her husband's old classmate criminologist, Alistair Sinclair, who in turn enlists Ziele's help. Together they must steer Sinclair's unorthodox methods past a police force that is so focused on rounding up Drayson's supporters that they've all but rejected any other possibilities.

Once again, Stefanie Pintoff's combination of vital characters and a fascinating case set amongst the sometimes brutal and sometimes glittering history of turn-of-the-century New York makes for totally compelling reading in *Secret of the White Rose*, the third novel in her Edgar Award-winning series.

## Secret of the White Rose Details

Date : Published May 24th 2011 by Minotaur Books

ISBN : 9780312583972

Author : Stefanie Pintoff

Format : Hardcover 384 pages

Genre : Mystery, Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Historical Mystery, Thriller, Mystery Thriller

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## From Reader Review Secret of the White Rose for online ebook

### Sushi (??) says

Avendolo letto dopo L'Alienista i due libri si assomigliano un pochino. Stessa città ma dieci anni dopo. Uno sorregge l'altro sulla storia, quella vera, in cui viene inserito tanto da farci capire il grande lavoro, si degli autori dei due libri, ma pure di Teddy Roosevelt. Io finchè non ho letto L'Alienista, che cito ancora, tramite i libri di storia conoscevo solo il figlio che nella storia lo incontreremo poi durante la Seconda Guerra Mondiale e che ho sempre stimato come Presidente. Grazie a questi due libri ora stimo pure Teddy.

Tornando a questo libro Theodore/Teddy a parte ci sono anche alcune rassomiglianze tra i protagonisti. Ma davvero poco e non influenzano la lettura perchè io ho letto prima Ziele #1 poi L'Alienista e infine Ziele #3. Quindi per quanto mi riguarda i libri su Simon Ziele, anche se mi manca il #2, meritano. Sono una lettura veloce ma io ve li consiglio se vi piace la NY dei primi '900.

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### Naomi says

I am thoroughly enjoying this mystery and will actually need to go back and check out others in the series...This book reminds me of a combination of Mary Russell Holmes(Laurie R. King) meets Sarah Brandt(Victoria Thompson)...

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### Dianne says

“Mystery lovers might just have found the next Caleb Carr.”—The Huffington Post

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### Molly says

I enjoy historical fiction and this book takes place in turn-of-the-century 1906 NYC. There are enough twists and turns, musical ciphers and white roses to keep you reading. I like a mystery that challenges me and keeps me guessing on "who did it" and this book fits that category. It is the third in Pintoff's detective Simon Ziele series: I discovered it in the library and only regret I did not read the series in order. There are references to Simon's past that would have been clearer had I read the books in order. Still a great murder mystery read! Well worth it!

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### Rusty says

I truly enjoy this author. The complexity, the depth of the characters and the twists and turns of the mystery itself make White Rose a most enjoyable read. Simon Ziele has returned to New York and finds himself embroiled in the investigation of a judge's murder. As the city reels from the activities of the anarchists who commit robberies and bomb areas to call attention to their concerns about the "system," another judge is

murdered. The commissioner believes that the anarchists are responsible but Simon is not so sure. When a college professor is murdered as well, Simon is certain that there is a personal motive for the murders. However, he must tread a thin political line to save his career, satisfy the commissioner and find the murderer. Well done!

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### **Mary G. says**

One of Ms. Pintoff's finest works. What an amazing story.

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### **Ron Chicaferro says**

This is another brilliant story by Stefanie Pintoff. *Secret of the White Rose* is an exciting story laced with actual historical places and events of the early 1900's in New York City. The story deals with the murder of three highly valued members of society and Detective Simon Ziele's search for the killer or killers. Mucking up the waters is the activity of violent but well organized anarchists bent on the destruction of society. There is politics aplenty as Ziele search leads to a run-in with the police commissioner. This book is well written mystery which also tells an important part of the history of the great city of New York. Another Simon Ziele winner by Stefanie Pintoff.

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### **Tracey says**

My LTER from last month was an ARC for the mystery *The Secret of the White Rose*, by Stefanie Pintoff. A trial is wrapping up in 1906 Manhattan; the defendant is one of the most reviled men in the city in decades, an anarchist called Al Drayson who made an inept attempt to blow up a Carnegie wedding and wound up killing, among other innocent (and non-upper-crust) bystanders, a small child. And on the eve of jury deliberations, the judge is murdered, his body found with the right hand resting on a Bible, a white rose sitting before him. This turns out to be the first act in a chain of violence, conspiracy, ciphers, and revenge.

This is the third book in a series about Detective Simon Ziele's uneasy partnership with criminologist Alistair Sinclair, and the first I've read. Here, they become involved because the judge was an old classmate and old friend of Sinclair, and the widow has asked for his aid - and where he goes, so does Ziele.

From the beginning this bore a strong resemblance to Caleb Carr's *The Alienist* and *Angel of Darkness*. Those took place in 1896 and 1902 Manhattan, and feature the friendship and partnership of a journalist and a criminalist; they were dark and complex and detailed with a wonderfully real setting - I still wish I could go to turn of the century Delmonico's. The Sinclair novels - or this one, at least - treads the same ground, although not the same restaurant - Ziele goes to Lombardi's for a slice of tomato pie (pizza - Lombardi's is now closed). The comparison isn't favorable for *White Rose* ... It wasn't bad. It was a rather clever, red herring-filled mystery, though perhaps a bit too filled with herring. The writing was good, although some of the dialogue bore little resemblance to anything most human beings would utter in this century or the last. I liked the main character, Ziele, from whose point of view the story is told in the first person, but I didn't form attachments to him or any of the others. The setting was well done, but not as strong and sensual as Carr presented. It's a shame that the comparison is so inevitable, because on its own merits it might do better.

On Goodreads, there are no half-star ratings, which is a shame; this is one of the times when three stars isn't quite good enough, but four is a little too strong: 3 1/2 on LibraryThing is right. I enjoyed it; it was a quick read; I will certainly read the other books in the series if I come across them but won't seek them out.

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### **Caroline Mincks says**

I picked this up not realizing it was part of a series, and I didn't feel lost at all, which I think is a sign of good writing. It made me want to read the other books in the series. Overall, this is a solid mystery with some great twists. I thoroughly enjoyed the setting of 1906 Manhattan and the exploration of criminal justice and police work of the time. Definitely recommend if you enjoy mysteries!

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### **Roshni says**

Reminds me of Inspector of the Dead (for reasons that would spoil the ending). The description of the general frenzy at the time due to the anarchists is pretty interesting, but the mystery itself is not too complex.

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### **Doreen Fritz says**

I was ready for a good mystery, and a friend recommended this one. Hooray! (I discovered that this is the 3rd in a series, so have since gone back to read the first two.) Detective Simon Ziele is called in on a murder case in 1906 New York City. A judge has been found with his throat cut in his home the night before he is scheduled to hand down a verdict in a case involving an anarchist who killed unintended victims (including a child). The setting makes this series, in my opinion. Descriptions of sanitation, horse-and-carriage and subway transportation, restaurants, ethnic neighborhoods, different levels of housing as wealth butts up against poverty, and especially in this novel the politics and economics of the bustling turn-of-the-century NYC were all fascinating. The reviled anarchists were violent, true -- in an attempt to get their message heard in the face of powerful and disdainful big business and big government. It was easy to understand how labor unions have greatly improved working conditions and wages - and easy to see that in the early days it took some force to get them started.

Simon is brought into this investigation by Alistair Sinclair, a wealthy man who studies criminology, and a personal friend of the slain judge. Alistair's daughter-in-law and assistant, the widowed Isabelle Sinclair, also participates -- and Simon and Isabelle grow closer throughout the novel, leading to speculation about their relationship in future books in the series.

I enjoy reading novels about places I have been, and catching references to specific places. In historical fiction, it is intriguing to superimpose these references to buildings, parks, theaters, etc. over their matching modern-day images. For example, Alistair lives in The Dakota, the building on the west side of Central Park that was home to John Lennon and Yoko Ono.

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## **Farin says**

I enjoyed *Secret of the White Rose*, but not as much as the first two Simon Ziele books. The subject matter of foreign anarchists was fascinating, and the mystery was absorbing, but I felt like I lost the characters a bit in this one and that the story could have been pushed just a little bit further. Still can't wait for the next one!

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## **Tom Anderson says**

This is the best of the 3 book series about Detective Ziele. This mystery is more complex than the first two in the series and the story never lags. It's a great story about a serial killer and once again it's set in one of my favorite time periods- early New York City. I give this book 4.5 stars. I hope this isn't the last time we hear from Detective Ziele.

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## **Amy Lignor says**

People vs. Drayson is the only headline in 1906 New York City. Everyone's talking about the horrific anarchist who planted a bomb in a horse carriage in order to take out Andrew Carnegie - make him pay for his ill treatment of U.S. Steel workers. Instead, the bomb only took innocent lives on the street, including that of a child. Judge Hugo Jackson is in the center of this storm as he presides over the case. Every day he receives a new threatening letter and he's becoming truly terrified.

Alistair Sinclair is one of the judge's friends, and a professor who knows all about the criminal mind and spends his time analyzing the 'monsters' of society. But when he shows up unannounced on Detective Simon Ziele's doorstep in the middle of the night, this story absolutely explodes with excitement.

Simon knows Alistair well, but when he tells him that Hugo has been murdered, Simon tries to explain that he can't help - seeing as that the crime didn't occur within his precinct. But unable to turn Alistair down, Simon finds himself a part of the case whether he likes it or not.

The clues left behind by the killer are extremely odd; a bible and a white rose surround the body that has been sliced from ear to ear. Simon soon finds himself on a hunt, teaming up with Alistair's widowed daughter-in-law, Isabella, to try and uncover what's actually happening by investigating everything from the wealth of the 400 Club to the gangs banding together to fight for people's rights. When Alistair up and disappears and yet another dead judge is found, Simon must put the puzzle together, or risk losing his career.

This is truly an outstanding mystery, and the vibrant color of 1900's New York is so rich that readers will want to stay there. From the glorious wealth to the criminal element to the 'good hearted' anarchists who are just trying to receive decent wages and housing - every aspect comes together to form a truly amazing story. In addition, the morals and messages are loud and clear as the reader takes a look at how two 'people' can see one issue extremely differently. After all, is 'an eye for an eye' the only real justice in the world? You decide!

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## **BAM The Bibliomaniac says**

In this last book of the trilogy Pintoff finally mastered her story. All three books bring in interesting aspects of late 1800s New York City; this book focuses on the anarchist movement. As usual, the character Sinclair is aggravating, Isabella is classy, and Ziehl is brilliant. What was worthwhile and worth the extra star was the smooth intertwining of the plots and other characters. Great transitions, juicy twists, some symbolism-all great in a mystery

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