



The Stone and the Maiden

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The Legend

The myths name it the Signata: the place that contains all places, the moment that contains all moments. As enigmatic to the gods as to mortals, the sacred treasure is said to have appeared but thrice in forty centuries, always in a different form, and each time to vanish as suddenly as it came. Its purpose and powers, no one knows. Yet in a world threatened by an ancient and merciless evil, it seems the only hope--if it can be found.

The Evil

The barbarian Tathars cut a scarlet swath across the lands of the Ascendancy, led by Erkai the Chain, a master of the dreaded Black Craft. However, there exists a power that dwarfs even Erkai's sorcery: the force known as Deep Magic, long ago banished from the world. But now Erkai has found a way to break the ban, and seize that terrible power for his own.

The Destiny

Defeating Erkai and the Tathar horde falls to Mandine Dascaris, heiress to the throne of the Ascendancy, and to the young soldier Key Mec Brander, an outlander from the distant lands of the Elthame. Together they embark on a secret, desperate search for the Signata. To fail means the ruin of their world--but the price of success may be no less than their lives.

The Stone and the Maiden Details

Date : Published August 3rd 1999 by Harper Voyager (first published April 29th 1999)

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Author : Dennis Jones

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From Reader Review The Stone and the Maiden for online ebook

Lyssa says

This book was a classic "epic" fantasy. It had lots of adventure, angst, and magical elements. A great amount of fictional history (which is always enjoyable, if you ask me), and a good promise of a sequel. Obviously a first novel, with several cliches and some "easy" transitions, but overall, a good book.

Lindy says

I enjoyed this book very much. It's straightforward fantasy with evil magical sorcerers and black magic and kings and princesses. A little predictable but fun nonetheless. If you're looking for a talented author tackle straight up fantasy this is a great book. I especially enjoyed Jones' writing style.

Dallas Nateweyes says

Company, c/o.

Elizabeth says

This is an incredibly quirky and odd story, with a side of entertainment and cliches. I suggest this for anyone who likes fantasy and random marriages that happen midway through the story. It's not a bad story- I found it very delightful (save for a few moments that dragged on and on).

Happy Bookaholic says

Maybe this book just came to me at the right time but I found it impossible to put down! It was thrilling, chilling, adventurous, and a little cliché. There was the typical ancient beings, a lengthy quest, "unexpected" backgrounds, fate, mystical beings, good vs. evil, etc. but Dennis Jones' telling of the tale was fresh and kept me on the edge of my seat. There are unexpected twists and turns, revenge, insanity, epic battles between good and evil, death, and true love.

Over all a very very good read. One of my favorites. Well done Mr. Jones.

Oscar says

My first fantasy book that wasn't written for a younger age group. I absolutely adore it, and have a lot of nostalgia for it.

Jo says

The author's writing style improves as the book progresses. There is one sexual scene (wedding night). The story is of good vs. evil - black magic vs. 'white' magic. While it was an interesting and fun read, it was not a book I would read again. The evil characters are extremely vile, committing heinous acts against humanity, including skinning alive, sucking out souls, torturing, delighting in torture, etc. The good characters seem to be delivered from evil because others that can help are attracted to their goodness.

Renée Yoxon says

I read this when I was 15 because someone told me there was a sex scene in it. I was deeply disappointed by the mere paragraph of sex and was left with the feeling (which unfortunately foreshadowed much of my teenage sex life) "is that it?"

I'm sure I'd like this if I reread it now but there you have it.

Janette says

Meh. I enjoyed it, but it was a fairly stereotypical fantasy tale.

Peter says

Review to come

Natalie says

This is a great book. The writing is not always as tight as it could be, but the plot is exciting and cohesive, the characters are fun to follow, and the world is so richly and perfectly imagined that it makes up for almost everything else. Several cuts above bodice-ripper fantasy (you know, the shirtless guy and the dragon and the swooning damsel). Only criticisms: a) the romantic tension is well-done and properly understated, but its eventual replacement does not live up to its predecessor (e.g. a gratuitous sex scene only worsened by the author's attempt to make it into something spiritual), and b) the ending bothers me if I'm in the kind of mood that makes me look for things that I would rewrite if given the power. Still highly recommended for sheer imagination.

Zelly B. says

I ... I hesitate to give it a 5-star rating, *and* put it into my favourites shelf.

But, there you have it.

I first read this book ... maybe a year after it'd come out, a random find in the public library, and I absolutely loved it. I was really young and impressionable, and I was finding my own footing as a fantasy writer, and this book kind of made me really, really happy.

Then I bought a copy for myself a few years later, reread it, and gasped in horror at my taste.

It is a *decent* story, if wholly predictable, with some serious archetypal characters, and your stereotypical villain as well. It's just - nothing is really original, per se. And it's kind of simplistic.

And yet - it will probably always have a special place in my heart anyway.

theduckthief says

"Theatana's palms were damp with suppressed excitement. She folded her arms, and with her fingertips stroked the brocading of her cloth-of-silver sleeves. Below the window where she stood, the small paved rectangle of the Penitential Yard lay cold and gray in the dawn. The courtyard was deep in the oldest part of the Numera, next to the prison beneath the Bucelon Ravelin, and in the courtyard's center stood a double gallows."

A horde of barbarians are invading The Ascendancy, an ages old kingdom ruled by Archates, an incompetent fool. His daughter Theatana is a power hungry wacko and Er kai the Chain, an evil sorcerer has just returned from the dead. Mandine Dascaris, Archates' other daughter and heir to the throne, must deal with all three. Only the Signata, a long lost magic that will help her defeat her enemies but she can't do it alone. With the help of Key Mec Brander, a knight, they will defend the kingdom and preserve The Ascendancy.

I was pleasantly surprised by this novel. I read it last year on the plane and found myself unable to put it down. It's very typical of your straight forward fantasy novel with good versus evil, ancient bloodlines, powerful bad guys and a complex mythology but I was entertained.

Mandine and Key make an interesting pairing. Their relationship slowly evolves throughout the book and is put to the test more than once. There are also some interesting additions to the fantasy novel mythos such as the cataphract, a horse/cat/bull mix that serve as mounts for the knights of The Ascendancy. Jones does a good job of creating a full world with its own rules and inhabitants. Another positive that I noticed is that Jones is Canadian. Can-Con is always a plus in my book.

My problems with the book stem from the plot and characters. Key's background seemed too cliché in terms of his family history and frankly, I'd read it before in half a dozen books. He and Mandine just happen to get thrown in together and lo and behold it was fated they should meet. As for the plot it starts with a punch but the tension starts to dissipate towards the middle. This series has definite potential and was an enjoyable read but the story needs to step it up in terms of tension and originality.
