



Red Days

M.L. Sparrow

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2017: 235 taken into captivity, 570 slaughtered.

Keiko never set out to be an activist, but when she's sent on an assignment to Taiji, Japan, the ball is set in motion. Reporting on the brutal yearly slaughter of hundreds of dolphins alters her life.

Over the course of ten years Keiko follows the highs and lows of the campaign to stop the slaughter of dolphins in Japan and attempts to bring change through her articles. Will her efforts and that of many others be enough?

Though fictional, Red Days is based on a series of true events up until January 2017

Red Days Details

Date : Published July 23rd 2017

ISBN :

Author : M.L. Sparrow

Format : Kindle Edition 118 pages

Genre : Fiction

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From Reader Review Red Days for online ebook

Sandra (LadyGrey Reads) says

I received a copy of this novel from the author in return for an honest review.

If she did nothing it would haunt her for the rest of her life.

Keiko is a young journalist at a British newspaper, writing articles that are assigned to her and not always exactly what she finds herself interested in. Then, one day, she is asked to go to Japan and do an article based on the events portrayed in the movie *The Cove*.

The Taiji Dolphin Slaughter.

This is the beginning of Keiko's new life. She becomes involved with the activists trying to stop the slaughter from happening and uses her powers as a journalist to spread the word to the world. And although Keiko's life and what she decided to do to help is fictional, the events that this book chronicles are not. They are real.

This book serves to further spread the word of the Taiji Dolphin Slaughter - to give people an idea of what happens to dolphins trapped in the cove outside this little Japanese village. It's honest and doesn't try to cover up anything. It will make you think, make you look into these things even more - which is a good thing. And thus I highly recommend that people read this novel.

Dianne says

Not only has author M.L. Sparrow written a great fictional tale, she has based it on facts. Acts that are brutal, raw and should scrape on the conscience of every human on Earth. Feel the passion of this author come to life, the passion of her characters and the atmosphere that will incite readers to want to learn more.

Imagine being given an assignment that affects you so deeply you become an activist, a crusader for a cause and will risk your very life to protect the innocent. Keiko has lived her life, never really thinking about the environment or the devastation being wreaked on other creatures, but that all changes when she witnesses the annual Taiji Dolphin Slaughter. Yes, a slaughter of brutal proportions held as a proud tradition.

Keiko lives a more than comfortable life in London, but that all changed when their sense of humanity becomes a raging inferno. It started with a DVD and a man well-acquainted with dolphins, their intelligence and the horrors they have faced. What person could stomach herding anything or anyone into a cove only to slaughter them?

Feel the passion, bear witness to the cruelty M.L. Sparrow was moved enough to write about to remind us of our responsibilities as beings who only share this earth with other beings. I was in turn, impressed with the raw facts, horrified that I have been so clueless as to the actual slaughters and ashamed to be part of a race who finds this heinous act worthy of being a tradition.

Read it. Ms. Sparrow does a remarkable job of telling a heart-breaking story and bringing it to life.

I received an ARC edition from M.L. Sparrow in exchange for my honest and voluntary review.

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Genre: Contemporary Fiction | Human Conscience

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Available from: Amazon

For Reviews & More: <http://tometender.blogspot.com>

Clota Santa says

Wonderful and inspiring.

A story of passion and enthusiastic activism that serves to motivate the reader to take interest in the lesser known world of dolphin hunting in Japan.

Keiko, a writer who journeys to Japan to 'get the story' comes back with so much more. The reader can easily dive into this book and emerge with a sense of sobriety when it comes to animals and human interaction/treatment.

Not content to write only an article Keiko finds herself growing as a person and activist, risking her life to aid the dolphins. Her relationships with characters throughout the book reflect these changes.

Highly recommended!

Aly says

I have read several books from this author and they all keep getting better. I love to cover of this book. I also love dolphins! The slaughter of dolphins, whales and porpoises in the coves of Taiji, Japan is so horrible. It was hard to read about but the book is wonderful. Keiko was an explosive character and the story kept me reading more. I enjoyed it very much. I can't wait for more great books from this author. * I received this book from the author and this is my honest review*

Charles Remington says

Red Days by M.L. Sparrow is an engaging novel constructed around a truly horrific annual event – the slaughter of dolphins, whales and porpoises in the coves of Taiji, Japan. The story follows Keiko Saito, a British journalist born of Japanese parents who is given an assignment by her editor to write an article on the annual slaughter. Underwhelmed at first, she is quickly fired up for the task when she is handed a first class plane ticket to travel to Japan and make an in depth study for her article. There she meets Jed Kenrick, an activist working with Ric O'Barry (a real-life campaigner who has been woven into the narrative). Together they arrange for Keiko to witness the slaughter at first hand. Sickened by the senseless killing and determined to do her bit to put a stop to it, she returns to London presenting a hard-hitting article to her paper and becoming involved in the campaign to promote awareness of this barbaric annual event. Taking some of

her holiday, she returns to Japan at her own expense to carry out further research and pay a visit to her family who, she is surprised to learn, that along with most Japanese, know nothing of the Taiji slaughter. Working closely with Jed Kendrick, their friendship starts to deepen and back in London she realises that her feelings for him have developed beyond mere camaraderie. Returning once more to Japan their relationship blossoms and is continued via Skype on her return home. It would be a shame to give away any more of the story but there is plenty of action in the closing chapters.

I was appalled by the revelations in Ms Sparrow's book and took the trouble to check the Taiji situation, finding a considerable amount of information and distressing video footage of this continuing event on line. The Japanese government allows the slaughter on the basis that dolphins are depleting fish stocks, while the small number of fishermen involved maintain that it is part of their culture and nothing to do with the rest of the world. Of course, they also seek to protect their livelihoods. I suppose it could be argued that nature is 'red in tooth and claw' (Tennyson) and in any case, dolphins kill to survive and killer whales have been filmed playing with their prey much like cats will torment mice. But isn't it our ability to emphasise, and our sense of right and wrong, what makes us human? As a race, we have put a stop to so many barbaric practices (though many continue). Can we not put a stop to this senseless slaughter? But I mustn't drone on - my function as a reviewer is to present a balanced view of the book in question. *Red Days* by M.L. Sparrow is a creditable story and a worthwhile read, whether or not you are interested in the welfare of cetaceans. I do not hesitate to recommend it.

Rosalyn Kelly says

2.5 stars!

This review and more on my blog www.rosalynkelly.co.uk/blog

Red Days tells the story of Keiko, an English woman of Japanese descent. She is a journalist for a small newspaper in London and her world is changed forever when her editor sends her to Japan to report on the annual Taiji dolphin slaughter after a (real-life) documentary called *The Cove* airs at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival. The film shines a light on the horror of Japanese fishermen who herd and kill dolphins for the meat as well as capture some for aquariums, marine parks and 'swim with dolphin' establishments around the world. This story is based on true events and starts in 2009, into present day and onwards in the author's imagination.

Clearly a lot of research has gone into this story, it is a topic that causes outcry around the world, but is one that is sadly *still* happening and this book definitely helps to raise awareness of the issue. The dolphin hunt 'season' lasts for six months and is claimed by the fisherman to be part of their culture, although, as *Red Days* made clear, many Japanese don't realise it happens and the Government claims it's because there are too many dolphins in the sea eating all the fish, so it is a form of pest control.

The barbaric slaughter is made all the worse because dolphins are highly intelligent, social, family focused creatures and the method in which they are herded together towards shore and then picked off and killed in a mass, bloody frenzy causes such terror, pain and distress to the dolphins that it is wholly inhumane.

After Keiko's first visit to witness the slaughter in person she decides to raise awareness of the issue and does what she can by writing articles, blogging, petitioning and protesting. She also returns to Japan

numerous times to help with the activists who base themselves in Taiji during the hunting season. This story is interwoven with Keiko's life, her boyfriend, parents, Japanese grandparents, husband, wanting a baby, moving home, job at the newspaper etc, so it is not all gruesome slaughter.

Keiko is a likable character, but I really wanted her to be even more passionate and feisty, plus some of the events are narrated as happened in the past and years are summed up in a few sentences. I wanted to see first-hand what was happening. For example, at the London protest Keiko attends but tells us about after the event in a few lines. As a reader, I wished I had been there, in real time, seeing it through her eyes.

Also, I needed more detailed descriptions about the coves that the dolphins are herded to (e.g. manmade/natural, shallow深深/深deep, size, surrounded by sandy beach or cliffs or fishing harbours etc) as well as the boats the fishermen are in (big commercial fishing boats or small rowing boats), the method of killing (e.g. do the fishermen lean over the boats and stab at random or do they pull the dolphins onto the boat individually or onto the shore or is it something else). This is not because I'm morbid, but I just couldn't picture what was happening at all, and because I couldn't visualise it, I didn't experience the revulsion and sadness that Keiko was experiencing. Eventually I went online to look at pictures, and yes, it is shocking.

I enjoyed the story and I feel like I learnt from it, but the reason I've not given it a higher rating is because I wanted MORE! I often moan that some books are unnecessarily long, but this one was too short. In my opinion, there was definitely scope for more detail around some of the years/events that are summed up quickly - and I was keen to know about them. I got to the end and wanted to stay with the story for at least a few more hours and for me, it was all over too fast.

If you are interested in the Taiji dolphin hunt issue and are looking for a fictional take on it, and want a fast read, then you'll enjoy Red Days.

I received a free copy of this book from the author to review.

Michelle (Bookaholic Banter) says

*I received an eARC of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

When the author first asked if I would like to read this story I was hesitant. I am a HUGE lover of dolphins and get very emotional when it comes to the abuse and killing of dolphins. I saw the documentary: The Cove and my heart broke and I bawled my eyes out. I didn't want a repeat of that.

This story was fictional but it was based very loosely on the truth. The things going on in this story really do happen. I did enjoy reading this story. Thankfully it was not as brutal to read as I thought it would be. It went very fast. There was a love story to this book as well and a happy ending. It was a short story but I enjoyed reading it. I'm glad that I took the time to read it.

Marta Tandori says

Red Days is a passionate work of fiction by writer, ML Sparrow, which brings awareness to the horrors of the annual Taiji Dolphin Slaughter. Although only a novella, it nevertheless packs the punch of a full-length

novel and provides valuable information and links to sources closely associated with the subject matter at hand.

Twenty-five-year-old Keiko (Kiki) Sato is living a charmed life; the kind of life many of her contemporaries would give their eye-teeth to have. Of Japanese heritage, Keiko lives in a spacious apartment in central London with her good-looking and well-earning boyfriend, Julian, and had been lucky enough to have been recruited directly out of school to work as a reporter for one of London's top newspapers. She's still trying to make a name for herself at the paper and the going isn't always easy but things take a turn for the better after she's called into her boss' office. Keiko's given a new assignment together with a DVD which she's to watch. The DVD is called *The Cove*, produced by Ric O'Barry, an American who had captured and trained dolphins for a classic American television show from the sixties before deciding to found Dolphin Project, a group dedicated to helping dolphins in need. Soon, Keiko is on her way to Taiji, Japan in order to interview Ric O'Barry. Once there, she's swept away by his passion and that of Ric's assistant activist, Jed Kenrick. The two men take her to the infamous cove where the dolphins are driven and subsequently slaughtered. These horrific days are known as red cove days – days when the normally blue water turns an ugly red from all the spilled dolphin blood as they're systematically slaughtered. Little by little, Keiko sheds her reporter's objectivity and the trappings of her former life, eventually becoming a passionate and spirited activist, supported at every turn by Jed Kenrick, a man who Keiko admires very much...

Non-fiction books that focus on a cause are difficult to write, works of fiction even more so. The fiction aspect of the story requires believable characters, pacing and a compelling story while not losing sight of the purpose of the book – which is to highlight a cause. The author manages to balance the two rather nicely in *Red Days*. What was particularly well done was the way in which Sparrow captured the inner conflict Keiko sometimes had with her heritage. She initially resented the fact that her boss gave her the Taiji assignment on the basis that she could easily blend in with the locals, yet relied on the fact that she blended in so that she could gain admittance to the Whaling Museum without being singled out as a foreigner. Many others, like Jed, were considered trouble-making activists and automatically banned from entering. The budding romance that develops between Keiko and Jed is sweet in that it's a shared passion for each other as well as their fight to abolish the dolphin slaughter at Taiji. It would have been very easy for Sparrow to wring every last emotion from her readers through the inordinate use of adjectives. Luckily, she chose not to do that, instead letting her well-chosen words carry the emotional impact necessary to keep her readers engaged and above all, committed not only to the book but to a worthwhile cause.

For lovers of animals and animal activists the world over, *Red Days* packs a powerful punch and is certainly worth the read.

Poulami says

Originally posted on Daydreaming Books.

** I received an eARC of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.**

This book was realistic and eye-opening. I was horrified to learn about the barbaric way the Taiji Dolphin Slaughter is done on an annual basis.

When Keiko gets a new assignment, she discovers the horrific incident about annual Taiji Dolphin Slaughter.

It becomes more than an assignment for her as she tries every possible way to help stop this barbaric tradition. In the end, will she be able to make any difference?

Although twenty-five-year-old Keiko or Kiki lives a charmed life, she is still striving for a deserving position in the industry she works for. When she finally gets an opportunity to cover the story about the annual Taiji Dolphin Slaughter, she takes it. Watching the documentary about the slaughter on a DVD is one thing but seeing everything with her own eyes changes her whole perspective. With the help of Ric O'Barry, an activist and writer who's fighting for this cause for a long time and Jed Kenrick, she tries to spread the news so that this injustice against the dolphins stops.

Everything in this book was portrayed so realistically. Like so many others, I was unaware of the slaughter and I was really shocked to learn about it as was Kiki. It became more than just a project for work, she became passionately involved with the cause. It was frustrating to see it took so many years for the Government to actually do something to stop the injustice but that's what exactly happens in real life, doesn't it? I can't even imagine how can people stomach this injustice done to the dolphin ages after ages. It's not only cruel but inhuman too.

After finishing this book, I started searching about this and I can't even say how much horrified I am. THIS STILL HAPPENS?? I mean, what is wrong with the people!! What we are doing to nature, no wonder karma has already started hitting back. I really, really hope this stops. This barbaric act of killing dolphins needs to stop.

Overall, Red Days was an eye-opener. **The plot was a little repetitive** but I was able to learn a lot about the Taiji Dolphin slaughter. This was a quick read and I was able to finish it in one sitting. The **writing was smooth** and easy to read and the **pace was even** throughout the book.

Recommend it?

Yes.

Bob Platypire says

I received an advanced copy of this book to be honestly reviewed

This was...WOW. Eye opening, fascinating, heart-warming, but also utterly heartbreakng! I know the characters are fictional while being set around real events, but their lives when not at the cove carried through and really made it feel real. The articles Keiko wrote felt like I was reading real articles, and not something in book. It's obvious that Ms. Sparrow is very passionate about the issues here; it comes through loud and clear through her characters. So powerfully written!

I cried a little, I'll admit it, and I shared in the little triumphs the activists had, even though these specific ones may not have been exactly real. This was just so well written. If you're an animal lover, I highly, HIGHLY suggest you read this book. You'll also enjoy the bonus short story at the end, I think!

Bob says: 5 Powerful Platypires!

S.K. Gregory says

When Keiko is given an assignment on the slaughter of dolphins in Japan, she has no idea how much it will change her life.

I really enjoyed the story, I think Keiko was a great character and the story revealed a lot about this barbaric practice. Definitely a book which will make you think. Highly recommended.
