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The Secret Language Of Stones: A Novel (The Daughters Of La Lune)



Synopsis

Nestled within Paris's historic Palais Royal is a jewelry store unlike any other. La Fantasie Russie is owned by Pavel Orloff, protégé to the famous Faberge, and is known by the city's fashion elite as the place to find the rarest of gemstones and the most unique designs. But war has transformed Paris from a city of style and romance to a place of fear and mourning. In the summer of 1918, places where lovers used to walk, widows now wander alone. Employed at La Fantasie Russie a girl with a special ability is sent on a dangerous journey to the darkest corners of wartime Paris.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Secret Language of Stones starts in the most fabulous way: "Every morning the pavement in front of our shop in the Palais Royal is washed clean by the tears of the mothers of dead soldiers, widowed wives, and heartsick lovers." And the novel only gets better from there. M.J. Rose's lyrical, descriptive prose draws the reader in and her use of colors and hues to portray the jewelry shop and other locations in Paris vividly brings the story to life. I felt like I had been transported to Paris in 1918. Rose melds together a ghost story, a mystery, a love story, and a depiction of WW I and the Bolshevik Revolution into one glorious book. Pavel Orloff, trained by Faberge and legendary in Paris, owns La Fantasie Russe, a renowned jewelry store in the Palais Royal where customers come to find the rarest gems and jewels. Opaline Duplessi, a mystic whose powers allow her to use stones to communicate with the dead, works at La Fantasie Russe. Women come in to see her and

have her make mourning jewelry so that Opaline can then communicate with their loved ones- sons, husbands, and lovers- that have died on the battlefield. As the story progresses, Opaline's powers grow and take her on a thrilling adventure throughout Paris and across the English Channel to see the famous dowager Romanov empress. Rose sprinkles historical tidbits all throughout the story including the history of the Palais Royal, the tunnels and catacombs under Paris, the tin masks created to cover the soldiers' destroyed faces, the use of Bertha (a huge cannon) by the Germans to bomb Paris, and numerous details relating to the Romanovs.

The Secret Language of Stones is the second book in author M.J. Rose's phenomenal The Daughters of La Lune series and after falling in love with the first book, I was eager to read this next installment. It's at this point I tell you how difficult it's going to be for me to adequately put into words just how much I loved this book and how deeply the story affected me. It was beyond anything I could imagine and holds a spot as one of my top five favorite reads ever. Opaline's journey was so incredibly touching and emotional from the very start. She's a young woman born into a witch's bloodline, gifted with the ability to speak to the fallen through gemstones. She has learned the art of jewelry making and has an admirable desire to help with the ongoing war by making the soldier's watches suitable for the battlefield. It's when doing that work that she learns to use her abilities to read stones to bring grieving mothers or wives or sisters some measure of peace and closure by making a talisman for the grieving family member. Where Opaline can speak one last time to the soldier who has passed on and deliver a final message. It's in doing that work where she crosses otherworldly paths with a soldier named Jean Luc. It's at that moment Opaline's life changes forever. It's at that moment that this book went from an engaging read to an all-consuming one I simply could not put down. Jean Luc had been a journalist before leaving for war and Opaline, along with having private spoken moments with his spirit, reads the weekly columns he wrote. We got to read them along side her and I cannot tell you just how achingly beautiful he wrote and how tender his words were. His entries are written to a fictitious love and he asks her to visit certain places and think of him.

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