



## The Mask of Atreus

*A.J. Hartley*

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## **The Mask of Atreus** A.J. Hartley

An obscure museum's dead proprietor lies in a secret room surrounded by one of the world's most astonishing collections of Greek antiquities. Only a priceless Mycenaean death mask has been taken, along with the bones of a legendary hero thought to exist only in ancient myth. Looted by the Nazis, the treasures are still being sought by those whose dreams of glory remain undefeated.

The mask is an unparalleled discovery that will be a force for devastating retribution in the wrong hands. But by the time museum curator Deborah Miller learns the truth, it may be too late not only to save herself--but to reveal to the world the awesome secret she's uncovered.

## **The Mask of Atreus Details**

Date : Published April 4th 2006 by Berkley Publishing Group (first published July 1st 2005)

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Author : A.J. Hartley

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## From Reader Review The Mask of Atreus for online ebook

### Randal says

Worst ... novel ... ever ...

No, seriously, it might just be ... it's recycled bits of Indiana Jones and Dan Brown (and Dan Brown was recycling Holy Blood, Holy Grail and Foucault's Pendulum), with some "Boys from Brazil" thrown in.

There are plot holes and bad timing (hint, you want the long-winded soliloquizing before you get to the big slam-bang finish, otherwise it's nap time in the middle of said finish). At one point, the author refers to the painfully obvious unmasking of the real bad guy as just like in a bad slasher flick. You wait for the "yes, but" moment, but there is no "yes, but" moment. It's just like a bad slasher flick.

It's barely coherent ... the temple of evil was built by the true believers ... but there's only three guys in the cult ... but if the secret were revealed it would lead to the reinstating of National Socialism, only this time in Atlanta, and with a membership of, um, three guys ... the reporter who took the undercover gig as a maid stayed on after the jig was up why? Huh?

Is there really an A.J. Hartley or is that a pseudonym to see if the public will buy computer-generated fiction ... you know, punch a bunch of cliches and a random dialogue generator in one end and out the other end comes books like this one?

And then there's a big, Hollywood ending. Wow. Call me underwhelmed, but I would give this a zero out of five stars only it might look like I forgot to rate it.

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### Kam Oi says

The 2 stars rather than 3 is more because this isn't really my kind of book but I needed something to read on the airplane. The writing is competent, the historical & archaeological stuff is interesting, and I liked the strong female main character. The other characters are less well-developed, the story is much more driven by plot (& coincidence). Ultimately it bugged me 'cause I just knew the conclusion would come down to Hitler and Nazi's, it was a bit predictable by the last 1/3rd of the book.

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### denise says

agonizingly terrible. read after visiting Mycenae hoping for a good travel read... actually chucked the book in the hotel garbage.

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### Christi says

decent

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### Abigail says

AH! So much potential--I mean, come on...a murdered museum curator, a previously unknown archaeological treasure, and a missing, and priceless, Mycenean death mask.

The problem--suddenly way too much is going on. There are flashbacks, hate crimes, far too many coincidences that are just hugely unbelievable (and it's a novel, I'm willing to stretch the boundaries of "believability" pretty far). By the end of this book, not only was I disappointed, but I wouldn't have been surprised out that Stefano had returned, and that our heroine had actually been brainwashed into forgetting her long-lost love child, and that she had been a spy for the Greek Government, known only as The Archaeologist. Ugh. Annoying. It had so much potential; unfortunately still a pass.

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### **Anne says**

Good read!

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### **Angela says**

Although the history/setting of the plot added a bit of flair to this novel, the plot itself seemed too obvious in trying to mislead the reader about the real villain.

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### **Ana Maria says**

un libro entretenido aunque con algunas lagunas en la linea de relato... si te gustan los museos es un buen referente

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### **Vincent Powell says**

Don't even bother. It's more predictable than post-Taco Bell bowel movements. The promise of some mix of ancient Greece with Nazi schemes is more of a backdrop than any sort of real part of the book. The heroine is painfully one-dimensional, the villain is obvious from the first several chapters, and the not-actually-a-villian-but-he-seems-like-the-bad-guy is as well. DO NOT READ. NOT WORTH ANY AMOUNT OF TIME/MONEY/MUSCLE ENERGY SPENT TURNING THE SOMEHOW TRIPLE DIGIT PAGE NUMBER THIS HACK MANAGED TO SPEW OUT.

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### **Jason M Waltz says**

Entertaining! Actually a rather strong start to a career; I would read another Hartley title. Don't have one on hand, and still have dozens in the TBR stacks, so it won't be soon, but it could happen. Anyway, strong protagonist, I liked the heroine, found her believable, found her anxiety and confusion and fear tangible, followed by her motivation, creativity, and understanding, finally courage. Saw the bad-guy early, though there was some mystery as to how many others there were, so that was clever. Interesting thriller as thrillers

go, only knock I can have - and it's slight - is that for all the WWII/Nazi/myth & occult thrillers out there, this one didn't seem to deliver on its potential, after all the work of getting to its point. Not a Ludlum, Lustbader, or MacLean, but definitely a contender.

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### **Amy says**

I only knew AJ Hartley from his YA fantasy stuff, so decided to try a few other of his books. This is a mystery/thriller that, unfortunately, is a little dated. There were a number of questions that I kept shouting at the main character to ask, but she never listened to me. Her own damn fault, then, when she got into a mess. Probably good she didn't listen to me. I totally missed the swastika on the cover.

Just recently went to a reading of HArtley's and I asked him about the genre hopping he does in his writing. He said that he likes to read all sorts of things, so why not write all sorts? Luckily, he's good enough that he can do that. Other authors get pigeon-holed into one type of book and have a hard time breaking out and still getting published.

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### **C. says**

I really did not care for this book. The characters were too trite and the plot was weak. Very disappointing historical book with too much coincidence driving the plot forward. It had such promise, too.

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### **Noran Miss Pumkin says**

Nazi cult in Georgia tied to a museum theft?! That is not what the book was described when i got it, or i would have not picked it up. Poor plot development. Unbelievable concept, and i just did not like the main character. I like action novels, but just not this one.

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### **Sue Law says**

Tedious, patchy, every cliche in modern fiction and totally dependent upon supposedly intelligent people behaving stupidly. It was a real struggle to finish.

The (female) curator of a private museum finds her boss murdered in a secret room with what appears to be a cache of Mycaenean pottery. Something else also stored in the room has been taken. What was it. The only clue is the word "Atreus".

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### **Lisa H. says**

Awful, terrible, wretched book. How bad is it? Let me count the ways.

First off, a charming, handsome man shows up saying he is with the law firm for a rich guy who just was

murdered, although he had never had the opportunity to meet the deceased himself (very convenient to explain his lack of direct knowledge about the dead guy. Also a handy, if clumsy, way for the author to reveal his bad-guy-ness when he later mentions some supposed personal interaction, which the heroine totally misses. The moron.) So of course the heroine is instantly attracted to him and accepts his story at face value, revealing pretty much all her secret inside information about what might have precipitated the murder, which she keeps hidden even from the police. Even when things start happening to her in places where only he knew she was going, she doesn't seem to question his involvement. Apparently this woman has never seen a thriller movie or read a mystery.

Secondly, a mysterious caller gives her a warning, and when she meets the guy and realizes he is also the person who previously broke into her apartment and lurked around there waiting for her, she goes ahead and makes plans to take a little road trip and investigate a historical site with him. And when someone takes several shots at her, she initially assumes it's coincidental, because no one could *possibly* be trying to kill her, even though she's already been warned that her life is in danger. The woman is portrayed as MONUMENTALLY dense. No 21st century woman with any sense would get in a car alone with a complete stranger, let alone one who she already knows is shady.

Big surprise, the one person she trusts turns out to be the bad guy, people she distrusts turn out to be her strongest allies. Along the way Mr. Hartley churns out plot complication after plot complication, until I just couldn't wait for it to be all over. I have to confess that at one point I was hoping the main character would get killed off. She was an embarrassment to modern women everywhere.

Oh, and the set-ups were ridiculously telegraphed. "She cleaned up her nails and slipped the file into her back pocket..." *so she can fortuitously recall its presence a little while later and use it to escape from the bad guys.* Yeah, it was really that transparent. Blergh.

A tiny picky detail - I mean, there are so many BIG reasons to hate this one - Hartley uses a phrase THREE TIMES that instantly told me he was a Brit: "finish up", meaning not "complete" but more like "arrive" -- the phrase an American would use in the same context would be either "end up" or "wind up." No clue why he would put this story in an American setting. Dude, write what you know. Like, not about women, for one thing. I also could really have done without the repeated flogging of the platitude about "handsome men don't go for marginally-attractive women like [Deborah Miller]."

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