



Mosquito

Roma Tearne

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'Mosquito' is an epic tale about tender love shattered by the destructive forces of civil war.

Mosquito Details

Date : Published May 1st 2007 by HarperCollins Publishers (first published 2007)

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Author : Roma Tearne

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marquie says

Having already read Ondaatje's 'Anil Ghost' on the insurgency in Sri Lanka, comparisons between the two novels were of course, inevitable. And although Tearne is definitely no Ondaatje, her novel is one which haunts and lingers within the mind with an almost alarming clarity. Despite the fact that the love affair within the novel occurs between two protagonists who have an incredibly large age difference, it is the sincerity of their love and the haunting innocence of it that render it as aesthetically beautiful as any other love affair in literature. This novel is highly recommended for anyone who craves a good, unbiased read on the civil war in Sri Lanka - or anyone really, who appreciates the gift of literature.

Julia Bondar says

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Kirsty says

I chose to read Roma Tearne's *Mosquito* for the Sri Lanka stop on my Around the World in Eighty Books challenge. I tend not to read books which are primarily love stories; I like there to be a lot of other things going on. *Mosquito* looked as though it would fit the bill in respect, set as it is at a tumultuous period of Sri Lanka's history. Most other reviewers seem to have loved this, but it felt largely awkward to me. Some of the sentences are very bland and matter-of-fact, and others feel highly overwritten; there is no overall balance between the two. The dialogue is stilted, and I found it quite repetitive. I couldn't get into the story at all, and was a little disappointed that the setting has been so sidelined. So much more could have been made of this novel.

Bonny says

This is a book that is astounding in its complexity and clarity. The story offers every human emotion we know and some we may never have experienced and would hope never to be faced with.

This book has everything, love, loss, betrayal, despair, hope, anguish and resurrection of the human spirit. It touches on topics of love, war and struggle and emerging political power.

It's not often a book will move me to the point of actually crying, but this one is wrenching and powerful and full of emotions. I am amazed at the atrocities men and humans do in the name of war and even more amazed at our resilience to come through it all changed and marked but alive.

I recommend this book to all my friends, and to anyone else. Read it. I just finished it and I will read it again,

immediately.

Terry says

This is a book about loving. A book about hope and survival. About war, also indifference. It is an elegiac book, filled with optimism and awash with tenderness. All of those words are the author's own as she describes the novel being written by her protagonist, but they easily translate to describing this novel.

Lauren says

The underlying civil war kept me going and interested. The violence and torture was interesting. The little love story was shallow and vapid. Actually pretty much all the characters were underdeveloped and their interactions shallow and hokey.

Sarah says

I guess I'm the only one who has a problem with theo seducing a 17 year old innocent fatherless girl to satisfy himself. Another example of misbehaviour. This novel was not set in the west it is set in Sri Lanka. Even the tigers were careful about preserving the virtue of the girls they recruited. The fact that theo was a stranger to Sri Lanka as an expat who had spent many years away makes his behavior even more disturbing. 47 year old theo and the 17 year old school girl. He's lucky he didn't get killed by the girls uncle, especially since he was so indifferent to have her spend the night. What would have been a good story becomes bogged down with the inequality between the wealthy traveled theo and this poor girl who had never been outside of colombo. Maybe I just don't get it.

I wrote the above part when I was at the point where Theodore was captured. I finished the book last night. She writes beautifully. I still have a problem with the age difference between them but I loved the ending. It was gorgeous. She is now one of my favs

Mary Ann Dailey says

This is an unexpected love story set in war torn Sri Lanka. It is one of my favorite fiction reads in the last ten years. I audibly gasped more than once while reading it; I was that moved emotionally.

Andrea Andrea says

Pican pican los mosquitos
pican con gran disimulo
unos pican en la cara
y otros pican en el...

Cuando fui a la colina
me dijeron cuerpo a tierra
como no les hice caso
me mandaron a la...

Mi hermanita toca el piano
con el profesor Pirulo
cada vez que se agachaba
le tocaba todo el...

Culpa de un malentendido
a la prima de ese buta
que tenía siete novios
la trataban de una...

- Ay!
- Que?
- Pero que no entiendes esto?
- Es que...
- Si es muy sencillo
- Pero es que casi no... tu viste...
- Nada más escucha

Publicaron en los diarios
algo que me dejó absorto
que a una niña de 11 años
le rompieron bien el...

Orden es lo que les falta
al vestir de las zendejas
que con los escotes nuevos
se les ven todas las...

Tentación es lo que falta
a una chica desprolija
que en las manifestaciones
le gusta tocar la...

Pídale al señor que cante
la canción una vez sola
pues al cantarla dos veces
ya empieza a romper las...

Boca dice que contrata
once jugadores nuevos
y la inchada le contesta
que no rompan más los...

Pican pican los mosquitos
pican con gran disimulo
- dónde?
unos pican en la cara
y otros pican en el...

- AAAAH!

Pican pican los mosquitos
pican con gran disimulo
unos pican en la cara
y otros pican en el...

Cuando fui a la colina
me dijeron cuerpo a tierra
como no les hice caso
me mandaron a la...

Mi hermanita toca el piano
con el profesor Pirulo
cada vez que se agachaba
le tocaba todo el...

Culpa de un malentendido
a la prima de ese buta
que tenía siete novios
la trataban de una...

- y el mosquito?
- se murió el mosquito!

Josh says

This book draws you in slowly, creating the relationships- some tenuous, some quite powerful- between the characters stroke by stroke like a painting. The part of me that initially recoiled at the prospect of a relationship between a 44 year-old man and an 18 year-old girl came around so much that as the book came to a close, in my mind there was one way it had to end and I held my breath to the last page truly hoping it did. The plot doesn't so much push you along as guide you, making the jungles of Sri Lanka seemed an apt parallel for the story itself.

As the civil war ravaging this small island nation begins to move itself from background to foreground, I loved how the characters were all caught up in the maelstrom, each affected in their own way. The way Ms. Tearne (an artist herself before trying her hand at writing) seems to communicate through her characters how against the world and its machinations we are all powerless alone spoke to me. She pervades the novel with a sense that without those closest to us, we are lost. Left to wander alone until isolation threatens to suffocate us. Husbands and wives, lovers and friends all show this to be true in Mosquito.

This book is the second in my 2011 Monthly Reading List. The first left our group with decidedly mixed feelings, but I am hoping that this one is more well-received. It has the rare ability to keep one's spirits hopeful despite the tortuous, violent and often explosive events occurring on the page. Even when death occurs, it comes quickly and without grand foreshadowing or sappy reminiscing. Like life, it comes without warning; the plot lumbers along without remorse.

I would highly recommend this book to most anyone, though fair warning the violence is real and unfiltered.

Aidan says

Beautiful and brutal.

Ben says

To start and finish a novel by a Sri Lankan author who lives in Oxford, while in Sri Lanka, seemed too good to pass up. As long as the novel looked like it might be a good one. It did and it is. This wise book knows that we never know which of our experiences will become memories. Its vivid descriptions, especially of the Sri Lankan coast and the girl in the lime green skirt, lend poignancy to that insight. The palpable sense of loss that this precipitates is heart-rending, because this book shows us that loss is as much a part of life as is breathing.

Stephanie says

A moving novel about second (and even third) chances at life. A love story set in Sri Lanka at a time of civil war. It makes the point that survival is not always a matter of bravery or intelligence, but rather luck and the ability to endure. A story of people who break in various ways, and how they heal into a fuller experience of life.

katie says

This is an absolutely beautiful novel. Roma Tearne is a painter, and tells an exquisite story of an author who returns to his home in Sri Lanka from years in Europe and a young Sri Lankan woman who is an emerging artist. Tearne almost paints with words, so that you feel like you are having a visual experience as well as a literary one.

She really evokes the sights, smells and sounds of Sri Lanka. And gives the background of the civil war and political conflict without it overwhelming the personal stories of the main characters. It was a quick and engaging read but also evocative and emotional story.

Tami says

Stunning in its poignancy, lushness, and brutality. Theo is a 45 year old nationally renowned - and outspoken - writer who returns to his native Sri Lanka on the brink of civil war and meets 17 year old Nulani, whose drawings and paintings captivate him. They begin a complicated relationship, until violence escalates and he is kidnapped. She, believing him dead, is shepherded out of the country to England by Theo's closest friends, who subsequently lose track of her. Neither Theo nor Nulani forgets the other, though... the ending of this novel is breathtaking. Amaaazing novel, really. I'd never read Roma Tearne's work before, had never even heard of her actually (and, agreed, she's no Michael Ondaatje, if that's what you're looking for)...however, I will definitely be seeking out the rest of her body of work in the hopes that it is nearly as good as this novel is!
