ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

MYSTERY

The Corporate Whore of Babylon
Steven Fritchie
Xlibris
978-1-4771-5881-4
Three Stars (out of Five)

In *The Corporate Whore of Babylon*, an attention-grabbing mystery, the murder of a corporate mogul leads a young detective into the world of a strange and secret society. Sixty-five-year-old William Babble, CEO of a leading tire company, is found dead in his Malibu home, and Los Angeles police detective James Gladd is assigned to investigate.

Gladd discovers a puncture wound in the back of Babble's head and suspects murder. When an autopsy confirms that Babble died by the lethal injection of a chemical mixture used for people on death row—a substance no longer produced—he pursues the clues to determine who might have had access to the chemicals.

His investigation uncovers Babble's involvement in the Temple of Inanna, whose members' beliefs are based on Babylonian mythology. Babble's four sons are also members of the secret temple, and Gladd seeks to trace their involvement to solve the murder.

Steven Fritchie builds suspense early on in this murder mystery, but his story quickly shifts to more of an action novel, with Gladd and the people assisting him often finding themselves in peril. Fritchie focuses on the activities of the temple and its goals, which include the creation of a "New World Order" by controlling economic, political, and social functions on a global scale.

The action scenes are fast paced and the plot is engaging. Gladd, the likable central character, is strongly developed as a good-hearted cop. Fritchie provides extensive details about the detective's professional life and investigative processes, and even offers a glimpse into Gladd's home life through his relationship with his quirky parrot, Sasha, who constantly curses—a source of comic relief throughout the book.

While Gladd is an appealing character, the members of the Babble family, both father and sons, are underdeveloped. Since Babble's murder is at the center of the plot, and his sons also play key roles, knowing more about them would have drawn readers in more fully.

At times, the level of detail can be overdone, particularly when it comes to the inner

workings and history of the temple. Some of the group's rituals are extremely graphic and may be off-putting to readers. Grammar and spelling errors create occasional distractions throughout the book.

The Corporate Whore of Babylon will be most satisfying to readers who have a strong interest in plot-driven narratives packed with action.

Maria Siano