FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

FOREWORD REVIEW ♥♥♥♥♥ GENERAL FICTION

White Fire

Stuart Murray
Images from the Past (July 2000)
Unknown $26.00 (364pp)
978-1-884592-25-6

Dirk Arendt, the main character of Murray's engaging historical adventure tale, shares a literary lineage with both Hawkeye from The Last of the Mohicans and Indiana Jones. This Cape Colony Dutchman is a scout too, with equal parts confidence, ingenuity and strength, on what he believes to be an archeological expedition into Zululand. Unbeknownst to him, one of the expedition's members belongs to a cult called the Red Brotherhood, whose mission is to steal the Zulu leader's ancient amulet; the charm's paralyzing "Stone of White Fire" is said to possess the power to reveal lands of gold.

Shaka, the feared Zulu leader, awaits the expedition and the arrival of his doctor, with whom Dirk is traveling. When Shaka demands a potion that was left behind at camp, Dirk and Mazibe, Shaka's favored slave and holder of the amulet, begin a 125-mile race through the jungle. The two become friends as they face lions and Brotherhood agents, but they return to find Shaka dead and murderous rebels waiting to prey on them. Mazibe gives the amulet to Dirk before returning to his warrior group, and Dirk seeks safety by traveling southwest toward his homeland.

Meanwhile, his people, the Boers (voortrekkers) are making the dangerous journey northward in search of their promised land. Both his parents and the strong-willed Rachel Drente are part of the caravan Dirk eventually meets, slightly ahead of Zulu regiments and a crazed witch doctor in search of the amulet. Dirk and Rachel rekindle their friendship, but when they realize the new land their family has chosen to settle is a virtual diamond mine, sought after by both the Red Brotherhood and the Zulus, their future seems tenuous.

Murray, the author of twelve works of fiction and ten nonfiction, has a dexterous hand for research. Here, he proves his skill with useful explanations of vernacular phrases and historical background for the 1828 setting. In straightforward language, Murray also keeps an even pace and alternates easily between Dirk's racing adventures and Rachel's descriptions of the family trek.

Perhaps things like amulets and Red Brotherhoods seem far-fetched, but in this novel they don't disappoint. After all, lost arcs and temples of doom haven't failed an audience yet.

REBECCA REGO (June 15, 2000)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The author of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the author for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.

Source: https://www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/white-fire/