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As the daughter of a mining family, Katie Mulholland is forced to find work as a scullery maid in the house of the Rosiers. But the beautiful young girl soon captures the eye of her employer's evil son, who rapes her and leaves her pregnant.

Quick to dismiss Katie, the family forces her into a loveless marriage with the cruel manager of the Rosier mines. But Katie's fate changes course when one man offers her the opportunity to make her own fortune, and to discover real love . . .

Spanning Katie's life from 1860 to the height of WWII, this is a spellbinding, triumphant, timeless drama from the pen of a brilliantly skilled storyteller.

Katie Mulholland Details

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Author : Catherine Cookson

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From Reader Review Katie Mulholland for online ebook

Sheila Kazmierczak says

I have read this book at least 3 times and it brings me to tears in the same places each time. The late Catherine Cookson is still high among my favorite authors. Katie Muholland's story represents nearly a hundred years of social and economic change in the pattern of English life, set in the harsh life of mid-Victorian Tyneside and the shipyards.

Judith Wrinkle says

My very first book by Cookson and she made me a fan. I love her way of making History come alive and she has an excellent relationship with her characters. This was a great book.

Wendy says

Catherine Cookson's tales of northern England were a part of my growing up. I have many on my 'keeper' shelf and have read many of my favourites by her, over and over again. She was a South Tyneside lass, illegitimate and born into abject poverty with a 'sister' she later discovered was her mother. Most of her stories are based on the people and places she was familiar with. Her stories are gritty, shocking, sometimes sad but always real and compelling, and it is obvious that the poverty she writes of has been inspired by and lived through, not just researched. There is always the obligatory happy ending, but it is not easily reached. Ms.Cookson's characters are, in my opinion always far more realistic than the norm - very few hearts and roses for her heroes/heroines. And one of the things I have always loved about her writing is that these heroes and heroines are not always beautiful or classically handsome - often they are working men and women who have suffered hardships and misery but who almost always triumph over adversity.

Katie Mulholland spans a period of some eighty odd years, beginning when Katie is just fifteen and has been working as a scullery maid at 'the big house' owned by the local landowners and coal mining family, the Rosiers. The tenants and workers of the Rosiers are treated abominably, they live in houses not fit for animals, work in the family mine, and even have to spend their hard earned 'brass' (money) on groceries at vastly inflated costs at the company shop. Katie is considered by her cohorts to be lucky not to be working down the mine or in the local rope works. A beautiful, sunny natured child, she is adored by her family and every fortnight, her trip across the moors on her afternoon off brings light into their soul destroying existence. Then one day Katie is brought home in disgrace, she is pregnant and will not name the father of her child for fear of what will happen when her father retaliates; as she knows he will. Bernard Rosier, the eldest son, raped her on the night of his engagement ball and, fearing the repercussions should his fiancée's powerful family discover his perfidy, forces Katie into marriage with the mine supervisor, Mark Bunting, a man who is despised by the pit men. He holds the miner's livelihoods in the palm of his hand and by marrying him, Katie will earn the derision of the local people. She marries against the wishes of her family, thinking to save them, but as it turns out, nothing can stop the terrible and tragic series of events which sees Katie and her family on the road with her baby daughter. By now Katie has become the lynchpin of her family. Like children, they all look to her for guidance, and eventually, because of the overwhelming love she feels for them and also the guilt as a result of her pregnancy, she is forced into making a heart-rending

decision which will have far reaching consequences. She may think that she has left the Rosier family behind, but her life is inextricably linked with them forever.

Katie meets and eventually marries a Swedish/Danish ship's captain, Andree Franenkel, whom she calls Andy and, through him becomes a rich and powerful woman. But again and again, her life is touched by the vindictive and tyrannical Bernard Rosier who holds her accountable for every ill that has ever befallen him and refers to her as 'the Mullholland woman'.

Katherine Cookson's characters, are real, down-to-earth and intuitively developed. Bernard Rosier, though initially handsome and powerful, degenerates into a dissolute, menacing and frightening monster and each time he made an appearance I was on the edge of my seat. Katie is a beautiful and talented young women, but no matter how powerful she becomes, she never quite conquers her fear of Bernard Rossier and such is the power of Catherine Cookson's writing that we, the reader, feel that fear, which is palpable and overshadows Katie's entire life. Andy is just adorable, large, blonde, bearded and older than her by some sixteen years, he is utterly captivated by her from the first night he meets her. It is Andy who is Katie's salvation and it is he who recognises that the only way he can help his 'Kaa-tee' kick poverty and her fear of Bernard Rossier is by making her rich and powerful and sets out to do just that - and succeeds with amazing results.

Susan Jameson, a British actress of some repute, is absolutely superb as the narrator of **Katie Mulholland** and handles the large cast of male and female characters, northern dialect, upper classes and - later on in the story - an American, with aplomb. I don't believe that there is another actress who could capture and hold without wavering, and without putting a foot wrong, the dialects, humour and characters through almost twenty one hours of narration in the way that she does. Considering that this story spans such a long period, Katie's voice goes from a youthful fifteen year old, through to a very old lady and Susan Jameson adapts her own tone and timbre to take account of this ageing process whilst still making Katie very recognisable. Andy's English, spoken with a strong Scandinavian accent and an undoubtedly male, deeper intonation, is superbly done and the all consuming love he feels for his 'Kaa-tee' shines through and is really quite moving at times; even the jaunty sailor in him is apparent.

I just loved this feast of a book, one of Catherine Cookson's earlier novels, first published in the 1960s. Susan Jameson brings it to glittering life with her very talented acting skills; this is no light listen and it is one which will probably leave the listener feeling wrung-out. Nevertheless I highly recommend it. There are more and more of this author's books becoming available in audio, all narrated by Susan Jameson and I am holding my breath and waiting for two all time favourites to become available - **The Dwelling Place** and **Kate Hannigan**.

Elodie says

My favorite book of all time. I have a green leather bound autographed copy and have read it many times over the years. She never disappoints. It may be rags to riches but many twists along the way will keep you enthralled.

Renee Ross says

Extraordinary!

I have only recently discovered Catherine Cookson. She is an extraordinary story teller. The characters are complex and memorable. I wouldn't want it any other way because I'm very reluctant to let them go. If you enjoy family sagas, don't miss this one. It captivated me from the first page to the last.

Rachel says

This book follows the story of Katie Mulholland, born to a mining family in the Tyneside area, from the 1860s right through to WWII. The thing that captures me with Catherine Cookson's novels is the great historical insight they provide into the hardships and poverty of the times, and what they reveal about the living conditions and social setting. Katie suffers at the hands of the rich family she is employed by, being raped by the son Bernard Rosier, which forces her into an unwanted pregnancy, and a brutal, abusive marriage. The two become lifelong enemies as their paths and that of their descendants continue to cross.

Katie's is somewhat of a typical rags to riches story, as she moves from abject poverty, and through her relationship with a Swedish sea captain Andy, becomes a wealthy property owner. I enjoyed the sociohistorical aspect of this book, but found the characters to be very black and white: they were either strictly in the category of evil villain or courageous heroine overcoming adversity. There were few nuanced or complex characters.

Overall a pleasant light read, although rather long, and the audiobook was well narrated.

Polly says

Heartbreaking story. Good read

Jesslyn says

Just as good as I remember it. I took away a star because I felt the ending extended too long and didn't have enough satisfaction for the way that it ended.

I highly recommend the audible version. The narrator, Susan Jameson, is one of the best narrators I've experienced. From accents to timing, she shined.

It's a shame that more of Cookson's books are not available via audio, but I'm grateful that I came across this one.

Shirley Revill says

Another exceptional book by Catherine Cookson. Storytelling at it's best.

Lynnette says

This book was written when I was 16, and the author wrote over 90 books even in her 80's. The ones I have read are all good. Taking place in a poor mining town, a young girl considered lucky to get a job as a scullery maid in a rich house finds it's not such a lucky place after all. Her misfortunes keep continuing, and I was wondering if she would ever get out of her messy circumstances... The book tells the story of her life--- a good read.

Laura Blodgett says

I have rarely read a more depressing book. I am very disappointed because people have recommended Catherine Cookson's stories so highly, but if they are like this one, I have better things to fill my mind with. This was one long drawn out story of a victim who never really took charge of her life, and when she did she made was manipulative. I understand that people have suffered many things due to the selfishness and arrogance of others, but to listen to it for hours, hoping for some resolution, then to be left with that ending has left me feeling like I need a long drink of something refreshing.

Laura says

Just arrived from UK through BM.

Katie Mulholland is a daughter of a miner who at an age of 15 years old went to work as a scullery maid in the house of the Rosier in order to support her family.

However, his life takes a turn as Bernard Rosier, heir to the Rosier family, charmed by its beauty decided to rape her.

This book chronicles the saga of Katie in a period that begins in 1860 and ends in 1944, with a vivid description of her obsession by Rosier family that intertwines the lives of her family as much as she strives to move away from this harmful influences.

Catherine Cookson is a master of storyteller and that's why I love these books written by the "old" ladies writers.

Sherry says

At first I had a little trouble getting into this book - only because I had just finished The Tea Rose and The Winter Rose - which also took place in that late 1800's/early 1900's era.

But once I got a little ways into the book and caught up in the characters then I couldn't put it down and hated to see it end...

I definitely will read another Catherine Cookson book!!!!!!!!!!

Kate B says

I remember reading this as a 13 year old being very proud of myself for picking up a book the size of my fist. But that was a non-issue as I got sucked in to the step by step take of the unfortunate girl who you just wanted something to go right by her. Over the years I've picked it up again and again and loved it dearly since.

Ingrid Fasquelle says

Catherine Cookson (1906-1998), née au nord-est de l'Angleterre, est la fille illégitime d'une femme qu'elle prenait pour sa sœur aînée. La pauvreté, l'exploitation de la classe ouvrière et l'emprise de la religion lui laisseront une empreinte qu'elle gardera toute sa vie. À quarante ans, elle commence à écrire un roman qui dépeint les conditions de vie de ces milieux défavorisés et devient l'une des romancières les plus estimées. Elle est anoblie en 1986. Avec plus de 130 millions d'exemplaires vendus, 104 romans à son actif, traduits dans 25 langues, elle est l'un des monuments de la littérature anglaise.

L'impossible amour de Katie Mulholland est une intrigue familiale qui se tisse sur plusieurs générations. Des années 1860 jusqu'à la Seconde Guerre mondiale, cette immense fresque dépeint les conditions de vie des milieux les plus pauvres et dénonce les injustices d'une société patriarcale envers les plus défavorisés, dont les femmes font malheureusement partie.

Exploitée, confrontée à la violence, à l'injustice puis au dénuement le plus total, la jeune Katie Mulholland connaîtra un destin chaotique mais la vie lui réserve bien des surprises... Courageuse, honnête et droite, c'est au fond de son cœur que Katie puisera l'espoir d'accéder enfin au bonheur qu'elle mérite tant.

Dans cette saga familiale qui témoigne d'une maîtrise romanesque rare et souligne la fragilité de la vie et du bonheur, Catherine Cookson donne vie à une constellation de personnages inoubliables. On y trouve le récit de vies minuscules et insignifiantes mais aussi l'incroyable destinée d'être au caractère entier, bouillonnants d'amour et de colère. C'est passionnant !

Entre amours contrariés, liens familiaux indéfectibles, vengeances et rivalités amères, le roman de Catherine Cookson résume parfaitement les vicissitudes d'une famille et, plus largement, d'une société profondément injuste, faite d'inégalités, de pauvreté et d'exclusion, en proie à des codes et des exigences morales incroyablement restrictives. Au faste et à la démesure des grandes familles bourgeoises s'opposent la chaleur et la générosité d'ouvriers fiers et forts, tout dévoués à leur vie de labeur. On y découvre leurs conditions de vie difficiles, pénibles, à côté desquels le luxe et l'insouciance contraste avec insolence ! C'est profondément révoltant !

En cela, L'impossible amour de Katie Mulholland se réclame davantage d'un document d'histoire. Bien plus qu'une romance qui entremêle les destins croisés de personnages victimes de scandales, de vengeance et de passions coupables, il s'agit d'un formidable témoignage historique, politique et social d'une Angleterre en marche vers la modernité. Une véritable perle taillée sur mesure par l'une des auteurs les plus reconnus en Angleterre !
