



A Most Dangerous Woman

L.M. Jackson

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Lee Jackson returns with a new lady detective, in the first of a gripping series set in 1850s London.

When the mysterious Sarah Tanner opens her Dining and Coffee Rooms on the corner of Leather Lane and Liquorpond Street, her arrival amongst the poor market traders creates a stir. Few doubt that she has a past, but no one can possibly predict how it will return to haunt her. When an old friend is brutally murdered by the unlikeliest of assailants, Sarah Tanner is the only witness. Unable to turn to the police, she reluctantly finds herself drawn back into the dark underworld of the Victorian metropolis.

Assisted by unlikely friends, dogged by the criminal machinations of the greatest gamester, felon, villain, swindler, and scoundrel in London, she must unravel a web of treachery and deceit that takes her from the gaming hells of Regent Street to the suburban heights of Upper Holloway, from the slums of St. Giles to the fast-flowing waters of the Thames. Relying on her wits and trading on her past, Sarah Tanner risks gambling her own life upon a desperate quest for justice and vengeance.

A Most Dangerous Woman Details

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From Reader Review A Most Dangerous Woman for online ebook

Free says

This was the first Lee Jackson novel I read and I have to admit my expectations were not high when I made my order. What a lovely surprise this book was! Lots of great period detail and an interesting murder story with a good pace. Added to that is the ongoing mystery of Sarah herself, as events slowly unfold to tell us about her past.

Sarah really appealed to me as a character and I sincerely hope that this book is the first in a series because I want to read about her again.

Sean Harding says

She may be a dangerous woman, but after reading this she doesn't seem like a very interesting woman.

Kagama-the Literaturevixen says

One fine day I came upon a series of books called "Silent in the.." by an author named Deanna Raybourn. Great! I thought an historical fiction with a female sleuth to boot. This can not be bad in any way. ... Well it was so-so.

I gave up my hopes for finding a good Victorian Era Lady Sleuth Book

Until I found "A most dangerous woman" by LM Jackson

It all starts when a mysterious woman called Sarah Tanner opens up a coffee house in a seedy street in Leather Lane, London.

No one knows where she comes from but her new neighbours all agree that she is bound to have a dark and mysterious PAST (that's in capital letters folks)

Not soon after she is recognized by an old friend, who hardly makes it out of the door before he is murdered. But why? Sarah decides to set out and discover the truth.

Even if it means she has to face old foes and other Dickensian London obstacles. Like a Victorian female crime boss that goes by the name of "Her Majesty" and her henchman, the suave and violent Symes and many other villains from the London underworld.

I was hooked.

Sarah Tanner is a bit unconventional, but she feels real within the era that she lives in. And while she isn't from exactly upper class or working class she knows how to act both downstairs and upstairs. The other characters both villains supporting character feels real and substantial.

The mystery is quite good and well thought out, as I didn't figure out who was the culprit until the protagonist did and even then you're in for some twists and turns in the plot.

It's a historical fiction, with a mystery and a heroine with a backbone that isn't a Mary Sue. What's not to like?

I am quite sad that there probably won't be a third book in the series as the second book raises some question about the future for the main character. I even asked the author about it.

Kagama

Just finished "The mesmerists apprentice"...

and I found it very enjoyable. Was a bit disappointed though that it didn't feature "her Majesty" or Symes. I thought their affairs with Sarah weren't quite finished.

I would also like to find out more of Sarah's past. Perhaps in a future book?

LM.Jackson

"Glad you enjoyed Mesmerist's ... always nice to know some people are actually reading my books! My plans for the next Sarah Tanner book definitely feature Symes and Her Majesty, and at least one crucial event from her past ... check back with me in 12 months or so ...!"

In fact, I confess, Sarah Tanner's UK future hangs on a publishing knife-edge at present ... however, my books are doing well in France (merci, mes amis!) which makes another ST book more likely, even it's retrospectively published 'on-demand' by me, from the French edition (!). best wishes, Lee (ps. see my other books published as "Lee Jackson

Kagama

"Vive le french!^^ Its too bad to hear.. But I hope things picks up

This was in 2008..

June53 says

Brilliant book

Marleen says

Generally speaking I enjoy a good historical mystery novel, and I had high hopes for this book. Unfortunately it didn't thrill me as much as I had expected. Mainly because I thought the plot of the story was a bit too convoluted, and at the same time unlikely and un-intriguing, for my taste. Nevertheless the

author did a great job to render the atmosphere and setting of Victorian London, and developed the characters enough for me to continue reading. True, Sarah Tanner is a very courageous woman as we discover bit by bit the world of deceit and disrepute she left behind, to start a new life as a Coffee house keeper - but I do regret that we really never get to know the real Sarah Tanner or what lies in her heart. The old waiter Ralph Grundy was probably one of my favorite characters.

Despite the fact that I never got enthralled by the mystery plot, I did enjoy the use of the English language giving that Victorian era more authenticity.

2,5 stars

Rea says

Despite the fact that I really enjoyed this book, and getting to know the characters found within, it took me a very long time to read such a short piece. This could be because the narrative style was a little detached, and I often find such styles hard to plough through - this is, of course, personal preference.

I enjoyed the premise (a gory murder), the setting (working class Victorian London), the fiesty main character and all her friends, present associates and past associates.

The main character intrigues me. She's trying to reinvent herself, move on from seedy past. I'd also really like to know more about her previous relationship with Arthur DeSalle, which is only teasingly hinted at in this book.

Rebecca Wright says

Another amazing mystery series by Lee Jackson. The detail and the world of Victorian London comes alive with suspense and atmosphere. Now if his books were only easier to get in the U.S., come one amazon.com stock ALL his books!

Caroline says

Good read for folks that enjoy that era, which I do..Found it a tadge Catherine Cookson in London goes dark!!

Twists and turns are fun and very easy to read.

Williad says

A good read, good pace with feeling descriptions of 19th century London, with surprising twists and turn (for me at least). Looking forward to reading the sequel

Amy says

A Most Dangerous Woman summarized:

Everyone: Sarah, no.

Sarah Tanner: Sarah, yes!

Joking aside, I did really enjoy the books. Though Sarah's reasons for getting involved are a bit slim and the plot became very convoluted, I liked the characters and the book had a great sense of place and atmosphere, as well as tension and danger.

Elizabeth says

Highly engrossing. One of the best Victorian crime novels I've read in quite some time. Wonderful characters and plot. Highly recommended for fans of Anne Perry, Victoria Thompson, Michael Cox.

Jim Gunnee says

I enjoyed this, maybe more than the Metropolitan murder series. LM (Lee) Jackson has a very obvious interest in Victorian London and this comes across vividly in the writing. Maybe to the slight detriment of the plot on occasion. I'll buy more of these, and so should you.

Linda says

I really liked this book. I liked the characters right from the start. 1850's London was depicted quite well. I could imagine it all. Good story with a twist at the end. Moved pretty fast too.

Kristen says

This is an extremely enjoyable Victorian era murder mystery, with the added benefit of the main character being a smart, resourceful, utterly fearless woman, particularly for the times.

"Mrs" Sarah Tanner owner and proprietor of her Dining and Coffee Rooms at the corner of Leather Land and Liquorpond Street, is a bit of an oddity to the locals. She clearly has some sort of past, and the contradictions of her character and mannerisms suggest she once lived a much higher life. But Mrs. Tanner simply wants to run her business and doesn't care to discuss her personal situation or her past with anyone.

Until, that is, a friend from her past is brutally murdered and Sarah happens upon the scene just in time to see him breath his last. Sarah determines that someone has to get justice for this man, and since no one else seems inclined, she will have to do it herself.

Sarah's determination quickly involves her in a nefarious plot with far-reaching implications, including

bringing her back into proximity of people from her past she'd rather didn't know she was still alive, let alone her current whereabouts. She must also ask for help from others from her past, that, while the association was more pleasant, they had thought they'd said their final goodbyes.

The character of Sarah is very interesting and out of the ordinary for this time-frame. She is terribly smart, completely independant, and has enough street smarts because of her past life - which involved somewhat less than "legal" behaviours - that she is totally believeable when she goes places, does things, and accomplishes results, that one might not ordinarily buy from a Victorian era woman.

The story as well is quite engrossing. There are a number of complicated twists and turns that are uncovered by Sarah as she tries to unravel the reasons behind her friend's murder, and as she becomes more and more deeply involved in other people's machinations, she continues to try to do what is right, without ending up dead herself as a thank you for her efforts.

To give more detail would be to create spoilers. Suffice it to say, if you like the Victorian era and clever, well-written murder mysteries, not to mention strong female protagonists, this book may be for you. I very much enjoyed it!

Shelly says

There's a slow build to the mystery, and it takes a bit before you really feel that Sarah Tanner has any good reason to press on investigating in the face of the dangers coming at her. The setting is well-done and some of the characters are very likable. I'd enjoy spending more time with Ralph at least. I'm not so sure I care for Mrs. Tanner. I don't dislike her - I could take her or leave her - but that is not the sort of sentiment your main protagonist should inspire.
