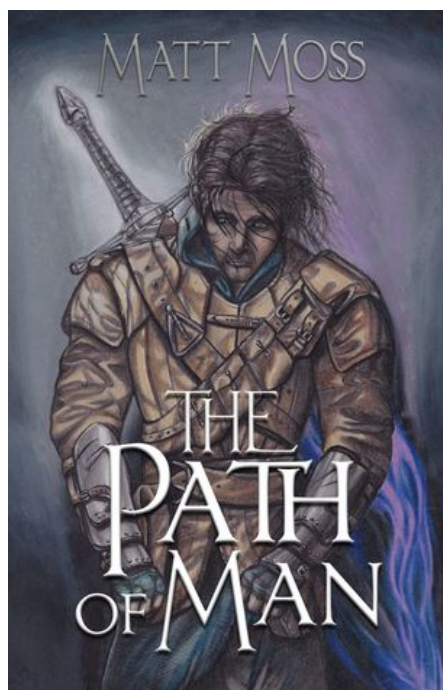




The Path of Man

Matt Moss

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Arkin's world is changed forever when a stranger rides into town looking for an artifact that Arkin's father would trade his own life to protect -- a book that holds the secrets of the past and possibly the fate of the future. Suddenly, Arkin is thrown into an age old war between the Order and the Dark Society. The kingdom is already in turmoil over the scarcity of jobs and the rationing of food, and now the church is trying to convert the people from their faith of old to a new and less holy religion.

Arkin will need all the help he can get to save the people he loves and the land he calls home. Somewhere out there lies the Garden of Stones, a place of myth and magic that Arkin and his new band of friends and warriors are hoping will be the miracle they need to turn the tides of war. Choices made in the past ripple through time as Arkin puts the pieces together. His choices will determine the future of all as he follows The Path of Man.

The Path of Man Details

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Author : Matt Moss

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From Reader Review The Path of Man for online ebook

Raymond St. says

Complaint:

The style is a bit off. Behold a far-reaching character-driven epic adventure-fantasy told in fairy-tale narrative strokes. Fairy-tales are quick and clear. They tell us who is wicked by their sneers, who is wise for the twinkle in the eye; who must be up to no good with their rat-like manners. But for 'slice of life' requirements of a trilogy, fairy-tale 'telling' instead of 'showing' shall grate at times. Recall how Tolkien starts in that key, then shifts to a deeper, more nuanced mood when the tale is moving.

Done. Finished complaining.

"The Path of Man" is a fun read that launches with standard parts. Arkin is Luke, Frodo, the Wart, Harry P., Hazel and every other man-boy astonished at a suddenly wider world and stranger mirror. Romantic interest Lyla is every smart brave plucky female to enroll at Hogwarts, Victorian Med School or Space-Camp

Standard Parts:

- 1 Young Boy of Astonishing Potential
- 1 Plucky Girl Determined to Find her Way
- 1 School of Magic/Combat/Lore
- 1 Dark Society (calling itself the Dark Society, go figure)
- 2 Dead dads To Be Avenged/Back-story to be resolved
- 1 Quest to Find The Magic Objects Before All is Lost

Excellent. You take standard chessmen and play a good game, you win. In this case, the reader wins. Mr. Moss is telling an adventurous morality tale affirming Faith, Charity and self-belief over Religiosity, Malice and Selfishness. We know the story is going to get dark, darker, darkest for the good guys, exactly so that their light will shine brightest. The plot tension is in the price: how much will the heroes pay to achieve their victory?

I'm a moralist. I like stories that tell us that goodness is strength. I nodd happily as Arkin and Lyla, Cain and Torin make the right choices. I approve of narratives implying that people who slaughter a tavern because twenty years ago someone offed their true love and they aren't over it yet, are *deeply stupid people.*

There is a faint, non-intrusive background of social commentary. A well-intentioned King George setting up a welfare-state to turn the populace into sheep, in defiance of the independent cities. Faith vs religion, self-reliance vs herd-mentality. But this is a book about The Path of Man. We can see that as referring slyly to Arkin-the-Boy running down the adventure road to manhood. Or referring to something wider; the path that humanity takes when it faces the choice of descending into idiocy and violence, or moving on to higher ground.

Nancy Foster says

I got an ARC copy of this book from the author via LibraryThing in exchange for a review.

I feel torn about this book. It mainly follows the path of two opposing characters: the archetype hero Arkin who discovers his mild mannered father Levi was a prominent member of The Order, a mysterious society of trained warriors and erudites that maintain stability in his nation while being the devoted servants of King

George.

The second main character of the story is a mysterious assassin with a powerful drive named Lucian who has a love/hate (well, mostly hate) relationship with Levi. After Lucian murders Levi with a magical stone in front of Arkin's eyes, the meek 18 year old stumbles into the care of a man named Torin who is a prominent member of The Order and brought to their headquarters to train and solve the mystery of the Soul Stones.

Meanwhile, the embattled Lucian bows before his master, the archetype villain Victor that uses his self-hatred to attempt a coup. Victor orders him to embark on a suicide mission that will inevitably drive the story forward...

There are obviously a lot of things going for this tale, you can read it reasonably quickly and the story while resoundingly similar with other epic tales will keep you interested. However, the book has some problems that other people have already mentioned.

The first is the language in some chapters. The book truly feels like the characters were born only 40 years ago. Words like gonna and ain't sound a bit off in a medieval setting. The most oddly misplaced one of all was the word "genetics". I find it rather strange that someone would casually use that word in a world that is still so absurdly patriarchal that it doesn't allow women to study medicine unless they join The Order.

The pacing in the first 30% of the book is a bit slow for me. I mostly blame it on the fact that I just didn't care for most of the characters. To be honest, the real story of this book is the twisted love/hate story of Lucian, Levi and Sarie. How did two best friends fawn over the same woman and end up choosing different paths? Lucian's drive is so powerful, so much hatred, so much talent. He could rule the world if he wanted and yet he bows to Victor who only uses him as a commodity.

I would really enjoy learning about this ill-fated trio, this is definitely the story I would have loved to see.

Arkan unfortunately doesn't carry the same weight on his shoulders. You quickly understood his character within the first page where he appears. He's 18 years old and bored out of his mind as he absently sweeps the floor to his father's curio shop. His lack of drive continues through the story and while he seems like a decent guy, I felt like Levi was a far more fascinating character even though he barely appears in a handful of pages.

Lyla was also sort of a wishy-washy character. She wants to be a doctor, cool. And then she sorta wants to learn how to use an arrow... and she's hot and um... some bandits show up (cuse every epic story during a road trip needs some stock character bad guys to want to keep a pretty lass for the sake of it), and well, I just found her to be rather boring. Sarie on the other hand, she's complicated, troubled and still draws a lot of attention despite her age. I want to learn more about what drives her and what is she like.

The book fortunately picks up speed after the 50% point and a planned assassination will move the story forward. One thing that sort of confused me in the plot was the whole new religion thing. They make it important at first, but it doesn't seem to carry any weight in the final battle.

While most of the characters from The Order didn't draw me in, I am curious to know what will happen to Cain. A sort of Darth Vader in the making? I'm actually very curious to know what is inside those little wooden puzzle boxes. I am certain there is something mysterious and utterly useful inside of them.

A flawed book for the reasons I already mentioned, I will definitely read the sequel sometime mainly because I just loved Lucian's character and want to know his story. Could he still be saved? That's the story I want to know!

Pieter says

The author shows a lot of promise. However, more time should be spent on character development and dialogue shouldn't read like Reddit comments. I thought the plotting was pretty good, though.

Buchdrache says

Hin und wieder findet man zufällig ein Schnäppchen. »The Path of Man«, Teil eins der Soul Stone Trilogie von Matt Moss war solch ein Fall. Der Roman ist der Auftakt seiner selbstverlegten Fantasy-Reihe.

Als eines Tages ein Fremder vor Arkins Tür auftaucht, wird sein ganzes Leben auf den Kopf gestellt. Arkins Vater gibt ihm ein seltsames Buch in die Hand und heißt ihm zu fliehen, ehe er sich selbst dem Fremden stellt. Arkin findet sich damit auf einmal mitten zwischen den Fronten eines alten Konflikts zwischen dem heiligen Orden der Kirche und seinen Widersachern, die den Niedergang des Ordens und damit des Königreichs herbeiführen wollen. Auf seinem Weg findet er unerwartet neue Freunde und auch verborgen in sich selbst große Kräfte, die ihm helfen können, seine Heimat vor der Dark Society zu schützen.

Einem geschenkten Gaul schaut man nicht ins Maul. Vor einiger Zeit gab es das Buch kostenlos auf Amazon und ich dachte mir, dass es ja nicht schaden kann. Tat es auch nicht, aber es war dennoch keine literarische Offenbarung.

Die Sprache ist einfach, die Dialoge manchmal etwas hölzern und steif und hätten definitiv mehr Dynamik vertragen können. Selbiges gilt für den Plot, obgleich dieser eine gewisse Spannung aufbauen kann. Zumindest genug, um nicht völlig gelangweilt das Buch zur Seite zu legen.

Wir verfolgen hier die Geschichte eines jungen Helden, der davon ausging, nichts besondere zu sein, aber dann mitten in ein Abenteuer geworfen wird, bei dem sich herausstellt, dass er doch etwas Besonderes ist. Gewürzt wird das Ganze mit tragischer Familiengeschichte: Mutter tot und dem Vater droht auch Lebensgefahr. Das sind die Zutaten eines sehr klassischen Fantasyromans. Man möchte sagen: Es fehlt an Salz. Etwas ist da, aber trotzdem fehlt es der Suppe etwas an Geschmack.

Die Handlung an sich ist nicht die allerschlechteste, auch wenn sie, wie gesagt, sehr klassisch verläuft und wie das nächste rip off von Eragon wirkt – nur ohne Drachen. Ein bisschen fehlte auch der Plottwist. So hatte ich zum Beispiel bis zum Schluss darauf gehofft, dass sich der Orden als insgeheim böse herausstellen würde, was er leider dann doch nicht tat. Das hätte der Suppe doch etwas mehr Würze verliehen.

Dafür, dass die Zutaten eigentlich alle bekannt sind, war es mit den Charakteren zwischenzeitlich jedoch recht verwirrend, wer jetzt nun wer ist und warum er etwas macht. Lucians Beweggründe waren mir zum Beispiel bis zum Schluss recht schleierhaft und nicht immer ganz nachvollziehbar. Die Charaktere hätten wesentlich mehr Farbe verdient, damit auch mehr Tiefe und vor allem eine Hilfe, manche von ihnen besser auseinander zu halten.

Um beim Essensvergleich zu bleiben: Die Suppe hat etwas Geschmack, aber um wirklich lecker zu sein, fehlt es definitiv an der Würze. Die Zutaten selbst sind nicht innovativ und kommen in der gängigen Zusammenstellung vor. Am Ende kann man die Suppe zwar essen, aber man kann sich auf jeden Fall einen leckereren Hauptgang vorstellen.

Pat Probasco says

Arkin's world is changed forever when a stranger rides into town, looking for his father. His father traded his life to protect a book that holds the fate of the future. Suddenly Arkin is thrown into an age old war and the dark society.

The kingdom is in turmoil over lack of food, and the church is trying to convert the people from their faith, to a new religion.

When I started the book, I was not sure I would like it. I loved it, so well written, that the people came alive and the pieces put together to follow The Path of man.

I could not let it end, I had to read the next two books.

Jenn says

I received this book in a goodreads giveaway in exchange for my honest review.

The Path of Man is fantasy novel told from several character view points about a brewing war and quest for power between the Order and the Dark Society. It has betrayal, battle, some romance, and some surprises. In the midst of it all is a mysterious Garden of Stones (which we don't get too much information on yet) that both sides will seek in order to gain the upper hand. I personally liked the fact that we got see the different vantage points, it definitely helped make some of the villainous characters more sympathetic. It is a really fast, fun read. Although, it felt like it was maybe geared towards a younger audience, nonetheless, I enjoyed it. I thought the last 80 pgs or so was the section that I read through the fastest because I had to know what happened next. I'd be curious to read the rest of the series.

Justine says

I've had a really good run lately with the self-published books of many talented authors and The Path of Man is definitely no exception! This was a fast-paced, hard-hitting read that I devoured almost too quickly and already have my finger poised on the order button for the sequel.

Throughout the story, we're witness to two sides of a war for power that has been brewing for some time with pretty clear definitions of who's "good" and "evil". However, there is one character that seems to precariously balance on that precipice as the story moves along, only to be heaved into the chaos and darkness he is so prone to. Call me a glutton for punishment, but I'm really hoping he's granted some redemption as the series continues.

Moss uses some common fantasy tropes in his storytelling, but uses them very well to keep the plot moving, making this book a genuine page-turner. While some things are clearly explained, others remain mysterious, leaving the reader wanting to dive deeper for the answers. Oh, and there's some foreshadowing throughout dealing with a *certain* love triangle that had me internally screaming "don't let history repeat itself!", but I

have a feeling we'll be seeing some deception down the road.

All in all, this was a pretty amazing debut with likeable and believable characters, serious themes splashed with humor to lighten the tone, and several twists and turns that take the reader by surprise. I highly recommend!

Shelby Rollenhagen says

The Path of Man captures readers, pulling them along through turmoil, loss, and bloodshed. Quite the beginning of a series; I can't wait to delve into the next book.

The Path of Man follows the life of a young man, Arkin, who is entrusted with an important book. Readers follow his quest as tragedy sets the story in motion. However, readers also are presented with the happenings elsewhere that are important to both the main character and the entire world around him. The story ends with him set down another road forever changed by the events that unfolded within the pages, but with the book still in tow.

I received this book as part of a Good Reads giveaway.

Esmerelda Weatherwax says

Gah! I've been having so much fun with Indie authors!
This was a short and fast paced book with an even faster more action filled ending that left me going "damnit, what happens now?!"

I'm looking forward to the sequel
This book is multi POV, and what I liked was that we are introduced to the next POV before we get their POV so I'm not left thinking "who is this and why should I care?". I do that sometimes with a bunch of POV's being introduced in the beginning.

What I liked even more is we see both sides of the story, the good guys and the bad guys both get POV's and that's something I always enjoy in a book.

The book is almost reminiscent of an alternative Earth, the names are normal and easy to follow, so for those of you who upvoted that comment that wack ass fantasy names get to be too much at points, this book has names like John, George, Victor, Lucian etc. Nothing hard to pronounce or hard to remember/follow.

Yay a map! I love maps.

So, in this book there are multiple religions fighting for power, and it's a central theme to the book. Both sides are looking for stones that have certain powers attributed to them. The stone of Healing, Communication, Invisibility, Levitation, Elemental Control etc.

There's a book in the story called *The Path of Man*, and in it lie secrets to what's known as *The Garden of Stones*, where supposedly there's a wealth of these powerful stones that grant the user magical abilities.

The Path of Man is a book valuable enough for people to kill, and die for, and the main character Arkin is

trying to learn what he can from it before it's too late.

Soul Tapping is another form of magic, and it enhances the senses and a person's strength, only a handful of people left in the world are able to Soul Tap and with stones they become even more powerful.

I'm pretty impressed this was a debut novel, pacing was tight, dialogue was natural, a good amount of action in it, and reveals at the right times. Several reveals took me by surprise, and I always like that.

The characters were done well, and I always enjoy seeing an evil person humanized - I like villain POV's for that reason. When all I see is one perspective I'm always left wondering why the villains are doing what they are doing. We're told that from the good guys POV, but I like hearing it for myself from their POV.

This book is pretty short, so if you're looking for a book you can sit down and read in one go, or a break from Malazan/Stormlight Archive kinds of books, you can pick this one up and get a reprieve from the giant door stopping tomes.

The prose is straightforward, kind of like Sanderson, so that added to how quickly I was able to read it. I enjoyed myself a lot, if you like sword fights, multi pov, villain pov, and shorter books that help with attention span issues I recommend picking this one up!

Free on Kindle Unlimited. Or 2.99 for non members Low risk investment

Roxie Prince says

Read this review and more on my blog at [Roxie Writes].

'The Path of Man (The Soul Stone Trilogy Book 1)' by Matt Moss

???????? 5/5

Finished on February 3, 2018

GIVEN A FREE COPY IN EXCHANGE FOR AN HONEST REVIEW

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BOOK DESCRIPTION:

The Dark Society has finally emerged from the shadows after years of silence. Their mission is clear and they won't stop until the Order is destroyed.

The Order has been waiting for this day. The Prophet has already assured their victory.

Buried within the riddles of an ancient text lies a place of legend that contains an unspeakable power. Many believe it to be a myth. But if the rumors are true, the Dark Society may already know of its location.

Young Arkin's life is drastically changed when a man in black comes to town. He finds himself thrust in the middle of the war between the Order and the Dark Society. Arkin and The Path of Man will change everything.

MY REVIEW:

I was given a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Matt Moss has created a vivid world in 'The Path of Man' with vibrant characters and a gripping storyline.

I really like the concept of the stones, and I can't wait to see their true potential in follow-up novels.

Arkin is a demure character with a deep, hidden strength. Even when he discovers his lineage and his innate abilities, he remains grounded and very "teenager". I liked this about him. He stands up when he needs to, but he still finds himself preoccupied with thoughts of young love.

I can't wait to read the rest of this series. The world Moss has created has really captured my attention and my heart.

William Bitner Jr. says

Just finished reading 'The Path of Man (The Soul Stone Trilogy Book 1) by Matt Moss. First off I'd like to say thank you to Matt for the gift of a digital copy of this book, I appreciate it so very much. This is the debut novel by Matt and I must say it's quite a good start to a what I believe will be a wonderful series. Action packed fantasy with sword, crossbow, and bow and arrow fighting, along with a little magic called soul tapping which allows special abilities to be performed. It's a good versus evil epic adventure fantasy that is well worth the time. "The 'Order' has been at war with the 'Dark Society' for as long as man has existed." Great characters and world building; anxious to see where they go and what happens in the next installment.

Synopsis: "Arkin's world is changed forever when a stranger rides into town looking for an artifact that Arkin's father would trade his own life to protect -- a book that holds the secrets of the past and possibly the fate of the future. Suddenly, Arkin is thrown into an age old war between the Order and the Dark Society. The kingdom is already in turmoil over the scarcity of jobs and the rationing of food, and now the church is trying to convert the people from their faith of old to a new and less holy religion.

Arkin will need all the help he can get to save the people he loves and the land he calls home. Somewhere out there lies the Garden of Stones, a place of myth and magic that Arkin and his new band of friends and warriors are hoping will be the miracle they need to turn the tides of war. Choices made in the past ripple through time as Arkin puts the pieces together. His choices will determine the future of all as he follows The Path of Man."

Mr A J Hay says

A good and interesting story

A good and interesting story. The first part obviously sets up the next book with plenty of plot threads to pursue. Quality of writing generally good but some of the characters need fleshing out more. Maybe this will develop in the next instalment. Hopefully the generally above average quality of the writing can be maintained

Epper Marshall says

The main problem with this book that kept it from being a 4 or 5-star book is mainly the naming of things. For example, the original religion is called 'the Faith' and the newer religion is called 'the Church'. This is

very confusing and broad. Many of the character names seem like they are taken from the bible and so it gives the feeling that it is based on actual history (conflict between religions, naming, etc). Then when the author mentions lore of the stories universe it makes it feel more like conspiracy theories than magic, history, or lore. Finally, the women seem to have absolutely no conscience. The main character's mother was apparently involved with 2 men, leading them on before deciding...and then when tricked to believe one is dead she goes off with a 3rd man and follows him devotedly. The main character and his friend both like the same girl and she flirts and leads them both on with no apparent guilt. Having the same thing happen twice makes it seem unrealistic and makes it seem like women aren't very nice/good.

Joshua Hair says

For a first effort, Matt Moss did a pretty darn good job! I enjoyed the characters, the plot, and the action. As someone else mentioned, the dialogue needs a bit of work, and there were some very cliché moments, but overall Mister Moss wrote a very fine first novel. I'll be waiting for the next one.

Jan K?enek says

~~painful to read, beyond simplistic writing, felt like it was written by a child, didn't finish, stopped at 25%~~

proper review to come
