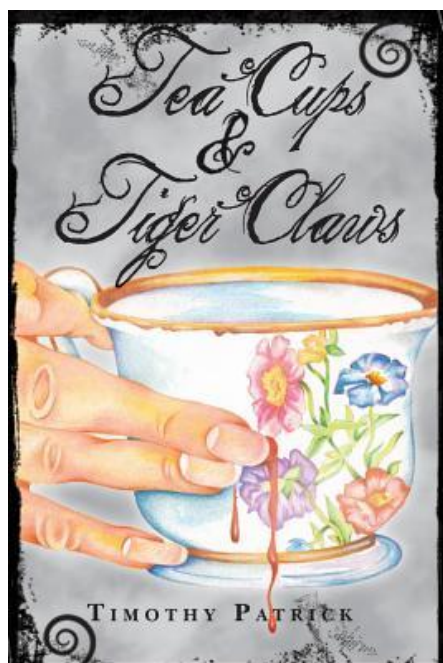




Tea Cups & Tiger Claws

Timothy Patrick

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First comes the miracle and then comes the madness. The miracle is the birth of identical triplets, and the madness is all about money, of course. The year is 1916 and the newborn baby girls have become pint-size celebrities. Unfortunately, this small portion of fame soon leads to a much larger portion of greed, and the triplets are split up—parceled out to the highest bidders. Two of the girls go to live in a hilltop mansion. The third girl isn't so lucky. She ends up with a shady family that lives in an abandoned work camp. That's how their lives begin: two on top, one on the bottom, and all three in the same small town. And when their worlds collide, as they must, the consequences are extreme.

"Tea Cups & Tiger Claws" spans fifty years and takes the reader from a shantytown to a gilded mansion, from dark desires to sacrificial love.

Tea Cups & Tiger Claws Details

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Author : Timothy Patrick

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From Reader Review Tea Cups & Tiger Claws for online ebook

Kelly Tarr says

Great potential, loved the beginning. Triplets separated, I wanted more of that story. It got weird and drawn out into a strange, fake twist. Almost felt like I read two different stories. It held my interest but I wanted something different.

Mercedes Prieto says

So so

Started out interesting but went into too many unbelievable turns. The jealousy and criminal mind if Dorothea was just too much to accept even in fiction.

Georgann says

REALLY??

REALLY??

Mr. Timothy Patrick sure knows how to spin a tale! The hatred, jealousy, and revenge that surrounds and envelopes the character of Dorothea is creepy! Are there really people like this??? I am hoping that the nastiness that comes from being unloved is just in Mr. Patrick's imagination! I found it hard to put this book down. I appreciate that the book was clean, as well as well-written. I totally recommend this to anyone who likes twisted mysteries and reading about dysfunctional families!

Katie says

I read this for a book club and did not think I was going to like it. I was surprised that I did. The story was good, but I really enjoyed the author's style. It wasn't what I expected. I don't believe the title represents the book very well.

Michelle says

Good book

You people should just read this book yourselves and write your own review on this novel yourself and I really enjoyed reading this book very much so. Shelley MA

Timothy Patrick says

By D. Elliott, Amazon Vine Voice, Top 500 Reviewer. (This review by D. Elliott is posted on the Amazon UK site. It is posted here with his permission. Timothy Patrick did not write this review.)

A possible genre for this book could be 'murder mystery' and certainly there are plenty of murders, but in fact 'Tea Cups & Tiger Claws' is much more - it is a family saga, it is a romance, and it is a historical societal commentary. The book is divided into 3 parts - first is 'Sisters' covering identical triplet girls where Abbey and Judith are adopted by a rich 'Duchess' and the third triplet Dorthea is brought up in squalor and poverty by her natural parents. In the second part, 'Cousins', Dorthea shows her true colours and sets out to usurp her sisters where pious Abbey turns to religion and spoilt Judith enjoys living in luxury and as upper class. Both have baby girls, cousins Sarah and Veronica, who are brought up quite differently and have very different temperaments. Vindictive Dorthea adopts a young boy Ernest and embroils him in her scheming to supplant his cousins - and everything comes to a head in the final section, 'Enemies', where new liaisons form with friends and foes co-existing for a frenzied roller-coaster finale.

The setting is a small town, Prospect Park, where the divisions of social class are real barriers between trash at the bottom of the hill, increasing respectability part ways up, and high society literally at the very top - though all is never what it may first appear and these generalisations cleverly mask undercurrents. Author Timothy Patrick skilfully employs homilies to explore concepts of honesty, sincerity, privilege, regret etc. and he introduces concepts of love and loyalty as well as jealousy, hate, misery, suffering etc. plus insights to domination, control, revenge etc. 'Tea Cups and Tiger Claws' is a complex novel, and as such some events are perhaps not fully explained, and there is a degree of implausibility in Dorthea's wielding of power - but it all makes a great story. Narrative is easy to read and comes across as spoken by a raconteur, with much humour in the dialogue and commentaries which at a serious level highlight differences between American white-trash and the old money class. Dorthea herself makes good financially but cannot overcome snobbery, inbred superiority and authority of those living on top of the hill. The final chapter queries what has changed within the family, and more importantly what remains the same in the wider community of Prospect Park.

Henk-Jan van der Klis says

In Tea Cups & Tiger Claws a Prospect Park, California family saga about greed and power, haves and have-nots is told along the lives of identical triplets born in 1916. Strange enough their parents decided to dispose one of them to the highest bidder. Of course this causes grief and jealousy, split up and reunite later in life. Whereas Dorthea is raised in a shabby village, she misses a lot, but not her ambition. Her sisters are denied having contact with her or even speak of her, though raised in a mansion of glamour and privilege up a hill. The novel's divided in three parts: Sisters as the foundation, Cousins for the interaction as teenagers and Enemies for the unavoidable deadly power games. The omniscient narrator's point of view changes frequently between characters, which requires your close attention. The character development is good, and I felt engaged with them. What distracted me, especially after having wrestled through the first 2 parts, is the strange punctuation, and long - comma sliced sentences. An interesting plot packed in linguistic sub-top quality.

Kathy Cunningham says

Timothy Patrick's TEA CUPS & TIGER CLAWS is a fractured fairytale, a darkly funny parable about haves

and have-nots, takers and givers, and what it's like to live in the shadow of great mansions on the Hill. The story is divided into three parts. The first revolves around three identical triplet sisters born to a white trash mother and her alcoholic loser husband living in a garbage-littered dump. Two of the babies – Abigail and Judith – are adopted by “the Duchess,” who lives in one of the town's two palatial Victorian mansions; the third sister – Dorthea – grows up in poverty with her parents in a run-down shack, with little hope of anything better. Abbey and Judith become young ladies living in the lap of luxury, while Dorthea learns the lesson her parents teach her – “when love isn't an option, sometimes the next best thing is hate.” She vows to get revenge on her sisters, the Duchess, and the Newfields who live in Sunny Slope Manor, the grandest estate in town.

In the second part of the story, the focus shifts to the second generation, as Abbey's daughter Sarah, Judith's daughter Veronica, and Dorthea's adopted son Ernest become pawns in Dorthea's continuing quest for vengeance. And by the third act, these enemies play out their diabolical and twisted roles as Dorthea moves to rid herself of all of them, taking what she's wanted all along – Sunny Slope Manor for her own.

At its heart, this is a novel about human depravity, and our very American fixation with wealth, power, and social standing. Patrick's convoluted saga spans over sixty years, with Dorthea's simmering hatred fueling the action. In another writer's hands, this story could have played out like an American Cinderella story, with poor Dorthea left behind as her sisters become wealthy and powerful. But Dorthea is hardly sympathetic, and she's no Cinderella. Although she's smart enough and cagey enough to manipulate her way into a fortune of her own, it can never give her what she really wants – the status of her sisters, and the right to live on the Hill with the “old money” crowd. Her bitterness is reminiscent of Dickens' Miss Havesham, who uses her ward Estella in a twisted plot against the hapless Pip, or perhaps Bronte's Heathcliff, who works to destroy not only the people he believes have betrayed him but their children as well (including his own son). As skillfully as Dickens or Bronte, Patrick brilliantly illustrates the results of allowing hatred and a thirst for vengeance to direct the course of one's life.

TEA CUPS & TIGER CLAWS is a beautifully written novel, with a sharply satiric style that works to propel the saga of these characters from twisted fairytale to morality play, without ever once getting preachy. There are characters here to root for – Sarah, for one, who manages somehow to rise above the craziness of her family and the town she lives in – and others to despise (including the noxious Veronica, who would give Roald Dahl's Veruca Salt a run for her money in the spoiled brat department!). And the town Patrick has invented, with its mansions on the Hill (the Hill the working classes are always gazing up at with awe and envy), is totally believable, even in its stereotypical familiarity. The rich are always envied, the poor are always bitter, and hatred really is easier to latch onto than love when the good life seems so very far away. This is a smart and savvy novel that will draw readers in from its first page. I highly recommend it.

[Please note: I was provided a copy of this novel for review; the opinions expressed here are my own.]

Jalyn Ely says

I picked up this book mainly on the premise of identical triplets separated as babies and raised in very different households. The whole nature vs. nurture thing is fascinating to me (plus I'm writing a book with a similar concept, so the idea is pretty close to my heart), so I figured I'd try it.

Dorthea, the triplet that didn't go to the mansion, was the main character for the first half of the book. She was ambitious, which I admired...but that was about it. She was just so heartless and ruthless and immoral. I kept trying to find something redeeming, I really did. But as the book went on, she got worse, and I hated her

so much.

Veronica, Judith's daughter, was a spoiled brat. A spoiled, selfish, irresponsible, lazy brat. She had so much potential, though, and I hated her mostly because she could do so much...and instead, she got in trouble and threw money at it to make it go away.

Sarah, Abigail's daughter, was the only redeeming main character in the book. She was nice, and actually cared about people. She tried a little too hard to please everyone, but I was willing to overlook that because she was the one main character I didn't want to punch in the face.

One thing I did enjoy about TEA CUPS AND TIGER CLAWS was the sweeping scope. It started out with the birth of the Dorthea, Abigail, and Judith to a selfish, rude woman in the poor neighborhood. Then it followed Dorthea, the triplet her mother kept, up through middle age with her driving and ruthless desire to get ahead in the world.

When Sarah and Veronica get into their late teens, it switches to following them – and how they help, hinder, and react to Dorthea's schemes. I found it interesting that this book managed to cover two generations, a huge cast of important characters, and shifting main characters while still maintaining a coherent plot.

This book was a struggle. The characters were so evil and immoral and petty. I hated almost all of them. Even the romance between Sarah and the sweet stablehand Mack was tainted by how much I hated everyone else. The problem was, Dorthea was brilliant, and I wanted to see how her schemes would play out. I hated the book, but I was fascinated by it, and I hated that I found it fascinating.

TEA CUPS AND TIGER CLAWS was just too much for me. Too much evil and too much selfishness and too much sin. I hated it, but I was fascinated by it, and that more than anything else is what made it difficult. This is my personal opinion and has little to do with the book or the writing – it was just not a book for me.

I received a free review copy of TEA CUPS AND TIGER CLAWS from the author. His generosity in no way influenced, or sought to influence, this review.

Chris says

What!?!

What a rollicking read! It was fun, which is not what I'd expected. As a matter of fact, I was bracing for a total downer. I kept reading because of the underlying attitude of sarcasm, which I enjoyed. We'll...get ready for a bumpy ride!!

Stephanie says

While the timeline was off towards the end of this book it gets all 5 stars because it had a unique story line. Triplet girls are born to a family that lives in a shack. One of the richest ladies in town tries to buy all three girls but ends up with only two. This is the beginning of the girls all taking very different paths in their lives. Follow along to see where these paths take them and their kids. It likely won't be where you expect.

rosanne brandenburg says

Decent read

I had Some issues with the writing style of the novel but I was pleased to not guess the outcome.

Rose says

I wish I could give half star ratings on Goodreads. This book is really a 2.5. It moves along quickly enough. No real character development and most of the characters are blah. The end was totally stupid.

Joan says

This is a wonderful story, and I really love to read a good story with a little possible and a little improbable thrown in for good measure.

Though not all the characters were well developed, they weren't just glossed over, and it was the plot that was compelling. I expected with triplets separated at birth, it would be a more character driven saga, but though it wasn't I was not disappointed.

What really got me was the way the author pulled at my heart strings, and for a time, had me rooting for the "bad guy", but didn't alienate the good character too much that I couldn't root for them in the end.

Angelica Bentley says

A pitiless look at how wealth and position drive the lives of a diverse community of people in the genteel small town of Prospect Park, California. It's impossible to outline the contents of the book without giving away too much of the plot and, since I hate spoilers, I will focus this review on the style and quality of the writing. The three parts of this complex, convoluted and multi-generational saga are so different in focus and tempo that, in different hands, might have ended up as a trilogy. Timothy Patrick weaves the separate strands with great skill and mastery, creating a tapestry of jealousy, hatred and revenge, shot through with sardonic observations of middle-class hypocrisy and, occasionally contrasted by the opposing forces of love and family devotion.

There is so much in this tale that it could have easily come apart but, somehow, the theme of revenge drives the plot relentlessly like a devastating tornado through a corn field. Some aspects are unrealistic and far-fetched but this is a work of fiction and the everyday authenticity of the common people's world is strong enough that the reader is willing to suspend belief and be taken along for the ride.

The first part "Sisters" spreads its poisonous foundations like an oil spill. The middle "Cousins" ticks along like a time-bomb, plotting and calculating, spinning a web of intrigue that is perhaps difficult to relate to real life. The third and last "Enemies" takes us on a mad, unstoppable ride of reckless power games and murderous folly where the book becomes a page turner and hard to put down.

Most of the main characters are frankly revolting human beings, and even the 'good' ones are not always easy to like. The narrator's voice remains neutral and non-judgemental but I sensed a fair amount of sympathy for human weakness in the face of adversity. Even though the story deals with three identical triplets, the author shows how upbringing and childhood values shape the character of the sisters so that, in maturity, they are as different as can be imagined. Their children (natural and adopted) are also heavily influenced and moulded by their respective mothers' personalities and parenting styles. Strangely, in this distorted slice of reality men have only limited influence and their impact is mostly dependent on their jobs and positions. There is a Henry James quality to the inevitability of an outcome that was almost impossible to foresee but, nonetheless, once the wheels of hatred are set in motion, can only lead to one conclusion. Dorthea's machine-like epic power is counterbalanced by the very human scale of characters such as Sarah and Mack, whose only strengths are their cool intelligence and determination to survive. Horse lovers will appreciate Tim Patrick's confident and knowledgeable treatment of equestrian matters and I very much enjoyed the horse-gentling subplot of Mack's youth, which reminded me of Monty Roberts.

Although the storyline is predominantly disturbing and there is some graphic violence, when something is done very well, it is enjoyable no matter what. This is certainly the case here and I loved the strong, assured quality of the writing, the fresh and original phrasing and the total command of both the gutter and lofty heights worlds that co-exist with such unease, separated and cushioned by the large and anonymous middle-class who despise both bookends with equal vigour. An intriguing and engaging read. I would like to see Tim Patrick tackle some lighter material with the same detached sardonic eye.

Gene Black says

This story starts with a good premise and then expands it into a page-turning, can't put down tale. While I did manage to put the book down a few times, the closer I got to the end, the more difficult it became to put it down. I finally got up an hour early to finish the story. The last chapters were a roller-coaster ride. This book delivered far better than I anticipated. Thank you Mr Patrick, you know how to draw in a reader and tell a tale

Caroline Davies says

Tedious

This book was promising to start with but quickly turned tedious the majority was mind numbing ramblings. The message I think the author was trying to portray about faith and love and how we often don't appreciate love especially from a parent until we don't have it anymore and how if we never receive parental love it can twist you into something evil but if you have a love and who has faith in you it can save you but he took too long to say it the middle could have been a lot shorter and the end less like a runaway truck. Essentially the book was readable but I wouldn't recommend it. I hate not knowing the end of any story no matter how dull so that's the reason I persisted with this one.

Shelly says

Pleasant surprise

Pleasant surprise

This was not at all what I expected as I started reading. I almost quit reading about the third chapter but decided to go one more...and then couldn't put it down! Excellent story of revenge and it's consequences! Very well written and decent job of editing too! Well done!

Jennifer says

I'm a little torn on this book. On the one hand it did hold my interest pretty well and the plot and characters felt pretty novel and interesting. It was quite a saga, spanning multiple generations and many years. The writing was decent in a plot-driven kind of way. Dark and a bit disturbing, which I like in a book. The book felt a little rushed at times, skimming the surface and not delving into the characters much, and leaving some stuff and some characters hanging.

I did feel like I wasn't sure who the author wanted us to sympathize with in this work. It starts out with what I felt was the main character, Dorothea, who has not gotten a lot of breaks in life. I felt like we should sympathize with her although even at the beginning there is a dichotomy with her mother's choice to keep her rather than sell her being somewhat oddly a bad thing rather than a good thing.

Initially I wanted to see the underdog make a place for herself and see some justice for her in the world. But then the character takes some actions that basically make her irredeemable. Dorothea isn't a love-her character or even a love-to-hate-her character. And there's really no one to root for through much of the book until the later part of the story where it comes to a climax of Dorothea versus her sisters' children in a battle for life and home, when it is pretty clear that we should want Dorothea to fail and for the kids who have basically had everything in life, to succeed, which seems a bit of a turnaround. But maybe its supposed to be unclear. Maybe that's the point.

An interesting book. Worth a read.

chlorinda naish says

Decitefullness

Bit of a while to get into, but could not put down took two hours to get into the very good ending, awful hatred the third triplet had for her siblings, but She got caught by her adopted son.
