



The Conjuror's Bird: A Novel

By Martin Davies

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The Conjuror's Bird: A Novel By Martin Davies

The Conjuror's Bird is a beautiful story in the spirit of *Possession* that is as exciting as *The Club Dumas*, inspired by one of the great puzzles of natural history: that of the Mysterious Bird of Ulieta. Seen only once, in 1774, by Captain Cook's second expedition to the South Seas, a single specimen was captured, preserved, and brought back to England. The bird was given to famed naturalist Joseph Banks, who displayed it proudly in his collection until its sudden, unexplained disappearance.

Two hundred years later, naturalists continue to wonder if the world will ever get another glimpse of the elusive bird. Were it not for a colored drawing done by the ship's artist, there would be nothing to say that the bird had ever existed.

The Conjuror's Bird is a gripping literary mystery and passionate love story that tackles the intrigue surrounding the celebrated Banks, his secret affair with an enigmatic woman known only as "Miss B," and the legendary bird that becomes a touchstone for their love.

Seamlessly spanning two time periods, *The Conjuror's Bird* is at once the story of this romance and of a present-day conservationist named Fitz, who is drawn into a thrilling and near-impossible race to find the elusive bird's only known remains.

An Alternate Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club and Quality Paperback Book Club

From the Hardcover edition.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. BBC TV producer Davies, the author of mysteries starring Sherlock Holmes's housekeeper, turns his attention to the search for "the rarest bird ever recorded" in this gripping book of literary suspense. In 1774, on Captain Cook's second expedition to the South Pacific, a single specimen of a thrushlike bird was captured. The bird entered the collection of eminent naturalist Sir Joseph Banks—but then it disappeared. Moving adroitly between the 18th and the 21st centuries, Davies indulges in clever speculation about the bird's whereabouts and adds an appealing strain of romance surrounding the identity of Banks's mistress, "Miss B." Alternating chapters chronicle the adventures of Fitz, a present-day London conservationist who's agreed to try to find "the Mysterious Bird of Ulieta" at the urging of a woman he once loved—but it's his spunky female graduate student whose ingenuity and indefatigable research do much to keep the plot spinning past red herrings, dead ends and the machinations of unscrupulous people racing to find the bird first. A third subplot concerns Fitz's grandfather's search for the Congo peacock, and it is to Davies' credit that he renders the novel's botanical and zoological details with an immediacy that helps along the narrative. A few farfetched plot twists aside, this is a captivating novel. (Nov. 22)

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From [Booklist](#)

This novel will not disappoint fans of literary mystery and readers who are drawn to naturalist accounts. The focus is the Ulieta bird, a specimen unique to science; both remarkable and romantic, it has a fascinating history. Two protagonists vie for the reader's attention: Joseph Banks, the famous eighteenth-century naturalist, who is given the elusive bird of Ulieta, captured on one of Captain Cook's voyages in the South Seas before its extinction, and Fitz, a present-day conservationist, who joins the competitive race to find the bird's remains, which mysteriously disappeared from Banks' collection many years before. Fitz's journey does not lead where he expects: he was looking for a bird but found a face in a picture--the face of Banks' mistress. What links her to the Ulieta bird? What is her name? Why did she disappear? And why is finding the Ulieta bird important to Fitz? Readers who like Andrea Barrett, Arturo Perez-Reverte, and David Liss will find this a page-turner through and through. *Sarah Watstein*

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Review

Advance praise for *The Conjuror's Bird*

"Elegantly written and exquisitely researched, *The Conjuror's Bird* is an engrossing read, a true page-turner as its story twines through past and present. I hated to put it down until the final revelation. Anyone who loved such books as *Possession* or *Girl with a Pearl Earring* should be delighted by *The Conjuror's Bird*."
—India Edghill, author of *Queenmaker* and *Wisdom's Daughter*

"Like all the best novels, *The Conjuror's Bird* left me with the sense of having learned something. . . . Poignant and beguiling." —Andrew Taylor, author of *An Unpardonable Crime*

"[A] gripping book of literary suspense. . . . Davies indulges in clever speculation about the bird's whereabouts and adds an appealing strain of romance surrounding the identity of Banks's mistress. . . . A captivating novel." —*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Brian Ramos:

This The Conjurer's Bird: A Novel usually are reliable for you who want to be a successful person, why. The explanation of this The Conjurer's Bird: A Novel can be one of the great books you must have is definitely giving you more than just simple reading food but feed an individual with information that possibly will shock your earlier knowledge. This book is handy, you can bring it almost everywhere and whenever your conditions in e-book and printed versions. Beside that this The Conjurer's Bird: A Novel giving you an enormous of experience like rich vocabulary, giving you test of critical thinking that we understand it useful in your day pastime. So , let's have it and luxuriate in reading.

Lilian Anderson:

Typically the book The Conjurer's Bird: A Novel has a lot details on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of profit. The book was authored by the very famous author. This articles author makes some research previous to write this book. This kind of book very easy to read you may get the point easily after perusing this book.

Wilbert Westerfield:

Exactly why? Because this The Conjurer's Bird: A Novel is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap the item but latter it will jolt you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who all write the book in such incredible way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining way but still convey the meaning completely. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this nowadays or you going to regret it. This unique book will give you a lot of rewards than the other book get such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking means. So , still want to hold up having that book? If I had been you I will go to the e-book store hurriedly.

Hector Medlin:

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