



Fields of gold

By Fiona McIntosh

First published 2010

Genre & subject

British India fiction

Historical fiction

Friendship

Australian fiction

Synopsis

Charismatic womaniser Jack Bryant has the world at his feet, but when trouble catches up with him he's forced to flee Penzance for good.

Honest Ned Sinclair is on a family adventure in Rangoon when he is dealt a bitter blow. With all the odds against him, he risks his life in a desperate bid to escape.

Both men hope to start their lives anew, seeking their fortune in India's fields of gold. Their paths collide in the colourful city of Bangalore, where they form a friendship like no other. In the years that follow, they remain inextricably bound by a dark secret, while their love for the same woman threatens to tear them apart.

From the windswept cliffs of the Cornish coast to the goldmines of southern India, this is a story of high adventure, devastating tragedy and enduring love.

Author biography

Fiona McIntosh is one of Australia's prolific and favourite storytellers selling worldwide in a variety of languages across several genres but it is her historical romantic adventures that she is capturing the imagination of the huge general fiction audience.

Fiona is married with twins. She lives in South Australia but roams the world to research her stories. She hosts a series of masterclasses that are highly regarded by the industry as some of the best available anywhere and many of her students are now happily embedded with major publishers. Her *How to Write Your Blockbuster* has garnered genuine praise and is now selling in the US.

Discussion starters (general Fiction questions, LitLovers)

- How did you experience the book? Were you engaged immediately, or did it take you a while to "get into it"? How did you feel reading it—amused, sad, disturbed, confused, bored?
- Describe the main characters—personality traits, motivations, and inner qualities. Why do characters do what they do? Are their actions justified? Describe the dynamics between characters (in a marriage, family, or friendship). How has the past shaped their lives? Do you admire or disapprove of them?
- Discuss the plot: Is it engaging—do you find the story interesting? Were you surprised by complications, twists & turns? Did you find the plot predictable, even formulaic?
- Talk about the book's structure. Does the time-line move forward chronologically? Is there a single viewpoint or shifting viewpoints? Why might the author have chosen to tell the story the way she did?
- What main ideas—themes—does the author explore? (Consider the title, often a clue to a theme.) Does the author use symbols to reinforce the main ideas?
- What passages strike you as insightful, even profound? Perhaps a bit of dialog that's funny or poignant or that encapsulates a character? Maybe there's a particular comment that states the book's thematic concerns?
- Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not...and how would you change it?
- If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask? Have you read other books by the same author? If so how does this book compare. If not, does this book inspire you to read others?
- Has this novel changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world?

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The lavender keeper by Fiona McIntosh.



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