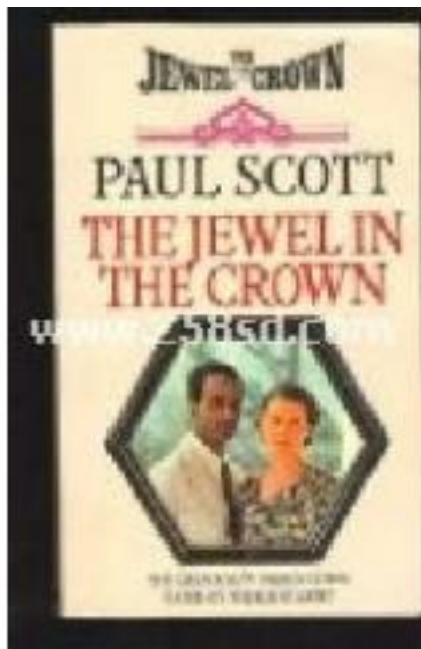


Jewel in the Crown



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Amazon.com "Ah no, waste no pity on young Kumar. Whatever he got while in the hands of the police he deserved. And waste no pity on her either. She also got what she deserved." August 1942. World War II is reaching its apex, with the conflict consuming almost all of Asia and Europe. In Southeast Asia, the Japanese have driven the British army out of Burma and are threatening India, where Britain's beleaguered forces find themselves facing an increasingly hostile Indian populace tired of decades of unfulfilled promises of freedom. On a dark monsoonal night in the town of Mayapore, amid an outbreak of anti-British rioting, a gang of Indian men rape a young British woman. Through this rape, we are introduced to a cast of characters engulfed and subsequently carried away by the storm of events. Paul Scott's *The Jewel in the Crown* is part historical novel, part mystery, part love story, part allegory. But to reduce it

to any of these elements is to miss its irony, poignancy, and beauty. Full of complex characters and rich in atmosphere and symbolism, this is a novel that works on many different levels. The events unfold through the eyes of a varied cast of characters--both British and Indian--united by their inability to escape the straightjacket of race and social roles, no matter their class, education, or political views. This is particularly excruciating for the rape victim and the young Indian man accused of the crime. These two are drawn to each other by their alienation from the roles they are expected to play. Englishwoman Daphne Manners finds herself increasingly estranged from her countrymen, while Hari Kumar, an Indian who has lived in Britain for all but two years of his life and is so anglicized that he doesn't even speak Hindi, can't abide his native land. Their struggle with the identities and constraints that society imposes on them and the manifestations of their conflict form the core of the novel, providing the timelessness and richness that make it one of the great novels of the 20th century. The Jewel in the Crown, originally published in 1966, is the first of the Raj Quartet, the sweeping epic that looks at the collapse in the 1940s of British rule in India. It was followed by The Day of the Scorpion, The Towers of Silence, and A Division of Spoils. --Jonathan King --This text refers to the Paperback edition. From AudioFile Daphne Manners, an unsophisticated British woman visiting Mayapore, falls in love with Hari Kumar, a complex, young Indian who has been educated in England. Inexorably the two lovers are caught up in the social upheaval sweeping India at the end of British rule; until they are parted forever after the fatal confrontation in the Bibighar Gardens. Since the author is saying that their tragedy is as much about India as it is about them, he tells the story in the words of seven diverse characters involved in the affair. Sam Dastor interprets them all with dramatic ease. Having for years narrated the books about Inspector Ghote of the Bombay Secret Police, he has perfected his Indian accent. But he was also educated at Cambridge and is just as convincing as Miss Crane and Ronald Merrick and the other British expatriates. He captures beautifully the deep feeling growing between Daphne and Hari as they reach out to each other. Once again a narrator's inspired reading breathes life into two characters who never seemed so alive on the printed page. Their star-crossed love, glorified as it is by the human voice, reaffirms the enduring tragedy of The Jewel in the Crown. J.C. (c)AudioFile, Portland, Maine --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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