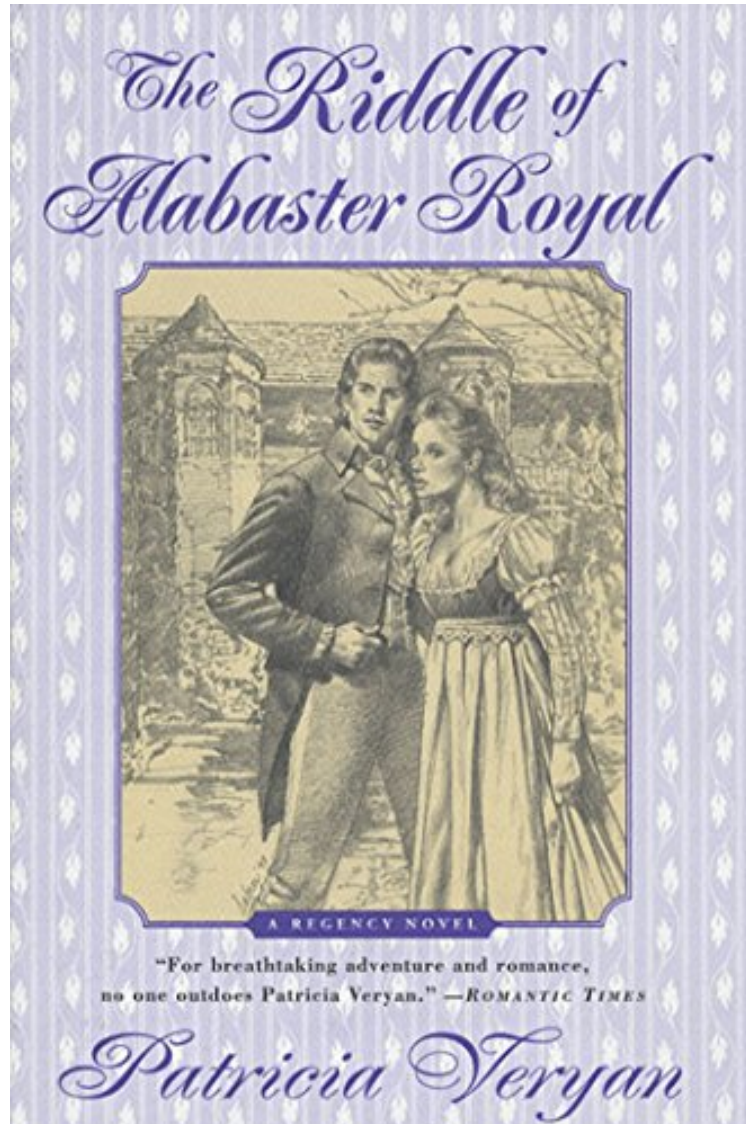


(Ebook free) The Riddle of Alabaster Royal (The Riddle Saga)

The Riddle of Alabaster Royal (The Riddle Saga)

Von Patricia Veryan

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Von Patricia Veryan : The Riddle of Alabaster Royal (The Riddle Saga) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Riddle of Alabaster Royal (The Riddle Saga):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. More of a mystery than a romanceVon Ein KundeI am a little puzzled why this book was marketed as a romance. The plot mostly involves a mystery set in a possibly haunted house. There is no expression of love or commitment between the male and female leads--not even a kiss. Also, I didn't feel the book stood very well on its own. Several of the

characters have little to do in this story and are obviously being introduced for some other purpose in the later books in this trilogy. I thought this could have been handled more plausibly than simply having several of the hero's old war buddies show up at his haunted house in the country for very little reason. I also thought the ending was lacking. Several plot points were left unresolved, once again obviously to be dealt with in the sequel. However, I don't think these characters or story were interesting enough to warrant reading further in this series. Despite the emphasis on mystery and adventure, I never believed the characters were in any real danger. The book did have some strong points, however. The author's writing style was smooth and fluid, she seemed very skilled at description, the book was well researched, and it did transport me back to another time and place. I just wish the story had been more compelling. This is the first Patricia Veryan story I've read--perhaps I'll read one of her earlier novels to see why she's so acclaimed. This book to me bore the earmarks of an obviously capable author who is burned out from writing the same kind of story too many times.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Patricia Veryan has done it again!Von Ein KundeI LOVED this book! Billed as a Regency novel, rather than a Regency Romance, this is one of Patricia Veryan's very best. The "tragic, battle- scarred hero home from the war" scenario has always been a favourite theme of mine, and nobody does it better than Patricia Veryan. The story revolves around Captain Jack Vespa's return to England from the brutal Napoleonic engagements in Spain to recuperate and to claim his inheritance - a huge, once-beautiful estate left destitute for some time - and believed by the local people to be haunted. There is a murder mystery, suspense, schemes, plot twists, a ghost story, personal dilemmas, and of course an eventual love interest; but most of all there are those wonderful characters which only Patricia Veryan can bring to life and make you truly care about. Jack Vespa's self-deprecating personality, wit and charm will win your heart and those off-the-wall servants and village locals will have you grinning your way through the novel. But the two secondary characters - the encyclopaedic Toby Broderick and the dandy, Paige Manderville - you will adore. There were moments in Riddle where I laughed out loud at the expressions and banter of these two former military compatriots of Vespa (this can be very disconcerting for other people in the same room who are watching the latest tear-jerker movie!). There is laughter, mystery and suspense, yes, but I think you will probably shed a tear or two as well. I did. I am an avid reader of all genre and Patricia Veryan is one of my favourite all-round authors. I recommend Riddle of Alabaster Royal to anyone who enjoys witty, colourful, courageous, endearing characters; a haunting, suspense-filled atmosphere; a vivid backdrop and intelligent, fluid writing style. But be warned - Patricia Veryan's books are addictive! My only regret is that I will have to wait months, maybe even a year, for the sequel. Those two rogues deserve their own novel; and then there's the enigmatic valet/Jack-of-all-trades Thornhill; and, of course, Jack's...ahm, I'd better stop there. To those who have never read a Veryan, I would recommend Riddle as a wonderful introduction to a truly great story-teller. And to her loyal fans, need I say that you are in for a treat.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Fantastic romance cum mysteryVon Ein KundeIn 1813, Captain Jack Vespa returns to his English home after fighting against Napoleon on the Iberian front. Jack is looking forward to some R R at Alabaster Royal, the home that he will one day inherit. When he arrives at the manor, he learns that his ancestral home is allegedly haunted. Worse yet to Jack is the visitors who insist on staying at Alabaster. The kooky Italian Duchess would be enough to send a man back to the front, but it is her granddaughter, Consuela Jones, that sends Jack's emotions soaring and destroying his sought after peace. Consuela insists to a skeptical Jack that her father was killed on this property. As she begins to investigate what happened, Jack cannot help but join her on her quest. Soon, he is convinced that her tale is true. Even more so, he finds himself falling in love with the feisty Consuela and she reciprocates his deepest feelings. Still, an unknown assailant wants Consuela to stop her meddling and will do anything, including murder, to assure that happens. Once the couple solves THE RIDDLE OF ALABASTER ROYAL, they might have time to explore their own relationship, that is, if Consuela can be persuaded to give her beloved a chance. Patricia Veryan is one of the leading writers of Regency romance today and her latest novel, THE RIDDLE OF ALABASTER ROYAL will augment her already merited prestige. The intriguing story line is humorous and exciting, and the characters are all lively and human. Added to the romance is the bonus of a brilliant mystery that could easily sell the novel as a who-done-it. Ms. Veryan has written one of the top three historicals of the year and is sure to gather awards for this splendid story.Harriet Klausner

KurzbeschreibungCaptain Jack Vespa, an aide-de-camp of Lord Wellington's in the battle against Napoleon, has returned home to convalesce from his rather serious battle wounds. But his parents' home in London is just too hectic, with his society-minded mother hovering and the demands of the social season looming. Expressly against the wishes of both his father and mother, Jack heads to the country to the estate of Alabaster Royal, his inheritance from his Grandmama. It promises to be deserted and a little run-down, but the prospect of some peace and quiet is more than Jack can refuse. But as Jack nears the village of Gallery-on-Tang, everyone he meets gawks in shock at the mention of Alabaster Royal, mutters a few words about the "accursed" place, and refuses to elaborate. When he finally arrives at his estate, the presence of a mysterious and beautiful young woman marks an end to Jack's plans for rest and relaxation. Miss Consuela Jones is the granddaughter of an Italian duchess and the daughter of an English artist who

died on the grounds of Alabaster Royal. Consuela thinks that he was murdered and wants Jack to help her find out why...This delightful Regency novel, mixing equal parts suspense and romance, is the latest from Patricia Veryan, "the reigning queen of period romance" (Romantic Times) and it promises to enthrall her many, many fans.

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Spain, June 1813 Desperate to find shelter from the hail of shot, Captain Jack Vespa crawled on doggedly. Even if he still had the strength to call for help, it would have been pointless; the French cannonade drowned out all lesser voices. He was finding it increasingly difficult to see now, and when his groping left hand slid over an edge, for a heart-stopping moment he thought he was going to plunge down the high crag above the river Zadorra. "Hey! A new arrival, my Tobias!" The voice that came through a lull in the uproar was strained but undeniably British. Another voice said an unsteady, "Ain't wearing red or green. I say--this shell hole is under British occu-occupation, Monsieur, so you'd best surren--" "Don't be a dolt, Toby. It's a blue coat! We're visited by a mighty Staff Officer, no less!" "Oh, egad! One of his lordship's famous 'Family!'" A shell screamed overhead. "Best not hang about, sir," urged the first voice. "Come on in." Vespa lowered himself cautiously, then rolled and for a minute or two lay still, pain causing him to curse faintly. The cannonade resumed but seemed less ear-splitting. Hands were touching him; something was wiping his face and he could focus again. A youthful, smoke-blackened countenance, framed by curling light brown hair, bent over him. "Lieutenant Tobias Broderick, sir. Forty-fifth." Vespa blinked at him stupidly. "You're Third Division. What the hell . . . are you doing up here?" Broderick bent lower so as to hear the gasped-out words. He clutched his side painfully, but roared, "Old Picton properly got his nose out of joint when his lordship sent word we were to support the Seventh. So we charged like the devil at the French centre. My poor hack was hit and bolted, and I--er--rather tumbled in here." "I see. Who's that?" "Oh, yes. I'm binding him up. Musket ball's smashed his shoulder and broken his collar-bone by the looks of it. I'll help you first, sir. You're all blood. Can you see?" "Not well enough to see your friend, but . . . finish with him. I'll do." Watching this member of the select few chosen by Wellington as his personal aides, Broderick thought it more probable that he would die. He started to crawl back to his first patient, then remembered, and half-turned to shout with a quivering grin, "You likely know him, sir. Lieutenant Manderville." "Manderville?" thought Vespa. It must be some other Manderville. The tattered casualty lying huddled in a rain-swept shell hole atop a Spanish crag couldn't possibly be . . . ? Reality melted away. He opened his eyes and started up, swearing. Broderick was wrapping a torn piece of shirt tightly around his leg. Catching his breath, he lay back. "Sorry. Good of you, Broderick. Is--is the bone severed?" "No, sir. But your leg's pretty damned riddled. I'll get to your arm in a minute. What happened to your head?" He'd been returning from delivering a despatch from Lord Wellington to Colonel Cadogan when a shell had killed his horse under him and sent him hurtling against a boulder, rendering him senseless. "I dismounted on it," he said wryly. He heard a faint laugh. "You wouldn't be Paige Manderville?" he enquired, peering mistily. "The debonair Dandy of Mayfair," said Broderick, with a gallant attempt at a chuckle. "The devil!" exclaimed Vespa. "I think I resent that. Sir," complained Manderville. "I was reacting to--to Broderick's--efforts," gasped Vespa. "Do I mistake it, or is the cannonade fading? Are you badly mauled, Lieutenant? Can you shin up there and have a look?" "Horse rolled on me, sir," said Broderick. "Think he snapped a couple of ribs. Or something. I'll make a try at it." Manderville drawled, "You'd best tie up the Captain's arm first, Toby, before he's bled white." Broderick investigated. "A piece of shell-casing, by the look of it. I think I can--" He gave a tentative tug. Vespa shouted an anguished "No!" Aghast, Broderick recoiled. "No. I think I won't." He moved in a sideways crawl to the edge of their shelter and returned to announce that there was "the devil of a fight round Arinez Hill. I fancy his lordship means to chase King Joseph all the way back to Paris." He completed his first aid, then settled himself between the other casualties, looking from one to the other anxiously. Manderville said with a sigh, "I don't imagine either of you has a canteen?" They hadn't, but the wish had been in all their minds. "Open your mouth," panted Vespa. "You might . . . catch some rain." "I might, sir. Except that it's stopped raining." "Never mind," said Broderick. "We'll have help here in a trice, I don't doubt." His optimism proved unfounded. The action that was to be known as the Battle of Vitoria raged on, and the three young officers lay in their damp and chilly sanctuary hour after weary hour. They endured their misery in silence, until Vespa, his mind wandering, muttered, "The crocuses will be in bloom." Broderick

argued wearily, "Can't say that, sir. It's cro-ci, not -ses." "No, it ain't," said Manderville. "Lay you a pony it's -ses." With difficulty Broderick reached Manderville's outstretched left hand. "You're on! Will you be a witness, sir?" Vespa gathered his wits and said, "Let's forget rank for a while, shall we? What are you wagering on?" The other men exchanged a quick glance. Broderick said, "You were talking about flowers, Cap-- Jove! We don't know your name." "It's Vespa." "Jack Vespa?" Manderville dragged himself to one elbow. "Aren't you the fellow who hauled Tim Van Lindsay out of the Esla last month?" "Tim's a clumsy fellow." Vespa shifted painfully. "Always falling down something, or--or into something. Was I really talking about flowers?" "You were," confirmed Manderville. "Like to garden, do you? I've seen your Richmond house from the river. Beautiful grounds. Do you mean to live there when we get home?" It was an effort to talk, but Vespa knew it was as well to try and keep their minds off things. He said, "No. I've inherited an estate in . . . Dorsetshire. Never have visited the old place. I rather fancy country life. My . . . my father won't like it, I fear, but . . ." Manderville waited, but the sentence went unfinished. "Sir Kendrick don't approve of me, I fear." He grinned irrepressibly. "Jealous, probably. He's quite a Non-Pareil." Vespa's dulled eyes brightened. "Yes. He is." "Sir Kendrick Vespa!" Broderick exclaimed. "Now I know who you are! Jove! I'd never have taken you for his son!" Vespa could not keep back a laugh, and then had to smother a groan. "I don't have his . . . good looks, is . . . is that what you say?" "If he does, it's because he's a clumsy clod," grumbled Manderville. "My nurse came from a hamlet called Pudding Park in Dorsetshire. Anywhere near your place?" "No. Alabaster Royal's farther...