



The Osiris Ritual

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A steampunk mystery adventure featuring immortality, artifacts, and intrepid sleuths Sir Maurice Newbury and Miss Veronica Hobbes

Sir Maurice Newbury, Gentleman Investigator for the Crown, imagines life will be a little quieter after his dual successes solving The Affinity Bridge affair. But he hasn't banked on his villainous predecessor, Knox, who is hell-bent on achieving immortality, not to mention a secret agent who isn't quite what he seems....

So continues an adventure quite unlike any other, a thrilling steampunk mystery and the second in the series of Newbury & Hobbes investigations.

The Osiris Ritual Details

Date : Published September 7th 2009 by Snowbooks (first published September 1st 2009)

ISBN : 9781906727048

Author : George Mann

Format : Paperback 348 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Steampunk, Fantasy, Mystery, Fiction

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From Reader Review The Osiris Ritual for online ebook

Brendan says

Sir Maurice Newbury and Valerie Hobbes are back in another rollicking steampunk adventure in George Mann's *The Osiris Ritual*. Like the previous book, *The Affinity Bridge*, there's plenty of great action and adventure and nobility and constrained behavior and running around London. The characters of the two protagonists develop a bit more thoroughly in this one, though they end up spending much of the novel investigating two separate cases and worrying about the other. A few more thoughts:

Mann really excels at gruesome description. In the first book, it was automata -- in this one it's a rotting cyborg. Gross and awesome.

The fight scenes in the novel are where it's at. Great action!

Alas, the relationship tension feels a bit tacked on to me. But I don't generally enjoy that part of these kinds of stories anyway. Thoughts about feelings? GROSS.

A nice romp. If you liked the first one, you'll like this one. If you didn't read *The Affinity Bridge*, I think you could enjoy this just fine as well.

Alias Pending says

Excellent steampunk tea time action. A short summary: I think TOR works better as an introduction to Mann's universe than *Affinity Bridge*. TOR seemed less weighed down with ornamental brass than AB, and was far more quickly paced and action packed for it.

My only quibble would be a certain damsel in distress scenario that seemed a lost opportunity and a lack of Amelia, but I won't say more for now is not the time for spoilers.

I also have a theory as to how Newbury is the Fox Mulder of his time, but I am not ready to reveal that thesis yet. Especially since I haven't read the next installment. But that'll be soon rectified.

-A-

(edit: Dept. of Redundancy Dept.)

Milou says

This is a steampunk mystery novel about immortality, featuring investigators Newbury and Hobbes, agents of the Crown. And I loved it. Was it perfect? Definitely not. But I didn't care.

This second book is better than the first one. It is not weighted down by the standard steampunk clichés, but is its own thing. Its making the promise of the rest of the series to be unique and lots of fun.

We learn a bit more about the two main characters, the charming Mr Newbury and the feisty and intelligent Miss Hobbes. There is a little bit of drama but not nearly enough to distract from the mystery. There is a little bit of romance, but again not nearly enough to distract from the mystery. And to be honest, who would not

fall in love with a woman like Miss Hobbes. She is a very modern woman, who makes up her own mind, is incredibly smart, beautiful... and Damn that fight scene.

One of my main problems is that the mystery is not very mysterious. But I find that with a lot of books so I can live with it. I like that George Mann does not shy away from showing the not so pretty parts. There are some very gory parts, some people die who you would have rather seen live. But it is not done in a showy way or to make the book more 'grown up'. Just like Newbury is an opium addict, not just to make him look more like Sherlock Holmes, but to make him a flawed, realistic human being.

But it is not all fast paced action and fun. There are some beautiful parts in it too and I have to admit I might have shed a tear for a certain character. The ending was great and made me very curious to the next few books in the series.

Elizabeth (Miss Eliza) says

Newbury and Hobbes are not working in tandem. Sir Maurice is off on assignment for the Queen looking into the "return" of another agent, William Ashford, who may have gone rogue and who may be involved in a high profile killing of the Egyptologist Lord Winthrop, whose discovery and then death are front page news as written by Newbury's new protege, George Purefoy. Veronica meanwhile is concerned about a spate of disappearances of young women, all who visited a magician, The Mysterious Alfonso, and participated in his stage show. They are both so wrapped up in their own cases that they don't realize the danger they are putting themselves in by working separately. Soon Veronica is trapped and in danger deep under a theatre, while Sir Maurice is racing across rooftops, not even sure if he's chasing the right man. They need each other to put things right before it's too late, or before the Queen gets tetchy.

I have an inkling that while I had heard of George Mann and *The Affinity Bridge* it wasn't until I heard about the second book in the series, *The Osiris Ritual*, that I really sat up and took notice. I am more than a bit of an addict for anything Egyptian. Like my love of Victoriana, it's the darker side of Egyptology that I am drawn to. The plagues and curses brought down for desecrating the dead, hold me back. When you crave bedtime stories about King Tut's Curse and Lord Carnarvon's dog howling and dropping dead at the same moment his master died, well, it's not that much of a surprise that that person grows up to dwell on stories of mummies and devours the entire oeuvre of Elizabeth Peters.

I still occasionally have nightmares that the Rame Tep from *The Young Sherlock Holmes* might come for me. But this nightmare is tinged with a deliciousness, because sometimes it's a good thing to be scared by something you can't explain. Though of course I like my Egyptian thrills from a nice comfy armchair versus up close and personal, the time my parents took me to the King Tut exhibit and I spent the entire time crying in a stairwell at The Field Museum in Chicago because my father and brother had convinced me that the mummy would curse me is a case study in why books are best. Armchair traveler for life, stamp my passport please!

Therefore the opening of *The Osiris Ritual* is a dream come true. I got to sit in my comfy chair wrapped snugly against the cold and read about a mummy unwrapping ceremony. The erstwhile and eager reporter George Purefoy was my entre into this world, we stood in awe together, and who wouldn't want to be brought under the wing of Sir Maurice Newbury and listen to his insights? The lush opulence of Lord Winthrop's house with all his artifacts, the ton gathering around as the mysterious sarcophagus was placed on the table, sigh. If I could just sink into a book and live in the moment, I would have chosen this one.

At TeslaCon, where I met George a few years back now, there was a staged mummy unwrapping, and while it lacked the intimacy of a true unwrapping, I was surprised that it was able to still contain that frisson of excitement. Though at the unwrapping we attended there was no chance of a curse, or at least I assume so. Here reading the book, I was just holding my breath till the "curse" took effect, and to my heart's delight I didn't have long to wait. Like all good storytelling while we are given an answer to the "curse" the book was able to suspend our disbelief and make us believe in the magic of "what if?"

Though in other parts the magic faltered a little. This would be the magical pairing of Sir Maurice and Veronica. The problem here was that they were separated for most of the book. Yes, I do understand that the main reason for this was that they were pursuing different cases and that it narratively worked for them to be separated so that they were ignorant that their cases were linked and therefore drew out the suspense for us readers. But it just somehow didn't click. Newbury couldn't exactly hook arms with George Purefoy and go walking down the street to face the next foe, it wouldn't be the same.

Yes *The Avengers* occasionally went off and did their own thing, Emma taking one lead, Steed another, but it's never the same with them apart, and that's how it is here. I also realize that the growing attraction between the leads has to be drawn out in some way, you can't have them get together too early and then have them lose their chemistry and destroy the series a la *Moonlighting*. But just using the simple expedient of keeping them apart seems a bit too contrived. There are many more reasons for them to not get together, and it looks like in future this will work far better for George's storytelling than this move did.

Though this separation was just a niggling problem in a book with a lot going right for it. What I loved most, which was oddly not Egyptian, was the hunt for the two former agents for the Crown, William Ashford and Newbury's predecessor, Knox. Not only was George able to portray the depth of these characters, making the villains have just as much going for them as the hero and heroine, but the relationship between Ashford and Knox reminded me powerfully of another famous book that has influenced the Steampunk genre. I'm talking about *Frankenstein*.

The monster that Ashford has become is very much created as a result of Knox's actions. Therefore the two have this creature/creator relationship that mirrors Shelley's work in many interesting ways, most of which I can't say without screaming "spoilers" beforehand. Needless to say there are just so many layers and connections to itself and other great stories that this is a penny dreadful to be savoured and returned to again and again just to see what you missed last time.

Jeffrey says

The flawed agent of this highly imagined Victorian England returns in this second Newbury and Hobbes Investigations. In the prior novel in this Steampunk trilogy, we have learned of many marvels that infuse this society, from seers, like Hobbes sister, to the mysterious Dr. Fabian, who keeps the Queen alive with pumps and wires, to robotic automons. Mann has a rich imagination and his highly stylized writing buoys this novel, which in the end is more about a mystery involving life after death, the occult and Egyptian mummies

In this novel, Newbury, who is both addicted to landenum and is now taking opium, is tasked by the Queen to locate Ashford, a former agent, who apparently was kept alive by Dr. Fabian after a terrible accident, but who has disappeared on a journey back to England. Newbury is also investigating, with the help of a young reporter Purefoy, the death of an explorer who found a mummy.

The Mummy is encased in a special way with chains and runic carvings. The Explorer who has found the mummy is also found dead.

Newbury suspects Ashford, who he finds at a couple of the crime scenes. Meanwhile Hobbes, is doing her own investigation into the disappearance of various young ladies, which coincides with their appearance in a traveling magic show.

The two stories are told simultaneously, and invariably in these type of novels end up coming together in some way.

A richly imagined world, this novel is more mystery and less steampunk, but still worth reading.

Suzy Dominey says

My first steampunk novel

Jamieson Ridenhour says

I really want to like these books. The characters have the potential for compelling relationships, and the story has potential as well. And--steampunk detective novels with zombies and Egyptian rituals? Sounds like a win. I have now slogged through two Newbury and Hobbes investigations, and I doubt I'll do a third. Mann's writing is the impediment: poor pacing, absurdly extended predictable action sequences, and a bad tendency to restate obvious plot point several times in as many chapters (which comes across to me as a dim view of audience intelligence). The biggest factor here, though, is the extremely limited range of Mann's descriptors for characters. How often does someone "grin" in real life? Every character in this novel "grinned" multiple times, and at least a dozen times someone's lips "curled into a smile." In chapter twelve, two characters have a conversation. In ten or twelve pages, one or the other of the men "smiled," "grinned," or "chuckled" twenty-six times. Yes, I counted. There was nothing else to do. I am compelled by Veronica Hobbes' story, particularly the events unfolding around her sister. I frankly read the whole novel simply to find out more about that plot. And there is a tantalizing glimpse into how that plot will be developed in the next book. But I won't be there. Check out Cherie Piast instead: steampunk action and awesomeness, but with a level of writing that suggests the presence of an editor, and perhaps more than one revision.

Sharon says

This is an entertaining and exciting steam punk novel involving a serial killer who is seeking immortality. Interesting characters and a level of tension that keeps you on the edge of your seat. Very enjoyable.

Dan Schwent says

Soon after Sir Maurice Newbury attends a mummy unwrapping, people connected to the expedition that recovered it turn up dead. Meanwhile, Veronica Hobbes is investigating the disappearances of young girls that seem to be connected to a traveling magician. How do their investigations intersect? What does it have to do with the mysterious agent who was supposed to meet Newbury at the train station? And who is behind the Osiris Ritual?

The Osiris Ritual is the second Newbury & Hobbes Investigation book and is a vast improvement on the first. The villains are more vile, the action more furious, and Newbury sinks further into the depths of opium addiction while Hobbes debates telling him the secret we all learned at the end of *The Affinity Bridge*, the previous volume. Knox and Ashford were both interesting characters. Knox had more dimension than most villains. The story itself had a lot of twists. I was sure I knew who the killer was until about two-thirds of the way through.

Any gripes? Yeah. Once again, Newbury seems a little obtuse for a Holmes-level detective. This time, it's the young reporter Purefoy that feeds him the necessary hints.

All in all, this was a good steampunk thriller and an improvement on the *Affinity Bridge*. I'll definitely be picking up the next Newbury & Hobbes adventure.

David says

Following hot on the heels of George Mann's entertaining steampunk debut *'The Affinity Bridge'* comes *'The Osiris Ritual,'* the second in the Newbury & Hobbes investigations.

Once again, we find the duo investigating the nefarious to the downright bizarre against the backdrop of a London filled with all manner of peculiar devices and insidious villains. This time, they have to spread their attentions on three different fronts: Firstly, a series of ritualistic murders are taking place and on the surface appear to be connected to the recent unveiling of an Egyptian mummy. Secondly, there has been a spate of disappearances involving young women, and Miss Hobbes doggedly pursues the culprit, her suspicions leading her to a magician named *'The Mysterious Alfonso'*. And, lastly, Newbury is tasked with bringing in a rogue agent, a man who died once and is now a grotesque marriage of both man and machine.

After Mann's solid start with *'The Affinity Bridge'*, I was eager to read this, hoping to see certain aspects of its fictional world expanded upon and, thankfully, in this area I was far from disappointed. London now feels like a much broader, more immersive landscape. You really start to get a sense of the grand buildings, grimy alleys and obscure nooks and crannies that cover the city. The world seems far more fleshed out and, subsequently, real.

The plot also shows greater thought and intricacy, the investigations contain greater detail and the pace has been enhanced to accentuate the story's greater sense of adventure. And, as always, Mann writes his action sequences with such energy that the reader is granted a seat right amidst the fray. Particularly during these sections, this book becomes a real page-turner. You know you have other things to do but you tell yourself "just a little bit more."

Any criticisms I have of this book are fleeting, and I would only say that I'd definitely like to see this wonderful cast of characters granted more time to be explored and their histories expanded upon. But, having said that, they are still people who you become highly invested in and attached to and they help propel this highly entertaining story from start to finish.

Mann has taken the groundwork of 'The Affinity Bridge' and improved upon it in almost every single aspect. He has successfully created the most enjoyable steampunk adventure I have read to date and one I will no doubt revisit over time.

Given the advancement in style and progress in pacing in the space of just one work, I await the next in the series with great enthusiasm and anticipation. This is a definite purchase for fans of 'The Affinity Bridge' as well as fans of the genre.

George Mann, you've just become one of my favourite authors.

Linda Nieves says

Ah.

That's the first thing that came out of my mouth after finishing this book.

Ah.

Sort of like the sigh you give after you drink water when you're really thirsty.

This book was that for me: an amazing Victorian mystery that didn't let me down. The idea of a mystery, steampunk, mythology, and paranormal book seemed like too much for me, but George Mann managed to make it both logical and enjoyable.

The Osiris Ritual is the second book in the Newbury & Hobbes series. Somehow I ended reading this one first, so I jumped in the story without knowing anything of the characters. However, I still ended loving and understanding both Sir Maurice Newbury & Miss Veronica Hobbes. The story starts when Newbury attends the unveiling of a mummy in the house of a rich man he knows. At the same time, Veronica is following the trail of woman who have disappeared after a magician visits their cities. Slowly, they become enthralled in their cases, not noticing that, in many ways, they are connected.

That's the worst summary I've written, but I can't share details. It would ruin everything. ?

Just know that this book is amazing. The writing, the characters, the plot: everything made me fall in love with it.

Give it a chance if you like mystery.

Dan says

This second dive into the steampunk world of Newbury and Hobbes begins with the unwrapping of a newly discovered Egyptian mummy. Newbury is shocked to see it's face is screaming but has little time to dwell on it as he is sent to apprehend a rogue agent. Meanwhile Veronica Hobbes is investigating a series of missing women with a connection to a travelling illusionist.

In many ways this is a more down to Earth story than the first one. Though it is set in the same steampunk world with hints of the supernatural, the plot itself largely ignores these parts of the world and is a mystery story. It's a Jack the Ripper-esque thriller albeit with hints of steampunk and supernatural madness alongside it.

I have to say this book didn't set my world alight. Although a new story I did feel it retread a lot of ground from the first book. I love the steampunk world of the series but other than a few details this is just post-Victorian London. When I read a steampunk book I want a steampunk plot and I didn't get it here.

I have seen a few reviews complain about the lack of character development, which surprises me. Although the book does focus on the plot itself there is definitely a change in the characters, especially the relationship between the two leads.

It was a decent enough read but doesn't reach anywhere near it's potential. A great world but an underwhelming plot.

Megan Baxter says

This series is growing on me. The first book I thought was merely serviceable, with a bit of a revelation at the end that made one of the characters much more interesting. Either the author has gotten better at plotting, or the tension has been amped up, or I was just in a better mood to enjoy Victoriana. I think perhaps all three, and the end result was that this was quite enjoyable. Not revelatory, but fun.

Note: The rest of this review has been withdrawn due to the changes in Goodreads policy and enforcement. You can read why I came to this decision [here](#).

In the meantime, you can read the entire review at [Smorgasbook](#)

Beka says

Reading The Osiris Ritual demonstrated to me that I liked Mann's first book, The Affinity Bridge, more for the novelty of a steampunk detective team than for the writing itself. He clearly has a lot of talent, and loves his characters, but it doesn't seem like he spends enough time getting to know them - they all come across as rather flat. It doesn't take more than a couple of pages to tell me that a) Newbury is very smart, b) Newbury is addicted to opium, c) Newbury is attracted to Hobbes, and d) Hobbes is a woman. That's first chapter stuff, but nothing had really been added to that list by the conclusion of the book. In the end, The Osiris Ritual, like Mann's first book, is good for a light, quick read, but it left me wanting something more substantial.

That said, if you're looking for a fun book that has zeppelins, clockwork men, and plucky Victorian ladies, and doesn't spend too much time dwelling on the negative consequences of industrialization, Mann's books are a great choice. Think of it as beach reading for the steampunk set.

John Carter McKnight says

Significantly worse than the first book in this series, which was pleasantly readable. Horrid, cliché'd prose, character un-development (they became more cardboard than in the introductory volume), and a generally hashed-up mystery plot. It was an effort to finish this, and I'll go out of my way to avoid further works by this author.
