

The Burning Chambers by Kate Mosse

3 Stars

Far too drawn out

Minou (Marguerite) Joubert, eldest daughter of Bernard Joubert and sister to Alis (seven) and brother Aimeric (thirteen), has taken on the responsibility of running her father's bookshop as he'd returned from his winter travels a changed man. He couldn't bear to tell Minou the real reason for this change – he had not been travelling but been locked up and tortured on suspicion of being a "heretic" – the term used by the Catholics to describe anyone who joined the Huguenot – French Protestant – religion.

Piet Reydon, once a staunch Catholic, has joined the Huguenot revolution. He meets and falls in love with Minou and will do anything to protect her during the riots that erupt between Catholics and Huguenots.

Minou and Piet are the main protagonists of this very long, over-complicated story of the struggle that Protestants faced, wanting to practise their religion without the threat of being attacked and killed.

Kate Mosse has managed to weave the history of the French Huguenots inside the main storyline, Minou and Piet's growing love and affection for each other.

In my opinion, it's a shame that Kate Moss didn't develop the storyline between Blanche de Bruyère and Minou, especially as the prologue is set in Franschoek, South Africa, where one of the descendants of Minou and Piet is buried. The story of the fight for religious freedom in France has been used by several authors over the past few years, and it would have been, in my opinion, a far more exciting story had we heard of how the Huguenots fled to South Africa to help create their wine industry.

Treebeard

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review.