

KIRKUS

REVIEWS

TITLE INFORMATION

BADEN-POWELL'S BEADS: LONDON

Book Two: Beads Series

Parsons, Paul D.

CreateSpace (290 pp.)

\$15.00 paperback, \$8.99 e-book

ISBN: 978-1482546941; April 11, 2013

BOOK REVIEW

A search for an ancient set of magical beads leads to a violent chase across London in this suspenseful thriller.

The second installment in Parsons' (*Baden-Powell's Beads*, 2012) adventure series continues his saga centered around a set of ancient beads imbued with mysterious powers. Dr. David Freeman owns one of these beads—a present from a dying patient—but the tiny artifact seems to be more of a curse than a gift. Cheri Hassan, a steely, sexy assassin, tracks Freeman to Memphis, intent on getting her hands on the bead. Freeman and his girlfriend, Pam Blanchard, flee to London with U.S. Department of Homeland Security agents Patrick Dartson and Adnan Fazeph, where they hope an elderly war hero can shed light on the beads' history. It turns out that many people are willing to kill for these strange items, which have a back story that goes back to the dawn of Christianity. Hassan in hot pursuit, and the foursome must also contend with a corrupt Scotland Yard official, Raoul Livingston, and a gang of violent Rastafarians. This high-stakes thriller is a true page-turner, although readers who haven't read the series' first installment may have some trouble getting up to speed. That said, the author's lively prose and edge-of-your-seat action sequences will draw readers in and keep them engaged; the beads' history is particularly compelling, if somewhat convoluted. A dramatic final showdown in an old English manor house ties up many loose ends but leaves enough details unresolved to allow a sequel. The novel does make a few missteps, however; for example, the author gives Livingston and Fazeph a score to settle, unrelated to the beads, that seems to be an awkward attempt to breathe life into the latter character. Readers may also find the idea of Rastafarian terrorists committed to “total destruction of the infidels” hard to swallow. Nonetheless, many will eagerly await the series' next volume, which promises to reveal even more about the beads' history and their power.

A well-executed mix of Indiana Jones–style adventure and political thriller.