

Rosa Mystica

A Mother's Mystery

by Jule DeJager Ward

by Rabia Ahmed

This book must possess some magic.

I was not too keen to read Rosa Mystica. I knew the story was about the writer's struggle to bring up her disabled children, so the tale had to be disturbing. I am at a stage when I no longer read anything deep and meaningful. Instead, I read crime fiction...which can often be well written, and is generally relaxing,

Well, Rosa Mystica was disturbing, but how do you describe something that is distressing as well as comforting? Am I some kind of monster that I find the real story of a mother caring for disabled children comforting? Did the book wield some magic over me, that I not only read it through, but did not wish to put it down?

The answer is that an important aspect of the story is the way disabled children bonded the "family to one another, to the rest of the family, and to the broader community" in a way that little else could manage. "Neighborhood families formed a cocoon around us that lasted the entire time our children were growing up."

The support the parents gave each other, the support they received from the community is a beautiful thing to read about. The strength this offered the mother, even while she and her family were subjected to a great deal of anguish made her realize that none of what was happening was a failure of motherhood. What an important realization that is when such illnesses must bring guilt down upon the main carers like a sledgehammer. She realized that none of it was her fault. The experience brought her nearer to the Creator, and that is always the most strengthening experience any person can undergo.

In a world as troubled as it is today, in a life that must be as agonizing as it was for this family and others like it....well, it makes this book worth reading.

For these reasons, and for anyone striving to discover ways to help children with disabilities, avenues for relief for themselves and their family, I recommend Rosa Mystica, very strongly.