

Patches of Time - Elwin Higgins

North London has been my home for eight years now. I moved to Muswell Hill from South London, and like anyone crossing such notable boundaries - I was full of trepidation. However, the community I found myself, one so rich with the goodness of its people, and so full of enchanting shops and eateries, made me feel very welcome.

My love of this area is why I was excited to see *Patches of Time* by Elwin Higgins cross my desk. *Patches of Time* is a love letter, told using diaries that span over thirty odd years. Higgins introduces the first section, 1965 - 1979, by talking about the tragic and untimely death of his friend Miggy.

The book, the writing of which was clearly prompted by Miggy's death, begins in a very melancholy manner - with a quote from his father expressing a wish for a daughter; "Jill to give birth to something this coming August, I hope for a daughter."

The opening sections of the book take the young Elwin to Nerja in Spain, and to Berlin, Germany, before coming a bit closer to home in deepest darkest Surrey. It isn't until 1970 that our writer begins his own North London journey.

Higgins is tender with his descriptions of his family and friends, and of the places that he has lived and visited. The pages of *Patches of Time* are packed with love and memories, perfect for those who want to sit by the fireside with their e-reader and enjoy the reminiscences of a life lived with enthusiasm and verve.



Rose: The Awakening - Krys Kingston

This is another book that tells a tale of London, but this time it is the darkness and fog of Victorian London that we find on the page.

Rose Maines is left destitute after the death of her father and finds herself living in an East End lodging house with her mother:

The book follows Rose as she meets Mr Oliver Weir following her mother's appointment as his housekeeper. They immediately form a bond that drifts between love and hate, seemingly dictated by the moods of Weir:

As the book moves forward, you begin to fear for Rose, but she maintains an unusually steady and cool head despite the mysteries unravelling around her:

The book is supernatural, but with more of a leaning towards the type of tale of the unknown that would endear an adult to it rather than teens who had discovered what lives on the other side through more commercial publications like the *Twilight* series.

Kingston uses wonderful imagery to engage the reader, something that keeps the pages turning, "It was there that I found sleep, deep within the veins of the city that flowed with life as London awoke."

Well written and fast paced, with very skillful use of short punchy chapters, Kingston has started her trilogy with aplomb.

So often the fog hides a greater darkness, and Kingston brings the velvet curtain of society as we know, and into a place where we'd not want to find ourselves alone. Murder, death, and the undead stalking the world of the living await as we look forward to the next two installments of this trilogy of books from Kingston.

