

Labyrinth by Kate Mosse.  
Orion 2005.

Labyrinth is an intricate and challenging novel, located in the present and the medieval past and focussed on the one hand on Carcassonne, the Cathars and those who led a crusade against them, and on the other hand the men and women who are knowledgeable about and study their past.

Labyrinth, as with many novels of its kind, is difficult to describe without giving away details of its plot! Suffice it to say that its leading protagonists, of past and present, are two women - one decent, likeable and honourable, the other committed to achieving evil ends by evil means.

The labyrinth of the title is both a symbol and a real structure of immense mystical and actual power, sheltering a secret that has been preserved by good and selfless people for centuries but always at risk of being used and abused by the wicked and unscrupulous.

Labyrinth is part historical novel, part thriller and part fantasy but throughout an excellent and compelling read.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh