



Kal

Judy Nunn

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Kalgoorlie. It grew out of the red dust of the desert over the world's richest vein of gold. Like the gold it guarded, Kalgoorlie was a magnet to anyone with a sense of adventure, anyone who could dream. People were drawn there from all over the world, settling to start afresh or to seek their fortunes. They called it Kal; it was a place where dreams came true or were lost forever in the dust. It could reward you or it could destroy you, but it would never let you go. You staked your claim in Kal and Kal staked its claim in you. In a story as breathtaking and as sweeping as the land itself, bestselling author Judy Nunn brings Kal magically to life through the lives of two families, one Australian and one Italian. The Australian family are the Bearleys: Maudie, who runs the miners' pub in Kalgoorlie and who was brought up in a tent on the goldfields; her husband 'Flash Harry' Bearley, charismatic conman and shyster; and his young son, Jack. The Italian family are the Giannis, railway workers from a small village in the Italian Alps, who dream of making a better life for themselves 'at the bottom of the world' after they hear about the Western Australian goldrush of the late 1880s. Rico, the elder brother, is a larger-than-life bull of a man, very protective of his sensitive younger brother Giovanni, a handsome dreamer. When the rich and frustrated widow Serena di Cretico spies Giovanni, she pursues him relentlessly, and they begin having an affair. Giovanni is terrified of her powerful landowner brothers-in-law, and tries to end the relationship, but she tells him if he attempts to do so, she will tell them he raped her. Rico and Giovanni decide they must leave as soon as they can, as the de Cretico brothers are bound to hear about the affair and come after Giovanni. Before their plans can be carried out, the brothers strike, killing Serena and storming the miners' camp in search of Giovanni, who is actually down in the village. Believing Rico to be Giovanni, they break both his knees with iron bars. Rico takes Giovanni's terrible punishment in silence, and is crippled for life. Guilt-stricken, Giovanni is persuaded by Rico to take their savings and sail to Western Australia to prepare the way for Rico and his family. Gio works like a dog for several years and is eventually joined by Rico, his wife Teresa and their young family. Rico is severely crippled, with an awkward swinging gait and has become terribly bitter and defensive about his disability. His aggression often leads to violence, particularly in Kalgoorlie, where the Australian population resents the invasion of 'dago' miners who are prepared to work longer hours for less pay and are taking all the jobs. Rico and Giovanni go into partnership with Harry Bearley, who owns a mine called the Clover, where the brothers work hard and start making a go of things. Then out of the blue they hear that Harry has sold their mine. He had led them to believe they were equal partners with him, but because neither could read, the actual contract was for them to be working partners with Harry for as long as he kept the mine. The brothers feel betrayed and murderous, and a terrible vendetta is started between the Bearleys and the Giannis that is not resolved until years later when Harry's son Jack and Rico's son Enrico find themselves fighting alongside each other at Gallipoli. After experiencing the trauma of war, the two resolve to end the vendetta if they ever return to Kal. Only one does, but he returns to Kal at the end of World War I to find a town riven by racism and rioting. The climax of Kal is extraordinarily moving and vivid, and will stay with readers forever. Apart from telling the story of the two families over two generations, Kal is also a moving love story and a page-turning action adventure novel. From the heady, early days of the gold rush to the horrors of the First World War in Gallipoli and France, to the shame and confrontation of the post-war riots

Kal Details

Date : Published September 5th 1997 by Arrow (Australia) (first published 1996)
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Author : Judy Nunn

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From Reader Review Kal for online ebook

Bronwyn says

i loved it ...
so full of life and adventure. .
aussie life style explained so beautifully. .
very likeable characters that we can relate to

Alana Clough says

The wild west gold rush town of Kalgoorlie where a man can make his fortune. Where a man can meet his maker. Roughing it to get rich quick while supporting your family all the while coming from a totally different country is a harsh reality. How did they do it?

Amanda says

fabulous. Loved it. Great story well written

Robert Morton says

historically it was interesting, but the plot and characters were so similar to other Judy Nunn books, I didn't bother reading the entire book which was a first for me. I doubt that I will read any further books by her again which is a pity as I prefer to support Australian authors

Michelle Perry says

I don't know how many times I've read this. Characters are fantastic and have stuck with me for years

Liza Perrat says

Another excellent story by Judy Nunn, full of Australian history and a sweeping family saga. Full review to follow ...

My review: Kal tells the story of two families spanning two generations: Giovanni flees the Italian Alps after his part in a family tragedy and Caterina is banished to the other side of the world in order to protect her family's honour. Both of them end up in Kalgoorlie, Western Australian town that sprouted up from the red desert dust and the world's richest vein of gold in the late 1880s. Kalgoorlie was a place for people looking for adventure; a place to start life anew and possibly find one's fortune in gold. Here the Italians cross paths

with the Australian Brearley family: Maudie, who runs a miners' pub and her husband Harry, charismatic conman, and his son, Jack.

The Australian population of Kalgoorlie resents the hardworking Italian miners, and a terrible, life-long vendetta is ignited between the two families when the Italians feel they have been cheated out of their mine.

Apart from the tale of these two families, Kal is also a moving romance and a suspense-infused adventure story. With its twists and turns, the plot is rich in characters, and brilliantly evokes the atmosphere of Kalgoorlie and its goldfields, the desolate and unforgiving landscape, WW1 and Gallipoli, and the people whose lives were shaped by these events, both in Australia and in Europe.

A rollicking great read!

Beck says

Well, if you're looking for a super sized '*Mills and Boon*' type novel. Look no further.

Here you'll find page upon page of heavy drama, "*romance*" and predictability.

Karen says

Although slow in spots this was a good read. The plot was rich in characters and encapsulated the feel of Kalgoorlie, the rush for gold, the war and the people that those events shaped, both Australian and European.

Helen Elizabeth says

One of the best books I've ever read. Absolutely love it and have read it 3 times ???

Bookmuseuk says

Kal tells the story of two families spanning two generations: Giovanni flees the Italian Alps after his part in a family tragedy and Caterina is banished to the other side of the world in order to protect her family's honour. Both of them end up in Kalgoorlie, Western Australian town that sprouted up from the red desert dust and the world's richest vein of gold in the late 1880s. Kalgoorlie was a place for people looking for adventure; a place to start life anew and possibly find one's fortune in gold. Here the Italians cross paths with the Australian Brearley family: Maudie, who runs a miners' pub and her husband Harry, charismatic conman, and his son, Jack.

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A rollicking great read!

Melissa Kuipers says

Loved it! Maybe I'm biased because I live in the West and have spent a lot of time around the Kalgoorlie goldfields but I felt Judy nailed the atmosphere and fervour of the times perfectly while delivering another gritty story at the same time.

Tenaha Wilson says

Growing up in Kal I found this book fascinating and could not put it down towards the end of the book. It was as if I could actually see the characters in the street. This book was very nostalgic to me and a book I think I will always hold dear to my heart because it describes the place that was my childhood. The characters were intriguing, the detail was beautiful. The red dust certainly never leaves your veins and I thought Judy Nunn depicted Kal remarkably.

Kelli says

After a heavy stint of non-fiction I thought it was time to read some mindless fiction. This wasn't too bad but really not the greatest of books. I think this style of book has been done to death personally.

Tim says

I found it very similar to some of her other books, a bit too "me too" or formulaic to get into.

Crt says

Not as good as her previous books. Just seemed to end abruptly
