



## The Scribe

*Antonio Garrido , Simon Bruni (Translator)*

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## **The Scribe** Antonio Garrido , Simon Bruni (Translator)

The year is 799, and King Charlemagne awaits coronation as the Holy Roman emperor. But in the town of Würzburg, the young, willful Theresa dreams only of following in the footsteps of her scholarly father—a quiet man who taught her the forbidden pleasures of reading and writing. Though it was unthinkable for a medieval woman to pursue a career as a craftsperson, headstrong Theresa convinces the parchment-makers' guild to test her. If she passes, it means access to her beloved manuscripts and nothing less than true independence. But as she treats the skins before an audience of jeering workmen, unimaginable tragedy strikes—tearing apart Theresa's family and setting in motion a cascade of mysteries that Theresa must solve if she hopes to stay alive and save her family.

A fugitive in the wilderness, Theresa is forced to rely on her bravery, her uncommon education, and the compassion of strangers. When she encounters Alcuin of York, a wise and influential monk with close ties to Charlemagne, she believes her luck might have finally changed. But the biggest secret lies between Charlemagne and her father. Theresa moves ever closer to the truth, bent on reuniting with her beloved father, only to discover that her family's troubles are inextricably entwined with nothing less than the fate of an empire.

## **The Scribe Details**

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Author : Antonio Garrido , Simon Bruni (Translator)

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## From Reader Review The Scribe for online ebook

### **mary says**

There were passages of this book that were very good. The book (even the ending) felt disjointed almost as if someone else wrote it. The premise or theme of this seemed to be very interesting but the plodding narrative overwhelmed the sparkling pieces. I believe it is the translation though I have nothing to base it on except that I want to give the writer the benefit of the doubt.

I read The Corpse Reader and liked it. It did not read like this book at all. So just beware if you read it that it is very unevenly written.

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### **Cynthia says**

This book is considered historical fiction but it is long on fiction and short on history.

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### **Amaya says**

An entertaining but forgettable book. Interesting enough to pass time, but not a great read.

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### **Tea Jovanović says**

Odličan španski istorijski roman, pratite ovog autora, guta se u dahu...

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### **Amy Lignor says**

This is truly a book that will pull the historian into its pages very quickly.

The year is 799, and King Charlemagne is awaiting his coronation as the Holy Roman Emperor. At the same time, in the town of Wurzburg, a girl by the name of Theresa is hard-headed and determined to follow in her father's footsteps and become a scribe.

Theresa's father is a very learned man and has taught his daughter how to read and write. Unfortunately, in these times, a woman's job was to marry and raise children, not have a career. But Theresa can not be stopped. She wants to join her father's business as a scholar no matter what she must sacrifice in the process.

Finally persuading the Guild to administer the test, she ultimately fails. Soon, Theresa becomes a fugitive; on the run she hides out in the woods with a price on her head.

Relying only on herself and her education, Theresa finds herself depending on strangers she meets along the way. One such stranger is Alcuin of York, an influential monk with close ties to the new Emperor. She

believes that Alcuin can help her, as well as aiding her in becoming a scribe.

Perhaps her luck will change, especially after she discovers a secret of her father's involving Charlemagne; a secret that could clear her name and give her the future she so wants. She is in sight of the truth; however, the parchment King Charlemagne commissioned her father to write holds a secret that could literally destroy the empire she loves.

Extremely suspenseful, this author makes the reader think long and hard about ancient, underhanded plotting by the old Empire. Not to mention, he opens up the classic debate of equality, with a young woman's tale of attempting to gain education in a world that was made only for men. This book is a true eye-opener!

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### **Sandra Bašić says**

Vrlo dobar povijesni roman, smješten u 8. stoljeće, s temom Konstantinove darovnice, je li istinita ili lažna i gdje se nalazi. Crkvene spletke - omiljena tema!

Ne poznajem dobro povijesne ?injenice ali vjerujem Garridu (tehni?aru po struci ali zaljubljeniku u povijesnu gra?u) da je, u 7 godina koliko je nastajao ovaj roman, sve dobro prou?io i imao život i vladavinu Karla Velikog u malom prstu.

Ako bih nešto trebala zamjeriti, spomenut ?u 518 stranica teksta - osobno bih to smanjila bar za petinu i ne bi se izgubio smisao knjige.

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### **Patricia Fawcett says**

This is the story of Theresa, trained by her father to read, write and translate in Eighth Century Northern Europe, where most of the population was barely literate. Having fled a life of privilege during battles for religious supremacy between the Byzantine and Roman empires, Theresa and her father each eked out a living in Wurzburg; he working on sensitive documents, she making her way, against no little opposition, in a workshop, preparing vellum for writing, painstakingly learning each step of the process to perfection. Thrown into the mix are the continued political and religious machinations of the day, intolerance towards women, a number of twists and turns in a fascinating plotline and possibly the most detailed descriptions of everyday life at the onset of the reign of Charlemagne. Garrido does not stint. His depth of research is very evident. Rather than merely envisaging the various scenarios and locations about which he writes, we are transported back to the Eighth Century and feel almost embedded therein. I have read other critiques of this book, and fully understand how it is possible to get bogged down in the ambience of the period, temporarily losing sight of the plot. The detail in the writing is so intense, but this is not a criticism. Far from it. As with all great reads, you approach the conclusion with impatience, yet you hardly want the book to end. Simon Bruni's translation of Antonio Garrido's book is of a seamless and incomparable quality. Nothing is lost in translation

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### **Petar says**

Knjiga je dobra, malo konfuznije napisana od The Corpse reader. Ina?e pisac za svaku preporuku.

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### **Victoria says**

It isn't often that I choose not to finish a book that I have started - usually no more than five a year out of the nearly three hundred books that I typically read. Unfortunately, this one will be one of the 2014 reads that will go unfinished. Its initial premise though certainly sounds intriguing - set at the turn of the eighth century, Theresa is a nineteen year old woman who wants to follow in her father's footsteps as a scribe rather than marrying. Though the book opens with plenty of action - in the first few chapters there's a mugging, a disastrous fire, a mysterious codex and events leading Theresa to flee as a fugitive - the book simply isn't engaging. The characters speak inauthentically - there's slang here (perhaps the fault of the translator) and other anachronisms - like a reference to a guillotine (something that won't be invented for a hundred years) that really makes it hard to take the other historical details as accurately researched.

Furthermore, the characters are rather stiff and are hard to connect with. Individually, these flaws could be overlooked, but combined it makes it hard to justify continuing on with this five hundred-plus page book. I began to dread picking it up, and eventually, decided that there are just too many other books in my TBR pile to justify continuing on with this one. There just isn't anything that I could connect with here...

Disappointing, to say the least.

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### **Lexi says**

\*\*Originally written for Book Bliss book blog. I received a copy of this book in exchange for an unbiased and honest review\*\*

Review: 2 stars

General: I love historicals, they may be my favorite genre out there. I was extremely interested in this because I enjoy finding time periods I studied that aren't written about much. The history and the world building in this book were extensive. It was entertaining on that level because I could really feel the authenticity of the made up story. However, the plot was inconsistent for me. It opened with a bang and then fizzled out and quickly became very dull. Another issue was the editing. This is a translation so I will not lay this issue on the author but rather whoever published and chose the translator. There were far to many issues and I understand sometimes things can be confusing in translation but these were errors, not points of confusion. For me, without the amazing world building this story lacked the elements needed to draw me in.

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### **Patrice Hoffman says**

The Scribe is the second novel I've read by the author Antonio Garrido. Because I loved The Corpse Reader so much, I thought he'd be able to bottle that thunder in a novel again. Although I didn't find The Scribe as gripping as its predecessor, I still very much enjoyed the title.

The Scribe takes place during year 799 and coincides with King Charlemagne being crowned Emperor. Theresa, the novel's central character, wants nothing more than to follow in her father's footsteps. She has been molded from a young age to take on the esteemed profession and bear the task of recording the town's records. After training as an apprentice, she is up for testing when a terrible accident leaves her fleeing for

her life. Much of the novel centers around her travels while away from home and the people she comes into contact with.

Antonio Garrido, from what I've noticed, features characters who have tremendous odds set against them but are quite talented in respects to their fields. Ci Song (from The Corpse Reader) was extremely studied in his skill of reading corpse' as Theresa is in her ability to read, write, and do all the functions necessary for the job. Theresa's biggest obstacle, besides the bad guy, is that during medieval times, there was no human resources. Women's rights was definitely not on the horizon so aside from dealing with the constant badgering of horny men, being female was enough to disqualify her. What resonates most with readers regarding both characters is that they still don't give up their hopes and we find them have a sort of coming of age in the process.

After a mugging involving Theresa and her father Gorgias in Wurzburg, an important codex is believed to be stolen. This really sets the story in motion and allows readers to realize that there is something suspicious going on. What's in this document and why's it so important? This question only lingers for a few pages when Garrido's long-windedness almost causes me to forget about it. I'm all for long books and I appreciate Garrido's attention to detail and character development, but it didn't seem important after awhile because the focus was on Theresa's new life. I felt that Gorgias was MIA for too long to remember he was missing a codex.

As mentioned in the last paragraph, Garrido gives life to his characters. There is a profound attention to detail that I love when reading historical fiction. He goes into detail about how the parchment paper of the time was made and the process. Garrido manages to make the reader feel as though they are plopped right into the medieval times. His characters are dealing with the food shortage, ergot poisoning, religious unification or persecution, and living in harmony with Carolingian laws.

Antonio Garrido is definitely climbing the list of my go-to authors. The Scribe was enjoyable and I recommend it to fans of historical fiction mysteries. I look forward to Garrido's next book.

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## **Czarny Pies says**

"La scribe" est un très bon roman d'aventure jeuneuse du temps du roi Charlemagne. Si vous cherchez un roman pour les adultes, il risque de vous décevoir énormément.

Le manque de profondeur des personnages est le seule point faible de "La scribe" qui est plein d'ambiance de l'époque carolingienne. La recette de Garrido est constituée d'éléments tirés d'Umberto Eco. Du "Nom de la rose" il y a un jeune protagoniste qui collabore avec un alter ego de Sherlock Holmes ('Guillaume de Baskerville' chez Eco et ' Alcuin de York' chez Garrido.) Du "cimetière de Prague" il y a au centre l'intrigue un document de propagande qui véhicule un mensonges grossier (les 'Protocoles des Sages de Sion' chez Eco et la 'Donatien de Constantin'.)

"La scribe" qui est bourré des informations a aussi une vocation pédagogique. Regardons deux exemples.

À la page 187, on trouve une bonne description de la structure politique d'Angleterre au huitième siècle. "À York, Alcuin apprit que l'Angleterre était une heptarchie, composées des royaumes Saxons de Kent, Wessex, Essex et Sussex, au sud de l'île, associés aux États angles du nord : Mercie, Est-Anglie et Northumbrie."

À la page 227, on trouve une bonne description d'un palimpseste et la bonne technique pour récupérer un texte perdu: "Il n'y avait qu'une explication, et Theresa la connaissait pour avoir employé cette technique des dizaines des fois. Quand on faisait un pâte sur un parchemin, il était possible de se rattraper en grattant l'endroit abimé jusqu'à éliminer la tache. En appliquant ce traitement à toute la peau, on obtenait un parchemin qui semblait neuf, prêt à être réutilisé. Toutefois, il était moins épais et plus clair. C'était ce que les scribes appelaient un palimpseste. ... Theresa prit dans l'âtre une poignée de cendres qu'elle étala en cercles sur la page du dessous et la frotta doucement jusqu'à obtenir une poussière grise qui se dispersa au premier souffle pour révéler le texte effacé."

"La scribe" va enseigner bien des choses au jeune lecteur. Pourtant, il risque par endroits d'agacer le lecteur qui a plus de dix-huit ans.

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### **Sandra says**

Comprei este livro numa promoção e não estava à espera de nada especial, mas acabei por gostar bastante. Achei interessante do princípio ao fim e estava sempre a tentar adivinhar o que se passaria a seguir.

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### **Jocelyn Gallardo says**

Hermoso!!! Una historia llena de sorpresas, misterios y aventuras que te hacen reflexionar sobre lo complejo de las relaciones de poder y sobre la cantidad de trabajo que conlleva la escritura de un libro... no por nada al autor le llevo siete años escribir esta novela!!!

La historia de Theresa se desarrolla en un mundo y en una sociedad donde las mujeres aún se ven relegadas al papel de madre y ama de casa, no leen, no escriben y no hablan griego y latín.

Lo mejor, cuando piensas que la historia ha llegado a su final te das cuenta que aún le quedan un ciento de páginas más!!! Muy recomendable!!!

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### **Italo says**

Not my cup of tea, had to force myself to finish it. Slow and pull fantastic deductions without much of supporting evidence.

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