



Order of Darkness Volumes I-III: Changeling; Stormbringers; Fools' Gold

Philippa Gregory

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Dark myths, medieval secrets, intrigue, and romance populate the pages of the first three books in the Order of Darkness series from the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Other Boleyn Girl*—now available in one glittering paperback edition.

In *Changeling*, the year is 1453 and all signs point to it being the end of the world. Forced to face the greatest fears of the dark ages—witchcraft, werewolves, madness—seventeen-year-olds Luca and Isolde embark on a search for truth, their own destinies, and even love as they take the unknown ways to the real historical figure who defends the boundaries of Christendom and holds the secrets of the Order of Darkness.

And in *Stormbringer*, as Luca and Isolde continue their journey, their attraction grows with each passing day. Even as they try to remain focused on the mysteries they've been ordered to investigate, the tension between them builds. Then their budding, forbidden relationship is put on hold when a boy, Johann, and his army of children arrive in town. Johann claims to have divine orders to lead the children across Europe to the Holy Land, and the townspeople readily accept his claims. And when Johann's prophecy begins to come true, Luca wonders if they have finally stumbled upon a real miracle.

In *Fool's Gold*, Luca and Isolde travel to Venice to expose a counterfeiting ring. But when Luca starts to investigate the original charge, the counterfeiter's true goal is revealed—he plans to create the Philosopher's Stone, a mystical substance said to be capable of turning base metals into gold and producing the elixir of life. All the evidence suggests that he succeeded in his task. But as Luca and Isolde get closer to the truth, they discover that reality may be more sinister than they ever could have imagined.

Order of Darkness Volumes I-III: Changeling; Stormbringers; Fools' Gold Details

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From Reader Review Order of Darkness Volumes I-III: Changeling; Stormbringers; Fools' Gold for online ebook

Jocelyn says

It hurts me to leave a one star rating because I love Philippa Gregory. But Order of Darkness crash and burned with me. I've been actively avoiding picking it up for over a week now. I won't be getting back to it and find relief in that decision (ouch, I know).

This wasn't up to Gregory's standards by a long shot. Maybe because it's meant to be "young adult"? Lacking in details and development. Slow story. Lots of words for little movement. I just can't continue.

Yassemin says

So I've only tried Philippa Gregory once, a long time ago and to be honest I didn't really think that historical fiction was for me so I've never read any more books by her despite her being well rated by most people. That stops now! I will definitely be reading more of her work off the back of this book and how much I enjoyed it. Clearly I shouldn't have ruled out historical fiction as not being for me because this book was definitely for me.

I felt the plot was absolutely fascinating (it follows people in the Order of Darkness who go around various places looking for signs of the end of the days and dealing with them as they see fit), the writing addictive (I didn't want to put the book down) and the characters were fantastic.

This book hasn't received very good ratings from what I can see, and I can't understand why. I absolutely loved it and it's the favourite book of the year for me as it currently stands.

Rachael says

I've said it before - Philippa Gregory writes better historical fiction when she focuses on an actual historical figure. This was really not her best work.

With regards to Volume I (Changeling), I twigged quite early on what was going on at the nunnery which was a little disappointing because I like to be surprised when I read.

I felt that Volume II (Stormbringers) took a while to get started and didn't really have much plot. I can say the same about Volume III (Fool's Gold) too.

Pamela says

This YA historical fantasy novel is set in the year 1460

Luca Vero the hero of the novel is recruited to join the order of darkness. He must inquire about the signs of

the end of the days in the kingdom of Christendom. In the first volume, *Changeling*, he must find out a mysterious madness, possession of the spirit that makes nuns see visions and report to his lord of the order of darkness. To help with this mission, Freize, his friend is sent on this wonderful adventure with Brother Peter, the clerk. It is on this mission that Isolde and her companion Ishraq (half Arab) become known to the readers.

In volume 2, *Stormbringers*, the five travellers Luca, Freize, Brother Peter, Isolde and Ishraq from Rome to Italy come across a charismatic character Johann who says "the end of days is upon us", the very thing Luca must inquire. Luca must learn from the sweet tongued Johann and decipher the truth.

In Volume 3, *Fool's Gold* the travellers are tasked to inquire about genuine gold coins(English nobles) from fake ones.

The writing is lucid and expressive. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in YA Historical Fantasy Fiction.

Sylvie says

I like Philippa Gregory's books very much. I would call myself a fan. I love the way she writes and presents England history through the voice of women. I give only 3 stars to this one because it is what I call "light reading" if you want to take a break from history but would not change the author. No wonder she wrote this series so easily and fast. I wouldn't call it a bad book but if this is the first book you read by PG, don't judge her based on this as this is under the standard that she set for herself. I would recommend the Tudor series if you like history or *Wideacre* trilogy and *Meridon*, if not. She has a "fluid" style meaning that the books are easy to read and smooth, she is good with putting words together to create an atmosphere and this book is no exception.

Cliff says

First thing I would say is that it appears that this series maybe young adult fiction. It didn't come across to me as that while I was reading it and it was only when I began to explore more after I'd finished it that I realised that such might be the case. I'm not sure, however, how many of today's YAs would read through 850+ pages! The book tells the story of 5 individuals who set out on a trek across medieval Italy with the intent of reaching Hungary. The medieval ambiance isn't as well caught as, for example, it is in some Karen Maitland's that I have recently read. Medieval habits are well caught however - the position of women, the all persuasive influence of the church and despite this the continued reliance of folk tales and beliefs. The ignorance shown makes the reader realise how far knowledge has advanced - not knowing the reason behind the tsunami which features largely in the second book, for example. The lack of understanding of what we now call market forces shown in the third book is something that would not be explained until the late 18th century and the works of Adam Smith. The third book does veer off the usual, but unexplained which feature in the first two, into fantasy. The author doesn't give any of her sources away and I for one would have welcomed some indication as to whether the tsunami described in *Stormbringers* and the run on English gold in Venice described in *Fool's Gold* have any basis in historical fact. And that applies also basic premise of the book, the idea that the end of the world was imminent. There is fact - the fear of the apparently unstoppable Ottoman advance which would last until the Great Siege of Malta in the next century.

Melissa Davis says

I must say that I was quite disappointed with this book. The first one in the series, Changeling, told rather than described the scenes and situation, and the characters were not really likable because there wasn't much to them. I am not sure when that one was written, but thankfully Philippa has grown as an author since then. The second book, Stormbringers, was better, but it was very slow. The characters became more likable and actually began to have personalities. So I had big hopes for the third one, Fools' Gold. It was definitely better written, but there was still a lack of descriptive scenes and personalities. The main characters have their personalities, but the minor characters didn't really come to life except perhaps Lady Carintha.

I am a big fan of Philippa Gregory and was hoping to be able to share this book with my kids since it is written for young adults. But the third one, Fools' Gold, has some content that I don't feel comfortable sharing with them. I know there is sexual content in her other books, which is fine for adults, but I was hoping it would stay out of these ones. It's not terribly descriptive, and the first two were clean, but the bit that is in the third one gave me a bad taste. But that is only my opinion, so use your judgement with your own kids.

I also wish there was more revealed at this point in the whole story, but it seems like there will be several more books in the series. There is still a lot of mystery, mostly about Milord and the Order, and I imagine that is supposed to hook people, so it really is the "Order of Darkness" in keeping the reader in the dark about a lot of what is going on.

Sarita says

by mistake i ordered this compilation....note to publisher: do not make the covers almost identical....wasted a few bob

Lydia Roman says

Unfortunately, I got about 300 pages in and had to stop reading. I was really struggling to enjoy this book. I usually enjoy Philippa Gregory stories - but I didn't get into this one. I kept trying, but I just found it to be boring.

Emily says

Sadly did not finish this book.

The book contains the whole trilogy and I managed to get approx. half way through the second.

The first book in the trilogy, I found, started slowly but I stuck with it and it was ok. Not great by any means but it was mildly interesting. However, I felt nothing for the characters which was a real shame. I think it's mostly this that made me stop reading. On the cover it's states 'unputdownable'. To me it ended up being 'unpick-upable'.

Fiona says

Not up to Philippa's usual standards, dull, predictable and unrealistic. Guess its not aimed at the same audience as the usual relatively intellectual historical fiction.
