



In the Shadow of Lions: A Novel of Anne Boleyn

Ginger Garrett

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"I am the first writer, The Scribe. My books lie open before the Throne, and someday will be the only witness of your people and their time in this world. The stories are forgotten here, and the Day draws close. I will tell you one of my stories. You will record it."

So begins the narration of one such angel in this sweeping historical tale set during the reign of England's Henry VIII. It is the story of two women, their guardian angels, and a mysterious, subversive book... a book that outrages some, inspires others, and launches the Protestant Reformation.

The devout Anne Boleyn catches the eye of a powerful king and uses her influence to champion an English translation of the Bible—Scriptures the common people could read for themselves. Meanwhile, Rose, a broken, suicidal woman of the streets, is moved to seek God when she witnesses Thomas More's public displays of Christian charity, ignorant of his secret life spent eradicating the same book, persecuting anyone who dares read it.

Historic figures come alive in this thrilling story of heroes and villains, saints and sinners, angels and mortals ... and the sacred book that will inspire you anew.

In the Shadow of Lions: A Novel of Anne Boleyn Details

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From Reader Review In the Shadow of Lions: A Novel of Anne Boleyn for online ebook

Michelle says

About the Book:

"I am the first writer, The Scribe. My books lie open before the Throne, and someday will be the only witness of your people and their time in this world." So begins the narration of one such angel in this sweeping historical tale set during the reign of England's Henry VIII. It is the story of two women, their guardian angels, and a mysterious, subversive book . . . a book that outrages some, inspires others, and launches the Protestant Reformation. The devout Anne Boleyn catches the eye of a powerful king and uses her influence to champion an English translation of the Bible. Meanwhile, Rose, a broken, suicidal woman of the streets, is moved to seek God when she witnesses Thomas More's public displays of Christian charity, ignorant of his secret life spent eradicating the same book, persecuting anyone who dares read it. Historic figures come alive in this thrilling story of heroes and villains, saints and sinners, angels and mortals . . . and the sacred book that will inspire you anew.

My review:

What an amazing story! I hated for it to end. The only thing I didn't care for was the current "scribe" scenes. I totally loved the scenes from the past and Anne Boleyn's story. It amazes me when I think about how incredibly fickle people were in those days, and how ignorant. For Henry to kill or cast off each wife that wouldn't bear him a son, oy! How sad! I felt sorry for the women because it wasn't their fault. What difficult times they lived in. I found the accounts of the persecution fascinating and also hard to stomach because the story was so well-written I felt like I was there. To think that reading the Bible was enough to get you brutally tortured to the point of death... I shudder when I ponder it too long. So if you love fiction that transports you back in time with realism and cultural flair, you will want to read In the Shadow of Lions. Awesome and compelling storytelling.

In the Shadow of Lions was published by Cook Communications and released in Sept 2008.

Heather Barbour says

I really enjoyed this book. It was a bit of a different writing style, but it was good. I liked reading from Anne and Rose's point of view.

Kelly says

This is another first for me. I have read a lot of fiction but never Historical fiction. It isn't that the genre wasn't entertaining, it was just a genre I never looked to for reading enjoyment. Ginger Garrett's Shadow of Lions definitely made me rethink picking up historical fiction.

The book is a tapestry of four stories making one whole. We are lead through very visual language through

the rise of Anne Boleyn from Queen Catherine's lady in waiting to King Henry the VIII's strong desire. The story gives us another side to Anne as a devout Christian seeking the Lord's will, and her life being used to be part of a spark that leads to change in the very way people relate to God. This was at first hard for me to swallow, because I, like so many others, have only related to Anne Boleyn as a seductress and manipulator. What a refreshing change!

We also follow Rose on her journey as a fallen woman who has experienced the full force of God's redemptive grace. Watching her life change and grow is touching.

Ginger Garrett has written a magnificent piece. The characters are clearly drawn and become very real to the reader. I loved the way she made the world come alive with descriptive language that was full and rich with even the scents of the city, people, and gardens clearly described. *Shadow of Lions* is a book that I will definitely want to keep in my library.

Chris says

First let me say that Garrett's writing is good. The book has been edited. The reason why I couldn't finish is Garrett's character of Anne Boleyn. While I am glad, very glad, that a fictional writer makes use of Anne and religion, making Anne into a naive, innocent form a family who think thier elder daughter (Mary) is a slut, is a little much for me. Sorry. (I also didn't like the whole Katherine of Aragorn characterization).

I did like the description and interactions of the More family.

If you like PG, you might like this, though this book is far less trashy in terms of content.

Ruth says

Every once in a while I read a novel that is not only well-written and entertaining, but also challenges and grows my faith. *In the Shadow of Lions* is such a novel, and the story has stayed with me long after I finished the book. Ginger Garrett (author of the novels *Chosen: The Lost Diaries of Queen Esther 480-465 BC* and *Dark Hour (Serpent Moon Trilogy)*) excels at bringing history to life, and with her latest offering she turns her attention to the well-known Anne Boleyn and turns everything I thought I knew about the woman on its head. Garrett dares to challenge the view that Anne was a scheming, manipulative seductress, and asks the reader to consider another alternative. What if Anne was a committed Christian, caught in a vortex of danger and intrigue that swept her into events beyond her control? What if Anne's deeply held beliefs threatened the religious establishment of the day and earned her the enmity of powerful people, determined to sully her reputation for centuries to come?

In the Shadow of Lions is the story of two vastly different women - Anne, the noblewoman, and Rose, the peasant - both fighting against the restraints placed on them by a powerful patriarchal society. Anne, a devout Christian, wants to restore her family's good name in court, but more than that she refuses to dishonor God by becoming Henry's mistress. Rose, victimized by power-hungry clergymen who espouse virtue and then live in vice, longs for hope and redemption. Both women earn the enmity of powerful Church leaders who fear the "corrupting" influence of the Hutchins book (Hutchins was a pseudonym used by William Tyndale) - an English translation of the Bible taking Europe by storm. As people discover the scriptures for

themselves, they learn that many of the established Church's teachings and requirements have little or no basis in biblical fact. The Hutchins book brings people face-to-face with God and His grace, without the Church as an intermediary. Anne's support of the Hutchins book is central to her tumultuous rise and fall from power in Henry's court.

The first entry in the *Chronicles of the Scribe* series is a fast-paced, completely engrossing read. The juxtaposition of Anne's and Rose's experiences are further contrasted with present-day scenes, where the Scribe angel dictates their stories to a dying editor, an unknowing heiress to the women's legacy of faith. Garrett lifts the veil between the physical and spiritual worlds and powerfully reminds readers that there is so much more to life than what can be seen with earthly eyes. Anne and Rose's story of faith and sacrifice is a heart-wrenching reminder that the right to read the Bible was a right paid for in blood. If the true version of Anne is even halfway between the commonly known history and story presented here, history has done her a grave disservice. Both as a woman and as a Christian, I found myself chastened by the reminder of how many freedoms I take for granted that were bought through the faith and sacrifices of women before me. As Garrett states in the epilogue, average Americans own multiple copies of the Bible and read none of them. Unless people know and cling to the truth found within those pages, unless we remember the sacrifices that bought the right to read the scriptures in the vernacular, the victories of the past will be lost, and the battle must be fought again. Kudos to Garrett for delivering a story brimming with life-changing truths, and giving Anne Boleyn new life as an achingly real, relatable - warts and all - child of God.

Jo says

This book was a terrible mess. Important historical facts were not included or completely disregarded and the whole thing just felt rushed. And, wow, what an incredible piece of anti-Catholicism not seen in England since the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605!

Jill says

This was defiantly a unique read. It was without a doubt, unexpected. I was hesitant to continue on from an early start, but felt compelled to see what the writer was trying to express. This book gives a very different perspective on King Henry VIII's court and his relationship with Anne Boleyn. I would quickly say that this is not a book that is a fan of catholicism...but it is distinctly christian-or more precisely, protestant. It turns Sir Thomas Moore into a villain in a lot of ways and somewhat demonizes the catholic church from that period. As a catholic, I am very aware of the church's history, and how in that time things were not organized or always handled properly and christianly. I was interested to see this time period from a different view, since I have read so many books that focus on this period.

The storyline of the overall novel is a bit odd to me. It jumps back and forth from Henry's court to something similar to modern day. The characters in the contemporary portion include a woman in a hospital suffering from what I believe to be terminal cancer and another character who seems almost disembodied or godlike (the scribe). I think the book would have actually moved more fluidly if the modern characters and time period would have been omitted altogether. There are other books in this series, but I currently do not plan on pursuing them any further than this.

Mel (Daily Prophecy) says

Also on <http://thedailyprophecy.blogspot.com>

Summary.

This book starts with the story of a dying woman in our time. She is visited by a strange figure nobody else can see: an Angel called The Scribe. He wants her to record the story he is about to tell out of The Tablets of Destiny.

He begins with Rose, a suicidal woman who ends up in the household of Thomas More. She is devoted to God until she reads the forbidden book from Hutchins. More is trying to persecute everyone who dares to read this book, because it's against God and the law. These heretics must burn for their sins. That's why More refuses to sign the Act of Supremacy and he is willing to give his life for it.

Between this story, we get glimpses of Anne Boleyn's life. She is sent to court to serve Catherine as a humble submission, because her sister Mary is pregnant from King Henry's child. Henry lays his eyes on Anna, but she refuses to become his mistress. That's how Henry starts to get rid of Catherine. Anne is going to be the one to give him an heir, but when she "only" gives him a daughter, it's time to get another wife.

Review.

I was surprised by the beginning of this book and it was very confusing first. Bridget is in a hospital, waiting to die from cancer. She used to be an author and The Scribe wants her to write down the story. When he first starts about Angels and Archangels, I almost thought I had the wrong book in front of me. Despite the strange start, I thought it was an enjoyable book.

Rose's story was the least interesting. I felt disconnected from her and I felt like I missed important pieces of her life to truly understand her. I liked the fact that I got to see more of More's life. His passion for God and his strange way to show it – burning other people on the stake – were fascinating. The main reason why I wanted to read this book was Anne Boleyn. I loved the original approach. Instead of making her the seducing, manipulating girl, Garrett portrayed her as innocent and faithful. This was so different from all the books I've read so far and from the television show – I really liked it.

Conclusion.

I'm still not sure if the beginning of this book fits to the story. I was left with some questions about The Scribe and why he wanted to record these stories. I don't know why Rose story was so important, but it was interesting to see the impact of Henry's decisions among the people. The take on Anne Boleyn was refreshing. All together, a good book, but I don't feel the need to pick up part 2 soon.

Anne knew her temper was flushing her cheeks. "I will not speak of that night, nor will I speak of the future. I will speak only on what I know today. I have not read this book of Leviticus, but I know my prayers. You have a wife. I will never consent to be a mistress."

Becky says

I really liked Ginger Garrett's style of writing - it was interesting and had a really smooth flow. I liked the

basic premise of this story - an angel of sorts is re-telling Anne Boleyn's story as it supposedly "really" happened to a modern woman dying of cancer. It does present a different side of Anne Boleyn and a different side of Thomas More than is usually presented in history books.

That said - it was pretty bad. She actually says implies in the Author's Notes that Anne Boleyn may have been the greatest Christian martyr of all time (really??? I mean, really? Come on GG....) and that she hopes we never speak poorly of her again. This seems a tad extreme to me. At the end, the dying woman is saved (spiritually) because she acknowledges the "truth" of Hutchins' book.

Ginger Garrett botches Tudor history pretty well in this one. She admits that she doesn't use any primary sources - what she refers to as her primary sources are actually all secondary sources. Her timeline is very condensed - she makes it seem like everything happens in the course of a year, year and a half, when in reality Henry courted Anne for years before they got married, and they were married for several years (and she had several miscarriages) before she was executed. I'm not part of the Anne-Boleyn-Was-Evil school of thought but neither am I in the Anne-Boleyn-Was-A-Saint camp. This book makes it sound like Anne Boleyn was essentially kidnapped by the king until she submitted to him and like her family was against the whole affair from the beginning, even though historical evidence indicates her father and uncle (the Duke of Norfolk, who is mentioned briefly at the end, as if Garrett realizes she should add some more historical figures into the book) likely orchestrated the whole thing. It's also just as likely that Anne was a Protestant as a way to subvert Wolsey and the Catholic church that wouldn't grant the annulment, as it is that she was one due to her deep faith. The reality is probably a combination of the two, but I had a hard time swallowing the portrayal of Anne Boleyn as an innocent martyr at the mercy of the king. She wasn't known for her beauty so it's unlikely the king became so enamored with her at their first meeting that he put her in her own quarters, etc. - by other accounts I have read the enamoration was a result of her wit, charm, and intelligence, along with her looks. All these historical missteps stood out to me, a complete non-expert on Tudor history, but there were enough mistakes/omissions here to really interfere with my enjoyment of the book.

The Rose story line was more interesting, although again, Garrett takes a very "gray" area in English history (who was right? who was wrong? it all depends on who you ask...) and makes it very black-and-white - Thomas More was hell-bent on eradicating the heretics as a way for him to keep control, etc. It was a different way of telling the story but not all that captivating. It was also clear that Rose and Anne knew each other, presumably from the secret circles, but this was not specified. Margaret's sudden change of heart from being a closet Protestant to an ardent Catholic also seemed extreme and a tad ridiculous.

Final vote - 2 stars. Interesting story for the most part, good writing style, but horrible use of history. I am planning on reading the second one to see if it's any better, b/c I liked her writing enough to give her another chance, but I can't really recommend this book.

Danielle says

I picked this up thinking I should try to read a Christian Fiction book. I don't really read Christian Fiction, but based on the description and the fact the author is an expert on ancient women's history I thought this might be worth a try. The summary on the back of the book initially confused me. I think it expected the reader to already be familiar with Thomas More, Anne Boleyn, and the transition of England to Anglicanism, but I'm not very familiar with any of it other than I know of the many wives of Henry VIII and these things and people existed. I say this because I read the back of the book thinking this was about the Protestant Reformation in England, but also I thought the book would have a speculative fiction element to it involving

a time displaced woman (I got this bit from reading part of the first chapter which opens on a woman dying in a hospital. This is actually a third minor story line in the book). There is no time traveling woman, she is just writing this story down in the present day. There is a quite a bit going on in this book and the ideas are interesting. Like I mentioned above I didn't know much about the English reformation and how much of a stir the publication of William Tyndale's English translation of the Bible would have caused. In addition to the perfect storm it caused with the king's interest in producing an heir and circumventing the Catholic Church to remarry. It is interesting to read about the history happening but unfortunately the characters themselves and their story wasn't something that kept me invested in the book. It's an easy read, but I lost interest 2/3s of the way through and had to make myself finish it. There is a lot to get from this book and it is far from bad, but it just isn't for me.

Stephanie Tracy says

This was an absolutely amazing story about two Tudor women - one, the very famous Anne Boleyn, and the other a fictional servant to Thomas More named Rose. Both women are on very different paths, with very different purposes, but their lives center around one book - the newly influential book by William Hutchins, a heretic. This is a story not only about the famous love between Henry VIII and his second wife, but also about an attachment and willingness to seek God, when powerful people at court were discouraging them, and even putting them to death. It's a completely different look at one of England's most notorious women - not just another retelling of the same story. It is through completely different eyes. If you like Anne Boleyn, or are fascinated by her effect on England, Henry VIII, and religion in general, go buy this book now!

Linda says

I'm not exactly sure how to rate this book. The author certainly gives a different view of Anne Boleyn than secular history has taught us for nearly 500 years. It has intrigued me enough to continue with the series.

Note to readers: There are many references to a book by a man named "Hutchins". I was confused by this, as I did not remember that name from Tudor history. In the Epilogue, Ms. Garrett clarifies that "Hutchins" was one of the pseudonyms used by early Bible translator William Tyndale, when he was being pursued by the authorities for his then-illegal activities.

Shantelle says

In the Shadow of Lions by Ginger Garrett is a historical novel with a generous splash of speculative-fiction-ness. Following Anne Boleyn (one of the wives of King Henry VIII) and a peasant woman named Rose, plus cancer-victim Bridget, who lives in the modern world, this book makes for quite the interesting story. And strange. For a while, I got really into it. But it never rose to what I was hoping it would be. Hence, the two-star rating.

Let me explain. While, yes, intriguing and well-written, the storyline of *In the Shadow of Lions* was lacking, to me personally. For one, I felt it maybe took too much liberties with real people in history. Two, Christianity was so mixed up, it rather overwhelmed me. I know that at that time in England, the Church was quite misleading people. But in this book, Anne Boleyn, a mistress of the king, basically a husband-stealer, is

portrayed as someone bringing God's Word to people, while King Henry VIII's first wife, Catherine, (who was cruelly cast aside) is quite against the Bible and Truth. Thomas More, Henry VIII, and other men are always crying and praying and saying their doing God's work when they're killing people or that God has blessed them after they committed adultery and their mistress is pregnant It was sickening! Anne Boleyn is created to be a victim, the next prey of the king. She says she won't become his mistress; they must be married. And so sets on this mission to become queen. It seems she sort of uses spreading word about William Tyndale's translation of the Bible as a means to become queen - to get what she wanted. And, in the end, she decides she tired of waiting and goes to the king without the blessing of marriage. It seems she doesn't care truly about spreading God's word, but what she can get out of it. She doesn't know God at all. She blesses Him when she's getting her way, and accuses Him when she's not. She never feels remorseful for her sin. But in the end, some angel-like person tells her she's going to heaven.

It was all confusing and strange to me, and I wasn't sure what the message of the book was.

Also, with the "intrigue" between King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, there were some unnecessary things added in. I felt some of it was inappropriate. What is the point of telling this story - telling how Anne felt? What happened between them was obviously wrong. The Bible speaks clearly against adultery, divorce, and flirting with sin.

I don't know. This book just wasn't for me. I don't exactly understand what the point of the story was. Hmm. I guess you can decide that for yourself if you want to read *In the Shadow of Lions*.

Crystal says

This is an unusual POV--what if Anne Boleyn was a martyr? All the historical people are here--Thomas More, King Henry the Eighth, William Hutchins(William Tyndale.) I read it and was inspired to read my Bible through again as it made me weep how we got our Bible into our hands. A mighty work of fiction--loved it. Edgy and inspiring.

Eustacia Tan says

Like one of the characters says in this book, everyone's written something about Anne Boleyn. But this book is sympathetic towards her. This makes it rather strange for me, because my first introduction to her was through The Other Boleyn Girl, which was not a very flattering portrait.

In The Shadow of Lions has a very interesting narrative style. It jumps between the 'author' of the book and the actual story. Personally, I found this style distracting, I didn't care about the author (there wasn't enough details and she was forever justifying herself) and would have preferred to just read the 'historical' section alone.

In the historical part of the book, there is Rose (a, um, stained woman who received a second chance) and Anne Boleyn. What I don't understand, is how Anne Boleyn can be a 'good Christian' and believe in things like fairies. Likewise, other characters believe in things like Unicorns and such. I suppose though, that this was a heresy of the time.

Anne and Rose as characters.... well, I like Rose (although I didn't care much for the household she was in),

and while I was initially prejudiced against Anne, she won me over by the end.

What I was really interested in though, was 'The Hutchins Book', in other words, The Holy Bible translated into English for the first time. That was really the part of the story that kept me reading. I felt that there wasn't enough in the court-section or the house-hold section to capture my attention or my heart. But the whole heretics and faith thing? Gripping.

Personally, the strongest point of the book was how it showed that by making Latin the "tongue of angels" and thus inaccessible to normal people, faith can be distorted. I really wasn't that interested in the plot, although since Rose and Anne are tied up in the book, they managed to grab my interest.

And out of curiosity does anyone know why it's Latin that's the chosen language? I'm pretty sure the Bible was written in Aramic, Hebrew and Greek.

First posted at Inside the mind of a Bibliophile
