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The Secret Healer (The Secret Healer Series)



Synopsis

In the fourteenth century, opportunities for women are limited to the home. But spirited young Madlen finds her calling as assistant to the city's trusted midwife, Clara. Working alongside Clara, Madlen develops a surprisingly soothing technique and quickly becomes a talented healer. After Clara's tragic death, Madlen alone rushes to assist the birth of a local nobleman's child. But rather than the joy of birth, Madlen walks into an accusation of murder and witchcraft because of her extraordinary gifts. Forced to flee her own town, she establishes a new identity in the home of her aunt. Yet even though it endangers her life, she cannot resist the urge to help the sick patients who seek out her miraculous treatment. When she meets handsome Johannes •an investigator hired by the Church to bring her to justice for sacrilegious acts •she becomes drawn to the very man who could destroy her. Will Madlen's gifts bring about her downfall? Or can love and reason prevail in a time of fearful superstition?

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Customer Reviews

I was very impressed with this new-to-me author. Loved the book; kept me up late at night (reading in the dark under a black pashmina so as not to awaken my dearest Hubs) is a wonderful way to relax and learn. There are wonderful characters, a strong story line and goodness triumphs over evil....and I loved that it was set in mid-evil parts of Germany; i have very good memories from Germany and it was a good way to revisit those memories as well. I hope to find more of this authors works. I was stunned that there were negative reviews, but dear author do not take it seriously, they know not what they read. Your book is well written, your translator did a great job and I found the book to be wonderful. And I have read everything I can get my hands on for 60+ years. I loved your book!

The writing leaves much to be desired (or perhaps the translation leaves much to be desired...either way), and there are very obvious historical inaccuracies despite being a historical fiction novel. Lacks authentic dialogue and consistent perspective.

This book made me feel something a book hadn't done in a while. I was on the edge of my seat and unable to stop reading until I finished it. I had to know what happened! I became involved with the characters, I wanted everything to work out for Madelyn. I loathed and despised the antagonist. This was a well written book and I devoured every word. I would definitely recommend it.

. . . though the need then was greater than today, what with bleeding and prayer being the most used treatments available to university-trained doctors. At the outset, Madlen is a 15-year-old girl living in Heidelberg occasionally assisting a midwife and healer with births and herbal remedies. Her father Jerg does not appreciate her absences from the housework. Following the midwife's untimely death, and responding to her own wish to be helpful to suffering folk in her city, Madlen predictably falls afoul of the evil nature of an ambitious local nobleman. The story and the characters, though not fully rounded out, are engaging from the first pages onward, and we find ourselves alternately rejoicing at Madlen's good fortune and then despairing with her as fortune's fickleness turns her joy inside out. The plot passes from crisis to bliss to crisis, sometimes rather swiftly. The prose in translation is adequate, but laden with anachronistic expressions, and the point of view of the narrative occasionally shifts two or three times on a single page.

I will update again when I finish the book BUT - after only a few chapters, I am struggling. The plot

seems as good as others have said, but if you care a great deal about POV consistency, this is not the book for you. There are other grammar issues in the translation and simple matters of refinement that would take this book from "good in theory" to a great read. These are things I wish I'd known ahead, as I would not have even chosen it for my Kindle First freebie, as they throw me out of the story.

Rating: 3.5 What a mixed bag! While at times, I could not read fast enough, at other times, I almost stopped reading. I listened to the audio, so I am taking that into account. Also, since this is translated into English, that could affect the cadence of the writing. There's no doubt, this is an emotionally-charged story, but it reads as a 21st-century novel set in the 14th century. I missed the usual feel of a Medieval novel. The heroine does something that totally turned my stomach, yet even though I came very close to not finishing the book, I read on. I am glad I read the entire book, parts of it are fascinating and had me cheering even though how things played out would never have happened during this time period. I know I am being vague, but I do not want to give anything away. If you can overlook the modern language and the historical improbabilities, then you will enjoy a compelling story. I know I did. The bottom line is, this is fiction and a writer can twist things. Happy reading!

I originally downloaded this book because the title caught my attention and nothing else. Ever since I started reading it, I couldn't put it away. It was such a delightful weekend in company of this book. Can't wait to download another one from this author

Heidelberg, Germany 1387, a sixteen year old midwife's apprentice with a gift for healing becomes the unwitting target of a despicable and ambitious nobleman. What is the significance of the year 1387? Three hundred and sixty pages later I have no idea; it might just as easily have taken place in 1887 as historical details are almost totally absent. Apart from passing references to the Hanseatic League and the founding of Heidelberg University, and "the never-ending city wars" (which reads as if it were swiped from Wikipedia), the lack of context and texture greatly impoverish this story. Because this is a translation it is difficult to know if the pedestrian prose, modern idioms, clichés and many glaring anachronisms are the work of the author or the translator. "...for now I need a cold beer." "Nail this bastard." "It was a special joy to meet you. Do you come here often?" Or this -

“When treating a pregnant woman, proper sanitation was of the utmost importance so as not to endanger the child. I think the word here should be hygiene, not sanitation, but the point is that while it is true that in the aftermath of the Black Death some people recognized the need for clean hands (washed with water, vinegar or scented oils) an understanding of the spread of disease from unhygienic practices was not fully accepted until the 19th century. There is more of this but why bother. By far my biggest issue beyond the bad writing is the fact while Madlen is beautiful, caring, gentle and kind she is never given agency in her own story, time and again she is rescued not by her own resources but by her brother, her aunt, her attorney, a kindly innkeeper. Every conflict or difficulty is overcome not by Madlen but by some other character. Maybe that’s why 1387, she’s a classic damsel in distress.

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