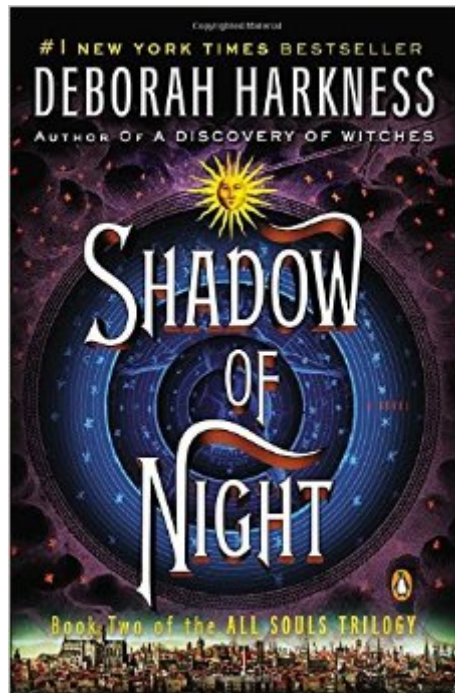


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Shadow Of Night (All Souls Trilogy, Bk 2)



Synopsis

The #1 New York Times “bestselling sequel to *A Discovery of Witches*, book two of the *All Souls Trilogy*” “œas enchanting, engrossing, and impossible to put down as its predecessor” • (Miami Herald) J. K. Rowling, Stephenie Meyer, Anne Rice “only a few writers capture the imagination the way that Deborah Harkness has with her New York Times “bestselling *All Souls* trilogy. *A Discovery of Witches* introduces reluctant witch Diana Bishop, vampire geneticist Matthew Clairmont, and the battle for a lost, enchanted manuscript known as Ashmole 782. Picking up from *A Discovery of Witches*’s cliffhanger ending, *Shadow of Night* takes Diana and Matthew on a trip through time to Elizabethan London, where they are plunged into a world of spies, magic, and a coterie of Matthew’s old friends, the School of Night. As the search for Ashmole 782 deepens and Diana seeks out a witch to tutor her in magic, the net of Matthew’s past tightens around them, and they embark on a very different “and vastly more dangerous” journey.

Book Information

Series: *All Souls Trilogy* (Book 2)

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Customer Reviews

Shadow of Night picks up a second after *A Discovery of Witches* ends. We join Matthew and Diana in their time jump to the 1500s where their goals are to 1) find a witch to train Diana and 2) find the mysterious Ashmole 782. But instead of doing this and picking up where the story left off, the author gets lost in history instead and the story disappears. Within a few pages the reader is instantly thrown into a crowded and overwhelming sea full of famous literary characters and influential

historical figures. In the very first chapter you meet famed playwrights and poets and others who have little to no purpose in the story. As much as it pains me to admit it, this book started out surprisingly dry and dull. I actually had to force myself through it. I rushed through the first book in the trilogy since I loved it so much, but not this one. Sadly, 100 pages into *Shadow of Night* and the story had yet to move forward. Matthew and Diana hadn't even come close to accomplishing what they meant to do when they went back in time. All they had done at this point is focused on Matthew's affairs during his life in the 1500s. This is when I understood why the book is 600 pages. Now, does that make this a bad book? No. Harkness is absolutely brilliant and her knowledge of history is highly impressive. There were a handful of interesting scenes and moments in the book, however, they had nothing to do with the main story. They were just written and plopped into a spot in the book with no point or purpose. They dragged the book down, dragged it very very far down. I stopped reading many times because I lost focus. Had those pages been removed, this book wouldn't be 600 pages, but half of that, and it would have been much better. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy history, but not like this. *Shadow of Night* felt like a history textbook at times and not a historical novel. I think the author, with her love for history and teaching (she's a history professor), blurred the lines a bit too much. There needs to be more than dates and historical facts, there has to be a story - a story that moves forward. Luckily, once you get deeper into the book, there is a story and we finally begin Diana's witch training, as well as the search for Ashmole 782. There are quite a few rocky parts in the story, but there were fantastic moments as well. Those fantastic moments saved this book and eventually it got to the point where I couldn't put *Shadow of Night* down. However, while I was eventually captivated by the fascinating world of *Shadow of Night*, I was still disappointed overall. I was expecting another novel as amazing as *A Discovery of Witches*. I hate being so harsh on *Shadow of Night*, especially since it had many great moments and because I am so incredibly awed and impressed by the author. But the sad truth is that this book needed some extra tweaking to make it truly great. There were far too many issues to ignore - unnecessary characters, sloppy storytelling, far too many random pages that served no purpose, the main male character doing a personality 180 and acting like a bipolar sack of crazy... etc. I do have high hopes for the final book in the trilogy though, especially since a lot has been left unanswered so far. I can't wait to find out how it all ends.

Every so often, a book comes along. It's everything you imagine a great fiction to be. It evokes the tremendous joy of just being able to read, to immerse yourself in a book so fully, to jump into a journey where every sense in your body is heightened and your mind stimulated. Then the last page

is turned, you sigh with sadness since you know you will not be able to find another book like this for a long, long time. *Shadow of Night* is such a book. I wrote these in my review of the first book of the trilogy: "The author has in depth knowledge not only about history, but also science, architecture, Europe, culinary delights and wine... The book immediately reminded me of *"The Historian"* by Elizabeth Kostova, since both story took me to places in Europe that I've never been and historical periods that were so enlightening.....The story will be a delight for people who actually enjoy accurate scientific, historical, culinary and geographical information. The author has a wealth of knowledge and a unique style of writing and she's willing to share." The review still rings true for the second installment, and more so. For readers who disliked the first installment of the series due to the slowness of the beginning, you'll be delighted to hear that this book started right at the part where the first book dropped off, and is a thrill ride all the way to the end. You can also find satisfactory answers to most, if not all the burning questions that you had after reading *A Discovery of Witches*. I know it's a gruesome wait for the second book in the series, but the wait is well worth it...this book surpassed everything I had imagined it to be. The story begins right where the first book left off, Matthew and Diana landed in Elizabethan England, 1590, hoping to find the enchanted Ashmole 782, as well as someone to help the spellbound Diana to learn her abilities. You'll be surprised to encounter real historical characters that came alive under Harkness' pen. Harkness' take on Christopher Marlowe, Elizabeth I, Walter Raleigh and others were unique and creative, yet totally believable. I wrote in my review of *ADoW* how I fell in love with all the characters in the first book, yet I'm equally invested in all the new characters in *Shadow of Night*, both historical and fictional. It's heartbroken to realize that these characters live in another space and time, and the only way I could reconnect with them is through the re-reading of this book. If you loved *A Discovery of Witches* because of Harkness' extensive and detailed descriptions of everything, you're in for another treat. Harkness brought Elizabethan England to life using her professional knowledge and her unique writing voice: fashion, writing, architecture, food, music, writing, cooking, art, jewelries, home decors, smell of spices, and even the sound of church bells.... Be prepared to be immersed into 1600 Europe, from England to France and Prague, whether if you're prepared or not. I recommend you to drop or finish every other book in your list to get ready for the most sensual ride in your life. I also love how Harkness incorporated a short chapter of the present after each part of the book. It shows how Diana and Matthew's interference with the past affects the future. Everything that we do or not do has an impact in future, especially in our loved one and family's life. Hopefully, history is valued and lessons learned. These chapters showed us how important it is to seize the moment and live your life, because there's no going back. A few tender moments brought tears to

my eyes. Compared to ADoW, the second book is much more emotional. Romance. Matthew and Diana in the 1600s were not without their problems. Matthew in Elizabethan era was a much more complex and dark character. The society was also less friendly for females, especially a witch with a weird accent. However, fans looking forward to more romance between them will not be disappointed. There are lots and lots of tender moments and love. It made up for what was lacking in A Discovery of Witches. If I write anymore here, this review will become a book! I do have a few recommendations before you jump in for the journey of your life: 1) Read A Discovery of Witches first. There's no way you could understand the plot and all the complexity of this book if you don't know the history of the characters. 2) Many new characters are introduced in this book. Use the appendix/Guide at the end of the book to familiar yourself with them. They are divided by location, quite clever. 3) If you are going to look for a simple, easy read for entertainment, this book is not for you; but if you love history, science, Europe, art, literature, geography, religion, philosophy, (food and wine for ADoW)...then, get this book (and the first).

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