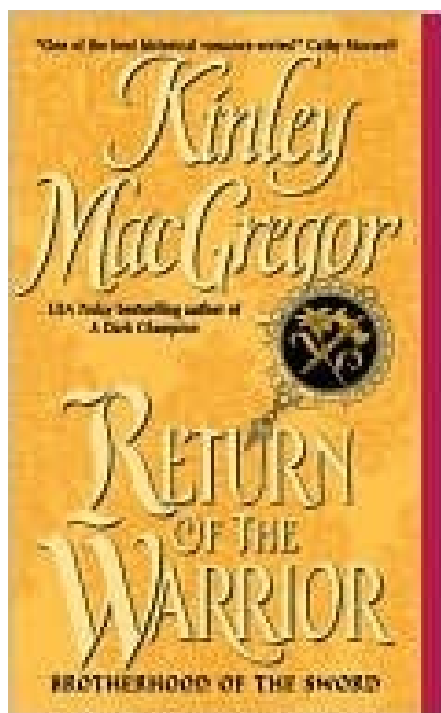




Return of the Warrior

Kinley MacGregor

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Return of the Warrior Kinley MacGregor

Fearless men, their allegiance is to each other, to the oppressed, and to the secret society known as the Brotherhood of the Sword -- and they must never surrender to the passionate yearnings of their noble hearts.

Fiercely devoted to her people and her land, Queen Adara refuses to let a power-mad usurper steal her crown. But the only way to protect what is hers is to seek out the man she married in childhood.

A proud, tormented warrior, Christian of Acre owes allegiance only to the mysterious Brotherhood -- and has no wish to be king over anyone but himself. Now a bold and beautiful stranger has appeared in his rooms, tempting him with an irresistible seduction and demanding he accompany her back to their kingdoms ... or, at the very least, provide her with an heir to her throne. Though he cannot abandon the brave regal lady to her enemies, Christian dares not give in to his traitorous body's desires. Yet how can he deny the passion that is rightfully his and the ecstasy that awaits him in Adara's kiss?

Return of the Warrior Details

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From Reader Review Return of the Warrior for online ebook

Sherily says

You will see Loyalty at it's finest! The Brotherhood is truly a brotherhood indeed and is the very definition of what friendship should be. Christian of Acres, aka the Abott, is part of the Brotherhood and I thought him an interesting character from the previous book. Christian is very closed off to the world and love. He only associates with those in the brotherhood. We find out who Christian truly is, since the whole time we only think of him as a Monk.

Adara is a Princess who is trying to save her people and herself from marrying someone cruel who only wants her lands and power. Adara has been waiting years for Christian to return home and consummate their marriage. But there has been no word of his whereabouts and the situation becomes dire when they try to force her into a loveless marriage. She decides to go find him herself.

Now there are people out to murder them both. There are some LOL moments. But mostly there are many intense moments and suspense. I was really disappointed in the consummation part, but Christian does redeem himself. Poor man has lived in solitary for most of his life, it is no wonder he is awkward around women.

I couldn't help but fall in love with Phantom. He sounds like a great character. He made me laugh the most. There is much action and I was on the edge with anticipation of many outcomes and what was to become of them. Overall it was a quick read. A great historical romance with love, suspense, action, mystery, loyalty and true friendship.

Tatiana says

Ohh mi Dios Lochlan MacCallister!!!! No puedo creer que así se termine esta saga doble, la verdad quede con muchas ganas de historias de los miembros de la hermandad de la espada, pero bueno así es la Kenyon. Lochlan como un Laird de su clan tiene un sentido del deber y la familia increíbles, lo que lo lleva a tomar una travesía para saber de su hermano Kieran. Es brutal lo que pasa. Brutal. Me encantó como se mezcló todo con la hermandad. Me hizo falta Ewan :(

Catarina es una loca, solo ella podía morder a Lochlan xD en fin una gran mujer con un carácter increíble. Me encanto. Aunque lastima como termina lo de Kieran y lo de Duncan.

Kathrynn says

Adara and Christian married when they were 8 and 12 years old, then went off to live their lives until they were old enough to consummate their vows.

Christian never showed to claim Adara and the validity of the marriage is questioned, so she hunts him down. Well, let me say, the consummation was completed and Christian had a lot to learn about women! By the end of the book, he only slightly redeemed himself.

Louisa says

I enjoyed reading about Christian and Adara so much! They were awesome and so good! Though I wonder what happened at the end of the 3rd last chapter, when Christian get's a knife thrown at him! I want to know what happened right after, but it's never mentioned!

First read July 11th 2012

Oh, great book, really funny, hope for more historical books soon!

Katy says

WOW! I loved this book, this book was the first book of the 'brotherhood' series I read even though it was the 5th (from what i remember) in the series it was far one of the best books I've read.

The brotherhood series is basically a secret band of people who have survived the holy land and came back stronger yet scared from their experiences. They form a brotherhood and protect each other, vowing if any other is in need they will help. They escaped from an Arab prison during the crusades where they were abused and beaten. They were virtually children. Boys and Girls from different backgrounds. Lords and commoners alike. A band of brothers formed and protected the weak in the prison and between them they managed to escape. But some couldn't escape and were left behind and they either grew resentful and twisted with their hate and became the enemy of the brotherhood, or they realised their was no other way to survive and joined the other side.

The whole series revolves around different characters of the brotherhood, they are scared, some arrogant, some tortured souls and some scary and hot all at the same time. They meet women who are strong enough to show them how to love and trust and they slowly come out of their shell to them. But not without some laughs and upsets along the way. Also quite a lot of surprises!

This story starts in striders story 'dark champion' where Christian is sent to meet someone. Since leaving his past behind after the Holy land Christian pledged as the rest of the brotherhood are to helping his fellow 'brothers' from the enemy who are out to kill them all. You don't find out who the enemy are at first they seem to hide behind others first. Christian chooses to don a monk's robes and is known as 'the abbot' to the brotherhood for his pious ways and would always be the hope and spiritual guidance of his fellow prisoners so the name stuck.

As he is waiting he finds that there is a beautiful woman waiting for him in his room naked. She 'Adara' a queen of a neighbouring country of his birth and has come to claim the man she was married to as a child. Un-be-known to him they are man and wife and she has been waiting for him to come and take his place next to her. She explains that they were married as children and needs help to clear her kingdom of the man who wants the throne from her. Who has taken Christians kingdom and is hell bent on taking Adaras. Christian at first refuses to help. But then as the story goes on he finds that he needs her and can't be without her. They meet some wonderful characters on the way. This book is far the best one of the series even though they are all great. I love this book and would recommend it to anyone who loves all things romantic and likes there hero's to be huge, macho, adoring, handsome, scared pig headed bad boys who are just aching to be tamed!

Zeek says

I finished Kinley Macgregor's Return of the Warrior. Per usual, Macgregor (aka Sherrilyn Kenyon) repeated one phrase too much- she seems to find one word or phrase that fascinates her in each of her stories and reuses it way to much. This one?

“Gimlet Stare”.

::blink::

Huh?

Counted it 4 times, when one was more than enough. Plus, as said before, she introduces way too many characters- obviously so she can start a series. Yet Again, I somehow ended up with an ok feeling about the book.

I'm feeling lazy so I'm just gonna paste the back cover blurb here for the synop:

Queen Adara of Taagaria is a woman with a mission. She has to find her wayward husband and either return home with him or return home pregnant. If she fails, her beloved country will be overrun by her husband's uncle who seeks to murder them and steal both their thrones.

Christian of Acre has no desire to be king of anyone except himself. Nor is he aware that the paper he signed as a boy was a marriage contract and not a betrothal. He spent his childhood first imprisoned in a monastery by his uncle, then later in a Saracen prison. Now that he is free, he wants only to help those in need. The last thing he wants is to be tied to a wife. His allegiance is to the Brotherhood of the Sword, not to an unknown kingdom.

But when the beautiful and alluring Adara appears unexpectedly in his room--naked--and informs him that not only is he her husband, but that he must perform his duty by her and give her an heir, Christian can't help but be intrigued by her most tempting proposition

Gizella Tóth says

Nincs mese, imádom Kenyont, még ha MacGregornak híják is. Pontosan azt kaptam, amit vártam: habkönnyű? kikapcsolódást ármánnyal, kalandokkal, izgalmakkal és romantikával (na jó, szexszel, amiről le tudtam volna mondani:) és persze a kötelező happy enddel, nehogy sérülés érje érzékeny lelkemet. Az egyetlen hiányérzetet a többi rész szereplőinek emlegetése, ám nem megjelenése okozta. Kénytelen leszek elvenni a sorozatot, és felidézni, ki kicsoda. :)

Océano de libros says

Christian deAcre es uno de los componentes de la famosa Hermandad de la espada, más conocido como el Abad, un hombre que solo se tiene a sí mismo y no busca nada más en la vida que la función que tiene encomendada en la hermandad. Todo se complica cuando se encuentra con Adara, la joven reina que le ruega que salve a su reino de manos enemigas.

La novela pintaba mucho más, está bien pero le faltaron muchos detalles para que fuera estupenda; y es que el principio prometía pero fue más bien poco atractivo poco a poco la trama va cogiendo consistencia y pasado el ecuador es mucho más entretenida.

Los personajes fueron casi lo mismo: esperaba más de Christian, más trasfondo, no me llegó a disgustar pero tampoco me fascinó. Con respecto a Adara más de lo mismo aunque de ella sí que no me esperaba nada porque no la conocía de libros anteriores como es el caso de Christian. Por ahí hay otros más pero no se llega a entretener mucho la autora en ellos, lo que es una pena (véase El Fantasma o Lutian) que podrían aportarle un poquito más a la historia.

Con respecto a la historia es entretenida, bien narrada pero poco más. Se queda con tres o cuatro estrellas, todavía a estas alturas me lo estoy pensando.

Jisela says

Historia igual de fantástica a las demás. Le doy 4 estrellas para un 4.5 como calificación.

Tenemos a Christian como protagonista, un hombre igual de profundo y atormentado que los demás. Adara, la princesa y esposa de Christian me parece genial, muy comprometida comprensiva, y sobre todo apasionada. Amé ambos personajes, en mi opinión se complementan perfectamente, hacen una pareja genial. Ese magnetismo que los une desde el primer momento, esa chispa que poco a poco va creciendo entre ellos y ese amor inmenso que terminan sintiendo el uno por el otro hace de ésta una novela exquisita. A ésto hay que agregar que es totalmente impredecible, en todo momento son sorpresas y más sorpresas que hacen que nos quedemos prendados hasta el final; ésto es algo que siempre subrayo al reseñar las novelas de ella, y creo que no dejaré de hacerlo porque es uno de los rasgos que la caracterizan.

Tengo que decir que cuando leí el epílogo de la entrega anterior, me imaginaba algo totalmente diferente, prometía mucho ésta escena que se describe, sin embargo no fue nada de lo que esperaba: aquí de nuevo se hace evidente la impredecibilidad de la que hacen gala las novelas de la autora y aunque no me esperaba que todo fuera como fue, debo decir que me encantó y me maravilló en igual medida. En esta novela, tenemos de nuevo esas cosas que caracterizan a las novelas de Kinley Mac Gregor: Humor y romanticismo hasta decir ahí no más, millares de emociones que transmite lo que viven los personajes y unas inmensas ganas de devorar la novela sin parar. Algo fundamental en los escritos de la autora es la sensualidad y la pasión que surge desde el primer momento en los personajes, y creo que sin ellos no sería lo mismo, aunque se hace muy tópico en sus novelas.

Algo sucede y es que, aunque es la penúltima novela de la serie y ha sido una experiencia maravillosa, creo que se queda corta. Es decir, me quedaré con las ganas de conocer la historia de amor del Fantasma (creo que compactó con Corryn desde el primer momento), de algunos miembros de la Hermandad, quisiera saber qué pasa finalmente con los cautivos y los miembros que han sido liberados y qué relación tiene con los McAllister. Ya conozco que la Hermandad y los MacAllister están relacionados con Simón, pero quiero saber mucho más. Y espero quedar satisfecha con la última parte; aun así es lamentable que no haya una historia aparte para el Fantasma.

Espero con ansias el momento en que me siente a disfrutar de la última novela. Tengo una gran opinión de la serie y espero que ésta, como mínimo, esté a la altura de las demás.

????α [Punya Reviews...] says

My review contains spoilers and they're mostly my thoughts as I went with the book. This one's got 2 parts.

For some reasons, I'm not liking Christian as a hero. And, yes, the story is dragging quite a bit. I'm at chapter 10 and it's still not picking up pace. Frustrating in one word!

I read in A Dark Champion that Christian is a prince and his Brotherhood nick is The Abbot. He wears the

monk's outfit but in reality he's anything but a monk! In this book, we get to know that his kingdom's name is Elgedera and why he has renounced his throne. Also, we get to know that he's been married since the age of 8, of which he had no idea about. So, when Queen Adara comes to consummate the marriage and take him back to her kingdom Taagaria, he's stunned. He finds her in the inn where he was staying, naked and waiting for him. Then she shows him the marriage contract, which he originally thought was a betrothal paper. But they had no time for doing anything since the tracker Adara hired to track him, comes back with the army of the villain king Selwyn called the *Sesari* to kill them both. They escape. On the way, they're attacked again and Christian sends Adara and her fool, Lutian to an abbey nearby. Christian is hurt in the skirmish but his friend Phantom (yes, he's introduced in this book) saves him. Adara takes care of Christian and tells him why it's very important that he consummate the marriage and father an heir. His distant uncle, Selwyn and his son Basilli are trying to attack her kingdom Taagaria and take it over. Christian needs to take care of her kingdom as a king.

This is trouble that brought Adara to this far land of England to find her wayward husband, whom she hasn't seen since that betrothal day. He was supposed to come and consummate the marriage 6 yrs later but he never did. In this time, Adara's brother was hanged by her father for treason and then her father died too. She virtually has no one to help her out. She thought it'd be easy but it certainly hasn't been so far (the naked seduction thing was Lutian's idea *rolls eyes*, about which I'll talk later). Her husband is not the type, kind and easy going, as she dreamed he'd be. Rather, he's a rugged, tough and life-hardened man. But, he's so handsome that her lovesick heart is full of yearning. Though she tries not to show it and act as a stern queen, she's anything but. Her fool, Lutian is her only close and dear friend.

In the abbey, they talk a lot and Christian gets to know that his loving parents were actually murdered. He's confused about many things, such as why did they leave him in that shabby and horrible abbey? He was abused there by the monks. Then one night, that abbey was also destroyed by fire with all the inhabitants except him, killed. Was that a murder attempt on his life? His grandfather and uncles were also killed, by each-other's hands and that's why Selwyn is now the king. So far, he'd kept very reluctant contact with him and that man knew his whereabouts! So, whatever Adara is telling, are they true? Christian does his best not to give in the consummation, since, even in his scarred state he wants love. But, after his life experiences in the abbey and then in Outremer and as a member of the Brotherhood, he can't afford that comfort in life. Then, Adara tells her she's still a virgin and Christian realized he can be easily charged with adultery and tries to apologize to her (I was kinda snorting here lolz). Adara, after knowing a few things from his past, was willing to go back and leave him in peace. But Christian decides to look for their (his and Phantom's) Welsh friend Ioan and hire mercenaries from him to fight for her kingdom, with every intention that he'll return after it's all settled. Gotta mention, Phantom's real name's known here, which is Velizarii. It was revealed that he's actually Christian's cousin, a fact he has no idea about. They basically met in Outremer. Phantom knew but never told Christian. Adara recognizes him and asks why didn't he, in answer Phantom tells her he has no intention of telling Christian, ever.

By the time they reach Ioan's, Adara's pretty frustrated with Christian, as he's still rebuffing her. It was fun as she decides it's better to look for a man here and sets her sight on Ioan. Christian is jealous on the spot and I was snorting more and more! Such a hypocrite! But, there were more funny scenes and banters between Christian, Phantom, Ioan and some other knights throughout the book. Adara and Christian fight again over the situation and then in a scene between Christian and Lutian, which I personally thought pretty lengthy and too predictable, Adara's real feelings for him is revealed. Lutian, the fool is actually no fool at all! He's fine but unsuspecting and hopelessly in love with Adara. He used to be a thief but to survive, acts as the queen's fool. Adara trusts him immensely thinking, of course, he's simple and tells him everything. I was like seriously? :s But, she did and the things Lutian tells Christian, I can't but think how pathetic it all sounded. She's been dreaming of this man, her husband all her life. She'd actually kept the things he used in their betrothal ceremony in a box and looks at them from time to time! But, I understood her need to be loved as Christian's parents (she remembered how they behaved with each-other, too!) but still, it was pathetic! Knowing all these, Christian finds her in her tent and consummates the marriage, huh? I was like WTF? ...

Well, yah, if you want to term it that! It was clumsy and stupid and I notched Christian down in my estimation a lot more after this debacle. And, Adara actually tells Lutian about it. I was so irritated! Why does she have to go and tell him every freakin' thing that happens to her?!

After that there were some more funny scenes. Christian taking Lutian's 'help' to woo Adara, which he also bungled. The scene was funny anyway. Ioan's sister Corryn is another fun character to read. I really loved the way Ioan and Phantom teased Christian about Adara and love in general but eitherway, I'd love to see both of them lovesick just so that I can enjoy these two eating their own words! In the meantime, Lutian spreads the word that he mucked up the consummation, making Christian the fool of the day. I'm more than annoyed by Lutian and wanna kick his arse because he does all these willingly and not because he's simple in the head. Also, not knowing how he really is, Adara's always there to save Lutian from a well-deserved thrashing for his mischief.

Adara tells Christian that she wants to love him and let him love her. Christian will not let her but he has to show Adara that he's not a clumsy boor when it comes to bed skills and they make love again. Adara is impressed. But, the very next day, I found it hard to believe that she took all the talks of Christian's other women by others so easily, with Christian boasting about his wenching no less! I didn't care if he 'tried' to look guilty. I wasn't convinced that he meant any of this at all. Then again, Adara's been doing that all through the book, *forgiving* him for every single of his screw ups! I'm also not convinced about the reasons to why he's trying to avoid love. So far, I'm really irritated and not at all impressed by Christian or Adara and their boring *reasons*. :/

Well, this book was this close to being boring but for a few incidents that were really good. Last few chapters of this book are what is making me give it a 3.75. Sorry, but I didn't enjoy it enough to give it a 4 or 4+ stars.

Most of the book took place at their journey from London to Taagara/Elgedera. In between, Christian and Adara's relationship blossomed yet they had their share of ups and downs. Love scenes (after the initial debacle) were quite good. The incidents I mentioned were really needed to shake the story a little bit. In the first one took place is Calais, where Adara was almost raped by two English men who just returned from some Outremer prison. Since Adara had dark hair-eyes and skin, they took her for a Saracen woman. I loved how Christian reacted to this and saved her. By that time, he had already fallen for Adara, though wouldn't quite confess it. Before that, Adara saw how Christian comforted one man, who was scared and lost. It explained a lot of things about him. Adara already knew that he has been the confessor to many dying man in the prison even in his tender age. Phantom tells her much more about him and his work.

After that, time went by as they keep traveling and in Venice, Adara finds out she's pregnant. Christian is a bit nervous about the whole thing, which led them to quarrel. I thought Adara was being a bit childish. Then again, she'd thrown quite a of bit childish tantrums throughout the book. I had a feeling that she needs to grow up. And, running to Lutian with every single problem was just too annoying for my choice! Then comes the second incident, as Sesari's get hold of Christian and stabs him fatally. He was unconscious for about a week and everyone was sure he'd die. But, of course, he comes back to life. I liked the way Adara took care of him and so on. I generally like this kind of scenes in any Romance. Then, Adara was taken to prison as it was said she's a witch and brought Christian back by her magic. Hooboy! I wasn't expecting this, took me totally by surprise and then, even as weak as Christian was, he saves with the help of Phantom, Ioan and the others.

The last 2/3 chapters held their journey to Elgedera and they stepped into a trap created by Selwyn, and Adara was kidnapped. Then with Phantom's help, Adara was rescued and Christian came up with this plan to get back his throne, also quite unexpected! Yah, I really did love the way the whole thing was resolved. I know, KM resolved the whole thing a bit too late as it was their journey and relationship with facts about

each-other and the Brotherhood took the forefront of the story. Still, overall the book wasn't as gripping and fun as I hoped it'd be, so I was kinda disappointed.

Anyway, I REALLY hope to see books for Phantom (I hope Corryn and not Thera, Adara's cousin, would be his match), Ioan and a few other secondary characters I liked. I still don't know who the Scot and Pagan are. Many questions still remain...

*The Brotherhood of Swords *update...*:*

The Wraith is Simon of Ravenswood (later, of Anwyk), book "Midsummer's Knight" (novella) in Where's My Hero

The Widowmaker is Stryder of Blackmoor, book A Dark Champion

The Abbot is Christian of Acre, book Return of the Warrior

The Scot is ... ???

The Sorcerer/El Sahaar is Nassir, a Saracen man, no books yet.

Then there are two other additional men:

The Pagan is ... Still not sure, he was first featured in Taming the Scotsman.

The Phantom is Velizarii, another Prince of Elgedera and cousin to Christian, no books yet.

Another character, an assassin:

The Scorpion is ... Damien St. Cyr???, first featured in A Dark Champion.

Preacox says

In "Return of the Warrior" we meet Christian of Acre again, a character we know from the previous book, A Dark Champion. He is called the Abbot of the Brotherhood because he wears a monk's robe over his armor (even though he definitely is no monk!) and because he was the one giving last rites to the other inmates in the Saracen prison.

He is actually a real prince but he has no interest in ever returning to his land to ascend the throne. He likes his life just as it is. But there is one thing he hasn't reckoned with and that is his wife Adara. Christian is absolutely flabbergasted to find this stunning woman in his room at an inn, naked and willing to consummate their marriage, right this instant. He had no idea he was married. He thought the contract he signed when he was eight years old was a mere betrothal contract. Well, turns out it wasn't. Now Adara wants her king to return home to dislodge the nasty usurper who wants it for himself.

But Christian is reluctant to take on his responsibilities. And the fact of having a wife doesn't sit well with him, either. He is not afraid of love, it's the loss of loved ones that he fears. Of course, in the end, he agrees helping her and together with a massive army they set off on the long journey to get rid of the usurper.

I liked this book. It was more slow-paced than the others in the series, but still an enjoyable read. Christian and Adara were likeable characters, as were the side characters Lutian, Ioan, Corryn and Phantom. Again, I'm really sad that they won't get their own book. I would be more than happy to read them.

"Return of the Warrior" is a great, funny, and hot book that will keep you entertained for a few hours. I will definitely reread it.

Olivia says

Yet another hit from Kinley MacGregor/Sherrilyn Kenyon! I loved every second. It's amazing how loveable and relatable her characters are. I admired Adara's courage and I loved Christian's protectiveness and possessiveness. I so highly recommend any KM/SK book. Amazing. I also loved the secondary characters: Phantom, Falcon, Ioan, & Lutian. It would be awesome to see at least some of them get books of their own.
<3

Her heart stilled as she looked down and realized she was still naked beneath her cloak. This wouldn't do! Adara placed her hands over Christian's on the reins. "Can we stop for a moment?"

"Why?"

"If we are to enter a village, then I wish to dress."

Christian's breath caught as an image of Adara's bare body whipped unbidden through his mind. During their argument, he'd forgotten her state of undress, though how he'd managed that, he couldn't imagine.

Lutian made a cry of surprise as he covered his eyes with one hand. "My queen is naked beneath her clothes? I should go blind should I glimpse her fair beauty." He split his fingers apart over his eyes to look at her. "Or will I? Mayhap we should test this theory."

"Lutian," Christian said solemnly. "All people are naked beneath their clothes, and if you glimpse Adara's flesh, then it is quite possible that you will become blind when I poke out both of your eyes for the affront."

Lutian gave a devilish grin at that as he dropped his hand from his face. "No matter what he says, your prince is jealous of you, my queen. 'Tis a good sign."

Christian scoffed. "I'm not jealous."

"He sounded jealous to me," Lutian said loudly from behind his hand. "Very jealous."

Christian let out a growl that reminded her of a ferocious bear as he glared at Lutian, who took his surly mood in stride.

-Adara, Christian, & Lutian

Her father had always said a person could tell much about a man by the way he dealt with animals, simpletons, and children.

-Adara's thoughts

She saw the slightest lifting of the corners of his lips. "You keep that up, Christian, and you might actually manage a smile."

His face turned sober again. "There is little about this situation that I find amusing, Adara."

"Are you so certain, my lord prince? I think being tossed naked from a window is rather amusing, myself. Or at least I am rather sure I will once the embarrassment of it wears thin."

She had a distinct impression that he was forcing himself not to smile at that.

"How can you find humor in what has befallen you?"

She shrugged. "There is humor to be had most places. My father always said that it is a wise man indeed who can laugh at himself."

"Only a fool laughs at himself and 'tis a greater one who allows others to do so."

"Pardon?" Lutian chimed in. Adara motioned him to silence.

"Laughter is the music of the angels. It clears the soul of its melancholy and adds the beauty to our lives. 'Tis why I value Lutian so. Without laughter and humor, we are all barren inside."

-Adara, Christian, & Lutian

The bishop glared at him. "You'd best remember your place, brother, as well as who you serve."

"You'd best be warned, Your Grace," Lutian said in his fool's voice. "Lord Christian has a mighty sword beneath his robes. Mighty indeed."

The bishop frowned at Christian. "Monks are forbidden to arm themselves. You should know that."

"I'm not a monk," Christian said as he came forward. "And you will not interrogate my wife for a crime she did not commit."

The man curled his lip as if the idea of any man telling him what to do were the most repugnant action he could imagine. "I have the backing of the Church for what I do."

"And I have the backing of an army who will lay waste to every man here if needs be, should you not heed my words."

The bishop was aghast. "You would threaten me?"

Christian didn't hesitate with his answer. "For her life, aye."

"You would jeopardize your soul for her? She is a heretic and a witch."

"She is a woman. My woman."

His words only succeeded in angering the bishop more. "I will have you excommunicated for this."

Christian pulled the black monk's robe from over his head and balled it up. "Then excommunicate me. If I am in the wrong for protecting an innocent woman, then God can judge me as He will."

He handed the robe to the bishop, then pushed past him to Adara's side. "I'm sorry I couldn't come for you sooner," he said to her.

"I will have you killed for this!" the bishop screamed.

Christian gave him an angry glare. "Then I will see you in hell."

He surrounded her in his embrace as he took the reins into his hands. "I just damned my eternal soul for you, my lady. Therefore I think it best that I keep you in close proximity before anything worse happens."

"I doubt there is anything worse than damning your soul, Christian."

"Aye, there is."

She could think of nothing else. "And what would that be?"

"Losing you."

"This is no longer your fight, Christian," Adara said. "I will raise my own army."

He scoffed at that. "Aye, but it is. They made it so the instant they traveled here like a pack of wild dogs to kill us."

Phantom laughed evilly. "No man kills me and lives."

Christian nodded. "Exactly."

Adara frowned at them, not understanding the phrase.

"It was a pact they took in prison," Thomas explained to her. "No one would take their lives without paying dearly for it."

Christian's pale blue eyes fairly glowed in the dim light of the refectory. "I never had any intention of going to Elgedera. But they didn't send a single man to kill me or Adara, they sent an entire garrison or more, and that was their mistake. They have dropped the gauntlet before me and I intend to return it fully met."

Christian looked at each of them in turn. "Basilli and Selwyn have no intention of letting this matter end until we are dead. Therefore I shall end it once and for all. The prince is going home to be crowned king and to exact his revenge. Swear your fealty to me, Phantom, and I'll see to it that you'll have the choicest land in the kingdom."

"Why would you choose me?"

"Because you have ever been in my shadow, lurking there and only emerging when I need you. I never understood why, but your loyalty has long been noted and appreciated. I would have no other man at my back for this."

Phantom seemed to consider his words. "Are you ready for the battle, Abbot?"

He nodded grimly.

Adara smiled in relief. Part of her was grateful, but the other part didn't like the thought of adding any more grief to a man who had suffered so much. "Are you certain you want to do this?"

Christian turned toward her. "They won't leave me in peace, therefore I intend to leave them in pieces."

Phantom lifted his cup. "God save the king."

"And the queen," Lutian chimed in sincerely.

Thomas took a torch from the wall, lit it in the fire, then led them to the antechamber of the church. He lifted the corner of a bright red tapestry that depicted Christ rising from the cross, to show a door behind it. The old door hadn't been opened in quite some time and it took both Phantom and Christian to shoulder it back into working order.

Lutian was "kind" enough to hold the tapestry out for them and verbally encourage them.

"He could hurt himself," Adara said when Phantom commented on the fool's lack of use.

"Better him than me," Phantom muttered as they finally managed to get the door open.

Christian rubbed his sore shoulder as he stepped back from the opening. "Might I make a comment, Thomas?"

In the event of the monastery being attacked, this would prove a most useless escape route if it takes the monks an hour to open it."

"Aye," Phantom concurred. In a feigned ancient voice that sounded much like an old monk, he added, "Wait, good and decent attackers, don't burn us out yet. We've still got a little more pushing to do. We'll be through with it shortly. Here, pull up a seat and give us a few so that we might escape you. God will bless you for it."

Adara squelched her laughter, while Lutian and Christian gave full rein to theirs.

Thomas looked less than pleased. "You really are a heathen, aren't you?"

Phantom shrugged as if it concerned him not at all. "To the farthest depths of my damned and rotted soul."

-Adara, Phantom, Christian, & Thomas

"You have a wise prince, my queen," Lutian said from beside them. "I would give him my fool's scepter, except that I no longer have one, since I left it at home so that no one would know I was a fool." He pulled a piece of lint from his tunic and held it out to Christian. "Take this as a token of my esteem."

She half expected Christian to scoff and mock Lutian, as most people did. Instead, he took the lint, thanked him for it, then put it on his shoulder as if it were some kind of prize.

-Lutian & Christian

Roxanne says

4.5 Stars

I loved this book so much. Not only did I LOVE Christian but I adored Adara.

Sha Mslvoe says

I loved Lutian, Ioan, Corryn and Phantom but I don't like Christian and Adara in this story. The story is a little bit dragging. Am I being fussy? I'm quite frustrated. I rather reading & again.

I can't accept how Christian just make love to Adara after calling her whore.. after being brainwash by Lutian. The make love scene make me feel angry. You can't just consummates the marriage like that. And you can't just walk away after done with it. Oh no!!! I can't tolerate with it.

It was not bad, but personally I found it not up to my usual standard.

Netanella says

Although the fake Christian kingdoms in the Holy Land, where Queen Adara and Christian of Acre hail from, are cheesy at best, this is a lovely historical romance that continues the series in the Brotherhood of the Sword.

To save her kingdom which is threatened by the greed of a neighboring usurper, Adara travels to England to find her husband Christian and convince him to claim his title and save her lands. Christian, or "The Abbott" of the Brotherhood, at first wants nothing to do with Adara, as he is committed to his current cause and rejects his past and former life completely. His change of course, from a cold, heartless warrior to a noble warrior who would sacrifice much for his new family, is both heart-warming and sweet. There's a scene in the middle of the book, where Christian makes such a foolish romantic gesture that my face hurt from grinning.

Very enjoyable historical romance, and recommended.
