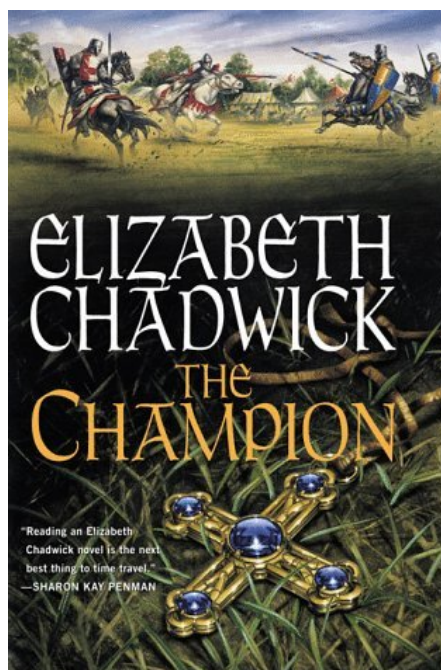




The Champion

Elizabeth Chadwick

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Alexander de Montroi, a knight skilled in love and war, joins his brother Hervi in Normandy. He soon has a passionate night with Monday, a young girl in Hervi's guardianship, that leaves her pregnant and betrayed. By chance the two meet years later and must face the wrath of unexpected adversaries.

The Champion Details

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From Reader Review The Champion for online ebook

Mela says

This is my first book by Elizabeth Chadwick. I can tell, she seems a very good historical fiction writer. When I was reading, I was feeling the atmosphere of those times (the end of XII century). Great descriptions allow you to understand that world and those people. Most of all, you learn the truth, not some myths. For example about tourneys, knighthood, even about politics in those times. In short, it is a good historical fiction book.

On the other hand, it is a romance. In this case, I would say that most of the part a love story sucked me. There are a few twists, which I didn't predict. So, that was very refreshing. It isn't a melodramatic love story and therefore it seems so beautiful and real. In short, it is a good romance.

I have only one but. After reading about 80% of the book I began to feel bored, a little. I think, because plot was more predictable. There were many interesting scenes and facts yet. Nonetheless there was less tension, I guess.

Summarizing, I recommend this book to fans of a historical fiction and a historical romance.

Morena says

I just noticed this book promoted, so took a peek at the synopsis and realized that I already read it and did not like it because of the main characters. Elizabeth Chadwick fleshes her stories with rich details taken straight from high middle ages, her prose is enjoyable without grading on me but it gets all ruined with her plastic characters who sound like liberal atheists. I have a liberal mindset on some issues and I don't pray to any god but why would I expect the same of the men and women who lived 800 years ago? Sure, they were the same species, had need for shelter, comfort, love, there was hate in their hearts as well as laughter but the world was different (just as it will be different in 1000 years) and as always the environment shaped both body and mind.

Medieval era was a time when Kingdoms were still establishing themselves and you could only do that through force and political machinations, add to that Christianity and you have a world full of extremes where compassion, fearlessness on the battlefield, noble bloodlines, and ivory skin were all admired. It was paramount that a wife you married wasn't pregnant already with another man's child and preferably had no other children because they could cause you trouble. (To some extent this matters even today though the reasons are more personal.) However, you never get a sense of it in Chadwick's books.

The female protagonists are more concerned with being emancipated than with pedigree, or devotion to God. The male protagonists are paragons of perfection straight from 21st century western world. They are reasonable, tolerant and pretty much let their wives walk all over them oh and they are faithful once they get married. I don't blame Elisabeth Chadwick. I blame the readers who only like the glitter on the outside and don't care about the inside. So the author does the inevitable and fills the inside with what appeals to majority of modern readers. And voila here is your pseudo medieval woman who is independent, concerned with equal rights, and not very religious, and a pseudo medieval man who looks irresistible with his sword and chainmaille but who is tolerant and treats his wife as an equal who gets her way in most things (I do appreciate that not all of her heroes are literate.)

To be fair, there were many men and I assume also women who were not devout Christians. Take for

instance emperor Frederick II who owned harem of women, who saw the pope only as an obstacle and who had muslim friends, or the Hungarian king Ladislaus who decided that shamanism was more interesting than Christianity, who cast aside his Christian wife and replaced her with his Cuman lover. Whether the medieval nobleman was pious or not if he liked sex and women he was not going to be faithful to his wife. Even Edward I, who loved his wife and was fairly religious had several bastards. They lived dangerous passionate lives, faithfulness played no role in such lifestyle. Before you say that it was not fair to women, remember – bloodlines were important to women too.

Lala_Loopsie [fire breathing B!tch Queen] says

This is my first Elizabeth Chadwick book, so i didn't really know what to expect.

The book was good, but i got to a point where i was constantly confused. I didn't like the fact that it was written in 3rd person. I'm a fan of 1st person novels, but that wasn't the worst, it was the fact that Elizabeth constantly changed perspectives, points of view. I was getting an inside of Monday, and all of a sudden there was a description of a forest, and you're WTH, she was sad or what ever.

All in all the book was good, so was the plot, so not counting my being confused, i loved it!

If you are considering reading it, i urge you to do exactly that.

Phew. Now that that's out of the way, i can read Queen of Shadows!!

Sibylla Matilde says

I've been dying to read this one... and, YAY, it is finally in the library again! About 2 chapters in, and already hooked. I'm pretty sure that Elizabeth Chadwick is one of my favorite authors EVER!!!

This was a really great story, although the middle portion of the book was quite difficult because I so didn't want her to be John's mistress... All in all, it wasn't as emotional as a lot of Elizabeth Chadwick books (hard to beat Shadows and Strongholds, IMO), but still a great story!

Sophie Narey (Bookreview- aholic) says

Author: Elizabeth Chadwick

Published: 01/12/1998 (first published 1997)

Recommended for: fans of historical romances

I absolutely loved this book! It was one that intrigued me straight away with its beautiful cover, it stood out on the shelf. This book is not my normal type of book with it being a sort of historical romance novel. The characters that are featured in the novel are very well described so that when you close your eyes you can imagine them and image the places they live in. The novel is set in the 1100's in Normandy, and see's the adventures, the ups and the downs of a girl called Monday. This book quickly captured my mind and was one that I could easily get caught up in, the characters are all very likeable and realistic which makes it all

that bit easier to get caught up in Mondays life and you feel for her when she has to suffer through hard parts of her life.

This is the first book that I have read by this author and..... it certainly wont be the last one I read by her, it has me completely hooked on this genre. I thought that this book was brilliantly written and keeps a great pace throughout making you want to keep on reading the novel.

Theresa says

Enjoyable book. Parts of the story were slow reading. The ending was the part I was drawn into the most. Was transported to earlier days, but felt like I was outside looking in rather than drawn into the times.

Lala_Loopsie [fire breathing B!tch Queen] says

What can i say? It was really confusing with the constant change of views (literally). Monday is living her life, and bam! a forest is what you see. Sorry, but even tho the atory was good and interesting, i'm not going to rate it for fear of the nothingness

Misfit says

While this is not Chadwick's best, her second best is far above many other writers of historical fiction. It is always time travel with one of her novels, wrapping you up in the sights, sounds and even smells of the period. An interesting concept using the tourney circuit as a back drop, giving you an entrance into an area most of us know nothing about. Of course the hero is wonderful, the villains truly evil and true love wins out in the end.

Terri says

This book had it's bland moments, but all in all, once I waded through those parts that were bogging me down, I discovered that I had actually enjoyed it. I have quite a few E.Chadwick books and though I keep buying them I have a bit of a problem with her female characters. I find them lacklustre, depressing and pretty much devoid of personality. There are slight glimmers of endearing qualities or spirit, but they never persist.

It's probably just me. Everyone get's something different from each book they read, though I have to say, dull female characters seem to be a bit of a recurring pattern in Chadwick's books. And yet her male characters are so well done, that it is what keeps me buying her books off the shelves. The Champion's female character was up there with the blandest and yet the male characters were great to read about, so the balance tipped and made this book worthwhile. I gave it a pretty good star rating because I rated it only against other Chadwick novels I have so far read. A good book and worth your time, I'd say, if you are into historical fiction that is love story driven.

MAP says

Ultimately predictable and everything wraps up a little too neatly. I keep trying to give Chadwick a chance, but other than The Greatest Knight, I just can't get into her books.

Barb says

I have to say that the slightly flawed plot line, stereotypical love story and predictable and somewhat tidy ending did not stand in the way of my enjoyment of this book on the whole.

This is the second Elizabeth Chadwick novel I have read. The first being 'The Greatest Knight' about the rise of William Marshall. While I enjoyed the details of that novel the narration was somewhat dry. And while the emotional aspect of this novel seemed more predictable the details of the setting and time were very enjoyable.

The first half of the book is written so well that I was completely unaware of the author. It was as if the events in the story were simply unfolding on their own and I was a witness to them.

I love reading about this period in history and enjoyed learning a few more tid-bits of history. I liked the back drop of the tournament life and enjoyed the characters Chadwick created. I also thought the thread of fertility and birth control woven into the story was a interesting one.

I will be reading more from Elizabeth Chadwick very soon.

Elia Princess of Starfall says

The Champion is set during the tumultuous and vibrant twelfth century when the Angevin Empire was at its territorial height, controlling England and extensive parts of France, and when the kings of these proud nations were clawing at each other throats. An era where wandering knights and warriors daily battled each other in bloody, brutal combat for glory and riches. It was an era were women were often at the mercy of men, where status and wealth were lauded heartily above all other aspects and where the Catholic faith held a ruthless stranglehold over nearly every facet of everyday life.

This should make for a fascinating read should it not?

Unfortunately, Chadwick has decided to go down the rather cliched and lackluster medieval path of romance-with a capital R.

Granted this is one of her earlier, less well known novels so I'm probably being overly harsh....

Maybe romance isn't really my thing :/

Onto the review!

Our story concerns Monday de Cerizay, a young girl whose father is a wandering knight and mother a noblewoman he eloped with, and her sweet, tempestuous and rather bloodless romance with an arrogant and hot-tempered knight Alexander de Montroi, a young man who escaped his hated priory and ran away to join his dependable brother Hervi and become a knight errant. Monday lives happily with her much loved and loving parents in haphazard but never dull world of tourneys and soon becomes infatuated with the dark and handsome Alexander, who excels at the twin bastions of knighthood and at wooing ladies. Misfortune and heartbreak dog Monday with ceaseless remorse and in her desperation she turns to Alexander for support and he well.....

screws up BIG time.

I won't go further as that would go into spoilerville but I will say that despite an engaging start and fairly interesting characters to begin with, I found myself rapidly becoming bored as the story progressed and in the end had no desire to finish it.

What can I say? I'm clearly not the romantic or soft-hearted type. I like my historical fiction to mirror the dark, brutish hell-hole that was the medieval world at certain periods in its history. Sweet, saccharine sentimentality just turns me right off!

Spoilers!

This wasn't a bad book by any means. The writing was crisp, subtle and to the point, the historical setting was detailed, evocative with an almost cinematographic feel to it with no weird anachronisms in sight and the characters from loyal, dependable Hervi, sweet, dignified Monday, to hot-headed, resourceful Alexander were well-rounded, flawed and for the most part likable.

Why then didn't I finish it?

1. Predictability-it went the well-trodden and uneventful route of historical romance and never once steered its course. A let down if ever there was one.
2. Too romantic-really three years separation, a secret kid and a new boyfriend and you more or less make up in a matter of weeks? *SIGH*
3. Superman and Lois Lane wannabes in the case of Monday and Alexander. They were not that interesting in my honest opinion.

4. OK SUPER SPOILER ALERT

Monday after having Alexander's kid in secret goes on to become the mistress of the notorious Prince John, future king of England, and gives him a son. Now this baby later dies, Monday has a miscarriage, M&A get married and live happily after-THE END.

Now what irked me about this was that M&A got a squeaky clean break-Monday has no bastards by John and Alexander has been celibate since their last hook-up. How utterly perfect for them. Literally no angst or regret! The death of Monday's second son felt contrived and cruel-a way to ensure her and A's blissful ending *rolls eyes out of head*. To be fair the moment the suspicion popped into my head, the more certain I became about it merely being the ultimate stepping stone to M&A's undying happiness and Monday's gruesome miscarriage confirmed it.

It makes their lives perfect and they shouldn't be. Honestly could you have imagine the family dynamic if Monday's kid had lived? What if John told her to raise the boy with Alexander or kept him away her? How would Monday cope? How would she feel? Would she have treated her sons differently? Alas we shall never find out as Chadwick went with a more sanitized, less uncertain direction and IMHO the novel suffers for it.

Ok I've ranted way too much here.

Lets leave it at this

Angela Smith says

This is one of Elizabeth Chadwick's earlier books, but no less enjoyable. It has likeable characters and the story of Monday and Alexander is engaging. I was sad for the book to finish. Loved that Monday a fairly independent woman of the time rather than a simpering pawn.

Alexander De Montroi was bound for the priesthood. Running away from an abusive Prior with a taste for young novices, he joins his half-brother Hervi on the tourney circuit. He slowly recovers mind and body and trains to become a knight like his brother. He has a period of wenching but always has Monday in his heart and mind.

Monday De Cerizay, daughter of a lady and a tourney knight is left orphaned and is in the care of Hervi and Alexander De Montroi. She knows the brothers well, having been part of the tourney circuit all her life and she is sick of that life and the hardships it brings. After a fateful night and too much drinking, Alexander and Monday sleep together. Alexander does the honorable thing and goes looking for a priest to wed them. Monday cannot abide the thought of living her parents lives and she runs.

Fate and circumstances keep Alexander and Monday apart for years and when they meet she belongs to the most powerful man in England who does not give up what he considers his, easily.

I also liked there was lots of interaction with William Marshall and his family peppered throughout the book. The William Marshall books written by the same author are among my favourite books of hers.

Elaine says

Once again, Chadwick has beguiled me with a wonderfully wrought tale, of medieval life, romance and intrigue. She truly is a gifted author who never ceases to please. Her characters are excellent-very believable, although for some reason I tend to find the males much more interesting than the females. The plot veers on the side of predictable, whilst the frequent explanations of medieval life are hugely appreciated.

Monday is the female protagonist. Her mother ran away from home to marry one of her father's knights and has been shunned by them ever since. In turn, Monday falls in love with a knight on the tourney circuit, bearing him a son. After being mistress to (the eventual,King) John, she is cast aside by him and is able to embark on her long overdue relationship with Alexander. Therein lie the bare bones of the plot. But the novel encompasses so much more. Many more characters are introduced-some of whom we love, some despise. The additional information re King John, and his predecessor, Coer de Lion, formed an important background to the novel, and I for one was grateful to learn more about this intriguing pair. Details of life in

castles, and just the daily routine followed by peasant or king, gave this added depth.

Am glad to say that all worked out well-not that there was much doubt otherwise! But there were certainly some moments when we despaired that Monday would ever manage to be with her true love. As I've already said-once again, Chadwick has excelled.
