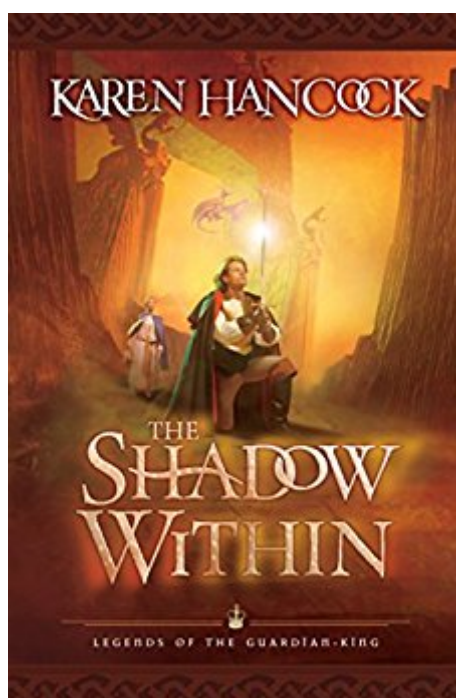


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The Shadow Within (Legends Of The Guardian-King Book #2) (Legends Of The Guardian-King Series)



Synopsis

Legends of the Guardian King, book 2, from the award-winning author of Arena. Karen Hancock brings to imaginative life the supernatural battle between good and evil, the preconceptions that keep us from embracing truth, and the distortions that trick and trap us. Four years have passed since the conclusion of The Light of Eidon. Abramm has been living peacefully abroad, but when he hears of trouble in his homeland, he returns to claim the crown he thought he'd never wear. But he has many enemies, including his murderous brother. The only thing that will save him is the Light that lives within him, but to appease his critics, he hides this. Before he can fulfill his kingship, he must reveal the truth and be reminded, painfully and powerfully, that his destiny can only be realized through humbly acknowledging his own weakness and the utter sufficiency of the One who created his destiny in the first place.

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Customer Reviews

I ignored the reviews for the Light of Eidon, the first book in this series, in order to judge it for myself. I gave the book a positive review, choosing to believe that the 'bad guys' were cultists come to power, rather than disguised Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, or other mainstream Christians. This second book proved me gravely wrong. This book is a thinly-disguised polemic against Catholic Christians and the Roman Catholic Church, in which we are asked to believe not merely that the predominate faith in her protagonist's country, the Matraian Church, is not merely mistaken but evil and demonic-- and then describes it in terms that identify it clearly as Catholic, even adding in the book the "Gabrielites", a Matraian Inquisition, charged with seeking out and torturing the heroic Terstanite "Protestants". It is possible to write good fantasy and science fiction with a Christian ethos, as any reader of C. S. Lewis knows. It's done by casting Satan as the enemy. It's not done by casting other Christians as being allied with Satan, which Ms. Hancock has clearly done here. The Roman Catholic Church is not an evil sect. It is the Church from which all Western Christianity springs, and for the first 1000 years after the Crucifixion was indeed the only Christian church. Protestantism split from the Church just within the past 500 years or so-- just a quarter the time the Catholic Church has existed-- and many Protestant sects are younger still. The great martyrs of Christian history, the women and men who were willing to die, to be fed to lions in Rome and crucified in Japan, for their faith, have primarily been Catholic Christians. Ms. Hancock, obviously, ignores such history in pursuit of her anti-Catholic polemic. What history she doesn't ignore, she revises in ways that say very little about Catholicism and a great deal about the deeply held prejudice in her own heart. I am sorry this is so. She has the makings of a good writer and fantasist. Before she can fulfill that promise, though, she will have to deal with The Shadow Within her own heart.

Book Two of the Legends of the Guardian-King takes up a couple of years after the first one left off. Abramm, gone from his own land for some six years, returns home to battle a sea monster threatening his country, and from there he intends to claim the throne which is rightfully his. Of course, his spoiled, bullying younger brother is firmly ensconced on said throne and has no intention of giving it up, but that's no deterrent to a man who has Eidon on his side. Just as action-packed as the first book, this one is a great deal of fun. It has the familiar story of the boy who left home as a ne'er do well returning quite changed, although those nearest to him can't believe or understand what's happened to "little Abramm." (Imagine Steve Rogers after becoming Captain America returning to his old Brooklyn neighborhood to face down all the guys who used to beat him up regularly.) And even once he's proved his heroic courage, people still have doubts because after all,

Abramm was never destined for the throne; he was next-to-last in a large family of boys, after all, so how can he have the leadership skills, tactical and battle training, diplomatic skills required of a king? What's worse: if he told people the truth, they'd never believe it, or still worse, they'd laugh, so it's best just to keep some things to himself. And worst of all--how can he tell them of his newfound faith in Eidon in a land where Terstans are considered heretics? Oh, and to add some comedy and a little romance, there's also the annoying younger daughter of a neighboring king, who's a lot more astute than most of the people of the land. And oh by the way, simply gaining a throne--which can be done fairly easily when Eidon's on your side--is not the same as keeping a throne, and the battle to keep his throne will exceed anything Abramm has faced in his very eventful life. Not to spoil anything, but this book is in my opinion the best of the series, and I almost wish I'd stopped here.

It's a solid character driven story, with much of the drama centered around the internal struggles of the main characters to trust their own beliefs, of themselves and those around them. Even with a heavier than normal religious context, it works due to the nature of how light the touch of the "good religion" is on those around them, while showing the "bad religion" as being heavy handed and confrontational toward other religions, even those that are supposedly compatible. Not the kind of series for everyone, but if you don't have a problem with faith being an element within your fantasy stories, then the story and characters will provide a well written and generally enjoyable adventure.

book 2 in a series a great read

I myself am not a huge book reader, my brother is in a location where he has limited access to books, and has request for me to send books to him. As I have not personally read any of the books, it's not very fair for me to comment on plot and story line. I do know he has not complained yet about any of the books so they must be good!

Loved this series. My only complaint is I felt like there needed to be at least one more book to completely wrap things up. Well written, great character development. I highly recommend it

The Shadow Within is a very exciting and inspiring read. How very true is the theme that we must overcome our own doubts to realize our true purpose--God's purpose--for our lives, and how we can accomplish nothing apart from Him. The narrative is well written and holds your attention throughout. It was very difficult to put down. The book portrays the classic battle between good and

evil.

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