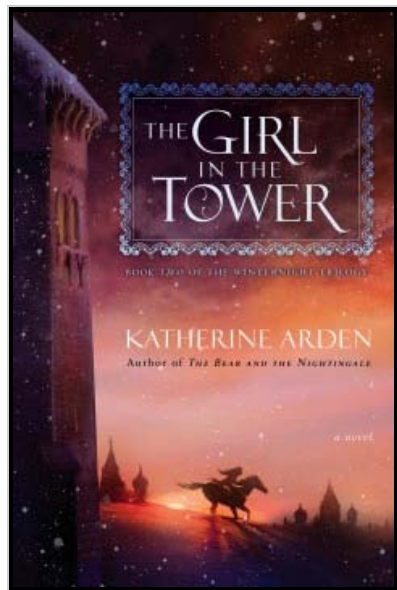


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The Girl in the Tower

A Novel

by Katherine Arden

Price: \$16.00(Paperback)

Published: June 26, 2018

★★★★★

Rating: 0.0/5 (0 votes cast)

From the Publisher: A remarkable young woman blazes her own trail, from the backwoods of Russia to the court of Moscow, in the exhilarating sequel to Katherine Arden's bestselling debut novel, *The Bear and the Nightingale*. Katherine Arden's enchanting first novel introduced readers to an irresistible heroine. Vasilisa has grown up at the edge of a Russian wilderness, where snowdrifts reach the eaves of her family's wooden house and there is truth in the fairy tales told around the fire. Vasilisa's gift for seeing what others do not won her the attention of Morozko—Frost, the winter demon from the stories—and together they saved her people from destruction. But Frost's aid comes at a cost, and her people have condemned her as a witch. Now Vasilisa faces an impossible choice. Driven from her home by frightened villagers, the only options left for her are marriage or the convent. She cannot bring herself to accept either fate and instead chooses adventure, dressing herself as a boy and setting off astride her magnificent stallion Solovey. But after Vasilisa prevails in a skirmish with bandits, everything changes. The Grand Prince of Moscow anoints her a hero for her exploits, and she is reunited with her beloved sister and brother, who are now part of the Grand Prince's inner circle. She dares not reveal to the court that she is a girl, for if her deception were discovered it would have terrible consequences for herself and her family. Before she can untangle herself from Moscow's intrigues—and as Frost provides counsel that may or may not be trustworthy—she will also confront an even graver threat lying in wait for all of Moscow itself. **Praise for *The Girl in the Tower*** "[A] magical story set in an alluring Russia."—*Paste* "Arden's lush, lyrical writing cultivates an intoxicating, visceral atmosphere, and her marvelous sense of pacing carries the novel along at a propulsive clip. A masterfully told story of folklore, history, and magic with a spellbinding heroine at the heart of it all."—*Booklist* (starred review) "[A] sensual, beautifully written, and emotionally stirring fantasy . . . Fairy tales don't get better than this."—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review) "[Katherine] Arden once again delivers an engaging fantasy that mixes Russian folklore and history with delightful worldbuilding and lively characters."—*Library Journal*

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About The Author

Katherine Arden

Katherine Arden is the author of the national bestseller *The Bear and the Nightingale*. Born in Austin, Texas, Arden spent a year of high school in Rennes, France. Following her acceptance to Middlebury College in Vermont, she deferred enrollment for a year in order to live and study in Moscow. At Middlebury, she specialized in French and Russian literature. After receiving her BA, she moved to Maui, Hawaii, working every kind of odd job imaginable, from grant writing and making crêpes to guiding horse trips. Currently she lives in Vermont, but really, you never know.

Release Info

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What We Say

Katherine Arden's debut fantasy "The Bear and the Nightingale" was one of my favorite books of 2016. Set in medieval Russia on the edge of the wilderness, it was filled with drama and danger as a young woman forged her own path, embraced the old ways of honoring the spirits and sprites around her while a priest railed against witchcraft. Vasilisa ultimately risked all -- down to grappling with the mysteriously compelling attentions of an ice demon -- but the book felt small and self-contained. Sure, the fate of the world hung in the balance, but Vasilisa's struggles felt internal and real, not melodramatic and world-shaking. The novel ended devastatingly and with a satisfying finish. I was eager to see what Arden would do next and slightly surprised to discover it was a sequel. Sure, I was ready to follow Vasya anywhere and yes, the first novel was open-ended as most good novels are (life goes on). But it wasn't one of those tiresome cliffhangers so many fantasies resort to -- one long story broken up into three parts. "The Bear and the Nightingale" can be read quite happily on its own. Not the sequel. You'll simply have to read the first story to appreciate what's going on here. It begins at a gallop and never pauses for a moment. Vasya has banished herself from the shattered family she protected and the village that now brands her a witch. She's become a traveler or at least fancies herself one. The ice demon appears again and again, protecting and cajoling and training Vasya for the dangers she will insist on facing. When posing as a boy, Vasya is delighted by the new possibilities open to her. Instead of finding her sister in Moscow so she can be locked up in a tower and await marriage, Vasya is free to roam the countryside thanks to the astonishing horse Solovey, with whom she handily communicates. But life on the road is not easy. Villages are being preyed upon by warriors that seem to come and go without a trace. Moscow is awash in intrigue and Vasya's mere presence there means tremendous risk for her warrior-monk of a brother and high-born sister. But the Grand Prince of Moscow decides this fierce but slight lad is his new favorite companion. So Vasya must hide in plain sight to protect her siblings and the Prince from the evil on all sides. This second book in the Winternight Trilogy feels much bigger than the first one, bursting with action and demons and the fate of a nation on slim Vasya's shoulders. And she's a willful treat. Even if she seems rather dim about the fact that the ice demon loves her, Vasya's unbridled joy in being able to go where she will and do what she wants will appeal to anyone. Unlike the first book, we are on a knife's edge by the end of this second, satisfying part. The finale can't come soon enough. -- Michael Giltz

What Others Say

"Arden's lush, lyrical writing cultivates an intoxicating, visceral atmosphere, and her marvelous sense of pacing carries the novel along at a propulsive clip. A masterfully told story of folklore, history, and magic with a spellbinding heroine at the heart of it all." —*Booklist* (starred review)

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"A compelling, fast-moving story that grounds fantasy elements in a fascinating period of Russian history." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"[A] magical story set in an alluring Russia." —*Paste*

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