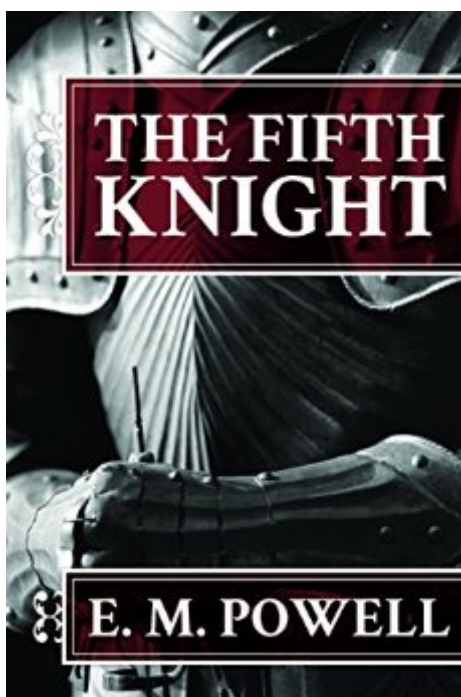


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The Fifth Knight (The Fifth Knight Series Book 1)



Synopsis

To escape a lifetime of poverty, mercenary Sir Benedict Palmer agrees to one final, lucrative job: help King Henry II's knights seize the traitor Archbishop Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. But what begins as a clandestine arrest ends in cold-blooded murder. And when Fitzurse, the knights' ringleader, kidnaps Theodosia, a beautiful young nun who witnessed the crime, Palmer can sit silently by no longer. For not only is Theodosia's virtue at stake, so too is the secret she unknowingly carries—a secret he knows Fitzurse will torture out of her. Now Palmer and Theodosia are on the run, strangers from different worlds forced to rely only on each other as they race to uncover the hidden motive behind Becket's grisly murder—and the shocking truth that could destroy a kingdom. Episode List

This book was initially released in episodes as a Kindle Serial. All episodes are now available for immediate download as a complete book. Learn more about Kindle Serials

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Customer Reviews

This book is a fast paced story that provides a new twist on the story of Thomas Becket's murder. Adding the fifth knight changes everything you have heard about the event and opens up a gripping

alternative account of it. I was captivated by Sir Benedict, the knight the title refers to and his feisty companion, Sister Theodosia. I am fascinated by the world these characters live in. I can barely imagine what it would be like to be an anchoress and know that you will never leave the cell in which you live for the rest of your life or to be a knight and face constant hardship and battles. But I didn't have to strain my imagination as the author paints a vivid picture of what these characters' lives are like - I was enthralled by it. I wholeheartedly recommend this novel and I found that National Short Story week was just the excuse I needed to treat myself to it.

"The Fifth Knight", by E.M. Powell, attracted me because I read many novels about Thomas Becket (my patron saint), The Templars and Arthurian Legend. What I took away from this work cannot be explained, except like this: I am richer in spirit and historic perspective because of it. This novel is like a tapestry of the 12th Century, written with great detail, honesty with an eye to adventure and holiness. "The Fifth Knight" deals with Benedict Palmer, a knight, who was part of the murderous team assigned to assassinate The Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket. But, Benedict soon discovers guilt and true love from an unexpected hostage. The hostage is a nun, who learns the secret which justifies the actions, and, along with Benedict, begin the journey of a lifetime. The author is no stranger to plot and character development. However, I was sad, at times, because the antagonist kills many beloved and kind characters who were my favorites. Like the authors of VicLit serials, the novel was released in parts, exclusively on Kindle. So, like Dickens or Collins, this author had to pace her plot, while it left us starved for the next one (and that, to me, was a good experience!) But, also like the serial writers of old, the plot, at times, slows down, at times. However, like a slow-moving carousel, who cares? The author always provides us shining, colored lights of authenticity and realism, and we are swept along with her prose, fascinated and enlightened. The final part reads like a swashbuckling Scott novel. Its pace is cinematic, climatic, dynamic, but leads us to a final resolution: no, I will not reveal one detail. If you like Arthurian adventure, scented with the realistic allure of the 12th Century, what keeps you from getting this novel? Billy Joel wrote: "Vienna waits for you." You will understand, after you read it, why I end with the phrase: "Paradise waits for you."

I highly recommend this book. I purchased The Fifth Knight to check out the Kindle serials. I've received 4 episodes so far, which equals about 280 pages for \$1.99. (Two more episodes to be delivered to my Kindle.) I didn't expect too much. Yet, the writing is excellent; the story is gripping; the characters are unforgettable. The two main characters, Theodosia and Sir Palmer, have an

irresistible chemistry because of both their flaws and their virtues. Powell has obviously done her research into the period. I felt plunged into the rustic and rough world of the 12th century. I learned something new with Powell's detail around the history of Thomas Becket's murder. I didn't realize he was murdered on December 29th, 1170, which is exactly the day I started reading *The Fifth Knight*. It's also my husband's birthday but, don't worry, he's in no danger of having his brains smashed against the altar as poor Becket had. *THE FIFTH KNIGHT* is storytelling as good as Ken Follett's *Pillars of the Earth*. Will definitely keep reading this author.

The language grips you and draws you into a reality so different, cold and cruel, that you want to escape. But that's not so easy as the plot, unrelenting, takes you from a battle at sea through cobbled streets to the cathedral where the gruesome murder takes place. You plan your escape at the end of the next chapter but, too late, the characters like a shroud have wrapped themselves around you and refuse to let go. You need to know what happens to Theodosia, are we seeing the true Palmer, where is this God forsaken journey going to end??The best place to read this is in a warm bed and I can't wait for the next chapter.....

I really wanted to like this. The premise grabbed me and it's a fascinating period in English history. I have two reasons for my lack of enthusiasm: 1) I found the bickering young couple super annoying, and 2) I didn't find the historical people believable. I think there's an inherent problem for an author when putting people who really existed in a novel because we have built-in expectations of who those people were and how we think they would have behaved. I wouldn't expect the reputations of the four knights to be rehabilitated, but they were soooo over-the-top villainous, I just kept getting yanked out of the story. Ok, so I'm just a history enthusiast, and don't have the qualifications the author has, but I don't think any of the historical people were portrayed realistically. Perhaps I would have liked this book better if it had been framed as alternative-history (but the young couple would still annoy me).

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