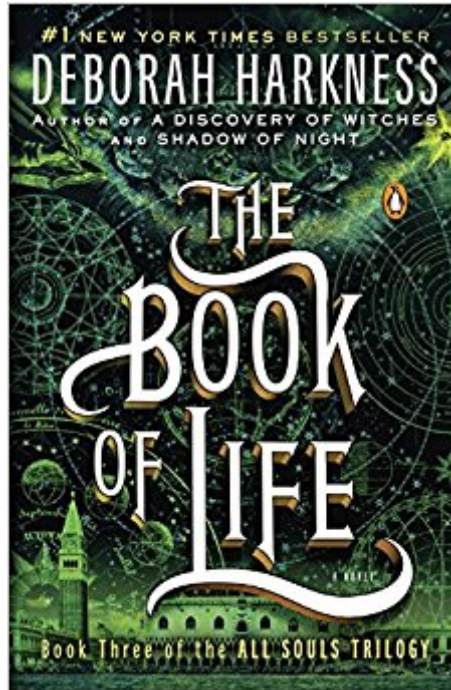


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The Book Of Life: A Novel (All Souls Trilogy)



Synopsis

The #1 New York Times bestselling series finale and sequel to *A Discovery of Witches* and *Shadow of Night* Bringing the magic and suspense of the *All Souls Trilogy* to a deeply satisfying conclusion, this highly anticipated finale went straight to #1 on the New York Times bestseller list. In *The Book of Life*, Diana and Matthew time-travel back from Elizabethan London to make a dramatic return to the present, facing new crises and old enemies. At Matthew's ancestral home, Sept-Tours, they reunite with the beloved cast of characters from *A Discovery of Witches* with one significant exception. But the real threat to their future has yet to be revealed, and when it is, the search for Ashmole 782 and its missing pages takes on even more urgency.

Book Information

Series: All Souls Trilogy

Paperback: 576 pages

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Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 1.2 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars See all reviews (4,459 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #9,198 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #115 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Horror > Occult #265 in Books > Romance > Paranormal > Vampires #349 in Books > Romance > Fantasy

Customer Reviews

**** ABSOLUTELY NO SPOILERS AHEAD **** I was a big fan of the first two novels in this series, *A Discovery of Witches: A Novel (All Souls Trilogy)* and *Shadow of Night (All Souls Trilogy)* and waited with exciting anticipation for *The Book of Life: A Novel (All Souls Trilogy)* to be released. I was fortunate enough to receive an advanced readers copy from the publisher last week and was not disappointed. I'm not going to rehash the publisher's summary by restating the plot of *Book of Life*, but believe me - the journey Deborah Harkness takes us with Diana and Matthew is wholly amazing. Their search for Ashmole 782 and its missing pages becomes tantamount into understanding what the witches have known for centuries and how to save their future. Although it has been two years since *Shadow of Night (All Souls Trilogy)* was released, you will find it very

easy to get back into Matthew and Diana's storyline. And seeing how things are settled with Benjamin was definitely worth the wait. There was plenty of action and suspense to keep you turning the pages. For all of us who were disappointed in how Veronica Roth ended the Divergent series with *Allegiant* (Divergent Series) last year have no fear with Deborah Harkness - she does an amazing job concluding the All Souls trilogy. This was a wonderful end to the series. It's a little sad to have waited two years for the conclusion and after a week of reading, having to say goodbye to the characters of this amazing trilogy. I thought Deborah Harkness did a wonderful job wrapping everything the plot without being predictable or leaving gaping plot holes. *The Book of Life* is all that I hoped it would be. It was hard to put down and I believe fans will not feel the same letdown felt with the Divergent trilogy. I fully recommend it as a quick read. It took me a week during my daily commute to work and a few hours before going to bed to get through the 576 pages. Definitely worth the wait.

What a huge let down this book was. I'm talking EPIC proportion let down. First of all, I am shocked at all the positive reviews I'm seeing. I feel like we didn't read the same book. *A Discovery of Witches* was one of my favorite reads of 2011. I wasn't as much into reading then, and I stumbled across this one while randomly perusing my library for books. I fell in love with the story, the characters, and the magic of it all. I felt like the story was building up for something important, something powerful. The second book was also pretty successful for me. It was lovely in the way that historical fiction is pleasurable for me. I also have a deep love of time-travel books, so I was practically guaranteed to fall head over heels. A lot of time has passed since the second, and my expectations were sky high for the third. Unfortunately, the careful world-building fell to crap in the final installment. I'll try to break down my main issues with the story without giving away any spoilers.

- 1) The POV switches: I have very specific opinions about lots of POVs in a story: Namely, I hate them. This book had at least 5 different points of view, which irritated me to no end. Why not just two? Those extra points of view just seemed lazy to me, just a way for the author to do some "telling" and less "showing" about the characters. To make matters worse, the author switched from 1st to 3rd person throughout the book! Talk about a headache. It was a terrible choice, in my opinion.
- 2) The number of characters: This book was like a who's who from the previous two books. I swear, no one was left out. There were so many people re-introduced that I had a hard time keeping track of everyone. The story felt so... cluttered. All of these extra people and their minor storylines weighed the plot down so much. It became sort of jumbled and confusing. I'm not sure why the author didn't just keep her focus on the main characters.
- 3) The lack of secrecy:

I'm so confused! In the previous books, Diana and Matthew guarded the secret of their relationship, the quest for the book, and the secrets of Matthew's family fiercely. In this book? They let it all hang out. They tell everyone EVERYTHING! Everyone seems to know what they are searching for, that Diana is pregnant, simply everything! I have no idea why this had them throwing caution to the wind. They freaking told an entire class of students what they were researching. It was madness. Then they are looking for the person "leaking their secrets"... it could be the pizza boy for all they know! It was truly bizarre.4) Diana's familiar: I won't say too much about this topic so I don't give away any spoilers, but I was utterly confused about the change in the firedrake's personality throughout the story, especially towards the end.5) The haphazard plot: It honestly felt like the author didn't think this trilogy through very well. It was like the author had a brilliant idea for the first book and then had no idea how to carry it through. The third book had to reveal some mind blowing things to fit with all the buildup, but instead it was a collection of jumbled tangents. The main characters jumped from location to location, doing a series of things that didn't really make sense. They seemed like chickens with their heads cut off. The book didn't seem planned. It was almost as though the author was making it up on the fly.6) The blood rage thing: I hated this plot point. Blood rage was supposed to be this crazy thing, but some deep breathing and zen meditation seemed to snap all the characters out of it?? I was so confused as to why it was this big issue to begin with if it was that easy to control. I would have preferred it be a mindless, insane thing instead of the nuisance it was made out to be. It was a poorly fleshed out concept that could have been more powerful.7) The Book: Okay, what is the deal with that book? We never truly get answers. I still am left wondering who created it and why. If you are reading this story thinking that something wondrous will be revealed, don't hold your breath.8) Plot inconsistencies: There are so many plot elements that make no sense or are left dangling. I don't want to go into them all because I want this review to be spoiler free, but there were many instances where the book contradicts itself. All in all, this book was a huge bummer. I give it 2 stars, mainly for nostalgia because I was happy to visit with these characters again. Oh, and can Gallowglass get his own book? Pretty please? **Copy provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review**

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