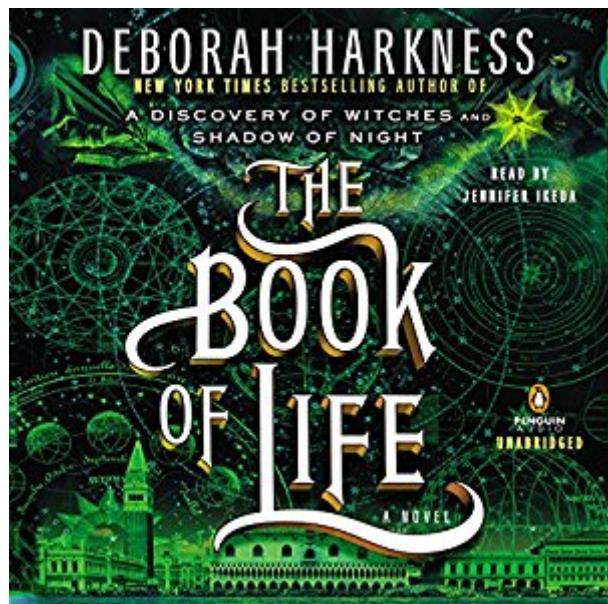


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The Book Of Life: All Souls, Book 3



Synopsis

The highly anticipated finale to the number-one New York Times best-selling trilogy that began with *A Discovery of Witches*. After traveling through time in *Shadow of Night*, the second book in Deborah Harkness's enchanting series, historian and witch Diana Bishop and vampire scientist Matthew Clairmont return to the present to face new crises and old enemies. At Matthew's ancestral home at Sept-Tours, they reunite with the 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. In the trilogy's final volume, Harkness deepens her themes of power and passion, family and caring, past deeds and their present consequences. In ancestral homes and university laboratories, using ancient knowledge and modern science, from the hills of the Auvergne to the palaces of Venice and beyond, the couple at last learn what the witches discovered so many centuries ago. With more than one million copies sold in the United States and appearing in 38 foreign editions and translations, *A Discovery of Witches* and *Shadow of Night* have landed on all of the major best seller lists and garnered rave reviews from countless publications. Eagerly awaited by Harkness's legion of fans, *The Book of Life* brings this superbly written series to a deeply satisfying close.

Book Information

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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.

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 the 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.

I loved DISCOVERY OF WITCHES, and I eagerly downloaded SHADOW OF NIGHT at the stroke of midnight on the day of its release. But I was disappointed at the plot disintegration, the puzzling and ill-advised tangents of the main characters, and the introduction of jarring multiple POVs. Matthew's character, once so edgy and alpha, became less Heathcliff and more unformed and

unsexy. I guess the “SHADOW” was a foreshadowing of what would be in store for readers of THE BOOK OF LIFE. While SHADOW was truly a shadow to its predecessor, DISCOVERY OF WITCHES, I was unprepared for the terrible disappointment I experienced with THE BOOK OF LIFE. Here are just a few of the reasons:1. In the original book, there’s an edgy, sexy, dynamic tension between Diana and Matthew, whereas in the final book, those “vibes” are almost non-existent.2. Matthew is no longer an alpha Heathcliff with a scary, but brilliant take on life, but a clueless, blundering dolt. The lack of dynamic tension between the couple demolishes what was once the sweet underlying “forbidden love conquers all” storyline that had been so cleverly woven around interesting historical and academic facts and ideas.3. Important characters who, in the first book, had hinted at a more important and pivotal role in the future, disappeared or were seen merely blinking in the dim light at the fringes.4. Certain characters that appeared for the first time in BOL seemed to be terribly contrived and PC.5. It was a crime that the character of Baldwin was short shrifted. The author could have done a lot with him. It was also disappointing that the readers aren’t allowed to see Peter Knox and Gerbert get their just desserts.6. Most of the main characters first introduced in the DISCOVERY lost their significance.7.

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