



## **The Book of Love**

*Kathleen McGowan*

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Maureen Paschal thought she might rest and work on her book after discovering the gospel written by Mary Magdalene that revealed Jesus and Mary Magdalene were married. The truth of their story rocked the world and made Maureen a target of those who did not like her discovery and a heroine to those who did. Then Maureen receives a strange package containing what looks like an ancient letter written in Latin and signed with a symbol. She discovers that its author is an extraordinary woman whom history has overlooked -- or covered up -- Countess Matilda of Tuscany, and in the letter Matilda demands the return of her "most precious books and documents." Maureen soon finds herself in a race across Italy and France, where hidden dangers await her and her lover, Berenger, as they begin to realize that they are on the trail of another explosive discovery: the Book of Love, the Gospel written in Jesus' own hand. As Maureen learns more about Matilda, an eleventhcentury warrior countess who was secretly married to a pope, she begins to see the eerie connections between herself and Matilda, connections she must trace to their source if she is to stop the wrong people from finding the Book of Love and hiding it forever. Weaving together Matilda's little-known true story and Maureen's thrilling search, "The Book of Love" follows two amazing heroines as their stories intertwine through time. Maureen is immersed in the mysteries of the labyrinth, the beautiful poetry of the Song of Songs, the world's greatest art and architecture, and Matilda's amazing legacy...until a potentially fatal encounter reveals the Book of Love to Maureen -- and to the reader.

## **The Book of Love Details**

Date : Published March 10th 2009 by Touchstone (first published 2008)

ISBN : 9780743295352

Author : Kathleen McGowan

Format : Hardcover 516 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Mystery, Religion

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## From Reader Review The Book of Love for online ebook

### Olga says

Me ha encantado... si el primer libro habla de Maria Magdalena y como se la ha vapuleado en la historia, ahora en este segundo libro nos habla de otro personaje femenino con la misma fuerza que Magdalena, Matilde De Cassona... Una mujer fuerte, inteligente y que fue una de las mujeres con las poder de su tiempo...

Mientras el libro sigue su curso con Maureen en el presente y como se le van revelando los misterios y secretos de la fe que intento implantar Jesus y Maria Magdalena... Hace un recorrido por Francia e Italia ( por iglesias, zonas y catedrales) , donde la aventura no decae y te engancha para saber mas...

Continuare con el ultimo libro, porque te deja con ganas de mas!!!

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### Mel says

I was very disappointed with this book. I was expecting great things after loving 'The expected One.' The story was longwinded and all over the place. I only got 1/3 of the way through it and then gave up.

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### Kate says

Having just finished TBOL, I have to say I was slightly disappointed. I thoroughly enjoyed The Expected One, mostly due to the way in which the characters were portrayed and developed throughout the story. Both their internal conflicts and external interactions were well written and engaging. With TBOL however, I felt as if none of the things I enjoyed in The Expected One were present. While the sections on Matilda's life were interesting, I much prefer to read about Maureen's story. The thought the author focused far too much time on the past and then had to rush through the ending. I was left feeling as if there wasn't a full explanation on either what Maureen discovers within TBOL or what the other characters think of her discover. I'm still planning on reading The Poet Prince (simply because I hate to leave a series unfinished), but I hope Ms. McGowen goes back to the style she first used in The Expected One and gives her readers more time with the characters they have invested so much time with.

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### Victoria McNulty says

At first I thought this was an overly religious unimaginative attempt to capitalize on the Dan Brown Craze. Then the more I read, the more I understood that the author actually believed everything she was writing was true (or mostly true). I'm not sure exactly what to think about the plot now, it's a lot to consider and I don't have the evidence to be able to weigh.

I did find the delivery corny, at times like a romance novel. I'm pretty sure I read "she had to catch her breath because it was so beautiful," and "she did not expect to be so emotional," about five times each. There were

no complicated feelings, nothing too exciting or extraordinary, which makes sense if your main goal is to convey a religious message. Unfortunately, I didn't know that until I got about 100 pages in, and by then it was like a car wreck- I couldn't look away.

I'll admit I am a little intrigued, and I may look into the gospel of Philip just to see what's out there. As a reader I found the book poorly written and I would give the advice to Kathleen McGowan: show me, don't tell me.

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## **obsessedwithbooks says**

The Book of Love by Kathleen McGowan is the second book in The Magdalene Line trilogy. The first book in the trilogy, The Expected One, focused on Maureen Paschal's adventure to discover the lost Gospel of Mary Magdalene and growing realization she is an "Expected One". The Book of Love begins as Maureen is on her book tour.

\*\*\*\*\*From the book Jacket: Fresh from her successful hunt for the long-hidden scrolls written by Mary Magdalene, journalist Maureen Paschal receives a strange package in the mail – containing what looks to be an ancient document written in Latin and signed in code. Maureen discovers that the document was written by an extraordinary woman who history has overlooked – or covered up, Matilda of Tuscany, and it demands the return of Matilda's "most precious books and documents". As the discoverer of Mary Magdalene's gospel, Maureen immediately recognizes a new search has begun. Soon, she finds herself in a race across Italy and France, where new dangers await her and her lover Sinclair as they begin to uncover secrets and shine new light on the hidden corners of Christianity.

As Maureen learns more about Matilda, a warrior countess who was secretly married to a Pope who joined her, not only in bed, but also in using the Last Gospel of Jesus to form a radical new kind of church, she begins to see the eerie connections between herself and Matilda, connections she must unravel quickly if she is to stop the wrong people from finding The Book of Love and hiding it forever.

Combining expert research with Dazzling plot twists, The Book of Love is sure to thrill readers as they follow Maureen's search for clues through the world's greatest art, architecture, and history, until a potentially fatal encounter reveals The Book of Love to her – and to us. \*\*\*\*\*

I thought The Expected One leaned more toward the mystery/suspense genre, while The Book of Love presents itself as largely historical fiction. It is an ode to a little-known but vital woman in history, Matilda of Tuscany, and a quest for the truth. As a large portion of the novel is portraying Matilda, I did not get as strong a sense of Maureen's character that I did in the first book. In fact I was much more engaged with Matilda, as Maureen seemed to be wavering between making choices, decisions. Parts of Maureen's story I was frustrated with, first that, as she should have already experienced theft of her belongings and attempts on her life, that she would have been more aware of plots against her and have the intelligence to avoid them. Second, her life is in ways paralleling Matilda's, but Matilda is a warrior and Maureen has little shown similar strength of will. I was most riveted with Maureen's story when she was unraveling all the clues to the truth about The Book of Love and the secrets of Chartres Cathedral.

The Book of Love is surprising, evocative and eye opening. There are many layers and interwoven elements to the story, probably more than what can be grasped in the first reading of the book (the author herself suggests this in Acknowledgements). I have to applaud Kathleen McGowan for the sheer amount of

historical content that had to have been researched and the creativity required to present the story in its three-way format of Maureen's present day journey, Matilda of Tuscany's historical diary and the writings from the Book of Love. In reading this series I would suggest keeping an open mind and an open heart. If you loved books such as The Red Tent, Labyrinth, The Rossetti Letter, The Historian or The Thirteenth Tale, I would definitely recommend this series.

The third and final book will be called The Poet Prince, the story of Maureen's other half, Berenger Sinclair. I definitely will be re-reading the first two books when The Poet Prince is published. Kathleen McGowan's website: <http://www.theexpectedone.com>

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### **Dave says**

I just read alot of the reviews. Seems to me that there are two camps; one which is severely disappointed by it being a "rip-off" of DaVinci Code. Gosh!, aren't people who write historical fiction allowed to use the same historical thread for a platform?

Others, like myself really enjoyed it because it is fun to simply think about things. History is always written by the victors, but as near as we can tell, it is "factual" that the Church did cherry pick from the myriad of written biblical records to produce "the Word of God".

So we have a choice; we can either complain because we simply would rather complain rather than consider possibilities OR we can read it and wonder if anything in it resounds within our lives.

For the complainers, go watch TV where "reality" takes place. For the others, take a look at other books that go more deeply into the Kinghts Templar, or Sacred Architechture. For the brave, read the Church excluded writings found in the Nag Hamadi collection or the Dead Sea Scrolls. (The Essene Gospels, The Gospels of Thomas, or the Gospel of Mary and yes, there is actually one!)

For those with a brain to think, let them think!

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### **Danielle says**

What could have been a hopeful sequel to the fun (if historically questionable) "The Expected One," turned out to be a good story within a bad one. Over 1/2 of the book was about Matilda of Tuscany, instead of the main character Maureen. I sensed almost no character development, and the main plot was so fragmented by the historical "flashbacks" that I had to flip back to the previous present-day sections. There were several intriguing reveals about the heretical religion that McGowan has presented in her two novels that I enjoyed, and it was thought-provoking.

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### **Pitter Patter says**

Dear heavens...haven't they pulped this woman's books yet? The loss of trees is a criminal act.

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## **Uber Chic says**

OMG! If I 'hear' one more silly review which mimics the author's redundant phrase "Those with ears to ear, let them hear", I am going to barf. All of the 5-star reviews seem to add this trite over-used phrase to the end of their reviews. It makes me wonder if they have ANY originality what-so-ever. McGowan uses this phrase every 500 words throughout her 500+ page novel. Just imagine how many times it appears in the book!! As if we did not "hear" enough of it whilst reading the novel - geez. Gimme a break. All of the 5-star reviews sound curiously similar in context, and seem to end with this over-used phrase. What, pray tell, is there to hear? After all, this book is not profound wisdom! It's a freaking historical romance based on fantasy!! Wake up!! (You know, the more I think about it, maybe these similar reviews are orchestrated by the marketing department for Kathleen's books. Hey, it certainly is a possibility to try to "dupe" the public. The only problem is, WE'RE NOT THAT STUPID!! Get real!)

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## **Mary Magna says**

I did not feel as though this book lived up to the hype surrounding it. The characters were right out of a corny romance novel, and were not worthy of such a long-winded novel. I don't know, maybe it was the title - as well as the cover - which smacked of those silly romance novels. This just didn't "do it" for me. Maybe her next one will be better!

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## **Paige says**

I thought this book was great. I pre-ordered and received a copy early. Hit up Amazon- they seem to be sending them out ahead of schedule if you want an early copy.

The book picks up shortly after the 1st book left off. Maureen is on tour promoting the book she had written based on her controversial discoveries that Mary Magdalene was the wife of and a beloved disciple of Jesus. Maureen begins to have dreams of a book, written by Jesus on his teachings, referred to as the Book of Love. Maureen is guided through these dreams to find the book so she can share its message with the world. She ends up reconnecting with Berenger, Tammy, Roland and her cousin Peter as the story unfolds.

I thought the book offered up a great adventure and the story was well told with an ending that caught me off guard. Part of the storyline I enjoyed most was that of Matilda of Canossa/ Tuscany, a woman of faith and strength, who serves the book of love through safeguarding its message she holds so dear. I liked how her story was integrated into the parallel journey Maureen was taking as she attempted to find the book Matilda had hidden.

I am getting ready to read it again, seems like I may pick up more details the second time round.. actually hoping the third book comes out soon!!!

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## **Christine says**

This sequel to THE EXPECTED ONE this book again follows Maureen Paschal on her quest to uncover the truth behind the Magdalene line following the crucifixion of Christ. I usually enjoy books with this type of story line, but in this case I found the writing to be excessively repetitive and unoriginal. Ms. McGowan seemed to be trying to fill pages and not only repeated herself excessively but gave the reader pages and pages (and pages and pages) of rehashed myths and stories from history. One version was not enough, so she then went on to retell the same myth again in another form. I managed to finish the book, but by the end I didn't really have any interest in what was happening. I understand there is a third book (THE POET PRINCE) in the Magdalene series coming out in July this year. I, personally, am not going to bother.

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## **Carla says**

I enjoyed this book, but I preferred her first book The Expected One much more. I think all of the information was a fresh, and she had interesting twists on Dan Brown's theories in Da Vinci Code. I also enjoyed getting to know all the characters in that book, and I missed Maureen interacting as much with her group of friends. However, I think that is one of the aspects the author was trying to convey - that with that great knowledge and responsibility a person can be very lonely. I did like some of the layers of meaning in this book.

I also loved the story of Matilda. I understand that much of historical fiction is heavy on the fiction. While we may know facts here or there, we weren't actually there - so much of what is written is very good guesswork. In that respect, the story of Matilda was extremely entertaining within the loose framework of known history. I look forward to her exploration of other historical figures in upcoming books.

I LOVED her treatment of the Lord's Prayer. While I use a different translation, the concept of six petals and how to pray using those was very helpful. What I enjoy about books like this is that you take what you want and leave the rest. Whether you agree with the theology of this (or even Brown's book) or not, there is still that desire to look into things for yourself - to research a passage of Scripture, to check a historical fact, or to just use a piece of the book in your own life (as I am using her method of the Lord's Prayer).

All in all, it was a VERY enjoyable read and spurred my interest in many things both spiritual and historical. I recommend it highly to anyone who enjoyed Brown's Da Vinci code. I also recommend it to anyone who enjoys a good mystery. I am looking forward to the next book, The Poet Prince.

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## **Kym says**

OKay, I was a huge fan of her first one, The Expected One, and have recommended it up and down the "halls", so I was eagerly awaiting this book.

McGowan is a talented writer and takes us on the next step of her new theology with The Book Of Love. More a wishful theory than suspense novel, 'Love' takes us into the next chapter of Maureen's quest to prove that Catholicism and its tenets are, at best, a misunderstanding, at worst, a willful abuse by history's church leaders and kings.

This is a book that made me happy while reading it....I cried at times, because wouldn't it just be nice if all the church let the teachings of Christ be as simple as "Love"?

There is also a parallel theme which allows for Jesus' marriage to MARY Magdelena, as the continuation of a eternal heiros-gamos or soulmate relationship. This is, perhaps, my favorite part of the book! I can't give anything away, there are few secrets here--just in how the story develops.

"I have loved you before

I love you now,

And I will love you again.

The time returns"

--Kathleen McGowan, "The Book of Love"

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## **Tracy Terry says**

The second 'quest' for journalist Maureen Pascal. Whilst this reads well as a standalone novel I do recommend that the first book in the series, *The Expected One*, be read first as, apart from it being a much better story, as a reader you'll have a greater understanding of the characters which, though not always too important in sequels, I think vital in this instance.

Not entirely what I was expecting - more of a love story and less of a thriller. Despite the synopsis on the back cover suggesting that the main body of the story was devoted to Maureen's story the opposite was in fact true with the major part of the novel being given over to the life, loves (and battles) of her 11th century counterpart, Matilda (Tilda).

Seamlessly blending fact with fiction though obviously well researched to its detriment at times this read more like an essay than a novel. Also a bit of a hard slog due to the incredibly small print, reading was made even more difficult by the use of italics to hi-light certain passages which made me worry that I was concentrating so physically hard on what was actually written that I was missing key elements of the plot.

Telling the story of two women, Matilda (Countess of Tuscany) and Maureen (the author herself?) who separated by time are connected by destiny, *The Book Of Love* spans several countries over several centuries and also includes dream/vision sequences as well extracts from the *Book Of Love*, a Gospel supposedly written by Jesus himself, not to mention the occasional sub-plots. Not overly problematic in itself as you always knew where and when you were its just that the story occasionally jumped from one woman's story to the others leaving such large gaps (well over 100 pages at one time) that I felt certain threads of the story were at best disrupted and, at worst, lost.

Though not a horrendously bad read, it just doesn't hold up to comparison with Book 1, I felt that though it obviously would have been a totally different story without the inclusion of Maureen (or, for that matter, the woefully under-used Berenger Sinclair) Matilda's epic story was more than enough.

As to whether or not I'll be reading Book 3 and what I believe is the final book in the series? Of course I will.

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## **Trina says**

It is difficult to critique one of an author's books without comparing it to his or her other books. 'The Expected One' was literally a revelation to me. It opened my eyes, mind, and heart to my Savior in a profound way. 'The Book of Love' follows the same characters, now on their search for the legendary Book of Love, a gospel written by Jesus' own hand.

At the end of the book, McGowen explains the immense editing and condensing that was required to make the story readable. While she may certainly take poetic license with certain historical figures and events, the result is compelling and beautiful. The notion of a Heavenly Father and Mother is a notion I have always accepted. I loved the accounts of various biblical and allegorical 'couples' mirroring the perfect love and balance of God and His Beloved. I found myself growing to love and care about Matilda as Maureen learns her story and struggles.

This is another powerful book of spiritual lessons and inspiration. For those with ears to hear... Thank you, Kathleen for another excellent novel.

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## **Sherry says**

I loved this book. It tells the legend of Jesus' Gospel written in his own hand. Maureen, The Expected One -- the next in the long line of Magdeline's searches for the Book of Love. She uncovers centuries of conspiracy to erase early Christianity and Jesus' marriage to Mary Magdeline from the history of the church. Last year at this time I read Faulcolt's Pendulum, that tells the same story only from a very male perspective. Katherine Neville touches on it in Eight through the metaphor of Chess. Ms. McGowan's research is excellent and she carefully explains in her notes what is fiction and what is based on historical references. The book reminds of my Mother. When a child, she imbues me with a different kind of Christianity -- one based strictly on Love and includes an acceptance of reincarnation. My Mother was born in Grenoble France, very close to the area where these stories have been passed down for 2,000 years. This book is a personal 5 star book. Maybe it would not be for everybody.

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## **Alma says**

[ (hide spoiler)]

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## **Sue says**

While I think that the author has great ideas and great material that she is working with, I found this somewhat hard to get through because I was almost totally & completely in awe of her overuse of effusive language. (I had the same issue with her first book). Fortunately, Matilda's story was very interesting & saved the day.

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**Daniel says**

I thought the first volume was a cheap imitation of Dan Brown's DaVinci Code - this one is even worse.

I was hoping for something fresh especailly after the author contacted me on GOODREADS to promote her new book after I didn't like the first one.

I wanted to like it - I really did. But...it just didn't do it for me.

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