



The Fire and the Light: A Novel of the Cathars

Glen Craney

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As the 13th century dawns, an ancient scroll hidden in the French Pyrenees is rumored to hold shocking revelations about Jesus of Nazareth. To preserve this lost evidence of His teachings, a charismatic Cathar holy woman must defy Rome. Christianity is about to enter its darkest hour and emerge forever changed.

Set during the religious persecution and political rivalries of the Albigensian Crusade, this is a fictionalized interpretation of the life of **Esclarmonde de Foix**, a revered leader of a heretical sect of pacifist mystics called **Cathars**, or 'Pure Ones.' As the Viscountess of Foix, Esclarmonde ignites the enmity of **Pope Innocent III** by challenging the Church's venality and corruption. When her fame grows after public disputations with the legates of Rome, the Church retaliates by launching a brutal forty-year war in Occitania that culminates with the nine-month siege of **Montsegur**, the Cathar Masada.

Here is a rich tapestry filled with poignant love stories, monastic corruption, Templar intrigue, troubadour espionage, mysteries of the Holy Grail and the Tarot, and epic siege battles that reshaped the kingdom of France and paved the path to the Reformation. This timely novel about the **Cathar Joan of Arc** offers a cautionary tale for those who insist that militant theocracy and terror in the name of God could never take root in the modern West. It also challenges traditional beliefs about the origins of Christianity and the controversial role of women in the priesthood.

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