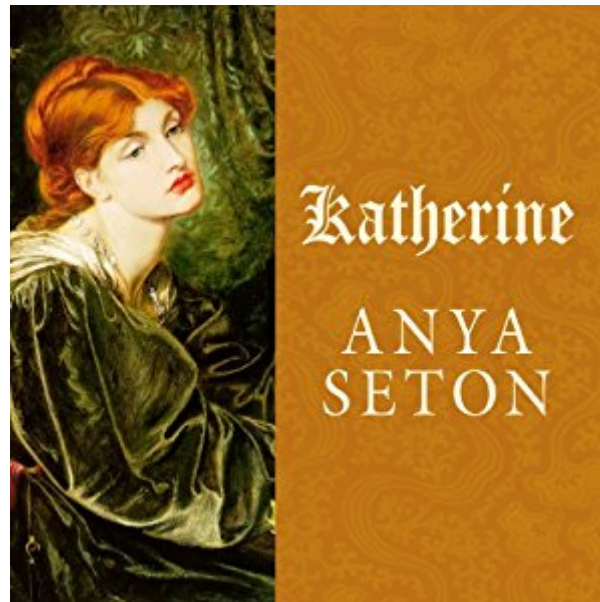




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Katherine: A Novel



Synopsis

Set in the vibrant 14th century of Chaucer and the Black Death, the classic romance Katherine features knights fighting in battle, serfs struggling in poverty, and the magnificent Plantagenets - Edward III, the Black Prince, and Richard II - who ruled despotically over a court rotten with intrigue. Within this era of danger and romance, John of Gaunt, the king's son, falls passionately in love with the already married Katherine. Their well-documented affair and love persist through decades of war, adultery, murder, loneliness, and redemption. This epic novel of conflict, cruelty, and untamable love has become a classic since its first publication in 1954.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Customer Reviews

Anya Seton wrote two historical novels with English settings. Katherine is set in the time of Edward III and gives an excellent background for the lead up to the War of the Roses. Katherine Swynford is one of the most remarkable women in history. She is ancestor to both sides of the war of the roses and managed to survive and thrive in a man's world. Anya Seton puts lots of romance in her novels and does it well. She never puts in any false history for the sake of the story. Consequently, when you are done with the book, you are really prepared to understand the period of history covered by the book. I am an English history buff and already knew most of the history in and around this time but Anya Seton fill in the blanks in a very entertaining way, and it makes you remember and understand the major events of the time. It's a really great read.

I read this book mostly because I'm interested in British medieval history and because I'm a descendant of the two subject characters: Katherine Swynford and John of Gaunt. I wanted to learn more about them. There were a lot of facts I learned that I hadn't known before; thus my choice of there being plot "twists." I used "thoughtful" to describe the mood of the book as there was a great deal of thought put into its writing and also the characters are described as appearing thoughtful. I described the pace as "slow" because it is. It is a rather long book (593 pages) but there is a lot of events to cover and a lot of descriptions. And I like "slow

When I was a child, my mother had boxes of books which included Anya Seton's book but I just ignored them and now that I'm older I wish I had taken the time to read them. So, at Christmas time, I bought two Seton books that had lowered prices for the holidays. Katherine needs no review as Ms. Seton is known as one of the great historical writers of our time and Katherine is no exception. The story is of Katherine Swynford and John of Gaunt, their love story, their lives together and apart, their children, their dynasty. If you like historical novels in this time period, you can't help loving Katherine. The descriptions in the book are so real that you can see them, feel them and your mind travels back to the 14th and 15th century of the Lancaster's rule, the gilt, the armor, the clothes. I was sorry to find the ending of the book, I'm sure I could have been happy to read another 500 pages of the story. If you love historical England, you will love this book.

Katherine by Anya Seton was written in 1954 and is the archetypical medieval Historical Romance. Seton created a work of timeless historical fiction. The writing style is clear and easy to read. The author uses language and words of the era which need to be looked up to be understood and which add authenticity. Her research is impeccable. We follow the life of commoner, Katherine Swynford during the late 1300's from her girlhood, first marriage, motherhood and her adultery with, separation from, and eventual marriage with John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The author seamlessly weaves together medieval life, fashions and history. Katherine and John's romance is set against the backdrop of the Courts of Edward III and Richard II, her brother in law Geoffrey Chaucer, Wat Tyler and the Peasant's Revolt and the Hundred Years War. The characterizations are a bit shallow, especially for John who is fairly two dimensional. I initially found Katherine mature but with the start of her romance her behaviour changes and her moods and actions become erratic. After the destruction of the Savoy Palace, Katherine goes on Pilgrimage to atone for her sins and ends up coming under the influence of Julian of Norwich. I knew nothing of this English mystic and was interested to find she was an actual religious figure in history. The pace and writing then

barrelled on to its conclusion of the marriage of our two protagonists and the story ended quickly. While I enjoyed Katherine and respect its status as a progenitor of its genre, it wasn't the best historical novel I've read. All in all, a good, not great read.

I have this book in hard cover, but the print is too small for me to read the book comfortably. I bought this book thinking the print would be larger, but it isn't. Will have to wear those darned magnifying glasses when I read the story again.

The one-star rating is for the quality of the Kindle book that has horrible (or no) editing. It is filled with typos throughout the entire text. It is not only annoying, but it is a bit puzzling to determine what the correct word should be. For instance, where the word "her" should be is the word "pier", or "Katherine" is spelled "Katlrine", etc. I am sorry I did not heed the warnings about the typos, thinking that it can't be that bad. Well it is. UPDATE: As of Feb. 14, 2013, has provided an update for the Kindle book of Katherine. Without having read the updated version, only skimming through multiple chapters throughout the book, looking at key words that I knew to be previous typo problems, I believe all typos have been corrected. I am thrilled that has provided an update for this book so quickly. I really wanted an electronic book of Katherine, now I have a quality product that matches the quality of the story!

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