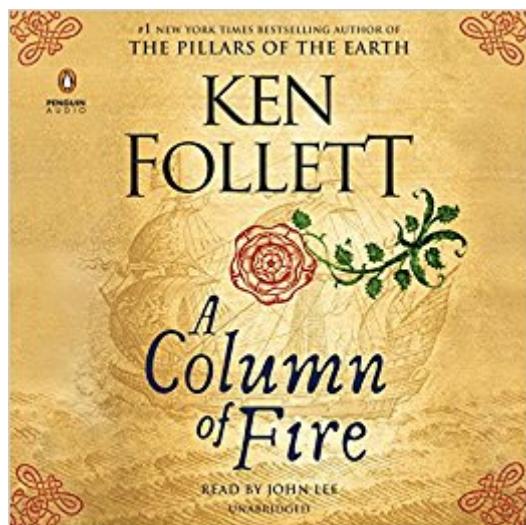


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A Column Of Fire (Kingsbridge)



Synopsis

International bestselling author Ken Follett has enthralled millions of readers with The Pillars of the Earth and World Without End, two stories of the Middle Ages set in the fictional city of Kingsbridge. The saga now continues with Follett's magnificent new epic, A Column of Fire. In 1558, the ancient stones of Kingsbridge Cathedral look down on a city torn apart by religious conflict. As power in England shifts precariously between Catholics and Protestants, royalty and commoners clash, testing friendship, loyalty, and love. Ned Willard wants nothing more than to marry Margery Fitzgerald. But when the lovers find themselves on opposing sides of the religious conflict dividing the country, Ned goes to work for Princess Elizabeth. When she becomes queen, all Europe turns against England. The shrewd, determined young monarch sets up the country's first secret service to give her early warning of assassination plots, rebellions, and invasion plans. Over a turbulent half century, the love between Ned and Margery seems doomed as extremism sparks violence from Edinburgh to Geneva. Elizabeth clings to her throne and her principles, protected by a small, dedicated group of resourceful spies and courageous secret agents. The real enemies, then as now, are not the rival religions. The true battle pitches those who believe in tolerance and compromise against the tyrants who would impose their ideas on everyone else "no matter what the cost. Set during one of the most turbulent and revolutionary times in history, A Column of Fire is one of Follett's most exciting and ambitious works yet. It will delight longtime fans of the Kingsbridge series and is the perfect introduction for readers new to Ken Follett.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Praise for *The Pillars of the Earth*: Follett is a master. *The Washington Post* Enormous and brilliant . . . a great epic tale . . . crammed with characters unbelievably alive across the great gulf of centuries . . . touches all human emotion love and hate, loyalty and treachery, hope and despair. See for yourself. This is truly a novel to get lost in. *Cosmopolitan* Wonderful . . . will hold you, fascinate you, surround you. *Chicago Sun-Times* A towering tale . . . a ripping read . . . There s murder, arson, treachery, torture, love, and lust. *The New York Daily News* Ken Follett takes a giant step. *San Francisco Chronicle* With this book, Follett risks all and comes out a clear winner. . . A historical novel of gripping readability, authentic atmosphere, and memorable characterization. Beginning with a mystery that casts its shadow, the narrative is a seesaw of tension, suspense, impeccable pacing . . . action, intrigue, violence, passion, greed, bravery, dedication, revenge, and love. A love that entertains, instructs, and satisfies on a grand scale. *Publishers Weekly* An extraordinary epic buttressed by suspense . . . a mystifying puzzle involving the execution of an innocent man . . . the erection of a magnificent cathedral . . . romance, rivalry, and spectacle. A monumental masterpiece . . . a towering triumph from a major talent. *Booklist* Praise for *World Without End*: [A] well-researched, beautifully detailed portrait of the late Middle Ages . . . Follett s no-frills prose does its job, getting smoothly through more than a thousand pages of outlaws, war, death, sex, and politics to end with an edifice that is as well constructed and solid as Merthins bridge. *The Washington Post* Follett tells a story that runs the gamut of life in the Middle Ages, and he does so in such a way that we are not only captivated but also educated. What else could you ask for? *The Denver Post* So if historical fiction is your meat, here s a rare treat. A feast of conflicts and struggles among religious authority, royal governance, the powerful unions (or guilds) of the day, and the peasantry . . . With *World Without End*, Follett proves his Pillars may be a rarity, but it wasn t a fluke. *New York Post* A work that stands as something of a triumph of industry and professionalism. *The Guardian (UK)* The four well-drawn central characters will captivate readers as they prove to be heroic, depraved, resourceful, or mean. Fans of Follett s previous medieval epic will be well rewarded. *The Union (CA)* Populated with an immense cast of truly remarkable characters . . . this is not a book to be devoured in one sitting, tempting though that might be, but one to savor for its drama, depth, and richness. *Library Journal* Readers will be captivated. *Publishers Weekly* "Praise for *The Pillars of the Earth*: "Follett is a master." --*The Washington Post* "Enormous and brilliant . . . a great epic tale . . . crammed with characters unbelievably alive across the great gulf of centuries . . . touches all human emotion--love and hate, loyalty and treachery, hope and despair. See for yourself. This is truly a novel to get lost in." --*Cosmopolitan* "Wonderful .

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Ken Follett is one of the world's best-loved authors, selling more than 160 million copies of his thirty books. Follett's first bestseller was *Eye of the Needle*, a spy story set in the Second World War. In 1989 *The Pillars of the Earth* was published and has since become Follett's most popular novel. It reached number one on bestseller lists around the world and was an Oprah's Book Club pick. Its sequel, *World Without End*, proved equally popular and the Kingsbridge series has sold 38 million copies worldwide. Follett lives in Hertfordshire, England, with his wife Barbara. Between them they have five children, six grandchildren, and three Labradors.

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