



Hild: A Novel

By Nicola Griffith

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Hild: A Novel By Nicola Griffith

A brilliant, lush, sweeping historical novel about the rise of one of the most powerful women of the Middle Ages: Hild

In seventh-century Britain, small kingdoms are merging, frequently and violently. A new religion is coming ashore; the old gods are struggling, their priests worrying. Hild is the king's youngest niece, and she has a glimmering mind and a natural, noble authority. She will become a fascinating woman and one of the pivotal figures of the Middle Ages: Saint Hilda of Whitby.

But now she has only the powerful curiosity of a bright child, a will of adamant, and a way of seeing the world--of studying nature, of matching cause with effect, of observing her surroundings closely and predicting what will happen next--that can seem uncanny, even supernatural, to those around her.

Her uncle, Edwin of Northumbria, plots to become overking of the Angles, ruthlessly using every tool at his disposal: blood, bribery, belief. Hild establishes a place for herself at his side as the king's seer. And she is indispensable--unless she should ever lead the king astray. The stakes are life and death: for Hild, for her family, for her loved ones, and for the increasing numbers who seek the protection of the strange girl who can read the world and see the future.

Hild is a young woman at the heart of the violence, subtlety, and mysticism of the early Middle Ages--all of it brilliantly and accurately evoked by Nicola Griffith's luminous prose. Working from what little historical record is extant, Griffith has brought a beautiful, brutal world to vivid, absorbing life.

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Download and Read Free Online *Hild: A Novel* By Nicola Griffith

Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review In her first foray into historical fiction, Griffith explores the young life of Hild, the future St. Hilda of Whitby. Set in seventh-century Anglo-Saxon England, during the early years of Christianity there, the novel begins with the sudden death of Hild's father, Lord Hereric. To secure the futures of her daughters, Hild's ruthless and cunning mother embarks on a plan to hook their fate to the coattails of Edwin Snakebeard, Lord Hereric's ambitious brother and king-to-be. Soon, Hild becomes Edwin's trusted seer, and as the novel progresses, she attempts to stay in his favor, treading carefully among the large egos of the court and knowing that her survival depends as much on luck as it does on the accuracy of her predictions. Griffith expertly blends an exploration of seventh-century court life and a detailed character study of Hild as she balances a need for acceptance, love, and friendship and a desire to escape the strict gender roles of her time. While fierce battles and political intrigue feature prominently, so do the fascinating details of everyday life, particularly the lives of women. In short, Griffith triumphs with this intelligent, beautifully written, and meticulously researched novel. --Kerri Price

From Bookforum

Hild recounts the early years of an actual seventh-century English girl, [...] a remarkable child treated by those around her as though she possesses supernatural powers. [...] Griffith realistically represents the brutality of everyday life in this milieu. She is interested in exploring the costs of slavery for both parties to the transaction, the ramifications of illness or injury in an age of physical violence, and the effects of political change at the highest level on the lives of individual people. [...] In its ambition and intelligence, *Hild* might best be compared to Hilary Mantel's novels about Thomas Cromwell. [...] [Griffith has a] sharp eye for what happens to plants and animals (especially birds) over the course of the seasons, as well as an understated and just-lyrical-enough prose style that delights the reader locally without ever distracting from the forward movements of character and plot. —Jenny Davidson

Review

"You will never think of them as the Dark Ages again. Nicola Griffith's command of the era is worn lightly and delivered as a deeply engaging plot. Her insight into human nature and eye for telling detail is as keen as that of the extraordinary Hild herself. The novel resonates to many of the same chords as *Beowulf*, the legends of King Arthur, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *Game of Thrones*--to the extent that *Hild* begins to feel like the classic on which those books are based." -- Neal Stephenson

"Nicola Griffith is an awe-inspiring visionary, and I am telling everyone to snatch this book up. *Hild* is not just one of the best historical novels I have ever read--I think it's one of the best novels, period. It sings with pitch-perfect emotional resonance, and I damn well believe in this woman and everyone she engages. I finished the book full of gratitude that it exists, and longing for more." --Dorothy Alison

"You could describe *Hild* as being like *Game of Thrones* without the dragons, but this is so much deeper than that, so much richer. A glorious, intensely passionate walk through an entirely real landscape, *Hild* leads us into the Dark Ages and makes them light, and tense, and edgy, and deeply moving. If it wasn't like this, it should have been--and I'm sure that it was!" --Manda Scott

"What a fabulous book! *Hild* has all the joys of historical fiction--transportation into a strange, finely detailed world--along with complex characters and a beautiful evocation of the natural world. But the

tensions of the gathering plot make *Hild* feel like a quick read--too quick! I fell into this world completely and was sorry to come out. Truly, truly remarkable." --Karen Joy Fowler

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Doris Simmons:

Have you spare time for a day? What do you do when you have much more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity to get spend your time. Any person spent their own spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to typically the Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book eligible *Hild: A Novel*? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time along with your favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have some other opinion?

James Peters:

Information is provisions for individuals to get better life, information today can get by anyone with everywhere. The information can be a know-how or any news even an issue. What people must be consider if those information which is in the former life are challenging be find than now is taking seriously which one is acceptable to believe or which one the particular resource are convinced. If you obtain the unstable resource then you obtain it as your main information there will be huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen throughout you if you take *Hild: A Novel* as the daily resource information.

Linda Harris:

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Rafael Perez:

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