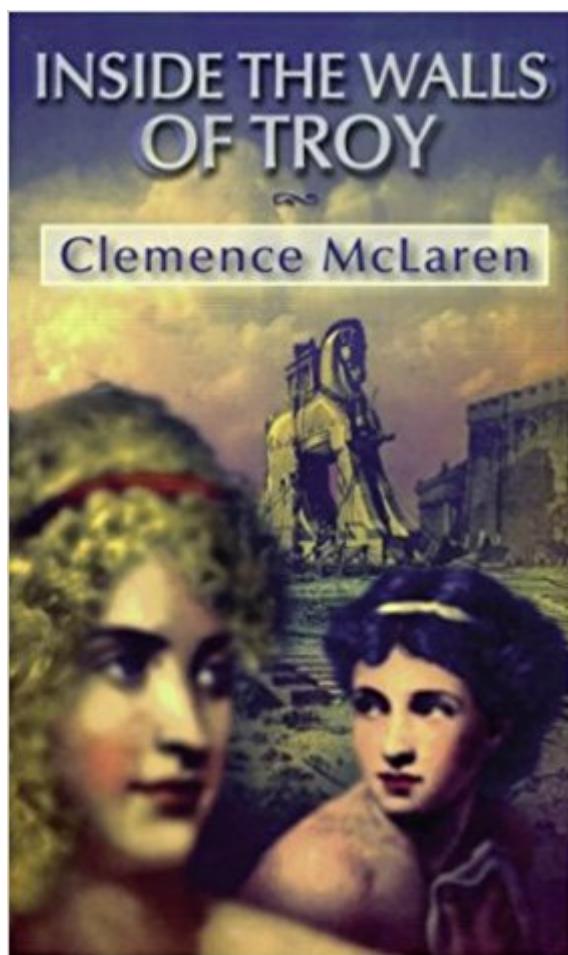


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Inside The Walls Of Troy: A Novel Of The Women Who Lived The Trojan War



Synopsis

Two women, one war. Helen, at age twelve, is not prepared to deal with her famous beauty: to have the face that will launch a thousand ships, kill fifty thousand men, and cause the fall of the world's greatest city. But when she is kidnapped by Theseus of Athens, she begins her journey into womanhood and finds passion strong enough to start the Trojan War. Cassandra has the gift, or curse, to predict the future. When she foresees the ruin of her family and city that Helen's arrival in Troy will cause, she is outraged. Yet she cannot help being drawn to Helen. As the war rages around them, Helen, the woman who started the conflict, and Cassandra, the one who foresaw it, develop a deep friendship. And through their eyes we see the Trojan War in a fascinating new way.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 8-10?What was it like to be the beauteous Helen of Troy, or to be Cassandra, the unappreciated visionary? This novel tries to offer some answers. It begins in the mind of 12-year-old Helen, abducted (but chastely treated) by Theseus, sought after by a dozen contentious suitors, married lovelessly to Menelaus, and finally?the only act in which she has not been completely passive?enthralled by passion in the form of Paris. If Helen, the victim of her own beauty and rank, is not exactly a heroine, Paris is far from a hero. He, too, is passive, blaming his actions on the will

of the gods (particularly, Aphrodite), and is fonder of love and his own looks than he is of battle. Fortunately, almost two thirds of the novel is given to Cassandra. Her description of Helen as "bone sweet" does not, however, conform to the Helen we have met in Part I. Of course many readers will know the outcome of the story, but the accounts of battles, negotiations and stratagems, seen from within Troy, still manage to be suspenseful, and the ending is particularly deft. The writing is competent but not especially vivid and too often predictable; there is some clumsy exposition. Little differentiates the voice of Cassandra from the voice of Helen: both are misfits in their world, but their speech and thoughts lack individual identity. Nevertheless, the novel is carefully structured, there are some interesting historical details, and the idea of a woman's-eye view of The Iliad would seem timely. If this novel manages to introduce even a few more readers to the world of the ancient Greeks, it will be worth its shelf space. ?Patricia (Dooley) Lothrop Green, St. George's School, Newport, RI
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Gr. 7^10. Promising first-time author McLaren gives us the story of the Trojan War from two points of view. She begins with the divinely beautiful Helen, who recounts her own history--from her kidnapping at age 12 by Theseus to her marriage to Menelaus to her head-over-heels encounter with handsome, arrogant Paris. The remainder of the book is narrated by Paris' sister Cassandra, who experiences painful visions of the future (precipitated by Helen's arrival) but can get no one to believe her. These ancient stories are made as fresh and vivid as any modern tale by the electrifying characters and sensual details. By the time the tragedy has unfolded, readers will no longer think of Helen, Penelope, Achilles, and Odysseus as dull entries in a history text but will recognize them as gripping, fascinating personalities. Susan Dove Lempke --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

My only complaint about INSIDE THE WALLS OF TROY is that the novella wasn't longer. It felt as if I'd just picked it up and, before I knew it, the story was done! Clemence McLaren has crafted an admirable re-telling of a the classic Trojan Wars tale from the standpoint of Helen and Cassandra. While the concept is not entirely unique, and while the short format of this novella never quite reaches the depth of characters that one finds in the only comparable work on this theme from the female perspective (a.k.a. THE FIREBRAND by Marion Zimmer Bradley) McLaren's characters are consistently and cleverly drawn and entirely believable. I can't wait to read future publications by this talented author.

IDK why I loved this book when I first read it at age 11, but I love it just as much now. I'm glad I was able to find a copy after so many years and for CHEAP. thanks

Got the book quickly and read it for the summer, perfect condition and I Aced my first semester. ^.^
Thank you

This book is about a beautiful girl named Helen who was kidnapped at the age of 12. Helen goes through task after task and is married to a suitor name Menelaus. Maybe 1 year after their marriage, an handsome man named Paris shows up at their castle to retrieve Helen. He says Helen was promised to him by the gods. Helen sails to Troy with Paris and his sister has a vision that Troy and Sparta will go to war. A couple of months later, Menelaus comes to Troy to retrieve Helen and take revenge on Paris. This is a good book for 6th 7th 8th and 9th grade girls. I am in the 6th.

I would give it no stars if I could. This tale of Helen of Sparta and King Priam's prophetess daughter Cassandra is not only dreadful in its inconsistencies with the myths but its attempt to sell Helen and Paris as true lovers. Love without trust is sex, which is all that Helen and Paris could truly share. At the wedding of Helen's parents, they neglected to sacrifice to Aphrodite, which is why, since birth, Helen was cursed with infidelity. Who can trust a person who is unfaithful by nature? This book attempts to glamourize one of the most annoying characters in Greek mythology, while making one of the most attractive--Hector's beautiful, intelligent, devoted wife, Andromache--an insufferable, catty brat. In addition, Cassandra was cursed by Apollo in such a way that NO ONE would believe her, something that this book certainly does not convey. The author tries to make her readers care about Helen; meanwhile, she willingly left a good, kind man for a philanderer who agreed to be bribed into presenting the softest, weakest goddess of them all, i.e. Aphrodite, with the apple "For the fairest", in exchange for the body of the world's most beautiful woman. Hollywood films, as well as books like this one, romanticize the story of an adulterous woman who ran to the arms of a coward. The true hero of The Iliad is Hector; Andromache makes a much more suitable heroine than Helen. Not only was Hector the bravest, best of the Trojan warriors, he was the only one of Paris' forty-nine brothers who did not fall in love with Helen immediately, thanks to his love for his wife. Andromache, though she might be out of place in modern society, did not live in modern society. She was a faithful wife to her husband, and only once did she ask him not to fight, for she supported him in every way. (This was right before he died; the scene is depicted in the book.) Had

she lived today, she would almost certainly have more of a mind of her own, but that wasn't how women lived. That wasn't how they were raised, and it's silly for modern writers to try to make us think that it wasn't. The way we think is dependent on the way we were raised, and women like Helen and Cassandra were not raised to believe that they should have the right to choose their own husbands. Also, there are many parts of the epilogue that don't really conform to the myths. Yes, according to some, Helen was spared, but many others firmly state that she was murdered by Orestes, Agamemnon's son, because he blamed her for the war. Agamemnon, it should be noted, was murdered by his wife and her lover, because she had heard (truthfully) that he had been unfaithful to her, and they were both killed by Orestes and his sister, Electra. I'm a very willful girl, and I fully appreciate having the ability to speak my mind and marry whomever I would like, but I also have a deep loyalty to the Greek myths, which I have loved since I learned to read, and this book does not do them justice. I highly recommend Edith Hamilton's *MYTHOLOGY* in place of this story; the myths are rich enough that they don't need fanciful twentieth-century novels to make them enjoyable. This one, at least, is not worth the paper on which it's printed. If you do read it, please read *MYTHOLOGY* (or at least the parts about the Trojan War) anyway. Also recommended is Bernard Evslin's *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GREEK MYTHOLOGY*, or any of the books on the topic by Evslin, Evslin, and Hoopes. They are easier than Ms. Hamilton's works but hers are more thorough. Anyone with interest in this book should read one of the ones I've suggested, which tell the myths as they appear in Homer, as well as other Greek poets and Roman ones as well, such as Virgil. Greek mythology is fascinating in its complexity; there's so much of it and it's so rich, and, once again, this book falls flat of being, well, any good.

I found this novel very absorbing and interesting. It took me one evening to read the book and I definitely plan to recommend it to my advanced female students (I teach ESOL). The book helps clarify the greek mythologies and tells it from the point of view of the women involved - Helen of Troy and Cassandra of Troy. The story is well developed and I enjoyed reading the book myself. I highly recommend the book to teenage girls and those beyond the teenage years!

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