



The Sky Worshipers

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The Sky Worshipers is an epic novel that pulls back the veil on the tumultuous life and times of Genghis Khan, the Mongol leader who was intent upon becoming the ruler of the world.

In 1209 CE, at the celebration of her father's coronation as emperor of the Tangut nation, Princess Chaka, his youngest daughter, is caught up by a shadowy horseman and carried off to become the bride of Genghis Khan. Over a century later, in the ruins of Karakorum, the once magnificent Mongol capital, a manuscript is discovered that unlocks the secrets of Genghis's kingdom, revealing a world at once tender and cruel, whose people were shaped by windswept, treeless plains and their worship of the vast, uncompromising sky.

Chaka is the first of three women to chronicle her court life in the growing Mongol realm—an activity that, if discovered, would cost her life. Her writings tell of an alien culture that is colorful, sensuous, and brutal—its rough ways a response to a harsh climate and the need for constant preparedness for war. After her death at the hands of the husband whom she comes to love as much as she fears him, the secret journal is passed on to Princess Reyhan of Persia, who was abducted by Genghis's son and heir, and later, to Princess Krisztina of Poland, the kidnapped niece of Henry the Pious. For each of these captive storytellers, the journal becomes both a companion and a sacred mission.

Breathtaking in scope, honest, and raw, *The Sky Worshipers* reveals life in the orbit of the conquerors. But beneath the destruction and bloodshed, the journal tells of freedoms for women yet unknown in Europe; of the Mongols' compassion for other faiths; and of love as fierce as the vast, unforgiving land that bore it.

KRISTINE MORRIS (January / February 2021)

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