

## **The Book of Life**

**Deborah Harkness**

**Reviewed by: Ashley Yamashita, 15**

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This book is the third and final book of the “All Souls Trilogy”. After Diana goes to the past, “The Book of Life” follows her life in the present. Her objective is to obtain Ashmole 782 and find out why Matthew and she can conceive a child. Throughout the book, the couple faces many difficult conflicts, including running into Benjamin, dealing with the Congregation, and giving birth. Unlike the other two books, “The Book of Life” dives deeper into Diana’s emotional connection with people and the answers to all of her unsolved questions. In this book, old characters come back, new ones are introduced, and the couples’ love for each other continues to grow and defy all laws of nature.

“The Book of Life” is by far my most favorite out of this series. It has an engaging plot, and Harkness develops so many characters that I now have an emotional connection to. My top six favorite characters are going to have to be Chris, Jack, Diana, Marcus, Phillip, and Gallowglass. Although Matthew is one of the main characters, I had a harder time connecting to him due to his tendency to shy away from the truth to protect his loved ones. Chris is by far one of the funniest characters. His character gives me so much life and each time he is mentioned, I know for a fact that I’m going to laugh. Not only is Chris funny, but he’s also very sweet to Diana and the Bishops, giving him this fun uncle vibe. Jack is so unbelievably kind, and when I read about his past, I immediately started crying. For someone so caring, I can’t imagine how painful his life must have been for him, and yet he still has a happy smile on his face. Diana is a woman that I aspire to become. Her courage and bravery are admirable, but she also has so much compassion towards those she loves and will protect them with her entire soul. She has a heart of gold and deserves the whole world, which Matthew is glad to give. Marcus is another character that continues to breathe life into my body. He and Chris are the life of the party, bringing laughter and fun wherever they go. Marcus also earned some more of my respect after he took over for Matthew. Phillip is hard to explain. He exudes power and strength in every one of his pores, yet he remains somewhat humble but proud of his achievements and family. He’s also very forgiving, and can easily bring comfort to anyone he considers family. I left my favorite character for last. Gallowglass’s character is so complex but also easily understandable. When it was revealed as to why he protects Diana with such fierceness, my heart immediately shattered for him. In my opinion, I feel not enough people appreciate Gallowglass, since he can pose as a threat to the couple, but Gallowglass’s intentions always remained pure throughout the series. I sincerely hope that he gets a side story or receives something that brings him happiness. Although all 6 characters are very different, each of them ties this story together, emphasizing the importance of laughter and love in a family.

I would recommend this book to people 16 and older since there are very graphic scenes of torture, sexual abuse, intimate scenes, and cussing. Although this book may seem graphic for some, I would recommend it to anyone willing to read it. "The Book of Life" has an overall great message, and touches sensitive topics such as discrimination due to one's skin/species. The plot of this story is guaranteed to make you cry and laugh at the same time! It was an experience that I will never forget and I plan on re-reading this series several times! Overall, this book is an exceptional story that teaches one about the importance of love in all relationships, no matter the people.

Recommended Titles:

Time's Convert by Deborah Harkness

Ash Princess by Laura Sebastian

City of Bones by Cassandra Clare