



# The Gracekeepers: A Novel

By Kirsty Logan

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**The Gracekeepers: A Novel** By Kirsty Logan

**For readers of *The Night Circus* and *Station Eleven*, a lyrical and absorbing debut set in a world covered by water**

As a Gracekeeper, Callanish administers shoreside burials, laying the dead to their final resting place deep in the depths of the ocean. Alone on her island, she has exiled herself to a life of tending watery graves as penance for a long-ago mistake that still haunts her. Meanwhile, North works as a circus performer with the Excalibur, a floating troupe of acrobats, clowns, dancers, and trainers who sail from one archipelago to the next, entertaining in exchange for sustenance.

In a world divided between those inhabiting the mainland ("landlockers") and those who float on the sea ("damplings"), loneliness has become a way of life for North and Callanish, until a sudden storm offshore brings change to both their lives--offering them a new understanding of the world they live in and the consequences of the past, while restoring hope in an unexpected future.

Inspired in part by Scottish myths and fairytales, *The Gracekeepers* tells a modern story of an irreparably changed world: one that harbors the same isolation and sadness, but also joys and marvels of our own age.

— Finalist, Lambda Literary Award

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## The Gracekeepers: A Novel By Kirsty Logan Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

This speculative tale is set in a water world with archipelagos of islands, where people are either damplings (born, raised, living, and dying on the water) or landlockers. The two mix sporadically and usually with distrust at events like religious revivals or when the circus comes on land. They also interact when there's a death, as damplings go to landlocked gracekeepers to bury their dead, a process that involves prayer and the body being placed in the sea with a captive bird marking the spot until the bird dies. The two groups collide when Callandish, a gracekeeper, is asked to bury a member of the Excalibur troupe and meets North, a dampling who works with a semi-tame tiger. Each recognizes a certain loneliness in the other and a need to somehow rectify past mistakes; ultimately, Callandish takes off to visit her mother and to find North, hoping to fulfill her need for companionship and forgiveness. The evocative descriptions of life as a gracekeeper and circus member or as a dampling or landlocker give the work a magical tone. The future Earth setting, in which oceans have risen so high that there are no continents, is something touched upon but not stressed by the author, helping readers to immerse themselves in the narrative. VERDICT Recommended for teens looking for speculative fiction with strong character development and a quiet plot, like those by Kent Haruf.—Laura Pearle, Miss Porter's School, CT

Review

## An NPR Best Book of the Year Selection

“Logan not only captures the cloistered eeriness of circus life, she does so in a way that lovingly reinvents both the weird whimsy and archetypal resonance of fairytales...Logan crafts an exquisitely wrought diorama full of tenderly compelling characters; observations about grief, worship, social order, and human nature, and a love that transcends definition... Spellbinding.”—**NPR.org**

“A lyrical debut novel that explores how our truest family is often one of our choosing rather than the one we’re born into.”—**Washington Post**

“Filled with evocative images, including cruise ships transformed into itinerant revival meetings, and with classic fairy tale elements such as world trees and selkies, Logan's novel imbues what is essentially an environmental fable with the heft of myth.”—**Publishers Weekly (starred review)**

"A beautifully strange debut novel that draws upon folklore of the Scottish west and the isles...Starkly original...The storm that rocks the *Excalibur* is both literal and metaphorical, as it brings the lives of North and Callanish crashing together and stirs up love, adventure, and a smoldering determination to find a sense of wholeness....Haunting, spare, and evocative."—**Kirkus Reviews**

“Gorgeous...Culling from Scottish fairytales, Logan paints a hauntingly beautiful portrait of a world imbued with both myth and eerie realness.”--**Bustle**

“Electrifying...Like Emily St John Mandel’s *Station Eleven*, *The Gracekeepers* circles the peculiar business of the culture humans make, and tries to understand why we would persist in the direst circumstances. From the flotsam of the washed-out world, ersatz elements are pulled together – a little King Arthur, some rustic paganism, evangelical kitsch – to make something that is, after all, beautiful...This is a novel of the liminal and the liquid, seeking new ways of living together and new forms of life in a world that humans have

transformed almost beyond the possibility of our own survival. As with any good descent, there is danger, devilish glamour and a resurfacing into sunlit salvation.”--**Guardian**

“Magical in every way...[A] beguiling, absorbing debut...Everything about this book is beautiful; the language is as poetic and diaphanous as nature and the many characters who contribute to the story are utterly authentic in this magic realist world. Every one of them stays with you, leaving you craving more about their back stories and their fates. Logan has a uniquely light touch on the theme of fluidity of gender and, above all, it all seems driven by humanity. This is a delicious piece of work from a supremely talented young writer.”—**The Scotsman**

“Dreamlike...wonderfully imaginative...Memorable and beautiful.”—**Daily Mail**

“[A] modern fairytale...Outstanding.”—**Herald Scotland**

"Truly magical... Perfect for summer escapism.”--**Heat**

"A bold, fresh new talent... a wild, original imagination"--**Independent on Sunday**

"In luscious, vivid prose, Logan brings to mind Angela Carter, or Atwood or Winterson at their best"—**Independent**

"*The Gracekeepers* is enchanting and heart-tugging. If you love Margaret Atwood you'll love this"--**Sunday Telegraph**

"Likened to Margaret Atwood, *The Gracekeepers* is a wondrous read"—**Stylist**

"Beautiful and bewitching: read it and be swept away on a magical wave of love and language"--**Bookseller**

“A highly original fantasy, set in a haunting sea-world both familiar and mysterious.”—**Ursula K. Le Guin**

"*The Gracekeepers* is an enchanting, magical tale, and Kirsty Logan's writing is beautiful. Compelling and vivid, with Scottish lore woven lyrically throughout, *The Gracekeepers* explores such issues as loneliness and isolation, our innate tendencies to create divisions between ourselves and others, the consequences of long-ago actions, and, ultimately, the restoration of hope."—**Sara Gruen, author of *Water for Elephants* and *At the Water's Edge***

“A gorgeously melancholy novel, a post-apocalyptic fairy tale of mermen and mourning birds, ghost cities on the ocean floor and precious, precious soil. I envy the reader who is just now picking it up.”—**Camille DeAngelis, author of *Bones & All***

“The *Gracekeepers* is a seemingly impossible combination of the lyrical and the gritty, the magical and the brutal. In haunting prose Kirsty Logan has woven a compelling, emotionally dense fairytale that kept me enthralled 'til the last page.”--**Tamar Cohen, author of *War of the Wives***

**Praise for Kirsty Logan's *The Rental Heart and Other Fairytales*:**

**Longlisted for the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award**  
**Winner of the Saboteur Award for Best Short Story Collection**

## Winner of the Scott Prize for Short Stories

“Kirsty Logan is an exquisite writer who possesses the uncanny ability to make even the most mundane detail beautifully compelling. If you want to be captivated, if you want to be utterly taken, reach for this book and don’t let go.”—**Roxane Gay, author of *Bad Feminist***

"Alarmingly good . . . Concise, vividly written and full of dark, arresting imagery." —***The Herald***

“[Logan] brings to mind Angela Carter, or Atwood or Winterson at their best...An exciting emerging voice, and *The Rental Heart* is an addictively enjoyable addition to the welcome resurgence of the short story. It displays an unexpectedly dizzying range of styles for a debut effort, putting Logan at the top of the “ones to watch” list. It’s always exciting to see such a bold, fresh new talent, and if Logan carries on in this vein, she’ll become a staple of the awards shortlists.”—***Independent***

### About the Author

KIRSTY LOGAN is an award-winning writer based in Scotland. She regularly performs her stories at events and festivals around the UK and Europe. *The Gracekeepers* is her debut novel.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### Eula Hunter:

Do you one of people who can't read pleasant if the sentence chained within the straightway, hold on guys this kind of aren't like that. This *The Gracekeepers: A Novel* book is readable simply by you who hate those perfect word style. You will find the data here are arrange for enjoyable studying experience without leaving even decrease the knowledge that want to offer to you. The writer regarding *The Gracekeepers: A Novel* content conveys the idea easily to understand by a lot of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the information but it just different such as it. So , do you nonetheless thinking *The Gracekeepers: A Novel* is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

#### Harvey Hobbs:

People live in this new moment of lifestyle always attempt to and must have the spare time or they will get wide range of stress from both lifestyle and work. So , if we ask do people have spare time, we will say absolutely yes. People is human not a robot. Then we consult again, what kind of activity do you possess when the spare time coming to a person of course your answer will unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative inside spending your spare time, typically the book you have read is definitely *The Gracekeepers: A Novel*.

#### Mark Shanks:

*The Gracekeepers: A Novel* can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary which could increase your knowledge in

vocabulary, easy to understand, bit entertaining but still delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to put every word into pleasure arrangement in writing The Gracekeepers: A Novel yet doesn't forget the main level, giving the reader the hottest in addition to based confirm resource details that maybe you can be one among it. This great information can drawn you into fresh stage of crucial contemplating.

**Carolyn Lutz:**

That publication can make you to feel relax. This kind of book The Gracekeepers: A Novel was multi-colored and of course has pictures around. As we know that book The Gracekeepers: A Novel has many kinds or genre. Start from kids until teenagers. For example Naruto or Detective Conan you can read and believe you are the character on there. So , not at all of book usually are make you bored, any it makes you feel happy, fun and rest. Try to choose the best book for you and try to like reading this.

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