

Askew

Prize for the Fire

Lincolnshire, 1537. Amid England's religious turmoil, fifteen-year-old Anne Askew is forced to take her dead sister's place in an arranged marriage. The witty, well-educated gentleman's daughter is determined to free herself from her abusive husband, harsh in-laws, and the cruel strictures of her married life. But this is the England of Henry VIII, where religion and politics are dangerously entangled. A young woman of Anne's fierce independence, Reformist faith, uncanny command of plainspoken scripture, and—not least—connections to Queen Katheryn Parr's court cannot long escape official notice, or censure. In a deft blend of history and imagination, award-winning novelist Rilla Askew brings to life a young woman who defied the conventions of her time, ultimately braving torture and the fire of martyrdom for her convictions. A rich evocation of Reformation England, from the fenlands of Lincolnshire to the teeming religious underground of London to the court of Henry VIII, this gripping tale of defiance is as pertinent today as it was in the sixteenth century. While skillfully portraying a significant historical figure—one of the first female writers known to have composed in the English language—Prize for the Fire renders the inner life of Anne Askew with a depth and immediacy that transcend time.



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