



★ **A Winter's Promise**

Christelle Dabos

Hildegard Serle, Translator

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A captivating fantasy thriller rife with magic and intrigue, Christelle Dabos's *A Winter's Promise* is an exhilarating venture into a world of floating cities, illusions, and lies, where appearances and honeyed words mask a multitude of evils.

As a museum curator, Ophelia uses her gift as a “reader” to experience an object’s history through touch. Danger lurks when a diplomatic marriage is arranged, tying her to Thorn, a surly northerner. As she struggles to understand her role as Thorn’s fiancée, Ophelia begins to unravel a terrifying secret beneath the glittering facade of her new home, where enemies and allies all wear false faces.

Translated from the original French by Hildegard Serle, the book’s language retains a lyrical cadence and international allure. Unique costumes and cultures emerge from the “arks,” a series of mystically floating islands that formed long after the world broke apart. Each exists with its own exceptional brand of family magic, customs, and ruling ancestors. Ophelia’s home, Anima, and Thorn’s, known as “the Pole,” are both vividly rendered and fantastically creative.

Plainly spoken with plain looks, Ophelia seems a mismatch for the stone-faced Thorn. He inspires hate and fear in equal measure. But their chemistry is palpable, if complicated by the deadly politics that surround their engagement. The book is narrated entirely from Ophelia’s point of view, and her transformation into a determined, self-aware user of magic coincides with steadily building action, suspense, and danger. This addictively twisty plot begins to expose harsh truths beneath the glimmer, or the “varnish over filth.”

The stage is set for the next installment, and with mass appeal for middle grade, high school, and adult readers, everyone will be clamoring to find out what happens next for Ophelia and Thorn. Christelle Dabos’s *A Winter's Promise* is an exhilarating journey into an unknown world of magic and lies.

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