



# The Book of the Maidservant

*Rebecca Barnhouse*

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**The Book of the Maidservant** Rebecca Barnhouse

“A funny and wise book about friendship, loyalty, and love.”—Karen Cushman

Johanna is a servant girl to Dame Margery Kempe, a renowned medieval holy woman. Dame Margery feels the suffering the Virgin Mary felt for her son but cares little for the misery she sees every day. When she announces that Johanna will accompany her on a pilgrimage to Rome, the suffering truly begins. After walking all day, Johanna must fetch water, wash clothes, and cook for the entire party of pilgrims. Then arguing breaks out between Dame Margery and the other travelers, and Johanna is caught in the middle. As the fighting escalates, Dame Margery turns her back on the whole group, including Johanna. Abandoned in a foreign land where she doesn't even speak the language, the young maidservant must find her own way to Rome.

Inspired by the fifteenth-century text *The Book of Margery Kempe*, the first autobiography in English, debut novelist Rebecca Barnhouse chronicles Johanna's painful journey through fear, anger, and physical hardship to ultimate redemption.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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