



# The Book of Eleanor: A Novel of Eleanor of Aquitaine

*Pamela Kaufman*

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## **The Book of Eleanor: A Novel of Eleanor of Aquitaine** Pamela Kaufman

One of history's greatest women, celebrated by her contemporaries, descendants, and biographers, now comes to life in this mesmerizing new novel by bestselling author Pamela Kaufman.

In 1137, fifteen-year-old Eleanor became Duchess of Aquitaine, a wealthy and powerful province in the south of France. Rich and influential in her own right, her tumultuous marriages thrust Eleanor into the political and cultural spotlight, where she would remain for more than half a century.

Still in her teens, young Eleanor of Aquitaine married Louis VII of France, a sickly religious fanatic so obsessed with fears of adultery that he kept his beautiful wife under lock and key, even forcing her to go on a long and dangerous crusade with him. But Eleanor was delighted by the freedom of the crusader's life. Her handsome Aquitanian knights, her deeds on horseback, and her scandalous attire were the talk of Europe; it soon became clear that Louis's young wife was more than he could handle. A lifelong rebel, Eleanor would defy her husband and the Church, and eventually strong-arm the Pope into annulling her unhappy marriage.

Once free of Louis, Eleanor thought to marry Baron Rancon, her childhood love, but found herself forced into another political marriage, this time with a younger and more dangerous husband—Henry II of England, a ruthless soldier known throughout Europe as “the red star of malice.” In Henry Eleanor found a man whose iron will and political cunning matched her own, but the marriage was a bitter and brutal one, which escalated into open warfare when Eleanor backed their sons in an armed rebellion against Henry. Vowing revenge, he imprisoned her for fifteen years, hoping she would die in obscurity. But Eleanor would not go quietly. In prison, she wrote her memoir; this is Eleanor's book.

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