



Goddess Tithe

Anne Elisabeth Stengl

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The vengeful Goddess demands her tithe

When a stowaway is discovered aboard the merchant ship *Kulap Kanya*, Munny, a cabin boy on his first voyage, knows what must be done. All stowaways are sacrificed to Risafeth, the evil goddess of the sea. Such is her right, and the *Kulap Kanya's* only hope to return safely home.

Yet, to the horror of his crew, Captain Sunan vows to protect the stowaway, a foreigner in clown's garb. A curse falls upon the ship and all who sail with her, for Risafeth will stop at nothing to claim her tithe.

Will Munny find the courage to trust his captain and to protect the strange clown who has become his friend?

Goddess Tithe Details

Date : Published November 12th 2013 by Rooglewood Press

ISBN : 9780989447805

Author : Anne Elisabeth Stengl

Format : Paperback 120 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Christian Fiction, Young Adult, Christian, Adventure, Christian Fantasy, Fiction

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From Reader Review Goddess Tithe for online ebook

Suzannah says

Enjoyable novella in the Goldstone Woods series. Very well written with a wonderful ending, but a little on the short side for a Goldstone Wood story. 3.5 stars.

Rina says

I just finished reading the first novella from The Tales of Goldstone Wood. It was quite good but now I really want to know if we'll find out more about Munny. What is his real name? Who is his mother? Who was his father? And the captain. What's his story? He wasn't afraid of Risafeth. Why? Who is the lady in the portrait?

And yet for all the questions this book raises, it does answer some questions. All of which concern Leonard the Jester. It's been a long time since I've read Veiled Rose which is the book during which this novella takes place. But I think this story shows us more about his character and some of the things he learns on his journey to Lunthea Maly.

Just like in Anne Elisabeth's other books there are universal themes woven in that make it much richer and deeper than a mere adventure on the high seas story. In this book honor, loyalty and self-sacrifice are deftly portrayed.

In hind sight Goddess Tithe reminds me of C. S. Lewis' Voyage of the Dawn Treader. The glassy sea, the fierce storm, the creatures below the water (though they were friendlier in Narnia's ocean at the end of the world), and of course the sea serpent.

Since this is a novella there are fewer descriptions, but I could still picture the scenes and Anne Elisabeth's illustrations are informative as well. If it were a full length novel I can imagine more details about life aboard the ship, a sub-plot involving other crew members and perhaps more hints about the captain's past as well, and longer descriptions of the sea and Risafeth. But I'm not complaining. I love the idea of a Goldstone Wood novella and am thrilled Anne Elisabeth will most likely be writing some more.

I thoroughly enjoyed this quick trip to the world of Goldstone Wood and the voyage of the Kulap Kanya. Any fan of Anne Elisabeth's and anyone looking for an exciting ocean adventure involving a vengeful sea monster will enjoy this novella.

Learn more about Goddess Tithe: <http://goddessstithenovel.blogspot.com/>

Review originally posted on my blog: <http://rinasreading.blogspot.com/2013...>

Josiah says

As someone who doesn't really come to Christian fantasy with high expectations, this was a surprisingly enjoyable read. Since it's only a novella, there's only so much you can do with it, but I found the setting

interesting and the conflict was pretty engaging. There's a lot of worldbuilding for just a novella (though I understand its from a larger series). The one thing I was on the fence about was whether or not the foreigner in this story fell into too many stereotypes, but since it appears that he's a more central figure in the full series (which I haven't read yet), I'll withhold judgment on that.

Overall, an enjoyable novella that makes me want to read more of this series.

H.S.J. Williams says

To the delight of her readers, Anne Elisabeth Stengl has brought forth her first novella in the epic Tales of Goldstone Wood series! This is the first of possibly several illustrated novellas that will be released amongst the novels. Goddess Tithe stands well on its own, but it takes place in the context of the novel, Veiled Rose. Those who have read Veiled Rose will remember that Lionheart was offered safe passage on a voyage to a distant land by a mysterious Captain Sunan. All assumed the voyage went well, without incident. Now it is revealed that a dark danger lurked under the ocean, one of unsated vengeance.

Though Goddess Tithe is one-fourth the size of the novels of Goldstone Wood, the incredible beauty of writing shines at its very best as a heart-tugging tale is told of a small boy, Munny, who is set on returning home, though tragedy might await him. As always, Anne Elisabeth creates her characters with insight, charm, and reality as she pits them against each other in amusing, sweet, and difficult ways. The men aboard the ship are from a country inspired by Oriental history, and the characters amongst them are vivid and varied. Captain Sunan is steeped in mystery and readers will be salivating for more of him and answers to his past in future tales! The stowaway upon their ship is vastly different from the crew, and they wonder if he is perhaps even a little mad. Readers will be delighted upon the return of Leonard the Jester, in all his foolish glory!

Nearly the entire story plays out on a ship at sea with an all-male crew. This does not mean that females do not hold a significant role. Indeed, the goddess of the sea is a constant threat and fear. The woman in the portrait creates a tantalizing mystery unsatisfied, though all who have read the series know that the author never sets a mystery without one day revealing the answer. And there is one other woman who brings forth the heart of the story...

One of the most remarkable aspects of this tale is that Munny and the strange clown Leonard learn from each other, come to respect each other, and even become friends without once understanding what the other is saying. It's a truly beautiful illustration of friendship despite the bars of language, race, and difference.

The beautiful black and white illustrations range from comical to enigmatic to dramatic.

For those who wonder what age the tale is appropriate for, I would not advise it for children despite its short length and gorgeous illustrations. There is no language, gruesome violence, or sexual content, but the story is quite serious, intense, and heart-wrenching. The faerie ocean was deliciously creepy.

An exciting tale with excellent writing, tantalizing mystery, an epic climax, and a tear-worthy conclusion. I declare Goddess Tithe a tale everyone should read

Kimberly says

This is an author who never disappoints. The world is just as lavish and incredible as the covers depict them to be and she (the author) has a gift for creating a tale that you just fall into and live with the character. This book is no different. There is heart wrenching despair, choices made to go against an evil sea goddess, sweet moments as unexpected friendships develop, depth of honor and integrity that will just pull on your heart.

Beautifully and wonderfully written- don't miss any of the stories from Goldstone Wood!

note: I was given a copy by the author for an honest review- 5 stars!

Allison Ruvidich says

I received a copy of "Goddess Tithe" from the author in exchange for an honest review. So. Here we go.

"Goddess Tithe" follows a young sailor, Munny, through the most dangerous voyage he has ever faced. When the crew finds a stowaway on board, instead of casting him overboard as the murderous sea-goddess demands, the captain grants him safe-passage to his destination. And even worse, he puts Munny in charge of the foreigner.

I liked this very much. Particularly since the jester-castaway was none other than Leo, the exiled prince of the Southlands, a principal character in Anne Elisabeth Stengl's earlier novels.

The plot:

I liked it. A vengeful sea-goddess demanding her tithe, and a captain who refuses to give it to her. The transition between the land of dreams and the world of reality is flawlessly handled. Admittedly, "Goddess Tithe" is a novella, so the plot is fairly to the point.

The characters:

Munny, the protagonist, is a very interesting individual. His mother is dying of sickness on the mainland, and all he wishes is to return to her before she passes away and bring her the white peonies she loved so dearly. Munny provides a way for the reader to see the rest of the crew. It was like looking up from a toddler's perspective, seeing all of these grand, frightening figures towering above. His age, or lack thereof, was handled masterfully.

I also liked the way his friendship with Leo progressed. Munny disliked him for a good long time before he finally warmed up to the irascible jester.

As for the rest of the cast, chiefly the crew and the captain, they were all sufficiently fleshed out to keep me interested. I am very curious of the captain's true identity and purpose and will enjoy seeing him return in future novels.

The writing:

Out of everything in this book, I enjoyed the descriptions the most. The bulk of "Goddess Tithe" takes place on the open sea, and the author beautifully captures its many moods, from raging storms to eerie calm. My favorite moment was the stunning imagery when Munny viewed the ship from underwater.

If I nitpick, and I feel I must in a review, I would say that the illustrations, although well-done, contributed little for me. They conflicted with the images I had formed of the characters, which is true for any illustration but I noticed particularly with these. The only one that decidedly helped me visualize the scene was the picture of Risafeth.

All in all, "Goddess Tithe" by Anne Elisabeth Stengl is another chapter in a beautifully stylized and polished series.

E.F.B. says

Thoughts on reread 1 from April 1-April 7: I finally got a physical copy of this book and decided now was a good time for a reread. While this is definitely the most simple story in the entire Goldstone Wood series, it is still lovely and I still enjoyed it as much as I did that first time on audio. Actually, I'd forgotten the most touching part of the story and having forgotten, it nearly brought me to tears again, in a good way. I'm glad to have read this again and look forward to continuing my reread of the whole series.

Original review from Feb. 25, 2015

The novella "Goddess Tithe" by Anne Elisabeth Stengl is available in print, digital download, and audiobook form. Since I had never listened to an audiobook before, and I had heard good things about it, I decided to try something new and get the audiobook version of Goddess Tithe. In this review, I will first address my feelings about the story itself and then I'll talk about the quality of the audiobook.

My thoughts on the story: To start with, give me a moment to make another check on the list of Tales of Goldstone Wood books that have made me cry. I've read almost every book that is available in the series at this point and I have yet to not get teary at least once at some point in every story. In the case of "Goddess Tithe", I cried at the end because it was touching and a little sad too. The main character, Munny is very likable and interesting and I got attached to him easily, despite how short his story is. He is not a character who appears in any of the other Tales of Goldstone wood books, but his story does intersect with the stories of a couple of the characters that we meet in Veiled Rose, and who also appear in some of the later books as well. This intersection happens because the story of Goddess Tithe actually occurs during the course of Book 2 in the ToGSW series: "Veiled Rose", after Lionheart a.k.a. Leonard the Lightning Tongue decides to stow away on a merchant vessel headed to the east and the city of Lunthea Maly.

Having read "Veiled Rose" first, I thought it was fun to see one of the adventures that Leonard had during his voyage across the sea. I also enjoyed seeing more of brave Captain Sunan in action and, aside from Munny, I think the captain was one of my favorite characters in "Goddess Tithe". Without giving too much away, I loved how he wasn't about to take any guff from any sea monsters threatening his ship! Mysterious as the captain is, I find him intriguing and look forward to learning more about his past as I continue my current reading of Book 7: "Golden Daughter" where he appears again.

Overall, I thought "Goddess Tithe" was a great story, filled with adventure, drama, thrills and spills and some heartwarming moments. Although this time around I listened to the audiobook, I fully intend to get a physical copy of this novella at some point, and actually read it.

My thoughts on the audiobook: The audiobook run-time is exactly 2 hrs 32 minutes which I was easily able to listen to in a single sitting this morning. It is available for download from several online outlets, but I chose to buy mine from iTunes just because I already knew how buy/download from them. When downloaded onto my iPod, the audiobook is divided into chapters so that, if you wanted to stop listening in

the middle of the story and pick it back up later, it would be easy to do.

The quality of the audiobook, in my opinion as someone who has never listened to an audiobook before, was excellent. The narrator had a good voice that was pleasant to listen to and easy to understand, and I loved how he actually changed his voice for the dialog of different characters and even sang the songs that feature in the story. I had heard that the most recent novella that has been released in the ToGSW series: "Draven's Light" is also going to be available on audiobook before too long. Although excited at this prospect, I decided to wait until I listened to the audiobook for "Goddess Tithe" before I would make my final decision as to whether I would get "Draven's Light" in print or in audiobook. Now that I've listened to "Goddess Tithe" I can say with certainty that I will be getting "Draven's Light" in audiobook form as well, as soon as it is available. In fact, I look forward to it!

P.S. I listened to this audiobook with my mother and she enjoyed it too!

Deborah O'Carroll says

Oh my goodness, I *adored* this! *huggles little book* Set in the midst of Veiled Rose (book 2) which is the last Goldstone Wood book I read, it's just a perfect little tale at sea, with mystery and fantasy and an elegant perfectness to the writing. I loved Munny and his and Leo's relationship was so fun — they don't even speak the same language, which made it hilarious! XD Anyways it has a bit of everything and was kinda bittersweet and perfect. ^_^ <3

Shelby says

** I received a free e copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review **

Goddess Tithe is the first book I've read by Anne Elisabeth Stengl but I am positive it will not be my last. This book was unlike any other that I've read. It was heart wrenching and soul lifting and so rich in detail. This author has such an amazing gift that you're able to picture everything so vividly in your mind's eye. I felt such an impending sense of doom and dread and anxiety and anticipation while reading this story. It was truly amazing.

The characters are well written and complex and so easy to connect with. The story centers on the crew of the Kulap Kanya. Munny a little boy who has run away from his home and his ill mother, Tu Pich an old seasoned sailor who looks out for Munny and teaches him the fine art of knots, the mysterious Captain Sunan who vows to deliver his entire crew to port unharmed, Leonard the stowaway, Risafeth the Goddess of Vengeance, and so many more. I loved that in spite of the stigma surrounding Leonard and the language barrier, he and Munny were able to form a friendship of sorts.

Goddess Tithe is so much more than the gorgeous cover that attracted me to it in the first place. It's a captivating tale of friendship, acceptance, and growing up with a healthy dose of mystery, thrill, and sea lore thrown in for good measure. I felt like I spent the day visiting a whole other world and honestly, I wasn't ready to leave. Anne Elisabeth Stengl is a master storyteller and I know her wonderful characters will stay with me for a long time to come.

Joy C. says

First of all, I have to admit that I am viewing this novella of The Tales of Goldstone Wood, from the perspective of having only read two books before in the series (the first and last novels only). Heartless was a enough of a 'background' for me to help me grasp the story and setting and Dragonwitch added the depth that made me connect with many elements in the tale, but I think full appreciation of it can be best acquired from reading the second book Veiled Rose first (that's my presupposition anyway since I have yet to read the full series).

But back to Goddess Tithe...

This story is BEAUTIFUL. It is touching and exciting and full of faerie-beauty and sea lore! One of the favourite things I enjoyed about this story (just as in Dragonwitch) was the cast of characters. They were very real and interesting. They were characters that endeared themselves to me and pulled me along with them into the thick of their lives and dreams: the sailor Munny with his boyish dreams of returning to his mother -- he is such a courageous little fellow! , Tu Puch who teaches him to tie his knots and made me cry (sob!), Captain Sunan--such a fascinating and heroic character, Leonard the stowaway who I have met before and makes me so curious to know his full story (he's quite funny in Goddess Tithe), and Risafeth the goddess of Vengeance; she reminded me a great deal with the Sea Serpent in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader. The plot was captivating and well-written - the ending was so heart-wrenching and bittersweet, and yet it was the perfect type of ending. I loved the dialogue-- I think Anne Elisabeth Stengl excels when her characters do not understand each other's languages and try to interact and communicate!! But perhaps what I loved about Goddess Tithe the most was the themes that were woven through the story so beautifully -- ones such as courage and faithfulness, justice and grace and sacrifice. While not being explicitly 'Christian' in plot, this story is full of the transcendence and hidden beauty that poignantly reflect the authoress' Christian perspective and worldviews. One of my favourite lines in the story would be that moment when the Captain tells Munny, "Vengeance cannot abide the agony of grace."

I have to say the more I read of Stengl's writings, the more I admire her work! She's VERY good. I should hate to ruin the story for you, so all I'll say is I highly recommend Goddess Tithe and that you really ought to read it! I also very much enjoyed reading Heartless and Dragonwitch and look forward to reading more of her books by and by.

Rating for this Book: five stars!

I received a free e-copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Sarah says

Those who've read Veiled Rose, the second in the Tales of Goldstone Wood series, might've wondered about Leonard's travels. What happened to him on his travels aside from his stops in Shippening, Lunthea Maly, and Parumvir? Surely he didn't make both journeys with no adventures besides those we've heard about?

He didn't. Goddess Tithe is the story of Leonard's journey from Shippening to Lunthea Maly, but it is not just his story. The story belongs to Munny, a cabin boy on the Kulap Kanya, to Tu Pich, his mentor, and to the ship's captain, Sunan.

Like many of Anne Elisabeth Stengl's books, my favorite part of Goddess Tithe is the characters. They seem alive, so much so that if one of them walked in my door, I'd be more surprised that he got in my house than that he was real. Besides just being real, the main characters make you like them from the start. Munny and

Tu Pich seem like old friends. Captain Sunan is an excellent example of one of my favorite kinds of characters: those who are more than they seem, and certainly have had more than a few adventures of their own. The dialogue is another high point, particularly that between Munny and Leonard. Having two characters who can't understand a word the other is saying must be challenging, but the author uses that obstacle to lighten many scenes and to help us get to know the characters.

Good characters deserve a good plot, and Goddess Tithe doesn't fail to deliver. Set in a world like and yet unlike our own, this is a story you'll want to savor. Some of the smallest things may prove to be important in the end, and many aspects of the story hint that this is only one small part of a much greater tale. The climax is absolutely thrilling, and though the ending is bittersweet in some ways, it's also beautiful and satisfying. Themes of justice, grace, faithfulness, and sacrifice are woven through the story, and you'll remember them long after its end.

Overall, I would definitely recommend Anne Elisabeth Stengl's Goddess Tithe. Fans of the series will love this new addition to the Tales of Goldstone Wood, but it could definitely be enjoyed without confusion by those who haven't read the rest of the series. Either way, the only thing disappointing about Goddess Tithe is that you won't want it to end.

Jenelle says

Munny is a young boy working on a ship. When the Captain allows a stowaway to live and gives him safe passage, the entire crew is worried that the Goddess Risafeth will enact revenge on the entire ship for his impudence.

Goddess Tithe takes place during the events of Veiled Rose, during the time when Leonard stows away on a ship and sails to the Noorhitam Empire in search of Ay Ibunda for answers on how to slay the Dragon. This story follows the cabin boy, Munny, and his perspective on the events of the voyage.

I do not usually participate in read-for-reviews anymore. I dislike reading books on my computer screen, and I really don't enjoy reading a book with the expected review I must write hanging over my head. SO, that should tell you just how very badly I wanted to read this book, that I could not wait for it to come out.

Shorter than the other Tales of Goldstone Wood, Goddess Tithe is actually more of a novella, but is no less rich of a story for its shortness. The tale and characters are woven with Anne Elisabeth Stengl's expert hand and have obviously been crafted with just as much love and care as her longer works. The themes are deep and meaningful. I also gained a new favorite quote from this book: "Vengeance cannot abide the agony of grace." A line which I believe sums up the point of the story quite nicely, and gave me chills the first time I read it.

The story opens up the world a bit wider, and left me wanting to read more about the Noorhitam Empire and its inhabitants. I definitely want to learn more about the Captain of the Kulap Kanya, as it is heavily hinted at that he is much more than he seems. And I'd like to learn more about Munny as well.

Goddess Tithe is absolutely delightful. I think it should be read within the context of the other books, as I generally recommend that books in a series be read in their proper order... but I think it stands alone fairly well, too. You could read it first, if you wanted, but I think the story is richer if you already know more about the world of Goldstone Wood and the characters therein. I highly recommend this story and this entire series. Though I only recently discovered the Tales of Goldstone Wood, they have gained the prestigious title of

"favorite" in my personal library.

Full disclosure: as per FTC guidelines I must inform you that I received this book in exchange for a review from the author. However, though I love getting free books, my opinions cannot be bought, and therefore this review is my honest assessment of the story.

Clara Thompson says

I have been utterly thrilled with each and every one of Anne Elisabeth Stengl's books, and Goddess Tithe was no exception. Not only does this amazing fantasy offer adventure and mystery to the reader, but it is also filled with the author's own illustrations that are absolutely stunning. This is a fantasy book like no other. The world that Anne Elisabeth has created is so real that it's hard not to feel as though you're on board with the crew of the Kulap Kanya, desperately trying to escape the vengeful goddess Risafeth. This is a tale of truth, grace, sacrifice, and adventure. I urge every fantasy reader to pick this book up without a moment's hesitation!

Stargazer R.L. says

I enjoyed this little adventure at sea so much!

Ever since I read that little bit in Veiled Rose with Captain Sunan of the *Kulap Kanya*, I wanted to read more about him. And here's a little book all about his ship! This mysterious and epic Captain is my favorite character in this story. I love Sunan! Only. . . now I have so many questions about him and I want him to get his own novel! BECAUSE HE'S EPIC.

But just because Sunan is my favorite doesn't mean I don't love the main character, Munny. I love Munny! And I loved seeing Leonard again! Who knew you could have a cool friendship between two people who can't understand a word the other says? It was awesome!

Shantelle says

An exciting short story telling yet another tale from Goldstone Wood! I really enjoyed *Goddess Tithe*, it was a quick and interesting read, written in the captivating way that Anne Elisabeth Stengl always writes! It was intriguing to reunite with Leonard the Lightning Tongue, and delve into the world of young Munny. *Goddess Tithe*, a tale filled with mystic, danger, and sea-lurking monsters. Don't miss this novella from Tales of Goldstone Wood!
