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The Rise and Fall of the Knights Templar

Gordon Napier

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The Knights Templar, a mysterious fraternity of warrior monks, pledged their swords to defend pilgrims to the Holy Land from the bandits and marauders of the roads. Patronised by the aristocracy, the Templars soon evolved into a formidable army and were the vanguard of the ongoing Crusades. They were widely acclaimed for their boldness and tenacity, showered with gifts by Catholic nobles and granted special privileges by admiring Popes. Even after the failure of the Crusades, the Templars remained one of the dominant forces in Christendom with political power to rival kings...until with shocking speed they were brought down by accusations of blasphemous crimes. With confessions tortured out of them by the Inquisition, many knights were burnt as heretics, and the Order was disbanded by the Pope. What really happended behind the closed doors of the Templars' preceptories? Was there truth in the rumours of secret rituals conducted in the dead of the night? Did heretical depravity and Devil-worship truly exist within the illustrious brotherhood? Why is their name associated today with the Freemasons? In this lively and authoritative account, historian Gordon Napier unravels the many mysteries that surround the Knights Templar and their sudden fall from grace. Widely acclaimed for their boldness and tenacity, showered with gifts by Catholic nobles and granted special privileges by admiring Popes. Even after the failure of the Crusades, the Templars remained one of the dominant forces in Christendom with political power to rival kings...until with shocking speed they were brought down by accusations of blasphemous crimes.

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