



The Chimes

By Anna Smaill

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The Chimes By Anna Smaill

After the end of a brutal civil war, London is divided, with slums standing next to a walled city of elites. Monk-like masters are selected for special schooling and shut away for decades, learning to write beautiful compositions for the chimes, played citywide morning and night, to mute memory and keep the citizens trapped in ignorance.

A young orphan named Simon arrives in London with nothing but the vague sense of a half-forgotten promise, to locate someone. What he finds is a new family--a gang of scavengers that patrols the underbelly of the city looking for valuable metal to sell. Drawn in by an enigmatic and charismatic leader, a blind young man named Lucien with a gift for song, Simon forgets entirely what originally brought him to the place he has now made his home.

In this alternate London, the past is a mystery, each new day feels the same as the last, and *before* is considered "blasphemy." But Simon has a unique gift--the gift of retaining memories--that will lead him to discover a great injustice and take him far beyond the meager life as a member of Lucien's gang. Before long he will be engaged in an epic struggle for justice, love, and freedom.

The Chimes is an impressive work of speculative fiction, an imaginative adventure elegantly told. *The Chimes* reveals the human capacity to create both beauty and terror, in art and in life.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A highly original dystopian masterpiece, an intricately imagined, exquisitely invoked world in which music instills order and ravages individuality . . . Smaill is a poet and a classically trained violinist, and both these skills shine in this lyrical novel steeped in the language of music . . . clearly marking her as an exciting new writer to watch."

?Geraldine Brooks, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of March

"something strikingly new" *?Lit Hub*

"Smaill's clever use of musical terms in her characters' speech adds to the immersive quality of the work, and her melodious prose lures the reader like a pied piper. With literary trappings but a solidly speculative heart, *The Chimes* is a cantata of pure delight." *?Jaclyn Fulwood, Shelf Awareness (Starred Review)*

"Smaill is a classically trained musician - a violinist, to be precise - and it shows on every page of *The Chimes*. Not only does music saturate the book's setting, it fills its themes and prose . . . For all the poetry and lyricism, *The Chimes* is a solid, suspenseful adventure story at heart, complete with a quest, a prophecy, and a simmering, deeply moving romance . . . lucid yet dreamlike writing pulls it through. Not to mention her deft, tender characterization . . . [and] profound ideas and images echoing throughout."

?NPR Books

"To call *The Chimes* striking is, I dare say, to underplay what might be the most distinctive debut of the decade."

?Tor.com

"Cleverly orchestrated and poignantly conveyed throughout." *?The Guardian*

"One of a kind, both in its dystopian landscape and use of gorgeous language throughout . . . Fans of the eloquence and imagery of Jeff VanderMeer's 'Southern Reach' trilogy and the spare desolation of Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* will adore this original work."

?Megan McArdle, Library Journal (Starred Review, Debut of the Month)

"A melodic, immersive dystopian tale set in a London where writing is lost and song has replaced story . . . Entrancingly poetic and engagingly plotted, this is a story that brims with heart and soul."

?Kirkus Reviews

"*The Chimes* is a remarkable debut. It's inventive, beautifully written, and completely absorbing. I highly recommend it."

?Kevin Powers, author of The Yellow Birds

"Atmospheric, intensely-imagined strangeness."?Daily Mail

"One of the top literary novels of the year. Set in a world where music has replaced the written word it's a lyrical, entrancing story which ramps up to a fast-paced finale."

?Elle (UK)

About the Author

Anna Smaill is a classically trained violinist and published poet. Born in Auckland in 1979, she holds an MA in Creative Writing from the International Institute of Modern Letters (Wellington), an MA in English Literature from the University of Auckland and a PhD in contemporary American poetry from University College London. She is the author of one book of poetry, *The Violinist in Spring*, and her poems have been published and anthologized in New Zealand and the United Kingdom. She has lived and worked in both Tokyo and London, and now lives in New Zealand with her husband, novelist Carl Shuker, and their daughter.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Evelyn Looney:

Do you have something that you enjoy such as book? The guide lovers usually prefer to pick book like comic, short story and the biggest one is novel. Now, why not attempting The Chimes that give your pleasure preference will be satisfied by simply reading this book. Reading habit all over the world can be said as the opportunity for people to know world much better then how they react to the world. It can't be said constantly that reading practice only for the geeky person but for all of you who wants to become success person. So , for all you who want to start examining as your good habit, it is possible to pick The Chimes become your own personal starter.

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