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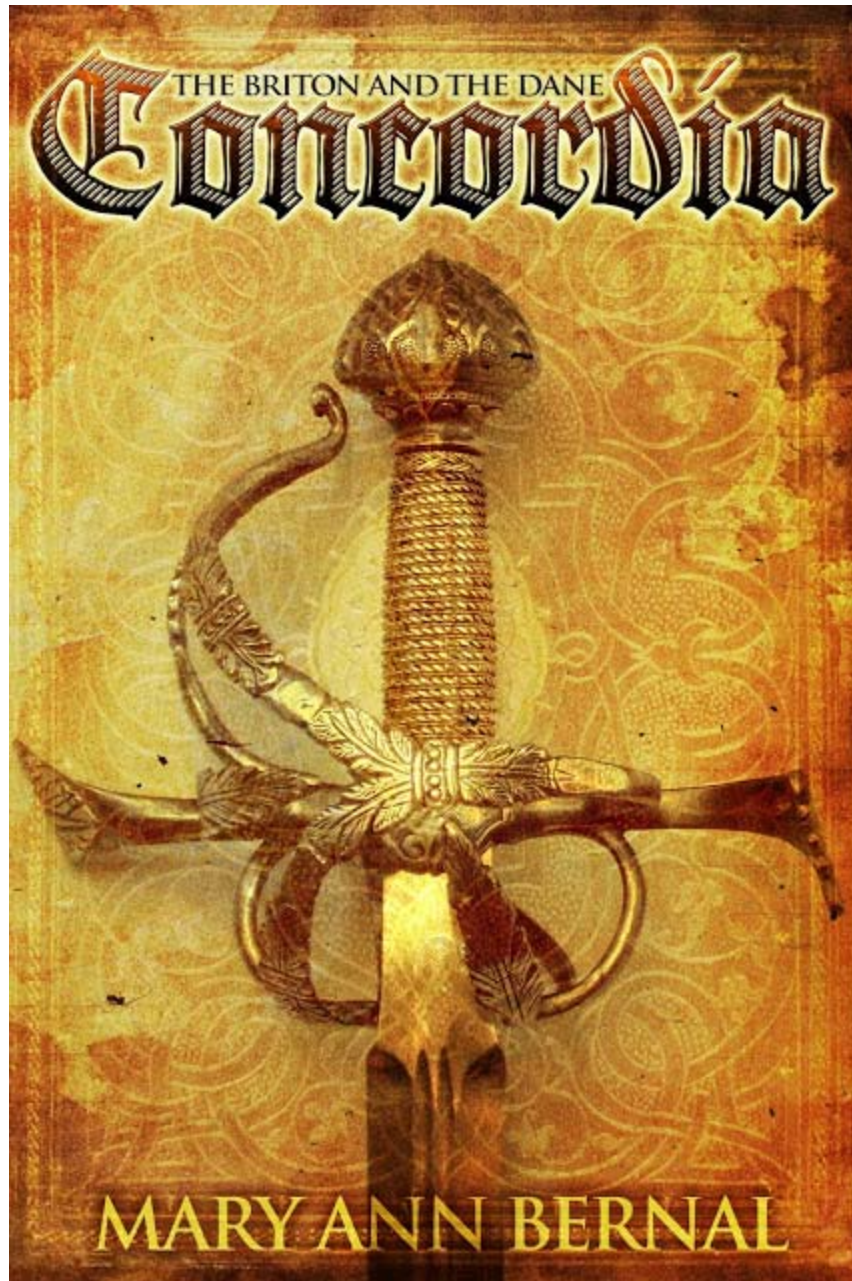
#BookReview — The Briton and the Dane: Concordia (The Briton and the Dane #4) By Mary Ann Bernal #HistoricalFiction #HistoricalRomance @BritonandDane



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The Briton and the Dane:
Concordia
(The Briton and the Dane #4)
By Mary Ann Bernal



Travel back in time to late Ninth Century Anglo-Saxon Britain where Alfred the Great rules with a benevolent hand while the Danish King rules peacefully within the boundaries of the Danelaw. Trade flourishes, and scholars from throughout the civilized world flock to Britannia's shores to study at the King's Court School at Winchester.

Enter Concordia, a beautiful noble woman whose family is favored by the king. Vain, willful, and admired, but ambitious and cunning, Concordia is

not willing to accept her fate. She is betrothed to the valiant warrior, Brantson, but sees herself as far too young to lay in the bedchamber of an older suitor. She wants to see the wonders of the world, embracing everything in it; preferably, but dangerously, at the side of Thayer, the exotic Saracen who charms King Alfred's court and ignites her yearning passions.

Concordia manipulates her besotted husband into taking her to Rome, but her ship is captured by bloodthirsty pirates, and the seafarers protecting her are ruthlessly slain to a man. As she awaits her fate in the Moorish captain's bed, by sheer chance, she discovers that salvation is at hand in the gilded court of a Saracen nobleman.

While awaiting rescue, Concordia finds herself at the center of intrigue, plots, blackmail, betrayal and the vain desires of two egotistical brothers, each willing to die for her favor. Using only feminine cunning, Concordia must defend her honor while plotting her escape as she awaits deliverance, somewhere inside steamy, unconquered Muslim Hispania.



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Someone should have told Concordia that when wishes come true they can leave a very bitter taste.

It had been very easy to fall in love with the young and handsome man from Hispania, but alas, their romance was never meant to be. It was nothing but an inexperienced girl's foolish dream.

Several years have passed, and Concordia has not seen or heard anything more of Thayer, but not for one moment has she stopped loving him. Since that night, Concordia has worn the necklace Thayer gave her. He was still the first thing she thought about in the morning and the last thing at night. She wished ardently to speak with him, to see him, just one more time.

Concordia marries a man whom she regards as a very dear friend. She should be content. Nevertheless, her heart still belongs to Thayer. Desperate to please his young wife, Brantson takes her on a voyage — their destination, Rome. However, they never make it, for their boat is boarded by Saracen pirates. What was to be an adventure of a lifetime, soon turns into a harrowing nightmare.

If Concordia is to survive, then she must use her wits and her body, but there is no telling if even that will be enough. If only Thayer were here to save her. He would assure her safety and if nothing else, return her to her homeland.

From the comfort of King Alfred's Great Hall to the terror of captivity in a foreign land, *The Briton and the Dane: Concordia* (*The Briton and the Dane #4*) by Mary Ann Bernal is the unforgettable story of one woman's quest to find true love and in doing so find herself as well.

Set firmly in the 9th Century, *The Briton and the Dane: Concordia*, drew me in from the opening sentence and held me enchanted until the very end. Bernal's narrative was not only utterly irresistible but incredibly vivid in the telling. This is a story that threatened to mesmerise. It was so compelling that I read it in one sitting. There was no way I could put this book down once I had started.

Concordia is an unlikely heroine. She is spoilt and conceited. However, there is an endearing innocence about her, and for anyone whose first love

was unrequited, there is a recognition of her daydreams and her heartache. She pines terribly for Thayer. As a character, Concordia certainly does her fair share of growing up as the novel progresses. Her relationship with Chad, the Saracen pirate, gave this story an unexpected twist. Of all the men in Concordia's life, Chad, although not the most honest, is more than a match for our fiery young heroine's free spirit.

The antagonist of this tale is an unlikely one. Thayer speaks with a double-tongue. He is not what he seems and Concordia learns a harsh but terrible lesson which is to not take anyone at face-value. Her love for him is pure, but his love for her is about control and dominance. He is the serpent who promises much but delivers nothing but heartache.

Bernal paints a dazzling portrait of what life was like in 9th Century Hispania. There is an elegant sweep of historical brilliance, giving this book an almost sensual grounding of time and place. Bernal has certainly woven the history into this incredibly enthralling tale. I was particularly interested in Bernal's depiction of the Emirate of Cordova (Emirate of Córdoba). This was a time of power struggles and dynasties, but it was also the beginning of a political decline of the emirate. I think Bernal has captured the essence of this era very well through her fictional portrayal. The tension between the Muslim community and the Christian one is evident throughout this story, and indeed history tells us that there was much unrest, particularly at the Christian border.

Although this is book #4 in the series, Concordia stands very firmly on her own two feet. So, if you are looking for your next fix of historical fiction, then why not check out *The Briton and the Dane: Concordia* (*The Briton and the Dane* #4) by Mary Ann Bernal.

I Highly Recommend.

Mary Anne Yarde.

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Mary Ann Bernal



Mary Ann Bernal attended Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY, where she received a degree in Business Administration. Her literary aspirations were ultimately realized when the first book of The Briton and the Dane novels was published in 2009. In addition to writing historical fiction, Mary Ann has also authored a collection of contemporary short stories in the Scribbler Tales series. Her latest endeavor is a science fiction/fantasy novel entitled Planetary Wars Rise of an Empire. Originally hailing from New York, Mary Ann now resides in Elkhorn, Nebraska.

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