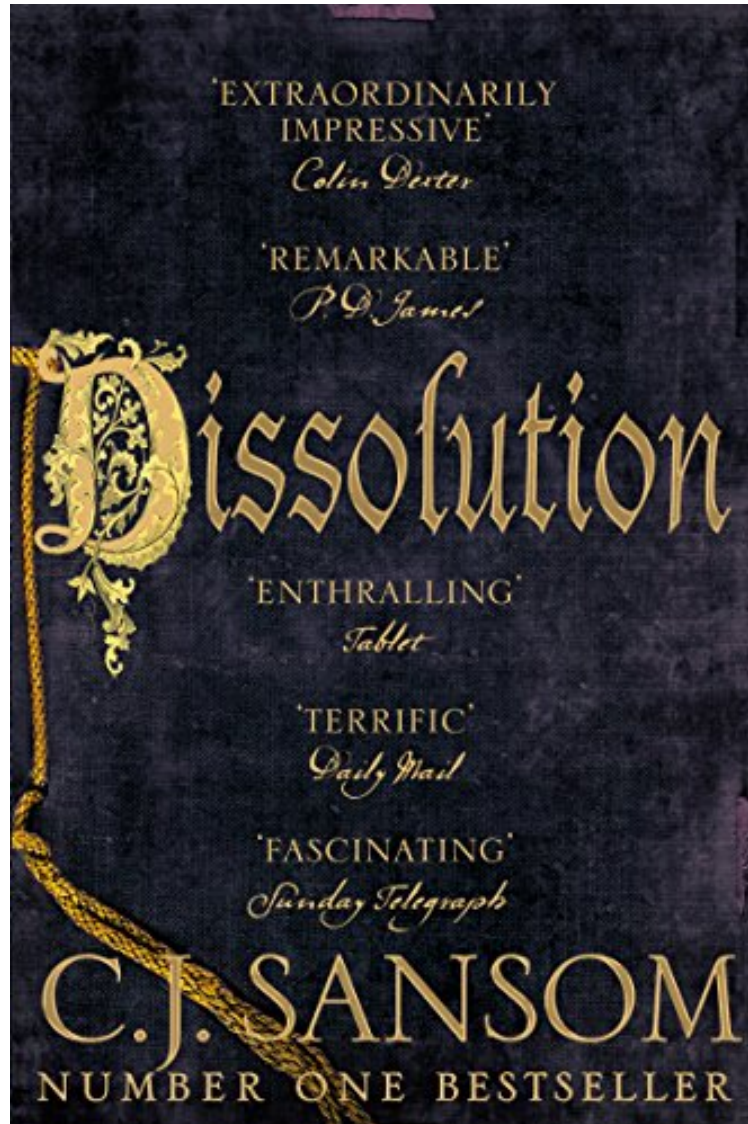


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Dissolution: Tenth Anniversary Edition (The Shardlake Series)

Von C. J. Sansom

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Von C. J. Sansom : Dissolution: Tenth Anniversary Edition (The Shardlake Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dissolution: Tenth Anniversary Edition (The Shardlake Series):

Kurzbeschreibung *Dissolution* is the first in the phenomenal Shardlake series by bestselling author, C. J. Sansom. The bestselling *Dissolution* is followed by *Dark Fire*, *Sovereign*, *Revelation*, *Heartstone* and *Lamentation*. It is 1537, a time of revolution that sees the greatest changes in England since 1066. Henry VIII has proclaimed himself Supreme Head of the Church. The country is waking up to savage new laws, rigged trials and the greatest network of informers ever seen. And under the orders of Thomas Cromwell, a team of commissioners is sent throughout the country to investigate the monasteries. There can only be one outcome: dissolution. But on the Sussex coast, at the monastery of Scarnsea, events have spiralled out of control. Cromwell's Commissioner, Robin Singleton, has been found dead, his head severed from his body. His horrific murder is accompanied by equally sinister acts of sacrilege. Matthew Shardlake, lawyer and long-time supporter of Reform, has been sent by Cromwell to uncover the truth behind the dark happenings at Scarnsea. But investigation soon forces Shardlake to question everything that he hears, and everything that he intrinsically believes . . .

From Publishers Weekly Murders on the grounds of a monastery, 16th-century intrigue, an unconventional sleuth—readers might wonder if this is a knock-off *Name of the Rose* set two centuries later, but Sansom's debut is a compelling historical mystery in its own right, with fewer pyrotechnics and plenty of period detail. It is 1537; the English Reformation is in full swing; and Lord Thomas Cromwell, King Henry VIII's vicar-general, is busy shutting down papist institutions. When one of his commissioners is beheaded at a remote Benedictine monastery, Cromwell dispatches a second emissary, hunchbacked lawyer Matthew Shardlake, to investigate the murder. What Shardlake and his companion, eager young Mark Poer, discover is a quietly bubbling cesspool of corruption, lust and avarice. The scope of the investigation quickly expands when a novice is poisoned and Shardlake finds the remains of a girl who served the monks in the monastery pond. Shardlake presses on by testing the alibis of the various corrupt monks, but Poer's objectivity is compromised when he becomes involved with the girl's successor, a bright, attractive woman named Alice Fewterer. As the investigation unfolds, Shardlake survives a murder attempt, and finally returns to London to tie his findings to higher-level intrigue. Sansom paints a vivid picture of the corruption that plagued England during the reign of Henry VIII, and the wry, rueful Shardlake is a memorable protagonist, a compassionate man committed to Cromwell's reforms, but increasingly doubtful of the motives of his fellow reformers. With this cunningly plotted and darkly atmospheric effort, Sansom proves himself to be a promising newcomer.

Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist It is England in the year 1537, and Thomas Cromwell is Henry VIII's vicar-general and in the process of dissolving all of the large monastic houses, granting the land to his favorites or the highest bidders. When one of his commissioners is murdered at the monastery in Scarnsea, mired among the marshes of England's south coast, Cromwell sends the hunchback lawyer Matthew Shardlake and Mark, his young handsome assistant, to solve the mystery. They find that not only has the murder been covered up but also other murders have been covered up as well, and they also find treasonous monks hostile to the king and his assumption of the role of head of the English church. As Shardlake uncovers more unsettling facts, he realizes that his own life is in danger--and solving the mystery takes on a life-or-death importance. Reminiscent of Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* (without much of the intellectual discourse), Sansom's first novel will not disappoint fans of historical fiction. Michael Spinella Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved