



Leonardo's Shadow: Or, My Astonishing Life as Leonardo da Vinci's Servant

By Christopher Grey

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Milan, 1497. The height of the Renaissance. And for Giacomo, servant of the famous painter Leonardo da Vinci, it's the most difficult time of all. His Master has been working on the *Last Supper*, his greatest painting ever, for nearly two years. But has he finished it? He's barely started! The all-powerful Duke of Milan is demanding that it be completed by the time the Pope visits at Easter. And Giacomo knows that if Leonardo doesn't pick up his pace, the Duke may invite a young genius -- Michelangelo -- to finish the painting instead. Which means that Leonardo won't be paid, which means that Milan's shopkeepers (to whom he owes massive amounts) will take drastic measures against him.

It's all down to Giacomo, and whether he can come up with a brilliant solution. And if he does, will his Master go for it? After all, Leonardo still doesn't seem to trust him. He refuses to teach Giacomo how to paint; he won't help him find his parents; nor will he discuss the significance of the medallion, ring, and cross that Giacomo was carrying when Leonardo found him. But with the secret arrival of a powerful stranger, Giacomo is about to discover much more than the answers he has been looking for. And he will also receive an invitation to help arrange a meeting that could change his life. . . and the future course of history.

With more twists and turns than a spiral staircase, this thriller is as unique as its two heroes -- the most celebrated artist who ever lived, and a young man without a past, who will stop at nothing to find the truth about his life.

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Leonardo's Shadow: Or, My Astonishing Life as Leonardo da Vinci's Ser

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 6-9-It is 1497, and young Giacomo does chores for his master, accompanying him when needed and running errands to the merchants of Milan. He also spends much of his time making excuses to those who have commissioned the artist's work and fending off the many merchants who come trying to collect debts. With smooth words and false promises, the boy keeps them at bay—for the time being. Da Vinci has a commission for a great painting, but he will not work. Why is a mystery, but until he finishes this painting of the Last Supper, he will not be paid. Even worse, the Duke of Milan, whose temper is legendary, is getting impatient. Giacomo worries about starving, about freezing, and about dying by order of the duke or the gentlemen whom Da Vinci insults. But, mostly, he worries about his great master, whom he thinks might be his father. In the beginning of the book, he is chatty and breezy as he introduces his city and surroundings. As the book progresses, he becomes more serious, and readers can see him maturing and becoming more responsive to the atmosphere and problems around him. Grey seamlessly blends fact and research about the inventor/artist with imagination. The basic time line and characters of the story fit with what we know of Da Vinci's life. Easily readable, this novel incorporates adventure and mystery with history.—Heather E. Miller, Homewood Public Library, AL

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From Booklist

Gr. 7-10. A disoriented runaway boy, Giacomo, is taken in by Leonardo da Vinci and grows up as the great man's servant, protecting him from his creditors even as Leonardo is pressured to finish *The Last Supper*. Although part of Leonardo's life, Giacomo still has dreams of his own: to be an artist and to find the secret of his parentage (which he hopes will lead back to da Vinci). Grey cleverly takes Dickensian conventions (a sweeping saga featuring an orphaned lad seeking his fortune, who bumps up against a host of memorable characters) and resettles them during the Renaissance. A first-time author, Grey writes intelligently, but even sweeping sagas sometimes need trimming. Moreover, the book needs an author's note. There's a short bit at the end, about *The Last Supper*, but the fact and fiction about da Vinci's art, his inventions, and even his sexuality, an issue raised in the novel, need clarification. The story itself, however, is enticing, and Giacomo's yearnings about his past and future will speak to readers. Ilene Cooper

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About the Author

Christopher Grey is from London, England. He has worked as a waiter, a hotel manager, a hospital porter, a jeans salesman, a rock musician, and a tour operator. This is his first book. Originally inspired by a visit to the *Last Supper* in 1992, it was not until he came into possession of an old, faded copy of Leonardo's Notebooks that the story began to take shape. The rest is -- almost -- history.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Christopher Olsen:

Nowadays reading books are more than want or need but also work as a life style. This reading practice give you lot of advantages. The huge benefits you got of course the knowledge the rest of the information inside

the book which improve your knowledge and information. The info you get based on what kind of book you read, if you want send more knowledge just go with schooling books but if you want sense happy read one together with theme for entertaining for instance comic or novel. Often the Leonardo's Shadow: Or, My Astonishing Life as Leonardo da Vinci's Ser is kind of reserve which is giving the reader capricious experience.

Patrick Sherman:

Playing with family inside a park, coming to see the marine world or hanging out with friends is thing that usually you will have done when you have spare time, then why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. 1 activity that make you not experience tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition of information. Even you love Leonardo's Shadow: Or, My Astonishing Life as Leonardo da Vinci's Ser, you may enjoy both. It is very good combination right, you still wish to miss it? What kind of hang type is it? Oh come on its mind hangout men. What? Still don't obtain it, oh come on its named reading friends.

Joshua Mack:

In this period of time globalization it is important to someone to obtain information. The information will make a professional understand the condition of the world. The condition of the world makes the information easier to share. You can find a lot of sources to get information example: internet, newspapers, book, and soon. You can see that now, a lot of publisher this print many kinds of book. Typically the book that recommended for your requirements is Leonardo's Shadow: Or, My Astonishing Life as Leonardo da Vinci's Ser this publication consist a lot of the information of the condition of this world now. This book was represented so why is the world has grown up. The terminology styles that writer use for explain it is easy to understand. The actual writer made some study when he makes this book. This is why this book ideal all of you.

Manuel Britton:

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