



# The Virtues of War: A Novel of Alexander the Great

By Steven Pressfield

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**The Virtues of War: A Novel of Alexander the Great** By Steven Pressfield

*I have always been a soldier. I have known no other life.* So begins Alexander's extraordinary confession on the eve of his greatest crisis of leadership. By turns heroic and calculating, compassionate and utterly merciless, Alexander recounts with a warrior's unflinching eye for detail the blood, the terror, and the tactics of his greatest battlefield victories. Whether surviving his father's brutal assassination, presiding over a massacre, or weeping at the death of a beloved comrade-in-arms, Alexander never denies the hard realities of the code by which he lives: the virtues of war. But as much as he was feared by his enemies, he was loved and revered by his friends, his generals, and the men who followed him into battle. Often outnumbered, never outfought, Alexander conquered every enemy the world stood against him—but the one he never saw coming. . . .

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## The Virtues of War: A Novel of Alexander the Great By Steven Pressfield Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

"I have always been a soldier. I have known no other life." Esteemed historical novelist Pressfield (*Gates of Fire; Tides of War*) crawls inside the brave heart of Alexander the Great in this chronicle of the king's bloody and extraordinary accomplishments and boundless ambition. Presented as Alexander's confessions (and lessons) to his brother-in-law, Itanes, as the Macedonian commander and his increasingly reluctant armies try to figure out how to cross "this river of India" to engage in yet another battle, the novel tells of Alexander's father's last victory (the defeat of the Greeks at Chaeronea) before his assassination; of how, over his father's corpse, Alexander cements his plans for future campaigns; of his struggle with his "daimon," which would call him to glory; of his burning of Thebes; of his march east and his slaughter throughout Asia; of his murder of his friend Cleitus ("I felt his spine shear"). Alexander's voice swoops from high-minded rhetoric to earthy vernacular as he regales Itanes with bloody battle scenes and stories of horror and triumph. For devotees of Alexandrite military history—and there are many—this is a sympathetic if slightly overlong portrait of a man who knew no doubt: "Fame imperishable and glory that will never die: *that* is what we march for!"

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From [Booklist](#)

Acclaimed historical novelist Pressfield turns his attention to the ever-fascinating life of Alexander the Great. The rapidly paced first-person narrative is distinguished by Alexander's own matter-of-fact voice. The mighty warrior and king candidly relates his amazing exploits in spellbinding detail. The inevitable gore and glory of the many battle scenes ring especially true as one of the greatest military tacticians in recorded history chronicles both his martial successes and failures. Being treated to a firsthand look inside Alexander's mind, the reader is quickly made aware of the multiple contradictions, ambitions, and passions that contributed to the complex sum of the entire man. This splendid fictional biography is calculated to appeal to antiquarians, Grecophiles, and fans of a darn good read. *Margaret Flanagan*  
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Review

—Praise for *Tides of War*:

"Pressfield serves up not just hair-raising scenes...but many moments of valor and cowardice, lust and bawdy humor....Even more impressively, he delivers a nuanced portrait of ancient Athens."—*Esquire*

"Unabashedly brilliant, epic, intelligent, and moving."—*Kirkus Reviews*

and for *Gates of Fire*:

"Vivid and exciting, Pressfield gives the reader a perspective no ancient historian offers, a soldier's-eye view...remarkable." —*The New York Times Book Review*

"*Gates of Fire* lives up to its billing as an epic novel....His Greeks and Persians come across as the real thing."—*San Francisco Chronicle*

*From the Hardcover edition.*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

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