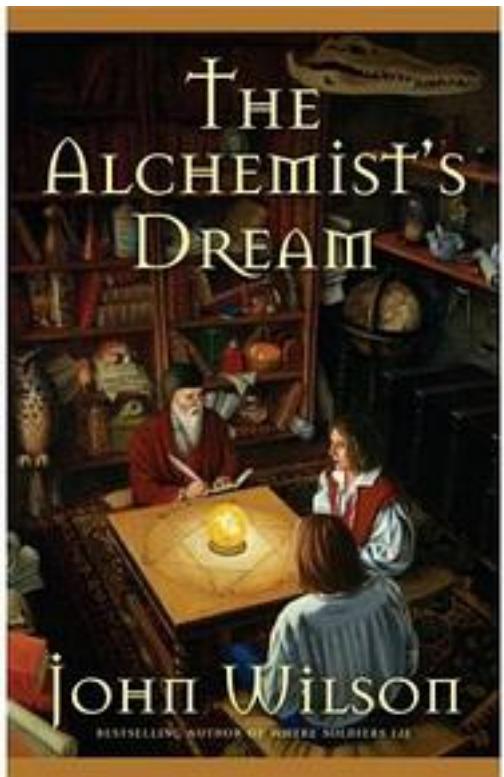


The Alchemist's Dream



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In the fall of 1669, the Nonsuch returns to London with a load of fur from Hudson Bay. It brings something else, too — the lost journal from Henry Hudson's ill-fated search for a passage to Cathay in 1611. The journal finds its way to the aged Robert Bylot and releases a flood of memories from his youth, some of them far from pleasant. As a young man, Bylot dreamed of becoming a famous explorer, and when his father died, he went to London where he faced the horrors of the plague — an epidemic that tragically claimed his sister. He then became the protégé of the notorious

mathematician and magician John Dee. After learning navigation, he signed on with Henry Hudson on his doomed voyage. Dee also gave Blyot a secret assignment for the trip: to bring back the most powerful of alchemical secrets. Will the journal and the dark recollections they bring up finally allow Blyot the peace of mind that has eluded him all these years? John Wilson's deft interweaving of history, science, mysticism, and a hero's journey make this one of his most exciting narratives.

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