



The Pilgrim Glass

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The Pilgrim Glass is the story of an artist, a priest, and a photographer, and the restoration of a stained glass one summer in Vézelay, France. This is no ordinary glass, however; it has a strange, almost hypnotic effect on them, changing them in positive and destructive ways.

Jonas Flycatcher, a well-respected but prickly artisan is contracted to repair a stained glass found deep in the ancient altar of the cathedral of Mary Magdalene at Vézelay. Traveling from California to Burgundy for the project, he meets Abbot Dubay, a worldly priest with a painful secret.

He begins the laborious work of restoring the stained glass offering, but when he meets Meredith, an ex-pat photographer who seems to be channeling a 12th century pilgrim, his carefully constructed world—and the ancient glass—are threatened.

The Pilgrim Glass Details

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Author : Julie K. Rose

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From Reader Review The Pilgrim Glass for online ebook

Terri M. says

The Pilgrim Glass by Julie K. Rose was featured in The Fussy Librarian recently. I was drawn to the book because of its cover and its connection to church history, France and stained glass. A mysterious stained glass window is discovered in a church in Vezelay, France and three individuals are brought together by its discovery.

I really struggled with this novel. It held so much potential and in the end, I was disappointed. Throughout the novel, I felt not enough information was given about the stained glass, its creator and the three main characters. I thought, by the time the novel wrapped up, the creator of the stained glass would be revealed and she would have some connection to two of the three characters, Dubai and Meredith, as their family roots were in the area. This connection would explain their link to the Church and the reason Meredith was "possessed" by the glass's creator. Each of the main characters, Jonas, Meredith and Dubai, had pasts that were haunting them and those pasts had led them to the Church and the piece of glass. Once again, not enough information was given about their psychological hang ups. When their pasts were revealed it was too late in the story to really drive the plot forward and really make me care about how it all turned out.

The other part of the novel that lead to my disappointment was the constant need for the characters to speak in French with no explanation, either a straight up translation, or contextual framing to lead me to understand, at least in part, what was being said. I don't believe I missed any key plot points, but this was an endless frustration for me especially when Jonas went on a bender (Chapter 19) and sits down to have a bottle of wine with a local gentleman who speaks no English. I can't help but wonder if the gentleman shared some key piece of wisdom with Jonas that was completely missed, both by me and Jonas, because neither of us comprehend much French. The same things happens with Latin and the technical terms used when talking about the actual stained glass.

Overall, there were just too many plot issues, too much was not revealed/connected in the end, and a language barrier drove me to distraction. I had hoped that everything would be tied together, but was left disappointed. This paired with eBook formatting issues, The Pilgrim Glass by Julie K. Rose gets a thumbs down.

More reviews on my blog: <http://secondrunreviews.blogspot.com>

Ellen says

Can not figure out why people actually liked this book. Lots of eating at the same old cafe, smoking, and not much else... I liked the idea of the book but never came to fruition...

Heather Domin says

4.5 stars! I read this book around the time it won finalist at the Faulkner-Wisdom awards in 2005, and I've had a crush on Jonas ever since. Literary fiction is not my usual cuppa, but Julie has interwoven her story with threads of litfic, magical realism, historical fiction, romance, and speculative fiction to create a true work of love. I'm happy to finally be able to replace my stack of printed paper with a shiny new paperback.

Lisa Yarde says

Author Julie K. Rose immerses booklovers in the colorful world of medieval stained glass repair, with her lauded debut novel, *The Pilgrim Glass*. Set predominantly in Vézelay, France, the novel begins as Jonas Flycatcher receives a call from UNESCO, inviting him to restore a fragile image of the Magdalene in ancient Romanesque cathedral of Saint-Marie-Madeleine de Vézelay. Three days later, Jonas arrives albeit without his luggage and restoration tools in a quaint village, once associated with medieval pilgrimages from ancient Burgundy to Compostela, Spain. It boasts a cathedral famed for its relics of Mary Magdalene. Jonas must restore the stained glass within a few short weeks, in time for the feast of the Magdalene.

Jonas meets the worldly Abbot Michel Dubay. The men initially clash over intrusive questions from Abbot Dubay and alterations of the original contract but Jonas soon begins his work. A comfortable partnership evolves between the two, as Abbot Dubay hints at an enigmatic past, including unclear reasons for choosing the priesthood instead of becoming an academic. Elsewhere, haunting words and images occupy the photographer Meredith's mind, memories that cannot be her own. She seeks the comfort of friends like Marie-Laure, an expert on the region's history. But Meredith cannot escape her visions or the pull of the cathedral. When she meets Jonas, they don't immediately warm to each other, but eventually find common ground in their working interest in the cathedral. Their relationship surprisingly grows and changes, yet Meredith's continuing hallucinations cause a strain on all the characters.

The central characters are memorable for their characterizations and the mysteries surrounding them. The author keeps you guessing about the sources of their pain and self-loathing throughout the novel. Why does Jonas, a renowned artisan keep everyone at bay and smother his innate brilliance in a haze of cigarette smoke? What should the reader make of Abbot Dubay's constant reliance on the Confessions of St. Augustine, and the photograph he keeps tucked away between its pages? Why is Meredith tortured by otherworldly visions?

The setting is as realistic as the characters' interactions, enhanced by Ms. Rose's visit to the great cathedral at Vézelay. Scenes and descriptions pull the reader into the story, as it unfolds as though on a movie screen, rather than pages. This is an easy, enjoyable read. In particular, I admired the author's references to pigments, vivid shades of red and blue that colors the world around Jonas.

A semifinalist in the 2009 Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award, *The Pilgrim Glass* is an entertaining, surprisingly suspenseful read, and I highly recommend it to readers who love historical mysteries enhanced by authentic details. If I could have given more than five stars, I would have.

Elli says

Actually 3.5 rating if I could. It is exciting and has its draw although it bogged down at times. The descriptions of the countryside, of the weather, its effect, the wine country and all the externals were very effective. The story is told as a time warp but the characters are clear. The major find of an unusual stained glass panel is found. Everyone has a stake in it, the individuals in the town, the religious in the area, the prominent townspeople and of the province. A lot of hope is put into the future of the area through this find and its restoration. The town, the cathedral, and the Cluniac monasteries were prominent in the middle ages. Pilgrim traffic was a major contribution to the economy. And in this novel, the shrine to the Magdalene lives its history once again.

Judy says

I'm more of a historical fiction kind of gal, but I loved "The Pilgrim Glass". I have such a crush on Jonas--smoky, grubby, talented Jonas with all his issues. All of Rose's characters are mysterious and damaged and talented in their own way, and finding out how the Pilgrim Glass affects each one of them, for good or ill, was part of the fun of reading this novel.

Anna Graham says

Characters enthused with strengths and foibles enrich this story layered with spiritual truths and deep anguish. Julie K. Rose winds the modern French countryside with a pilgrim's ancient wanderings in this tale of self-recrimination and forgiveness. Especially enjoyable is the honesty within the novel, as Rose builds to a complex and charged conclusion, holding the reader's attention right to the last page. With fine detail and expressive language, Rose weaves disjointed personas into a tight assemblage, all in need of the other to continue their journeys.

Zoe says

I got really annoyed by the use of " he/she folded his/ her arms" phrase all over the storyI lost count.The format for kindle it's really disappointing.

Denise, a ScribbleManiac says

In The Pilgrim Glass, Julie Rose has created a compelling story filled with characters that stay with you, long after the book is finished. I was drawn into the story, and found the book hard to put down... I simply needed to know what was going to happen next!

The characters are interesting and relatable in their imperfections, making them all the more real. The mystery of the stained glass itself is irresistible, mystical and intriguing.

Relationships, art, faith, passion, coping with past mistakes and inner demons, are all delved into and thoughtfully worked through in this story. I loved this book and eagerly await Julie Rose's next novel!

Cilla Clare says

This is not my usual type of read – I am normally a fantasy or sci-fi gal, but it came highly recommended by a friend, and so I thought I'd give it a try. I certainly don't regret picking up an e-book version of Julie K. Rose's "The Pilgrim Glass".

Read more of my review at my blog: [Tea & Magic](#).

Angela says

The Pilgrim Glass is a book filled with beautiful scenic descriptions and with damaged people. Each of the main characters carries with them wounds from their pasts which refuse to heal. In examining the story of the stained glass and wondering about its creator, they also take a journey in examining their own histories and perhaps starting on a path of healing. I really enjoyed all the characters because they were so flawed. I was interested in why they were the way they were. If anything, I wish Rose had given us more of their history so that their pain in the present could be understood even more deeply. While the creator of the glass is somewhat of a background character, I would have enjoyed knowing more of her story as well.

Rose provides a very authentic setting for her story with the description of the village and the conversations in French sprinkled throughout the book. Most of the French was understandable in context but there were a few times that I was wishing for my French dictionary from high school.

Overall, I found The Pilgrim Glass to be an enjoyable book.

Julie Bozza says

I bought this book for the beautiful and elegantly designed cover. Unfortunately the text formatting inside isn't so elegant, and lets down the story. However! The novel is a good read, with interesting stuff about stained glass restoration, a great setting in France, and a strong supernatural / historical element. A bit angsty and dramatic for my tastes, but I'm glad I read it - and hell I still love that cover!

ETA: The author is classy enough to have contacted me and asked about the formatting issues. I let her know, and she's uploaded an updated book file. So please don't let that put you off, if this yarn sounds like your kind of thing! I bet you'll enjoy it.

Meg - A Bookish Affair says

I really enjoyed this book! I read it pretty quickly as I couldn't put it down. Jonas Flycatcher (how great is that name?) is charged with fixing the stained glass window of Mary Magdalene in the church in Vezelay, France. He's instantly taken with Meredith, a gorgeous photographer, who is hiding something.

The setting is fantastic. I've never been to France but had no problem envisioning how the French countryside might look or the awe I may feel taking in the gorgeous stained glass windows in the church.

This book has a little history, a bit of a mystery and a dash of romance. It was wonderful to watch it all come together and to be able to figure out what exactly was going on with Meredith. This book does have some sort of paranormal elements to that (specifically a whiff of reincarnation), which was sort of interesting.

The only criticism that I have is that there is a lot of French in the book although this was not a dealbreaker. I really struggled with this and although I don't speak French, I can generally figure out what's going on when authors use this element but I was kind of lost in this book. I believe that done in the right way, including parts of a foreign language that everyone understands helps to pull the reader into the story more and to give

them a more authentic experience. I read a lot of the book on the Metro and with Metro's shoddy service, looking up what the French meant on my iPhone was out of the question. This element definitely took me out of the story a little bit.

Cindy says

I thoroughly enjoyed *The Pilgrim Glass*. It did exactly what I always hope a book will do: make me want to meet the characters and visit the locale. I'm not Catholic, and I have a rather different understanding of Mary Magdalene, but that didn't detract from the lovely experience of meeting Jonas and the rest of the characters who were delightfully flawed and interesting.

The one truly unique thing Julie did with this story was to make color an actual character. Everything is oriented around color--the town, the people, the clothing, the mountains, and the glass. The rich descriptions made it impossible not to see the story in a very special way. I especially loved the broad variety of color she used--not just plain colors, but flaming red, deepest orange, jade green, and sandy grey. Even the breeze is "bright blue." As Jonas tells Dubay, "You can feel the color."

Luscious!

Lisa says

I loved this story! I was initially drawn to it by the book's title. The very name, *The Pilgrim Glass*, had me envisioning medieval cathedrals illuminated with the beautifully filtered light of stained glass, and it ignited my deep fascination for this intriguing period of history.

Julie K. Rose weaves a beautiful tale that combines mystery, intrigue, romance, deep, profound loss, and forgiveness. I was drawn to the characters because of their flaws and deep, personal wounds. They were real and I was able to relate to them because all of us know what it is like to hurt, really hurt. These characters will stay with me for a long, long time. When I finished the story I was reluctant to turn the last page because I didn't want to let go; I wanted to stay with them a little longer.

However, what really made this story click with me was the element of intrigue and medieval history. At various points in the story the author takes her readers back to medieval France, where they enjoy getting a real sense of that period in time and a glimpse into the life of the artist who created the pilgrim glass. The story behind the glass and the artist who created it is as compelling as it is heart wrenching, and it adds strength and depth to the overall story. What I really appreciate is that the author provides just enough detail to inform her readers and yet leaves enough to our imaginations to uphold the mystery of the glass.

Finally, I must say something about the setting. I've never been to France, and before I read this story, I had never heard of Vézelay or its great cathedral. But now, I want to go! Throughout the story, the author shows her readers the absolute beauty of this place. Julie K. Rose is a master of description. I wanted to be there, to feel the breeze and the warm sun on my skin, to see the beautiful old buildings, and climb the narrow cobblestone streets. With the author's superb way of "showing" I felt like I was almost there.

I'll say it again, I loved this story. I'm going to read it again someday. I look forward to the next Julie K. Rose book!

