



## The Red Velvet Turnshoe

*Cassandra Clark*

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## **The Red Velvet Turnshoe** Cassandra Clark

Black February in the year 1383: rain started to fall before Martinmas, sweeping through France, Flanders and Tuscany, and barely ceased all year. Floods brought famine. Famine brought disease. The Black Death bestowed its grace on town after town. Bodies were piled in open pits.

The lime was spread. Paris shut its gates; Cologne and Florence followed suit. Into this watery world, against a background of plague and the political turmoil of the Hundred Years War, the nun Hildegard is sent across Europe in search of a precious relic, the Cross of Constantine.

Strong-willed and independent, she will need remarkable skills to survive such a dangerous quest. For with the English Crown at stake there are many who want her mission to fail - and one, above all, who plans a deadly revenge . . .

## **The Red Velvet Turnshoe Details**

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Author : Cassandra Clark

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## From Reader Review The Red Velvet Turnshoe for online ebook

### **Kathy says**

Had to circle back to read this since I read the book that comes after it. I have not read any of the books in this series in proper order, but then...that's me. I tend to select cleanest books off shelf at library. This one had important things I needed to know to fit the puzzle together. Still, though, the very first book I read and reviewed remains true in that I find the "perilous" adventures the heroine nun throws herself into are outlandish. Still enjoyable reading if one is in the mood to suspend belief.

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### **Christy says**

I enjoyed the second in the series, actually found it to be a faster read than the first. However, at times the author leaves things too vague, and I just wish she'd get to the point or be a little more direct. I'll still continue on to the next, and either assume I'm not going to figure it all out [I actually felt like a whole chapter was missing towards the end which would have resolved plotlines better], or I hope that she's not as vague in the third book.

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### **Heidi Kneale says**

Loved the historical detail, enjoyed the mystery elements, but I simply couldn't get into the characters. I couldn't grok their motivations and emotions. This might be because I haven't read the first book in the series, and I missed out on a whole lot of character development.

I really wanted to love this book and couldn't.

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### **Beka says**

I don't think I'm going to read anymore from this series. The mysteries are good, and I like the main character. But I feel like she tries to be too cryptic and subtle with her wrap-ups. I got to the epilogue in this book without feeling like the mystery was solved. Maybe I should have paid closer attention to details, but I feel like she could also have explained things a little better.

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### **Pamela McLaren says**

This was a really good mystery with strong characters in realistic situations and enough action throughout to keep you glued to this story set during the period when the boy-king Richard II is beset by enemies and usurpers.

Hildegard of Beaux is sent on a secret mission to bring back the legendary Cross of Constantine to York. She is escorted part of the way and joined by a minstrel who may or may not have murdered a clerk. Reaching the Alps, her escort killed by an assassin who was out to kill her, Hildegard finds herself alone with only her

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wits to guide her in her quest for the cross.

A very good read.

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### **Michelle says**

The second book in the Abbess of Meaux series, set in the late 1300's, Hildegard is summoned to go on a secret mission to Italy to obtain a holy relic, the Cross of Constantine, to help protect the king. She is sent under the guise of a pilgrimage, with only her two dogs and a tournament knight as protection. Before she leaves, she is shocked and dismayed by the actions and appearance of the Abbott, for whom she has feelings that cannot be realized due to their respective positions. She joins a baggage train with a secondary mission to secure a marriage with a dowry that is being leveraged by financing trade. On their arrival in Bruges, a gruesome discovery of the dead body of a missing scribe, puts the unfortunate man's companion, a young minstrel, Pierrekyn, in jeopardy. Hildegard feels compassion for this young boy and helps to smuggle him out with the help of her knight, to continue their pilgrimage across the Alps. When weather separates the knight and Hildegard from the rest of their party, they come under attack and Hildegard must flee for her life. It becomes clear to Hildegard that there is more to the story of the minstrel and the clerk than initially meets the eye and the key is the small red velvet turnshoe in e possession. In addition, she finds that she is being pursued by an old adversary. Hildegard finds herself in the midst of political intrigue that may cause great upheaval in England. She must find a way to complete her many missions and solve the mystery of the shoe while staying alive. The book is filled with the historical turmoil and intrigue of the period.

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### **Renee says**

Clark sends her Sister Hildegarde on a mission to Florence in this second outing. Same quality of historical research as her debut novel, Hangman Blind as well as intricately woven plots and sub-plots. Hildegarde is accompanied by a chivalrous knight, a trio of mercenaries, and an minstrel accused of murder. She is also shadowed by an enemy bent on revenge. Meanwhile, the nations rage and our nun plays her (not very) small part. Some series require a breath between volumes, but not this one. On to the next: The Law of Angels.

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### **Frances says**

I much preferred this second book in the Abbess of Meaux series. Set in the 1300's, a time when England is being devastated by a power struggle between its current King and those who would like to replace him and the church has been divided between 2 rival popes, it tells the take of Hildegarde, a nun, who is sent from her home in the North of England to retrieve a relic in Italy. She is accompanied at various times in her journey by a tournament Knight, a minstrel, merchants, a group of mercenaries and assorted other characters. The beauty of having a heroine from a religious order is that she can mix with both the high and low born of the Mediaeval world and this series gives a wonderful depiction of both the splendour and the hardships of this time. I thoroughly enjoyed the mix of political and religious history and the descriptions of life at that time both for those in religious orders and for both rich and poor in the greater community. Sitting and reading this book by a warm fire, with a glass of wine and some mediaeval music playing in the background was bliss!

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## **Julie says**

second in series of medieval mysteries. Protagonist is an independent women--which is to say a nun who is also a widow with some resources. Historical element is strong. Political complexity from the first one (feuding popes, feuding local authorities, general social unrest) continues and it is slowly becoming more comprehensible. Suggests to me that reading in order is important. Mystery is fine but isn't really what drives it. New settings introduced (pilgrimage to the holy land) that I found very effective. On to the next.

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## **Jacqueline Seewald says**

First I've read of this series. Clark is incredibly knowledgeable regarding the medieval period. I wouldn't hesitate to read another in the series.

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## **Kathy says**

History is my thing. The further back it is the more it grabs my attention. The book takes place in the 14th century. A time when having the wrong thought can be the end of your days. The Black Plague is ending its deadly reign through Europe, as a Nun tries to figure out the murder of a manor scribe. The down fall is that the book is 2nd in a series. Intrigued.....I'm going to order the 1st one from the Lib and then carry on with the series.

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## **Tricia says**

I normally enjoy historical fiction, but our dear sister just wasn't real to me. She's described as beautiful, and every man she meets seems to fall for her. She's a nun, but has no problems with a young man telling her he's been abused by priests, she seems to just accept it making no comment at all. She tells us that the young man is homosexual, though we've seen noting to lead us in this direction of thought. There are too many instances when she is left alone with a man, something that I don't believe would have been allowed at that time, and in fact she travels with a man as her escort. These things made the story seem too modern for me since it is set in the 1300's.

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## **Val Sanford says**

So it's true I read these books out of order, starting with the 3rd in the series, and then backing up and fitting in 1 and 2. I had a lot of problems with this book. The premise is super fun and the adventure across the Alps was interesting, but the bizarre interactions between Hildegard and the Abbot of Meaux was just not clear. Difficult to follow and a little head-shaking. If you can get over that, it's a fun read.

I loved book 1 and 3 so ...

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### **Allie Riley says**

Abandoned halfway through when I realised I didn't even care who the murderer was. Something about this fell flat for me. The prose was smooth enough, but the characters were wooden and I didn't find it engaging at all. A pity, as I think this could have been good. I suspect the author fancied Hildegard a female Cadfael, but I don't think it's as successful.

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### **Patricia says**

This is the second in one of my favorite new series and is equal to or better than the first. The year is 1383 and a plot is afoot to surpress the story of what really happened to the leaders after the Peasant's Revolt (or Wat Tyler's Rebellion). John of Gaunt, King Richard II's uncle and chancellor, is not depicted in a good light at all here, which is different than in other historical fiction of the period that I have read. Sister Hildegard is sent on a journey to Italy to purchase a reliquary cross, there is murder and mayhem during her journey and when she returns; an excellent read for historical mystery fans!

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