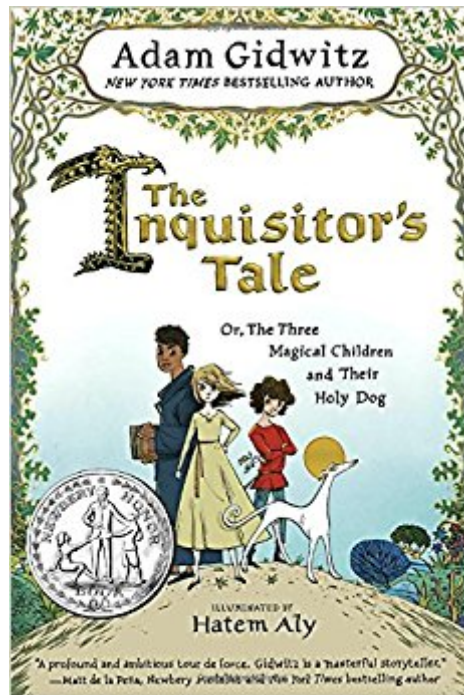


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The Inquisitor's Tale: Or, The Three Magical Children and Their Holy Dog



Synopsis

A 2017 Newbery Honor Book Winner of the Sydney Taylor Book Award! An exciting and hilarious medieval adventure from the bestselling author of *A Tale Dark and Grimm*. Beautifully illustrated throughout! *The Inquisitor's Tale* is one of the most celebrated children's books of the year! ... A New York Times Bestseller ... A New York Times Editor's Choice ... A New York Times Notable Children's Book ... A People Magazine Kid Pick ... A Washington Post Best Children's Book ... A Wall Street Journal Best Children's Book ... An Entertainment Weekly Best Middle Grade Book ... A Booklist Best Book ... A Horn Book Fanfare Best Book ... A Kirkus Reviews Best Book ... A Publishers Weekly Best Book ... A School Library Journal Best Book ... An ALA Notable Children's Book

œA profound and ambitious tour de force. *Gidwitz* is a masterful storyteller. • "Matt de la Peña, Newbery Medalist and New York Times bestselling author "œWhat *Gidwitz* accomplishes here is staggering." "New York Times Book Review

Includes a detailed historical note and bibliography

1242. On a dark night, travelers from across France cross paths at an inn and begin to tell stories of three children. Their adventures take them on a chase through France: they are taken captive by knights, sit alongside a king, and save the land from a farting dragon. On the run to escape prejudice and persecution and save precious and holy texts from being burned, their quest drives them forward to a final showdown at Mont Saint-Michel, where all will come to question if these children can perform the miracles of saints. Join William, an oblate on a mission from his monastery; Jacob, a Jewish boy who has fled his burning village; and Jeanne, a peasant girl who hides her prophetic visions. They are accompanied by Jeanne's loyal greyhound, *Gwenforte* . . . recently brought back from the dead. Told in multiple voices, in a style reminiscent of *The Canterbury Tales*, our narrator collects their stories and the saga of these three unlikely allies begins to come together.

Beloved bestselling author Adam *Gidwitz* makes his long awaited return with his first new world since his hilarious and critically acclaimed *Grimm* series. Featuring manuscript illuminations throughout by illustrator *Hatem Aly* and filled with Adam's trademark style and humor, *The Inquisitor's Tale* is bold storytelling that's richly researched and adventure-packed. It's no surprise that *Gidwitz*'s latest book has been likened to *The Canterbury Tales*, considering its central story is told by multiple storytellers. As each narrator fills in what happens next in the story of the three children and their potentially holy dog, their tales get not only more fantastical but also more puzzling and addictive. However, the gradual intricacy of the story that is not *Gidwitz*'s big accomplishment. Rather it is the complex themes (xenophobia, zealotry, censorship etc.) he is able to bring up while still maintaining a light tone, thus giving

readers a chance to come to conclusions themselves. (Also, there is a farting dragon.)" • "Entertainment Weekly, "Best MG Books of 2016" Puckish, learned, serendipitous . . . "A Sparkling medieval adventure." • "Wall Street Journal" . . . "Gidwitz strikes literary gold with this mirthful and compulsively readable adventure story. . . . A masterpiece of storytelling that is addictive and engrossing." • "Kirkus, starred review" . . . "A well-researched and rambunctiously entertaining story that has as much to say about the present as it does the past." • "Publishers Weekly, starred review" . . . "Gidwitz proves himself a nimble storyteller as he weaves history, excitement, and multiple narrative threads into a taut, inspired adventure." • "Booklist, starred review" . . . "Scatological humor, serious matter, colloquial present-day language, the ideal of diversity and mutual understanding" this has it all." • "The Horn Book, starred review" . . . "I have never read a book like this. It's weird, and unfamiliar, and religious, and irreligious, and more fun than it has any right to be. . . . Gidwitz is on fire here, making medieval history feel fresh and current." • "School Library Journal, starred review

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 84 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #7,744 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 in Books > Children's Books >

Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Medieval #181 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy

Tales, Folk Tales & Myths #301 in Books > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy >

Fantasy & Magic

Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

Gr 5-10 "What is a miracle? Is a miracle what happens when, faced with murderous bandits, a teenage monk rips a leg off his donkey, beats them to death with it, then restores the donkey's leg?

Or is it a miracle when a cranky innkeeper is so moved by a little girl's friendliness that he risks his life to help her and her companions flee a posse of armed knights? Maybe the real miracle happens when readers attracted to the action and violence a particular author is known for find themselves strongly invested in the moral questions that plague bandit-killing monk and friendly peasant girl alike—along with every other character they encounter, from a young minstrel/pickpocket to Louis IX. Gidwitz's tale of medieval France successfully combines the epic with the personal, aiming for that heart-stopping moment when characters readers have come to care about find themselves on a collision course with one of the great wood chippers of history—the Inquisition, agents of which are in hot pursuit of three underdog characters (and one actual dog) from the very start. It is left to the titular Inquisitor to discover the truth behind the legends that quickly rise to surround these kids. He nudges it from each of the travelers at a roadside inn, the narrative tension rising as each facet is revealed. VERDICT This book appeals to the heart, to the mind, and to any reader's appetite for action: read it for the thrilling escapes, the fart jokes, the stinky cheese, and the palace intrigue. Read it for the Talmudic wisdom, commonsense philosophies, and moments of doubt. Read it for the palaces and monasteries and the unbelievable descriptions of food. But read it. —Paula Willey, Baltimore County Public Library, Towson

What Gidwitz accomplishes here is staggering. The Inquisitor's Tale is equal parts swashbuckling epic, medieval morality play, religious polemic and bawdy burlesque, propelling us toward a white-knuckle climax where three children must leap into a fire to save a Talmud. And yet, the rescue of this single book feels like higher stakes than any world-incinerating superhero battle. Part of this is because The Inquisitor's Tale is dense with literary and earthy delights, including Hatem Aly's exquisite illustrations, which wrap around the text as in an illuminated manuscript. —New York Times Book Review —Adam Gidwitz —mingles earthy humor and high culture in The Inquisitor's Tale, a medieval story that unfurls —Chaucer-style, with revelers in an inn taking turns to explain why the king of France is trying to hunt down three child-saints and their holy dog. —Hatem Aly's marginal illuminations add sparkle to this novel for 11- to 16-year-olds. —Wall Street Journal, —Best Books of 2016 — —Three children persecuted for their religious beliefs band together to fight intolerance—and save their necks—in this fascinating story set in 13th century France. —People — —no surprise that Gidwitz's latest book has been likened to The Canterbury Tales, considering its central story is told by multiple storytellers. As each narrator fills in what happens next in the story of the three children and their potentially holy dog, their tales get not only more fantastical but also more

puzzling and addictive. However, the gradual intricacy of the story that is not Gidwitz's big accomplishment. Rather it is the complex themes (xenophobia, zealotry, censorship etc.) he is able to bring up while still maintaining a light tone, thus giving readers a chance to come to conclusions themselves. (Also, there is a farting dragon.)

• "Entertainment Weekly, "Best MG Books of 2016" ... "Gidwitz continues to toy with narrative in a well-researched and rambunctiously entertaining story that has as much to say about the present as it does the past [The tale that comes into focus is one of religious persecution and faith, friendships that transcend difference, and a dangerously flatulent dragon]

"Gidwitz continues to have no problem mixing high and low.

• "Publishers Weekly, starred review ... "It is a time of miracles and saints, of fiends and dragons, all of which Gidwitz has meticulously teased from legends and histories of the Middle Ages

"Gidwitz proves himself a nimble storyteller as he weaves history, excitement, and multiple narrative threads into a taut, inspired adventure.

• "Booklist, starred review ... "Gidwitz strikes literary gold with this mirthful and compulsively readable adventure story set in medieval France

"While the three protagonists initially come together out of necessity, the heartwarming friendship they form celebrates a common humanity that transcends the bounds of race, religion, and social class. The author creates a richly designed medieval world, filled with imperious knights, farting dragons, foreboding forests, and soulless fiends, in which nothing is as it seems, including the tellers of the tales

"Gidwitz's lighthearted touch nonetheless provides for insightful commentary on the dangers of narrow-mindedness and zealotry that will resonate with modern readers. A masterpiece of storytelling that is addictive and engrossing.

• "Kirkus Reviews, starred review ... "Gidwitz's tale of medieval France successfully combines the epic with the personal, aiming for that heartstopping moment when characters readers have come to care about find themselves on a collision course with one of the great woodchippers of history—the Inquisition, agents of which are in hot pursuit of three underdog characters (and one actual dog) from the very start

"This book appeals to the heart, to the mind, and to any reader's appetite for action: read it for the thrilling escapes, the fart jokes, the stinky cheese, or the palace intrigue. Read it for the Talmudic wisdom, commonsense philosophies, and moments of doubt. Read it for the palaces and monasteries and the unbelievable descriptions of food. But read it.

• "School Library Journal, starred review ... "An ambitious mash-up of medieval saints' lives, the Joan of Arc legend, thirteenth-century French history, and elements of The Canterbury Tales

"Gidwitz presents moral issues that are currently relevant, and gives several theological arguments about good and evil a brisk, accessible airing. Scatological humor, serious matter, colloquial present-day language, the ideal of diversity and mutual understanding—this has it all.

• "The Horn Book, starred

reviewâ€¦â€”â€”Cleverly craftedâ€”Six years of extensive research and a natural storyteller's gift shine in [Gidwitz's] spiffily spun novelâ€”Over-the-top skirmishes, comical triumphs over thugs, unlikely allies, religious persecution, stinky French cheese, noble acts of bravery, deep-seated emotion, profound theological questions--and a fatally flatulent dragon--intermingle in this suspenseful novel set in a medieval world where atrocities are committed in the name of God. In the style of "illuminated" medieval texts, Egyptian-born illustrator Hatem Aly illuminates Gidwitz's story with whimsical black-and-white drawings that enliven this philosophical swashbuckler.â€”

•â€”Shelf Awareness, starred reviewâ€”This â€”Canterbury Taleâ€”-style masterpiece is serious, scatological, violent, funny, philosophical and timely.â€”

•â€”San Francisco Chronicle, gift guideâ€”The children are like none weâ€™ve met before: so dignified, so self-sufficient, so, well, medieval. And yet, they are funny, intensely real and believably braveâ€”Gidwitz and illustrator Hatem Aly breathe life into a tale that you won't soon forget.â€”

•â€”Chicago Tribuneâ€”Gidwitz paints a vivid image of medieval France, and his mix of heart and humor makes this book an utterly magical read. Who else could weave a tale of acceptance, love and hope, complete with farting dragons?â€”

•â€”San Diego Union Tribuneâ€”Brimming with action, history, humor and much more, Gidwitz has crafted a masterfully seamless novel that is thought-provokingly relevant, making this selection nothing short of brilliant.â€”

•â€”Books to Borrow, Books to Buyâ€”Whimsical and windingâ€”One of the most interesting parts of this story is the message it teaches: A story is established that brings together three characters from very different backgrounds. At first there is conflict between them, but the characters learn to work together. With the conflict in the current political atmosphere, perhaps this is something even adults could stand to learn.â€”

•â€”Denver Postâ€”Game-changingâ€”I have never read a book like this. It's weird, and unfamiliar, and religious, and irreligious, and more fun than it has any right to beâ€”As I write this review in 2016 and politicians bandy hate speech about without so much as a blink, I can't think of a book written for kids more timely than thisâ€”As for the writing itself, that's what you're paying your money for at the end of the day. Gidwitz is on fire here, making medieval history feel fresh and current.â€”

•â€”Betsy Bird, A Fuse #8 Productionâ€”[An] exciting adventure storyâ€”Just as medieval manuscripts had illuminated drawings, great illustrations go hand-in-hand with the story. Gidwitz finds a way to make the Dark Ages not so dark but exciting and full of mystery.â€”

•â€”The Clarion Ledger, holiday gift guideâ€”The Inquisitor's Tale is a well-researched and thoroughly engaging adventure, which beautifully imagines the feel and texture of thirteenth-century France. It is also a moving exploration of friendship, curiosity, and love of learning in a world all too filled with narrow-mindedness and hate.â€”

•â€”Sarah Lipton, professor of medieval history at SUNY, Stony

Brook & Accolades for A Tale Dark & Grimm: New York Times bestseller Selection on the Today Show's Al's Book Club for Kids NCTE Notable Children's Books in the Language Arts Selection An E. B. White Read Aloud Honor Book New York Times Editors' Choice pick Publishers Weekly Flying Start School Library Journal Best Book of the Year ALA Notable Book "Unlike any children's book I've ever read . . . [it] holds up to multiple re-readings, like the classic I think it will turn out to be." â "New York Times Book Review "A marvelous reworking of old stories that manages to be fresh, frightening, funny, and humane." â "Wall Street Journal

Most of us like a good tale. Storytellers find most of us a captive audience. The Inquisitor's Tale is told through the eyes of various people who instill the tales with their own perspectives. As with all traditional storytellers, the tales are oral, so I listened to this on Audible as I read the words. I think this enriched the telling immensely. However, the text alone is certainly a wonderful read. Here we have historical fiction intertwined with magic and fantasy. The period of history is the Middle Ages during the Inquisition and particularly during the reign of King Louis. Those who did not follow the tenets of the Catholic Church in all respects were in danger of being killed and tortured. Thousands of copies of the Jewish Talmud were burned. Infidels were hunted down. Jean, a young peasant girl, who during her seizures has visions of the future, is distrusted. Is she a saint or a devil? Her beloved white dog is resurrected from the dead. Is the magical dog a saint or a devil? Jacob, a Jewish boy who is desperately seeking his parents after his village has been burned, joins them. William, a huge Christian boy/monk who was banished from his monastery and sent on a journey to another monastery unites with them, also. They struggle for survival and the pursuit of goodness. Determinedly, they vow to save one book of the Talmud from the burning pyre. Running for their very lives, the three children and the holy white dog unite in their brave quest even if it means their martyrdom. Intent on wiping out all writings of the infidels, King Louis and his soldiers pursue them. Why does God let bad things happen? Why does God not protect the good with his omniscient power? The children ponder these questions. The characters are thrown together by fate. Their different backgrounds and perception of the world cause friction and distrust. However, through their struggles and adventures, lasting friendships emerge. Tolerance for others is a strong lesson here. We see that the characters, even King Louis, are human, with both good and bad qualities and decisions. This makes them come alive to the reader and imparts an important message. Although this book is primarily targeted for middle school children, adults can thoroughly enjoy it. I found it fascinating.

Read the entire book in one day. Could only keep turning the pages. Meticulously researched, The Inquisitor's Tale is a gloriously fun romp through the adventures of 3 amazing children. Told through a number of different voices, each story completes a piece of the puzzle, as you figure out who the Inquisitor is and the role he has yet to play on the lives of these important children. Great story of courage, tolerance and bravery (with a farting dragon thrown in for good measure)! Please read it.

Excellent story line, really beautiful to see a children's author taking on the lines that we draw in the sand to separate from each other over theology, cultural background, ect ect. Really enjoyed reading it as an adult.

One of the most unusual and fascinating MG novels I have read. Using the setting and characters of Canterbury Tales to into each young refers is inspired.

I wasn't entirely sure our daughter was going to like this book, but felt she needed to broaden her reading palate. Much to our pleasure, she sat down and read this book in two days, laughing along the way and sharing various bits and pieces of the story. In the end, she absolutely loved it and has since recommended to several of her friends.

Middle Ages revealed by the children and the dog! Amazing connections with real historical figures and fictional characters.

This is everything I have ever wanted from a middle grade medieval fiction novel, and maybe any medieval fiction novel. I have waited for so long for a story that treats medieval people with such grace, honesty, and humor.

A moving book about tolerance and kindness told through the eyes of children

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