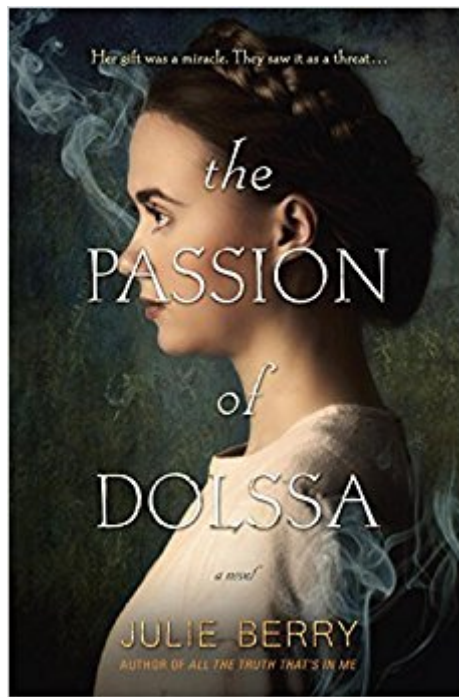


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The Passion Of Dolssa



Synopsis

"Gorgeous and evocative . . . magnificent."--The New York Times
Medieval France: Dolssa is an upper-crust city girl with a secret lover and an uncanny gift. Branded a heretic, she's on the run from the friar who condemned her mother to death by fire, and wants Dolssa executed, too. Botille is a matchmaker and a tavern-keeper, struggling to keep herself and her sisters on the right side of the law in their seaside town of Bajas. Their lives collide when Botille rescues a dying Dolssa and agrees to conceal her in the tavern. Aided by her sisters and Symo, her surly but loyal neighbor, Botille nurses Dolssa back to health and hides her from her pursuers. But all of Botille's tricks, tales, and cleverness can't protect them forever, and when the full wrath of the Church bears down upon Bajas, Dolssa's passion and Botille's good intentions could destroy the entire village.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Passion Of Dolssa by Julie Berry is an intricately written young adult historical novel set in an era of Inquisitions. Berry's latest book is quite different from The Scandalous Sisterhood of Prickwillow Place " yet retains the powerful bounds of sisterhood " and is more along the lines of All The Truth That's In Me with the serious subject matter and heavy mood. I felt like Berry really had her writing chops on full display with this multi narrator book. It's layered and complex and quite the harrowing read. This is absolutely not a book for the faint of heart " it can feel long and maybe a bit more adult than young adult. However, the pieces all put together add up to an unforgettable read. The Passion Of Dolssa is about this girl named Dolssa who believes that Jesus is her beloved and she finds herself able to perform small miracles. However, not everyone thinks

this is awesome and she finds herself on the wrong side of the Inquisition. After her mother is burned at the stake and Dolssa is next, she makes a miraculous escape and runs away. She finds help from unexpected quarter along the road – this includes a young matchmaker and tavern keeper named Botille. Botille and her two sisters live in the town of Bajas by the seaside. They shelter Dolssa and hide her from the inquisitors who are looking for her. Although Botille and Dolssa could not be more different – they form quite the friendship and so, the town of Bajas will find itself forever changed by Dolssa. Although this book is entitled The Passion of Dolssa, I think that the true star of the book is Botille. She’s the type of main character I love to read about.

The Passion of Dolssa is finely wrought – tense and beautiful and somehow mystical. Pacing is slow, in such a way that we ease slowly into a very obviously different time, which itself proceeded at a much more deliberate pace than our own. Like the best historical fiction, the setting and characters are more complex and layered than they seem at first blush. Author Julie Berry rounds out each character as if she is building the person up on canvas using layers of oil warmed in the sun of Provence, the locale of this story. At its most basic, The Passion of Dolssa is the story of a young gentlewoman, Dolssa, who is disavowed and hunted by the Church for her religious visions. She finds succor with three sisters who eke out a living in a seaside village, only to be forced to choose between personal safety and helping others. The details and layers – time and place and character – are what make this story rich, and Berry does not stint on evoking various locales in medieval France with overwhelming realism. Dolssa and the middle sister, Botille, are crafted in the most detail. As I read, I found myself marking several passages that were particularly eloquent. Only after finishing did I realize that most of them were uttered by Botille. Perhaps that is because life forced Botille, who had to be self-sufficient from a young age, to be more – present – than Dolssa, who was more ethereal. Berry uses simple, vivid language throughout.

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