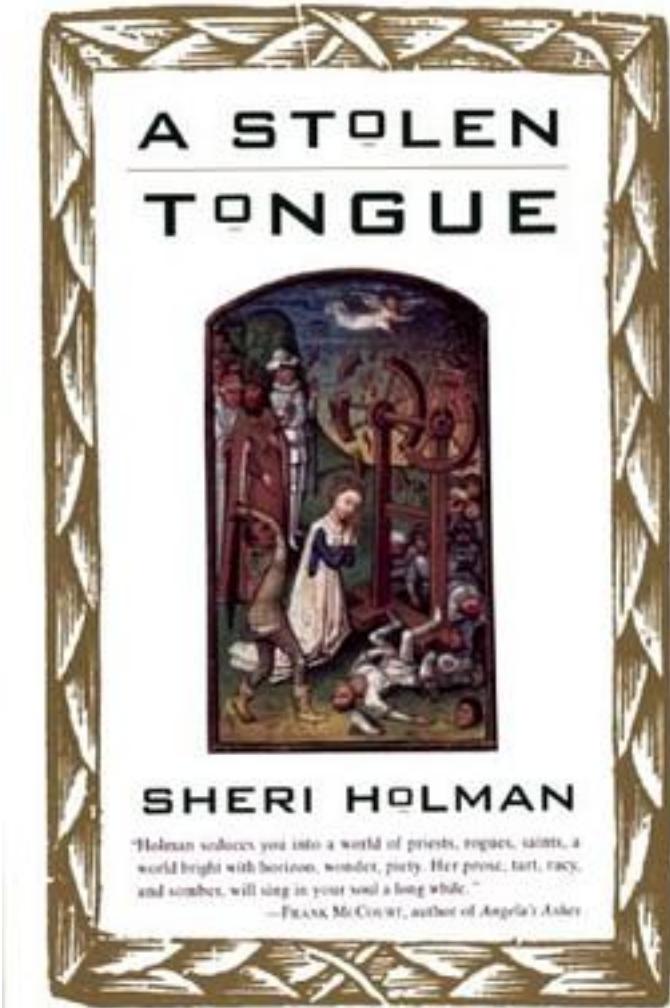


A Stolen Tongue



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著者:Holman, Sheri

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Amazon.com The narrator of Sheri Holman's debut novel, *A Stolen Tongue* is Father Felix Fabri, a 15th-century monk on a pilgrimage to Alexandria, Egypt, to visit his "wife," Saint Katherine. The fact that Katherine is long dead, her various body parts distributed among reliquaries from Greece to Palestine, does not dilute Felix's passion for his spiritual mate. Indeed, from the day he first offered himself to her as a boy, it has been his life's ambition to travel to the Sinai, where she was martyred, visiting each relic along the way. But every time Felix arrives at one of these holy places, he finds a piece of Katherine gone. First her hand, then her ear, then her tongue--all stolen. This historical mystery has many charms, not least among them Father Felix himself. Ms. Holman has done both the actual historic figure and her novel a great service by occasionally allowing this unique individual to speak in his own words (translated from the Latin by the late Aubrey Stewart) on such subjects as "Why the Eucharist May Not Be Celebrated on Shipboard" or "The Rules for Pilgrimage." It is a testament to the author's skill that the seams stitching together the fictional Felix and the historic one are well-nigh invisible. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title. From Publishers Weekly Widely varied notions of faith and mission, from the conventional to the bizarre, color this intriguing historical thriller about a 15th-century pilgrimage from Germany to Mt. Sinai. The narrative takes the form of a journal kept by Dominican Father Felix Fabri, beginning at sea in 1483. Felix seeks to visit the relics of his spiritual wife, St. Katherine of Alexandria, on whom he has developed a fixation that might strike contemporary readers as not being entirely in keeping with his vows?though such eroticized spirituality was not uncommon at the time. As pieces of Katherine's body disappear from churches along his party's route, Felix faces a troubling mystery made more strange by the appearance of a young woman named Arsinoe, whose possibly mad communications with the saint have earned her the sobriquet, Tongue of St. Katherine. The pilgrims' voyage is arduous enough, but with the added intrigue of the disappearing relics, and conflicts that try Felix's faith and corrupt his judgment, they will be pushed to the brink of despair. First-novelist Holman pulls her readers along with odd riddles and careful suspense. As absorbing as is her portrayal of the premodern world is, her feel for timeless ironies is also sure: Felix decries the strange, unholy ways of the "Saracens" while he searches for his dead "wife," "whose dried-out tongue he keeps in a pouch around his neck. While the plot's resolution is a bit unsatisfying, this is a strong debut, an often enthralling yarn that draws the reader right in among the pilgrims on their harrowing trek. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title. See all Editorial Reviews

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