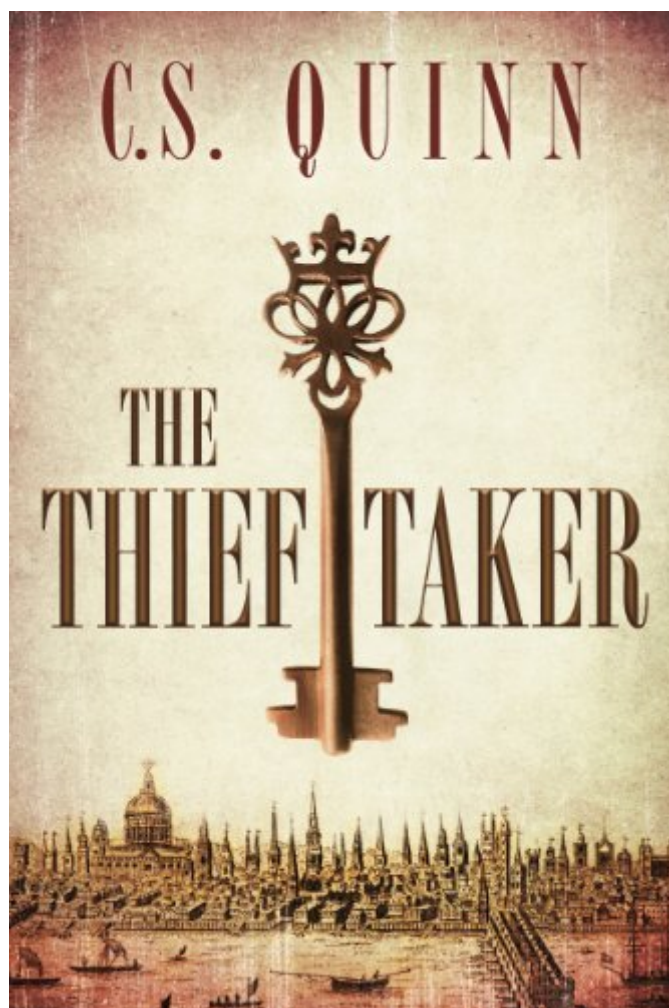


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The Thief Taker (The Thief Taker Series Book 1)



Synopsis

The year is 1665. Black Death ravages London. A killer stalks the streets in a plague doctor's hood and mask...When a girl is gruesomely murdered, thief taker Charlie Tuesday reluctantly agrees to take on the case. But the horrific remains tell him this is no isolated death. The killer's mad appetites are part of a master plan that could destroy London and reveal the dark secrets of Charlie's own past. Now the thief taker must find this murderous mastermind before the plague obliterates the evidence street by street. This terrifying pursuit will take Charlie deep into the black underbelly of old London, where alchemy, witchcraft and blood-spells collide. In a city drowned in darkness, death could be the most powerful magic of all.

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Customer Reviews

The plot is involved and complex. The historical references are mostly to the horrible conditions of the time. If you like dirt, pain, grime, disease, prostitution, torture, etc you'll like the ambiance of this book. But it really needed some help from an editor and some rewriting--some inconsistencies, sometimes it's hard to know who's talking, some sentences don't make sense.

Maybe because I had just finished reading Anne Rice and jumped right into 'The Thief Taker' -- maybe that is what made it seem to start off slow.... however, before I got to the end of the first chapter I was enjoying this story! For starters, I never knew that the thief taker was an actual profession, and then there was the incredible historic content - I appreciated the learning experience and I appreciated the vivid writing expressing the bleakness Londoners endured during their plague infestation. My imagination was soaring - and that's what I look for in storytelling - the ability for an author to take me out of today and into their world of fiction.. The story line and characters were likable and believable.. I will read more of C. S. Quinn

I enjoyed the first part of the book much more than the last one third. The reason was basically the many mutations of the plot through the last 30% of the book, and the many unreal situations even for a fiction novel. It seems the writer forces an ending no matter that in doing so any semblance to possible rational situations is totally lost. It is like a performing artist badly fumbling in the middle of a scene and breaking the illusion previously created by his/her good acting. It seems the final 30% of the book was written by a different person who writes in a childish and fantastic unreal manner. I felt sorry of such ending for what could have been a very interesting novel indeed. If I give it three stars is only for the entertaining first part of the book. To my taste there were also much unnecessary details of gore, blood, and unsavory scenes related to the plague. The book ending is so ridiculously childish that I don't even want to know more about the real identity of the thief-taker. Sad, sad, sad. JAS

(Really, 2.5.) I, too, disliked the repeated graphic descriptions of the plague and found much of the plot unbelievable. The author made several errors about facts that would have been easy to check, e.g., Louise Carwell (as the English called her) was not Charles II's mistress in the mid-60's. Charles I was not a Catholic; priest holes are not found in churches; and the author (I think) over-emphasizes the atrocities of the English Civil War, and then draws a picture of their impact that is nothing like what we now know as PTSD. More importantly, London's 17th-century slums were not favelas. For that, you need empty land where people can build houses out of discarded materials, as well as (probably) a dryer climate. I'm not saying London didn't have horrible slums, but if informal building was common, the open land that did exist, like Moorfields, the Inns of Court, the parkland that became Hyde Park, would not have survived. It's not necessarily bad to draw parallels with current conditions, but they need to be based on something real. On the other hand, I

did find many of the characters charming, and enjoyed reading the book. Overall, I think it's a matter of genre -- Charlie Tuesday doesn't belong in a lurid thriller, but -- with better fact checking and attention to when events occurred -- might be the perfect fit for a quieter mystery. Alternatively, if the author wants to write Mickey Spillane, she needs a different hero.

I loved this book. I loved Charlie, Maria, and the time period. It was so good. The only thing that wasn't believable is that Charlie should have gotten the plague 100 times! I won't include a spoiler. I will read more books in the series. There isn't any crazy sex or anything just really good knowledge of 17th century London which was interesting and it was fun to watch the characters unfold. Great book. Loved it.

On a positive note, this book is well written. But the lovingly descriptions of violence and gore are way too numerous for my tastes. And there is a background of depressing horror that finally made me decide that well written or not, I was going to have to choose between nightmares and finishing the book. So I didn't even make it half way through.

Author should be a bit more careful with her phrases.....to say that the hero "....jumping off of a cart, injured his ankle and it felt like an ELECTRIC SHOCK..!" - oh really, and what year in history was this? And there were other faux pas in terminology!

I had mixed feelings about this book. I wanted to like it but there were problems with the book that made that difficult. I agree with the reviewer who pointed out the problems with the history as presented in the book - I won't repeat them there, but as a history instructor I recognize the issues. I like historical fiction and I don't expect it to be 100% accurate (if I wanted that I would read a history monograph) - but there are limits to poetic license, especially with real, as opposed to fictional, characters. But my biggest problem with the book is that I was not very engaged with the characters and especially the plot. I felt like a primary goal of the author was to present how awful this period was in England so every unpleasant aspect was described in great detail. The mystery seemed to take a back seat to the endless descriptions of plague symptoms and unpleasant people. I read historical fiction to enjoy it and I found that elusive with this book.

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