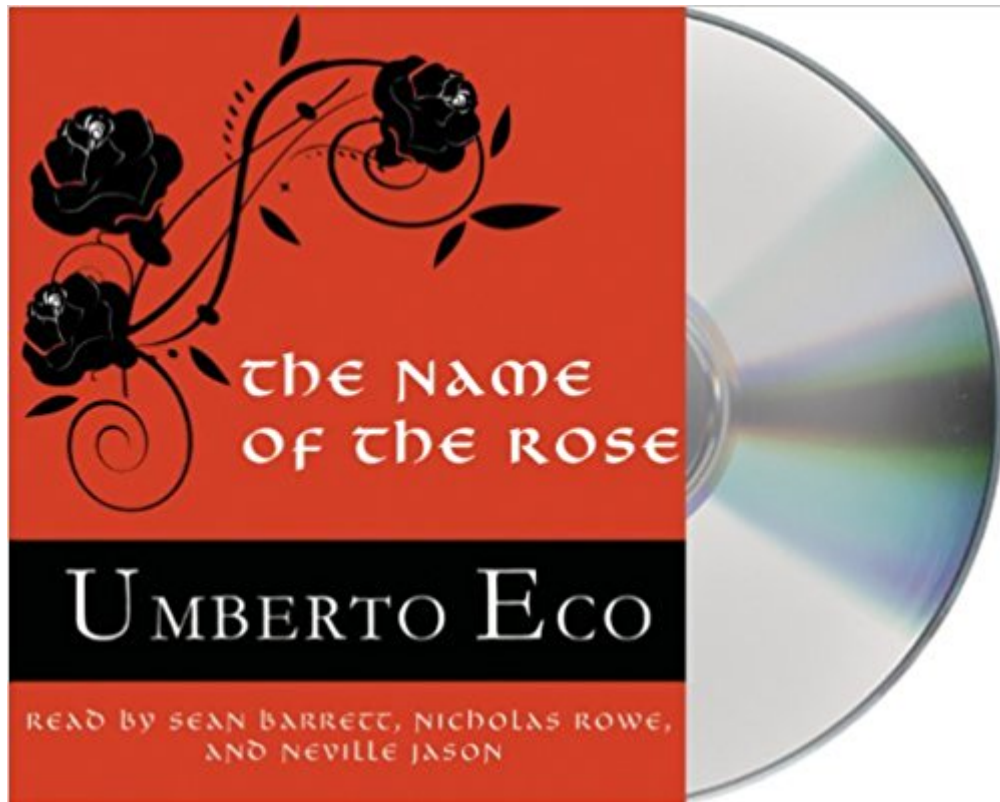




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# The Name Of The Rose



## Synopsis

The international bestseller! A masterful gothic thriller set against the turbulence of medieval Italy. The Name of the Rose The year is 1327. Franciscans in a wealthy Italian abbey are suspected of heresy, and Brother William of Baskerville arrives to investigate. But his delicate mission is suddenly overshadowed by seven bizarre deaths that take place in seven days and nights of apocalyptic terror. Brother William turns detective, and a uniquely deft one at that. His tools are the logic of Aristotle, the theology of Aquinas, the empirical insights of Roger Bacon--all sharpened to a glistening edge by his wry humor and ferocious curiosity. He collects evidence, deciphers secret symbols and coded manuscripts, and digs into the eerie labyrinth of the abbey where "the most interesting things happen at night." As Brother William goes about unraveling the mystery of what happens at the abbey by day and by night, listeners step into a brilliant re-creation of the fourteenth century, with its dark superstitions and wild prejudices, its hidden passions and sordid intrigues. Virtuoso storyteller Umberto Eco conjures up a gloriously rich portrait of this world with such grace, ease, wit and love that you will become utterly intoxicated with the place and time, in The Name of the Rose.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Eco, an Italian philosopher and best-selling novelist, is a great polymathic fabulist in the tradition of Swift, Voltaire, Joyce, and Borges. The Name of the Rose, which sold 50 million copies worldwide, is an experimental medieval whodunit set in a monastic library. In 1327, Brother William of Baskerville arrives to investigate heresy among the monks in an Italian abbey; a series of bizarre

murders overshadows the mission. Within the mystery is a tale of books, librarians, patrons, censorship, and the search for truth in a period of tension between the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire. The book became a hit despite some obscure passages and allusions. This deftly abridged version, ably performed by Theodore Bikel, retains the genius of the original but is far more accessible. Foucault's *Pendulum*, Eco's second novel, is a bit irritating. The plot consists of three Milan editors who concoct a series on the occult for an unscrupulous publishing house that Eco ridicules mercilessly. The work details medieval phenomena including the Knights Templar, an ancient order with a scheme to dominate the world. Unfortunately, few listeners will make sense of this failed thriller. *The Island of the Day Before* is an ingenious tale that begins with a shipwreck in 1643. Roberta della Griva survives and boards another ship only to find himself trapped. Flashbacks give us Renaissance battles, the French court, spies, intriguing love affairs, and the attempt to solve the problem of longitude. It's a world of metaphors and paradoxes created by an entertaining scholar. Tim Curry, who also narrates Foucault's *Pendulum*, provides a spirited narration. Ultimately, libraries should avoid Foucault's *Pendulum*, but educated patrons will form an eager audience for both *The Name of the Rose* and *The Island of the Day Before*. James Dudley, Copiague, N.Y. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

• Barrett deftly handles the Latin phrases and the long passages of church history and politics. The general tone is reflective of the quiet monastery setting; however, Barrett finds opportunity for artfully varying the pace and attitude. • AudioFile Magazine

The Name of the Rose is a challenging read: Eco infuses the dialogue with Latin, the primary plot doesn't really develop until after the first 100 pages, and he provides a superabundance of sub-plots and historical details. But where the journey is difficult, the rewards are tremendous - and I encourage readers who otherwise might consider leaving the book after the first dozens of pages to hang in there - the details Eco provides in the opening chapters are what make this such a marvelous, masterful work. Eco is writing on several levels: as a mystery, to be sure. Who is killing the monks at the abby and why? And why is there an apocalyptic theme to the deaths? What are the secrets being hidden by the monks, and how are they related to the crimes committed? But there is another level to the story: Brother William and his novice (Adso, the author of the story) are part of a larger theological mission regarding the nature of the Church - should it emphasize poverty? And if so, how does one reconcile this with the tremendous wealth and power the Church

wields in the 14th century? (The backdrop of the story is set during the "Avignon Papacy" which resulted in two Popes claiming leadership of the Church). This conflict, in fact, may play a role in the murders; as a stand-alone issue, Eco not only shows remarkable historical accuracy, but also makes a commentary on the Church specifically and religion more generally. Yet Eco goes further still for those readers who are looking: while many of the characters and issues are drawn from history, Eco also gives a nod and wink to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in several respects - Brother William is "William of Baskerville"; the methods used by Brother William are identical to those used by Doyle's creation (deduction, inference and Occam's Razor - in fact, Occam is cited as an acquaintance of William's) - in fact, as the pair arrive at the abbey, the deductions William makes are too reminiscent to be overlooked. Further, the narrator writes as did Dr. Watson - *The Name of the Rose* is essentially an account written by the investigator's side-kick. Eco's brilliance is also demonstrated in the organization of the book: it opens with the same lines as Genesis ("In the beginning was the word ...") and is broken up into seven days, each day divided into the monastic measurement of time (Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, Nones, Vespers and Compline). This not only reinforces the sense of authenticity of the story, but it also draws readers into the rhythms and pattern of monastic life. The details of the monastery - and especially the library around which the investigation revolves - speaks to the conflict between reason (as exemplified by Brother William) and faith (as exemplified by the monks). This is a conflict that continues to the present and is related to the other issue of wealth and Christianity that is at the heart of the internal conflict within the Church in the 1300s. Perhaps my analysis is more than the casual reader is interested in, in which case Eco provides a top-notch mystery that is complicated, difficult to solve and rewarding in its conclusion. The only complaint I have plot-wise is the resolution: I was frustrated at the way in which Eco chose to end the mystery, if only because of my tremendous reverence for and love of the written word. That being said, the conclusion certainly does point to the value of monastic work in the Middle Ages, and the miracle that we have so many texts from the ancient world still extant. *The Name of the Rose* is dense and sometimes difficult to read (because of Latin, because of the historical details, and yes, because the mystery itself is a real challenge). But it is truly a masterpiece of writing - I highly recommend it.

This is a great story that I'm sure can be interpreted differently by each reader. However this reader believes that this is a tale told by its participant of the days of his youth and learning. In an unsolved mystery that having been solved remains unsolved. Great read! Try it and see how you perceive it.

Since I watched the movie first, I knew what to expect from that novel! But I was impressed, that it took Umberto Eco time and intense research for getting the style, translation and other things together, to make it such a fine book. I was glad that I was reading the introduction to this medieval, theological mystery novel.

One of the best books I've ever read. (Keep a Latin dictionary handy.) This complex, intricate mystery keeps you guessing and forging ahead almost from page one. My only regret was when I finished it. I reread it already, and then I got an audio version, it's that good. And you'll learn a lot about medieval monasticism to boot.

Still reading, but wanted to post. I loved the movie (twice) but as usual, the book is so much fuller in every way. The story is excellent and even has relevance today, the writing is very, very skillful. Wish I could express my view here as well as Eco does, but please accept this poor effort.

My husband loves this book. 4 murders at the abbey. The young monk who is recounting this story gets so flummoxed whenever any female is near or a young lady simply pops into his mind, he describes the thought or event in such an anguished, tortured way that my husband laughs so hard he actually has to hold his sides... I got this book to commemorate Umberto Eco's passing last month.. just couldn't stand his leaving and not taking the time to pass on his genius to at least one more person.

This is my fourth time reading this novel....especially liked the Sean Connery movie same name.

Umberto Eco tells a story of superstition versus logic and science in the setting of the rising of the merchant class, the separation of the monastery clergy and the lay or town clergy and the struggle for power and supremacy between them. We see the Inquisition and the problems with a "belief based faith in which any wayward thought or action or interest can be claimed a heresy. The history of Christianity is the struggle for dominance and control and the winners claim the story. Yet the life of the heart remains true--we walk our paths, experience all the things the world has to offer and savor those that bring us meaning and joy. I've watched the movie many many times...it is true to the book. Of course the book gives you so much more--such richness. Thank you for making this an audio book. I am in the car all day long and look forward to the pleasure of being read to.

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