
The Jesus Thief, a new novel about cloning Christ, breaks into Top 20 on Amazon's Mystery and Thrillers bestseller list

Houston—*The Jesus Thief*, a new novel by J R Lankford, has for the first time become a Top 20 best seller on the Amazon Mystery and Thrillers list on March 14. The book was released two weeks ago and it is now ranked number 17 on that list.

A fictional work, *The Jesus Thief* (Great Reads Books, \$26.95, 287 pp., ISBN 0-9718694-1-3) recounts the story of Dr. Felix Rossi, an obstetrician and biologist, the devout only-son of a Catholic family—or so he has always believed. Rossi, a passionate aficionado of the Shroud of Turin, is convinced that the face on the ancient linen is Jesus Christ and that the linen's Type AB blood contains the DNA of God. The novel opens as his dream of conducting research on the Shroud comes true. Felix is in turmoil, having just learned that his family had been Jews who escaped Nazi Italy during World War II.

Instead of studying the Shroud, Felix finds himself stealing two threads from the treasure. Cloning Jesus Christ, he thinks, will reverse the crucifixion and the persecution of the Jews will finally end.

The story takes the reader from society galas to Irish pubs, from Turin cathedrals to Harlem churches and to Italy in Fascist and current times, with all the chills of high adventure. In the swirl of events, a love story unfolds.

Felix's progress in cloning is impeded by a cast of vivid characters. There is Jerome Newton, an atheist aristocrat reporter for *The Times* of London, who is bent on making a fortune off the story. Adeline Hamilton, Felix's fiancée, is a beauty asked to carry the clone. Maggie Johnson, Felix's prying black maid and a devout Baptist, fears his cloning project will cost her job. Doorman Sam Duffy is torn between friendship with Maggie and a long-time, secret allegiance to a powerful and potentially dangerous man.

Frances Rossi, Felix's sardonic sister, tries to convince him of his folly, "They've cloned a sheep, let's clone the Shepherd?"

The author J R Lankford was born in Washington, D.C. She graduated from Howard University with a bachelor's degree in engineering. Lankford attended the University of Chicago's business school and worked internationally as an electrical engineer. She is married and lives in Texas.

Available to the trade from Biblio Distribution (a division of NBN) (800) 462-6420 and from major wholesalers. *The Jesus Thief* by J R Lankford. March 2003. ISBN 0-9718694-1-3. Hardcover. 287 pp. \$26.95 US, \$42.00 CAN.