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Plague: A Cross on the Door

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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In 80 pages, Ann Turnbull succeeds in giving the reader a real insight into the fear and ignorance that illness brought to the population in the 17th century. Sam has been taken in by a shoemaker after he was orphaned, but when his master dies from the plague Sam, obliged to stay indoors until the requisite time to prove he does not have the plague as well, escapes and is very lucky to be taken in by a French family whose son he had been bullying only a few days earlier. The story is then set up well for the sequel trailed in the book.

The details of the herbs used, the dubious medicine, and the awful way in which bodies were treated of necessity, is all laid out for the young reader and this is my only worry. Is the Plague a good subject for such a brief historical story, so obviously aimed at schools? I can imagine a few children who would go home thinking they too might have purple spots! The illustrations by Akbar Ali are of the style much in vogue, very flat and at times rather gruesome. Yet Ann Turnbull's lovely prose overcomes them to make an engaging story in just a few words ? a real art.

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