

## THE ASCENSION OF RADEGUNDE – Synopsis

Radegunde, an Abbess in 12th-century Germany, is gifted with extraordinary powers of persuasion and insight. A group of ruthless Norsemen arrive at her village. Radegunde bargains with them, but to no avail. The Norsemen, eager for the riches of the abbey, attack the community. Their leader, Thorvald, spares Radegunde and an orphan boy she considers her foster son. Later, Radegunde demonstrates her miraculous powers by healing a dying Norseman, Thorfinn, hoping to teach him compassion. Radegunde and Thorvald clash as she tries to make him see his responsibility for the deaths and misery in her village. Gradually, Radegunde realizes she has greater power than she thought: she is not human, and her "people" are coming for her. In the final scene, Radegunde finds Thorfinn stalking a nun he had previously raped. Radegunde sees he has learned nothing and kills him. Radegunde's "people" arrive with a great light to take her home. Before she ascends she gives Thorvald the gift, or curse, of empathy, and leaves the boy to tell her tale to the survivors: to remind them of the virtues she embodied, in hopes they too will practice compassion.