



## I, Claudia

*Marilyn Todd*

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## **I, Claudia** Marilyn Todd

First in the Claudia Seferius mystery series, set in 13 B. C. and available for the first time in ebook format!

Claudia Seferius has successfully flattered her way into marriage with a wealthy Roman wine merchant. But when her secret gambling debts spiral, she hits on another resourceful way to make money - offering her “personal services” to high-ranking Roman Citizens.

Unfortunately her clients are now turning up dead - the victims of a sadistic serial killer.

When Marcus Cornelius Orbilio, the handsome investigating officer, starts digging deep for clues, Claudia realizes she must track down the murderer herself - before her husband discovers what she's been up to.

### CRITICAL ACCLAIM FOR I, CLAUDIA:

‘A timeless heroine for today—you’ll be hooked.’ *Company*

‘The Roman detail is deft, the pace as fast as a champion gladiator, and the heroine, Claudia, an arrogant superbitch who keeps us all on the edge where she loves to live.’ *Sunday Express*

‘A wonderful fictional creation—a bawdy superbitch with a talent for sleuthing...an enormous triumph.’ *Ms London*

‘An endearing adventuress who regards mortal danger as just another bawdy challenge.’ *She*

‘If you’re looking for a romp through the streets of Rome in 13 BC then this is the book to buy!’ *Books Magazine*

‘Terrific read...It is written in a contemporary, fast style, and is a thoroughly entertaining mystery romp.’ *The Bookseller*

## **I, Claudia Details**

Date : Published January 18th 2014 by Untreed Reads Publishing (first published 1995)

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Author : Marilyn Todd

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Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Mystery, Historical Mystery, Fiction

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## From Reader Review I, Claudia for online ebook

### Alien says

3.5 / 5

When I look around here at goodread, I come to the impression that I am the only male being that ever read this book. Amazing.

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### Andrea says

At various points reading this I found myself wondering why I was struggling on...but I did want to give it a fair chance and wanted to find out who the killer was. Sadly, my tenacity did NOT pay off. I am not one of those people that needs books full of lovely and likable people, but it's hard to keep reading a book where I actively despise nearly everyone. I hated the main character, Claudia, and was just over it as she lied, connived, endangered others, and generally slithered her way from one self-absorbed, odious act to the next. UGH. I was seriously rooting for her to be killed. I can't say I liked the detective Orbilio any more. He seemed unable to think with the head on top of his shoulders and I suffered through at least eight wet-dream level daydreams since he couldn't manage to have an entire conversation with Claudia without a commotion in his toga. I just - no. I hate all these people and my only sadness is that every single person in this fictional Rome wasn't dead and city reduced to ashes by the end of the book.

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### Joanne Fish says

#### Couldn't Finish It

I've read many Roman novels and can forgive some use of modern slang terms but this book was riddled with them. The author, being English, used her vernacular as in calling someone a punter, or using the phrase "leave off" which made it all the more disconcerting for me. This was done multiple times in each chapter. I just couldn't finish the book. I did like the character of Claudia. She was the ancient Scarlett O'Hara and probably would have enjoyed more of her adventures. I did read the ending and that isn't tired up for you. It beckons you read the next book in the series. Disappointing to say the least.

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### Vicki Cline says

Claudia is married to a rich wine maker and her life is very good, except for her gambling problem, which she finances by working as a dominatrix. When some of her clients turn up dead, she's worried she'll be outed. To make matters worse, the man investigating the murders, Marcus Cornelius Orbilio, is very attracted to her, and vice versa. This is the first in an interesting series - it's unusual to have a female protagonist in a Roman mystery.

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### Heather says

I love this series. I suspect (somewhat shamefacedly) that Claudia and I would get along rather well!

She is definitely more ruthless than I am, but I have to admire her dedication to a plan.

Anybody who enjoys books with a strong central female character will enjoy this series. Unless you are easily offended :)

Not yet read the entire series (still looking for a few of the books), but I have enjoyed each one that I have found so far.

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### **Shawn Thrasher says**

Really disappointing.

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### **Kate says**

I really liked this book; our hero, the Claudia of the title, was a really great character, and very, very human. I loved the relationship with her husband, and I thought the author managed to get across a lot of the Roman sensibility of the time in a way that didn't stand out as strange or weird, but none the less read very true to me. (I've had \*a lot\* of background in Roman history, including a lot of Latin translation, and this can and has been a thing to throw me out of historical novels before.)

So, very much recommended on that account.

Some nitpicks, however, were that the way the author used British slang to get across class differences started standing out A LOT about mid-way through the book. You might not find it as distracting as I, a very American reader, did. It was an effective method, but idk, I felt like it got a little over the top at points.

Another is that the love interest's POV on Claudia gets weirdly rapey at points? Like, in a fantasy, never even hinted at acting upon, but that combined with the "if I can't have her no-one will" angle to the murders, it was a little jarring.

That all said, I'm definitely planning on picking up the next book.

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### **Doug Lewars says**

\*\*\* Possible Spoilers \*\*\*

It's very seldom that I mark a book DNF but I came close with this one. The writing wasn't bad. The plot was adequate. The pacing could have used some work but it wasn't really terrible. The characters were ... just plain awful. The protagonist was supposed to be a STRONG woman. Instead she came across somewhere between whiny and hysterical. Her most annoying failing was that she was totally reactive. She didn't pause for one second to simply think. This was a mystery. As the story opens, Claudia finds one of her clients very much deceased. This is awkward because the nature of the business she is running must be kept secret from her husband. Therefore she feels compelled to find the murderer. Up to there things are fine. So what does she do? Absolutely nothing. She reminded me of a ball in an arcade game bouncing from place to place as she digs herself ever deeper into a hole. Then when she runs into difficulty she simply bulldozes her way through. By the half way point I was ready to pack it in but I tend to be stubborn and kept on reading just to see if the book would improve. It did. At about the 80% mark things improved. Our heroine started to think

and act like a rational human being. She stopped with the stupid games and started making progress. The remainder of the book was a page-turner.

So I cannot say I hated this novel. On the other hand, I can't say that slogging through the 80% for the final 20% was time well spent. This book is number one in a series and I doubt I'll be reading beyond it.

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### **Sara G says**

This one is an odd mix of modern characterizations, slang, and sensibilities with the ancient Roman world. The author clearly knows her Roman history but everyone involved, especially our main character, could be found on the modern streets of London.

Claudia is a wealthy man's wife with a checkered history, and has gotten herself into a bit of trouble with gambling debts. Being a bit of a tart anyway, she works as a sort of escort in order to earn money to pay off the debts. When men that she is "escorting" turn up murdered with their eyes cut out, she becomes a bit concerned. When a patrician investigator starts looking into who she really is, she REALLY becomes concerned.

I can't say that I loved it or hated it. I enjoyed the mystery, but the anachronisms were pretty jarring. I'll probably read the second one and see if I have the same impression before giving up on this series.

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### **Ribblefizz says**

#### **Excellent protagonist**

Fresh voice, marvelous blend of modern and ancient. Plot was a little bit frayed towards the end, and there were several punctuation issues, but the characters and the mysteries were strong enough to override my (usually strenuous) complaints. Enthusiastically recommended, would recommend the author have one last edit done, though.

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### **Kimberly says**

I love a good mystery, and I love a good historical novel but I love it even more when the two come together which is why I was so excited to have the opportunity to read and review I, Claudia by Marilyn Todd. Reading books set in the ancient world is one of my favourite things to do especially when they're both witty and require a bit of brain power to read.

I, Claudia is the first novel in Marilyn Todd's Claudia Seferius series of historical mysteries, and am I ever glad I got the chance to read it since it was only released in E-book format this past May. Right away I was sucked into the story that Todd wrote.

Claudia Seferius is not your cuddly housewife, she is not soft nor kind. She's actually quite bitchy, which would usually irritate the hell out of me but in this case I loved it! It was so refreshing to read about a character who wasn't all nicey-nice. I liked her fire and how riled up she would get but I mostly loved her snarky attitude. She was conniving and plotting and I thought that those were really rare qualities to come

across in a main character in a mystery novel where she herself is solving the crimes.

I loved the way the novel was laid out. It was fast paced, full of cynicism, wit and intrigue and I found it completely and utterly addictive. Besides our heroine Claudia we were introduced to a wide cast of characters that had both good and bad qualities and many of them along with the murderer took some time to figure out just who was who in terms of the series of murders that Claudia and Marcus Orbilio are trying together (very reluctantly I might add).

The dynamic between Claudia and Marcus was intriguing, as Claudia is a married woman and Orbilio an officer of the law and he isn't entirely too sure about Claudia's claims of innocence or about who she says she is. Whilst Claudia isn't so sure that the crimes are the real motivation behind Orbilio's interest in her, but boy oh boy is there chemistry.

I loved the way that Todd infused the perfect amount of mystery, and intrigue into her novel while balancing it with a historical atmosphere that I thought was both rich and authentic. Finding out who the murder was in the end really caught me off guard because I didn't see it coming at all, and I loved that Todd kept me guessing right up until the very end.

Overall, I found I, Claudia to be a really great read and I'm most definitely looking forward to reading the other books in the Claudia Seferius mystery series in the near future depending on whether or not I can get my hands on them.

I would recommend I, Claudia to fans of historical mysteries with a strong female lead who isn't your average heroine, set in a time and place that is unique and well written and for those who enjoy reading mysteries that will keep them guessing the identity of the murderer right up until the very end.

**\*I received a free copy of this book in exchange for my free and honest review. All thoughts and opinions expressed herein are 100% my own.**

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## Clare says

I first read this series when I was about 14, and totally fell in love - I have re-read it so many times since then. I'm a big fan of all things Ancient Rome, and while I think that helps - as it makes details throughout the story more interesting, it's certainly not a requirement for enjoying this book; Claudia is enough!

Claudia is a sassy, fierce and seductive young woman who has picked herself up from her rough roots to marry a rich older wine merchant - and though she's landed on her feet, she can't help but get herself into mischief. Claudia is a shameless thrill-seeker, and starts to work as a high-class escort, until someone starts killing off her clients...

Enter Marcus Cornelius Orbilio, a gorgeous, aristocratic investigator. Claudia decides she's going to have to solve these crimes before her husband finds out.

The mystery is interesting, and keeps you guessing, but the dynamic between Claudia and Marcus is what keeps you reading. Here is one man Claudia can't wrap around her little finger. They are sarcastic, and sparky, and reading their interactions is so much fun. I love all the Roman touches, and Marilyn Todd manages to inform you of important attitudes and details without patronising.

In fact, I might have to go re-read this again now...

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### **Sandra says**

Odd mix of god research and jarring modern terminology. I really wanted to like it because hey, female character struggling against one of the ultimate patriarchies... Ancient Rome isn't known for sympathetic personalities, but it's hard to care overmuch about a series of murders when all the characters are so disagreeable.

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### **Arlene Allen says**

My favorite Roman devious bitch! And I say that with the utmost respect. :)

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### **Laura says**

She's too much of an anti-hero for me

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