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Sommario/riassunto	<p>The streets of Rome are crowded as Theoderich, the "barbarian" Gothic king, makes his triumphal entry into the conquered city. Suddenly a boy rushes into the street and attempts to stab the king with his stylus. Kicked aside by the king's guard, he is rescued and carried to safety by a young man. The boy is Peter, adopted son of the noble Roman philosopher, Boethius. His rescuer is Benedictus, a student, who becomes Peter's tutor, and tries to curb the boy's reckless determination to succeed at all costs. So begins this vivid story which follows Benedictus through a disillusioning experience with a beautiful woman of Rome, his years as a hermit and his work in establishing religious communities that were truly citadels of God in the decadence of sixth-century Rome. Peter, meanwhile, has dedicated himself to overthrowing the Goths--partly to further his own ambition and partly to win the beautiful Rusticiana, who has promised to marry him if he succeeds. Sweeping from Rome to Ravenna, Byzantium and Monte Cassino, the story reaches its climax in a dramatic fulfillment of Benedictus's long-ago promise to Peter: "We shall meet again when you need me." Here, as in all his novels about great saints of the Church, Louis de Wohl weaves an intricate colorful tapestry of violence, love and piety to tell with historical accuracy the story of St. Benedict and the</p>

tempestuous era in which he lived.
