



# The Executioner's Daughter

*Laura E. Williams*

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**A medieval executioner's daughter discovers that she can make choices about her own future, though the rewards may be equaled by the risks.**

*"All Lily could remember when she got to the hill was looking up at the distant gallows and the roar of the crowd around her. On the platform, a tall man looped nooses around the thieves' necks and pulled the ropes till the condemned hung like sacks of grain."*

Born into the family of an executioner, Lily has always been sheltered by her mother from the horrors of her father's occupation. While her mother assists her father in all his daily duties, Lily spends her time caring for her animals, collecting herbs, and playing alone in the forest. But when her ailing mother takes a turn for the worse, Lily is suddenly thrust into the paralyzing role of executioner's assistant.

Aside from preparing healing concoctions for the suffering and maimed, Lily must now accompany her father at the town executions, something she has never done before. Though she loves her father, the emotional burden of his disturbing profession is just too much for her to bear. Lily must find a way to change her destiny, no matter the consequences.

Set in medieval England, this well-researched and beautifully written novel tells the story of one girl's fight to rise above her fate.

## The Executioner's Daughter Details

Date : Published June 1st 2000 by Henry Holt and Co. (BYR)

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Author : Laura E. Williams

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# From Reader Review The Executioner's Daughter for online ebook

## Donalyn says

Set in 1450, The Executioner's Daughter follows the life of a young girl, Lily, whose father is the town executioner.

Lily and her family are outcasts, they cannot attend church or travel about the town without harsh treatment from the townspeople. They are also healers who make medicines and comfort the sick. This duality causes conflict for Lily who knows that her destiny is to become her father's assistant some day.

The book was too short and ended just at the true story began in my opinion. Still, a interesting and well-researched look into medieval life and the role of the executioner in it.

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## Monica says

ok

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## Alexia says

"All Lily could remember when she got to the hill was looking up at the distant gallows and the roar of the crowd around her." In this historical fiction, Lily, the protagonist, was born into an executioner's family. Her caring mother, Allyce, guarded her from the horrors of Will, the town executioner and her uncaring father. While Allyce accompanies Will with everyday duties, Lily would linger around the forest and collect and gather herbs for the family's apothecary. She would most likely retrieve an injured animal, and bring it back home to take care of. Life seemed splendid until her mother took a wrong turn and Lily was suddenly forced to become the executioner's assistant. Can Lily fight against her destiny?

The author Laura E. Williams writes with such delicacy and greatly incorporates the saying "less is more." Williams will write such simple sentences, but the of those sentences are mammoth-sized. Sentences such as, "Her destiny lay beyond this forest and down a distant road she'd never seen, barely even dared imagine." (pg 127) allows the reader to illustrate their own meaning of destiny in their minds and feel how hard it must be to sustain days of torture, days of hurt and guilt, and days where Lily is forced too assist an executioner in his work.

I would strongly recommend this novel to all 8th grader students because this well-written story is an excellent demonstration of the harsh realities of life during the Middle Ages. I am almost positive that from the first word of this book, the reader's eyes will be chained to this book and soon enough they will find them self on the last page, smiling with happiness. Although life drags along rough times, you need to remember that your destiny can be changed with a little bit of perseverance and strength.

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## Emma says

A decent quick read, considering there was only 130 pages for character development and plot. Decent characters and less than strong plot, but still interesting. Still annoying that there were so many unanswered questions at the end.

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### **Kristine says**

As title would imply, story about an executioner's daughter and the horrors of her life around 1450. This YA historical fiction book was a short and quick read, and left many unanswered questions. But overall a pretty good book with a brief account of the life of executioners and what their families endure.

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### **Nance says**

liked it, well written

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### **DemonKitty003 says**

Its been forever since I have read this book. I almost forgot since I read it, I cried. I felt good after I read this book, because of it being the only book I have ever completed when I was in middle school.

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### **Heather says**

Interesting but very short picture of what life was like for outcasts in the middle ages. The daughter of the town executioner is faced with the horror of what her father really does and she decides to escape the cycle that will doom her to take her mother's place helping him. Good, but a bit too brief.

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### **TJL says**

Heartbreaking.

You see what a nice kid Lily is, a genuinely good spirit, and she gets kicked around for legit no other reason than that her dad's the town executioner (you know, the guy the villagers cheer for when he's killing people, but afterwards he and his family are apparently too dirty to be seen conversing with or treating kindly? The hypocrisy is *blinding*.)

And as always, gotta give credit to a kid's book that had the nerve to show a pretty gruesome execution scene.

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### **Tia says**

There was nothing to this story. Everything that was mentioned in the summary happened, and that's it. It was very uneventful and not exciting at all. There was zero depth to the story.

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### **Kari says**

I liked this book a lottt!! I loved learning about medieval times. I didnt like thinking about the way people died but i guess that is sorta the point of the book.(look @ the title haha) The author was extremely descriptive and i could really relate to Lily.

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### **Rebecca says**

This novel was built upon the fact that during the Middle Ages, executioners and their families were shunned, forced to live outside the village walls and forbidden to attend church and social gatherings. Thirteen-year-old Lily, the fictional main character, is cursed from the moment she was born - her father is the village executioner. But because her mother is the one to assist her father in his duties, Lily keeps to herself in the forrest near their cottage, gathering herbs and healing wounded animals, and taking comfort in her mother when her father distances himself from them. Lily loses that one comfort when her mother sickens and dies. Now Lily is doomed to be her father's assistant at executions. A gentle, quiet girl, Lily cannot bear to see an animal in pain - she doesn't know how she can ever watch executions. But Lily won't resign herself to the fate assigned to her.

This was an excellent historical novel that brought the time and place of England in the 1400s, gruesome details and all, to life. It was inspiring to read a story about a young girl who chose to fight her place in life in a time when most people were forced to accept whatever their circumstances in life turned out to be, whether they liked them or not.

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### **Renaë says**

Fair. But I wanted more at the ending.

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### **Christy says**

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## **Karie says**

This book lacked depth. Williams was going for a "slice of life" story, but I think that in aiming it at younger readers, she left out the internal motivations that move a character forward. And she quit the story too soon, as well as leaving the backstory too sparsely told. Definitely not a high-impact book, in spite of the high-impact title.

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