



Hawksmaid: The Untold Story of Robin Hood and Maid Marian

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Before she was Maid Marian, she was Matty....

Matty has been raised to dance well, embroider exquisitely, and marry nobly. But when Matty's mother is murdered before her very eyes and her father, a nobleman, is reduced to poverty, Matty's life changes.

As the daughter of Nottingham's most famous falconer, she finds a new destiny in the hawks her father keeps. She begins to understand their thoughts and even speak their language. The beautiful merlin Marigold becomes Matty's closest winged companion and her fiercest ally.

It is a treacherous time in England. The sheriff of Nottingham is rising to power, and a true king has been kidnapped. Determined to fight, Matty's friend Fynn becomes Robin Hood. As Maid Marian, Matty joins Fynn and his Merry Men, famously robbing from the rich to give to the poor.

You thought that you knew the legend, but this is the untold story. Bestselling author Kathryn Lasky soars to magnificent new heights here, giving us a bold tale of bravery and romance.

Hawksmaid: The Untold Story of Robin Hood and Maid Marian Details

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Panda Incognito says

This book is so bad that it isn't even funny! I don't know how this book got published. I've read stories by my unpublished writer friends which are far better than this.

I stumbled upon this book in the library, and checked it out because it looked intriguing. It's a juvenile book by an author that I'm familiar with, so I assumed it would be decent, and it was. But the story was absolutely horrible. My complaints could carry on as long as the book itself, but I shall narrow them down.

The untold story of Robin Hood and Maid Marian obviously is going to have some romance in it. But the romance was awful! There are very few moments where their attraction shows, and when it does, there is no chemistry whatsoever. The dialogue is quite stilted. At the end, we have no reason to believe that they should get married, or that their love is real at all. Their attraction never passes the adolescent puppy-love stage, and barely reaches that, come to think of it.

The beginning of the book was interesting enough, but soon it was just plain weird. It was difficult for me to keep up with what was happening, because the story seemed to go in several directions at once. Plot devices would appear one moment and be forgotten about the next. Nothing particularly exciting happened, and when something vital finally occurred, it was written in such a way that I had to re-read the paragraph to figure out what had happened. At first I thought I just must be dense, but after reading other goodreads reviews, it looks like I'm not the only one who had trouble keeping up with the story.

The main character, Matty/Maid Marian, was an irritating "Mary-Sue" type heroine. She was good at everything and became a falconry expert practically overnight, even though it would take an ordinary person a long time to develop the new skill. Fynn/Robin Hood would make comments about "you can't do such-and-such because you're a girl", and she always had to one-up him. Sure, he shouldn't be demeaning; men and women should be equals. I know how it feels to get left out just because you're a girl. But the story isn't trying to teach equality. Instead, we were supposed to learn that Matty was BETTER than Fynn. He was the poor clueless male who had to be guided along. She had almost all of the good ideas, and pretty much orchestrated everything.

I shall refrain from giving spoilers, but the end was extremely odd. Random, unexpected things happened all at once, leaving me confused. It's still fuzzy in my mind. The story was dragged to an unsatisfying conclusion, making me wonder why I wasted my time reading the book.

Aspen Shannon says

A child-like retelling of the legendary story of Robin Hood. A very cute read, with lots of falconry (which was very fascinating to me as I've been interested in becoming a falconer in the past), beautiful moments in the forest with Robin's young band of outlaws, gorgeous tree houses and overall I truly liked the story.

Jamie says

I read this book for two reasons. The first reason is that Adam begged me to read one of his young adult books, and the second reason is that I am a Robin Hood fan. I tried to abandon this book more than once. Adam told me to hang in there. Wow, that is an interesting reversal! I don't think that it is possible for me to care any less about birds and falconry. To say that the first one-third of the book is mostly about falconry would be a gross understatement. Adam was right once I got past that part, the story picked up. It is a cute version of the Robin Hood characters as tweens through teens. It had some excitement. I also enjoyed that Matty (maid Marion) was a strong, brave, and smart adventurer.

Joyce says

I founded this book in the library and borrowed it because it looked interesting and I was curious on how the ending would appear. As I was reading it, I wasn't very thrilled with the results. It wasn't bad but it wasn't the best. It could have been written better and it needed a more advancing romance between the characters Matty/Marian and Fynn/Robin. The beginning wasn't all bad but it was very plain and simple.

As I kept on reading, I was pretty amused with Matty. She had a stubborn attitude when Fynn/Robin wouldn't let her do things because she was a girl. I find that when Fynn doesn't let her in all of the events, it's insulting because he doesn't believe she is as good as guys. She, of course, proves him wrong with her boldness and strong ideas. The main thing I don't understand of Matty, is the fact that she talks with her hawks. In the end, when she is inside one of her hawks body, it left me totally confused and totally frustrated. I didn't understand well how she could become one of her hawks while she was dying.

Fynn/Robin was a daring, mischievous robber. Throughout the story, it hints in some places that he likes her but it isn't very clear on that. I also find him to be very slow and dependent on Matty on ideas for schemes. In the end when she was dying, I was expecting something interesting to happen. A kiss most likely. Instead, we get Matty asking for a few things and promising that she'll love him forever. That doesn't really connect to my mind that their love is real. More like a puppy love. The idea of their love not advancing, didn't interest me as much.

This is my review of this book in my opinion. I wish that the author, Kathryn Lasky, would have done a better job in the love of the characters. I also wish that she could have made the story clearer for it has made me very confused.

Chrissy says

I thought this was a super-cute retelling of "Robin Hood." I enjoyed the reading the story from Maid Marian's perspective and the amount of detail Lasky includes from the old legends is lots of fun. If you're a fan of any version of Robin Hood or just enjoy fairy tale retellings in general, you'll like this one.

Kara says

First, there is something I have to get off my chest that really bugged me:

There were NO POTATOES in 12th century England! Got that? **THERE WERE NO POTATOES IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE!** None. Nada. Not a one. No, no, no. Robin Hood characters and potatoes never, ever met! There were no French fries, no crisps, no chips, no mashed potatoes, no sweet potatoes, no baked potatoes, and if you needed somewhere to hide when there was an attack on the castle going on, there would certainly not have been a bag of them in your root cellar for your mother to try and stuff you in. because there were **NO POTATOES OUTSIDE OF SOUTH AMERICA UNTIL THE 16TH CENTURY!!!!**

breeeeeeeeeeeeathe

Ok, anyway, moving on.

So you know how a teacher – especially English teachers – can use the same grade as both a punishment and a reward? Example- you’ve got two students in an 11th grade English class, both having just written essays on the fatal flaws of Shakespeare’s tragic heroes, and both get C’s.

The girl who has had F’s and D’s all semester and poured a lot of work into this essay is all smiles and happy and the teacher even writes a compliment on her essay about her improvement.

The other girl has had all A’s that semester and rushes out of the classroom to go cry in the bathroom after reading the teacher’s cutting remark about her “resting on her laurels” underneath the big glaring red C.

My point is all books I give a single star to are not the same. There is a big difference between giving this book 1 star and giving that other Robin Hood book I read recently –The Youngest Templar – 1 star. I am secretly in love with Templar, but must profess extreme loathing due to bad characterization, historical white washing, too many dues ex machinas, and the waste of perfectly good potential. But it’s still really good, and funny, and entertaining, and there’s still hope the to-be-published third book in the trilogy will be better.

This book, however, puts forth a feeble attempt at an average Robin Hood adventure story, assuming that since Marian is presented here in every way, shape, and form of perfect, the reader will love her. >sigh< No, honey, all you’ve done now is create a Mary Sue, whom any fangirl worth her salt will instantly seek and destroy. Meanwhile, the rest of the outlaws (who never actually get outlawed – they just all declare themselves “outlaws” because it, like, sounds sooo cool) are presented as growing characters (the story spans over several years) and yet it always feels like they’re just hanging out at the Sherwood Mall. Urgh. And let’s not even get started on the bird talk.

So I’m not sure if this book is smiling happily or in the bathroom crying, but I did not like it and see no hope for improvement.

Quoth Dr. Horrible ...It’s not a perfect metaphor.

Adam says

I love Robin Hood. I love 12th century medevil books like this. I love the author, her writing and her other series. So how could I not like this book??

Absolutely perfect. A top ten lister.

? ???????? ? ?????? says

4.5/5

I've reread this book many times and I forgot to put in on Goodreads. This book says that it is for 10 and up but I think that it is still okay for young adults looking for a quick read.

This book is about Matty who is the daughter of one of the best falconers in their time which is in the 1100's. she was growing up to be a typical young lady until there castle and whole town was attacked by men following orders from Prince John. His older brother is line for king but was away so John is trying to take over as king. Matty's mother dies and she is left with her father and a few workers left from the ambush.

Her father teaches her everything he knows about falconry and soon she is very good and able to communicate with them like he had never be able to. While this is going on, Matty plays with her group of friends led by Robert Woodfynn or who they call Fynn. As they all grow up, the boys think that Matty shouldn't hang with them since she is a girl. The times are also getting more dangerous with a mystery "shadow man" and Prince John limiting where they can hunt using his men to patrol. She shows them that she is equal or better than them.

In the latter half of the book, Ms. Lasky shows the characters transformations. Along with getting older, Matty becomes Maid Marian and Fynn, Robin Hood. Using her hawks, the team try to save the country and get the true king, Prince Robert to rule once again.

This book did have a lot of action and it was still entertaining besides it being aimed for a lower age group. The mystery of how Robin Hood and the Merry Men should basically save the day and the suspense on the health of some major characters.

One of the things that I loved and disliked was the romance. It was cool seeing how Ms. Lasky perceived Robin Hood and Maid Marian falling in love and it was very cute. The one thing that I disliked was that it seemed rushed. All of a sudden, Fynn realized that he loved Matty and vice versa. I know that there had been some hints that they might be feeling more than just friendship but I feel there could have been something in between.

I would definitely recommend this and it is still one of my favorite and most memorable children's book.

Bonnie says

I found this book by chance in the new books section of the Children's Room (in Brookline). I've loved Kathryn Lasky's historical fiction and this book was no exception. I read it as I was transitioning from

Brookline back to Negril. Fortunately my yoga teacher from Brookline was visiting and could return it to the library. Such service!

This is a different take on the tale of Robin Hood and Maid Marion which includes the art of falconry. It's historical fiction set in the 1100s with a dose of fantasy thrown in. Fun, fanciful, engrossing.

Madelynn says

Wonderful book. I highly recomend it. At some points little confused. but then read last few sentences that I had accidentally skipped over... ta-da made sense again!! I think that this book had just the right amount of drama, romance, nature-as in the hawk info, and everything else.

Sarah Hayes says

I loved Kathryn Lasky's GUARDIANS OF GA'HOOLE series. This book, however, is a hot sweaty nonsensical mess of a novel. It carries itself as a historical fiction novel - but by the end of it, everything falls apart and is a failure of what is supposed to be a historical fantasy AU.

Maid Marian is some kind of hawk mastering master and surpasses even her father at a very young age. She is the most smart, clever, cunning, pretty, brave, fearless person ~ever~ and everyone loves her and if you don't love her, then you're evil! Look at how nice Marian is, she remembers a leper woman's name! She is the bestest member of the Merry Men and even though she resents being left out of the stories, she's totes okay with it because she's PERF.

Oh, and did I mention she can talk to the hawks? Like, legit conversations? Gag me with one of those anachronistic potatoes from the potato hole she couldn't fit in.

I really wanted to like this. That didn't happen. Maid Marian is unerringly perfect and therefore boring, and everyone else is disastrously underdeveloped. The hawk mastering scenes are detailed to the point of also being boring. A lot of subplots are brushed aside to show how awesome Marian/Matty is. I'd rather watch an animated film about Robin Hood and Maid Marian as foxes than read this again.

Lanie says

the very fact that this piece of dung exists bothers me. this is a slap in the face to robin hood fans, falcons, and men the world over. first off, there were NO potatos in england in the middle ages! that was just terrible research on everyone's part. i can hardly believe the editors allowed it to go unchecked. secondly! it is not realistic for Matty to suddenly become so great at falconry, arechery, fencing and fighting. I'm not saying that girls aren't capable of these things. of course they are. but theses are talents that are built up over years and years of training. there is no plausible way for this little girl to become so damn good in as short a time as she did. on top of that, the fact that no one was truly making an effort to make her sit in silently in a corner and do needlework is appauling. this is the 1100s! they were supposed to think that woman were objects! so

why is a lord teaching his daughter about falcondry in the first place? why are all the "merry men" allowing her to boss them around? someone explain that to me. it doesn't make sense! Matty is the completely perfect mary jane hero and it pisses me off. She can do no wrong! she is the mastermind of all Robin Hood's success! SHE is oh so brilliant and smart and strong and pretty and she can run around in the forest in men's clothes and no one catches on that this is a girl! what happened when she started developing breast huh?

and that brings me to her and Robin's relationship. he is a sexist dog! one second he's going on about how much better men are than women and saying completely asinine things, and within the next few pages, he's flip flopping to being all apologizing and sorry, and how Matty's so great. and she forgives him everytime even if when it's painfully obvious that the fool's never going to change in the long run. plus, their relationship never developed into anything more than a badly described puppy dog love. And Matty treats him and all his friends like dogs that she whips about to do her bidding and somehow, no one tries to put "the woman in her place" like men of the 1100s should have.

yes, it was wrong of them to treat woman like that, but that was the way they lived. she was trying to write a strong heroine, but she really just made a much too perfect idiot. All Robin's flip flopping and the fact that NO ONE bothered to really question the fact that a woman was "fighting" and hunting and being a great war mind is really annoying. Why didn't her family lock her up or send her to a church or marry her off like they should have. that way she could have at least run away to sherwood and then she might have at least had a logical reason to learn to fight and hunt and defend herself.

the falcons were just stupid. She can talk to them? no. just no. the author was trying to shove in her stupid obsession with birds into a story that didn't need them and it work. falcondry wasn't even popular during the time period! why didn't matty freak out? or why didn't she blabber about it like the child she is and get burned as a witch?

the passing of time was impossible to follow and i could never really figure out how old anyone was, which just added to the impossibility of the "love" of matty and robin. And The NAME CHANGING! pointless, confusing crap! yes, robin eventually takes on the "hood" title, but flynn to robin? not needed!

i could keep going on, but it's been a while since i had the displeasure to read this and i don't want to make a bunch of confusing mistakes.

i do not recommend this to anyone. not the middle schoolers it was intended for. not for people who like birds. and never, never, ever for anyone that loves Robin Hood and all that he stands for.

>:(>:(>:(

P.S. they never became outlaws! they just declared themselves outlaws! that is not how it works! they have to defy the sheriff and he makes them wolfheads! no one with half a brain would EVER say "hey im an outlaw now!" that's like walking up to the gallows, putting your noose around your neck, and kicking the stool out from under you!!!!1

Jake Rideout says

I am a complete sucker for Robin Hood retellings. Ever since I read *The Outlaws of Sherwood*, by Robin McKinley, I can't get enough of them. This one was so good, different from all the rest but with enough of the familiar elements that I was satisfied. Matty is the daughter of an English noble, and when she is a child her home is invaded by the vile Guy of Gisborne. In the aftermath of the invasion, Matty finds herself bearing more responsibility than a child should, and she learns to hunt with her father's hawks. Soon her band of friends are not satisfied with innocent games in the woods--their home is changing under the influence of Prince John and his cronies. They decide to do something about it, and Matty becomes Maid Marian, a spy within the household of the Sheriff of Nottingham. Naturally, I loved the story itself, but what I really loved was the way that Kathryn Lasky wove so much falconry into the tale. It's a subject that I knew almost nothing about, and I didn't feel like the book was trying to cram facts into my head. I'm curious to see what kids think of this one.

Kogiopsis says

I read the first... one? Two? books of the Guardians of Ga'Hoole series and I *swear* they weren't this bad. Seriously, Lasky, what gives? I mean, just on a writing front this was... this was terrible. Really. The characters never spoke naturally, there were sentences that didn't make sense, and reading it was a frustrating experience just short of being a chore.

Oh, and that plot. ARRRRGH THAT PLOT. I don't even know. I **don't even know**. What even happened? I got that Matty could talk to her hawks within the first fourth or so of the story and then it was forgotten until it was convenient. Is that why? Really, it was nonsensical at best. I won't even mention the climax. I was shaking my head through all of it. All I can say is that authors should **decide before they write** whether they're writing historical reimagining or historical fantasy and then *stick with it*. You don't get to just switch back and forth at whim. You just don't. And even if you do, you can't do it that choppy! Transitions! Use them!

Character-wise, I just didn't care. 'Robin' was not in the least surprising. Neither was Matty/'Marian'. Every time either of them mentioned their being in love I rolled my eyes. No, really. EVERY TIME. There was no real chemistry shown. There was no real reason for them to be in love- they just had to be because they were Robin Hood and Maid Marian. And every now and then Robin was a sexist prick. He switched back every time, but that just made the prickishness more annoying in contrast. Oh, and there's the fact that I have NO IDEA how old any of them were! Were they thirteen? Sixteen? In their twenties? NO CLUE. NONE WHATSOEVER.

Also, sometimes I felt like Lasky was showing off. "DUHURHUR LOOK AT ALL MY RESEARCH" was just everywhere in this book. Congratulations, you know falconry terms. I'd care more if they were smoothly integrated, not awkwardly. The little italicized paragraphs at the beginning of each chapter were a cop-out on that front. AND THIS IS A BOOK, NOT A PISSING CONTEST. You know the terms, but your story is about the characters, *not the words they use*. Stop waving around your research as if it will save you from a crappy plot, writing, and characterization.

Long review short: Didn't like it. Gave it two stars instead of one because Matty had moments of being cool and when the falconry elements were well-integrated they made the book interesting. Felt like it was a draft

in need of revision.

Princessbugc says

I loved this book! I tried to read it once before but it had to go back to the library before I got past chapter two. Then I put it on hold but it went off hold before I got there. So now that I finally got it I finished it in one day. It was amazing! As I got closer to the end and things weren't looking as good I was a little worried that it would end horribly and that I would not be satisfied with the book after waiting so long to get it but now that I have just finished it I am totally satisfied. There are some book s that I read that I like but that I would be okay not owning, and then there are those books that I read and instantly fall in love with and can't be satisfied until I've added it to my home library. This is one of those that is going straight to mt wish list. Again I loved this!
