



Paladin's Prize

Gaelen Foley

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New York Times bestselling author **Gaelen Foley** leads readers on a magical journey to a fairytale land where good battles evil, adventure beckons the daring, and epic love awaits the true of heart.

Resolutely noble, impossibly brave, paladin Sir Thaydor Clarenbeld serves as royal champion for the kingdom of Veraidel. But when the king becomes corrupt, Thaydor speaks out—and promptly ends up banished from court, sent off as a knight errant on an endless round of quests meant to get him killed. One mission nearly does. Covered in wounds after a monstrous battle, he lies at death's door when rescue arrives in the form of the beautiful, mystic healer known as the Maid of the Mount.

The lady Wrynn du Mere gave up a luxurious life to devote herself to caring for others. When she finds the famous hero broken and bleeding, saving him will take all her skill—and a fateful dash of magic. And it will cost her dearly. For the dangerous spell will leave their souls forever entwined, and his foes, so many and so powerful, will target her, as well. Wrynn knows to survive and restore justice to the land, they must join forces. But for how long can they resist the searing temptation of desire?

Praise for Gaelen Foley books:

"Enchanting, intriguing, fun." ~Stephanie Laurens, #1 *New York Times* Bestseller

"Run, do not walk, to your nearest bookstore and snatch up everything you can find that this amazing author has ever written!" ~The Romance Readers' Connection

"One of the finest adventure/romance authors does it again. Foley never sacrifices character or romance while whisking readers away on fast-paced escapades and daring missions and giving them a glorious deep-sigh read." ~Kathe Robin, RT Book Reviews

(Fantasy Romance / Sensual / 125,000 words)

Paladin's Prize Details

Date : Published July 14th 2015 by Gaelen Foley (first published July 10th 2015)

ISBN :

Author : Gaelen Foley

Format : Kindle Edition 346 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Romance, Fantasy Romance, Magic

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From Reader Review Paladin's Prize for online ebook

Barbara says

Paladin's Prize

I want to start by saying I have always enjoyed Ms. Foley's books and when I saw she had a new one I was very excited! But on my second glance I saw it wasn't her typical Regency Romance book but more a fantasy romance! I almost didn't read the book but decided since it was a Gaelen Foley book I'd read it! Boy am I Glad I did!

The story is set in a magical era with the Hero Knight Paladin and a Magical Healer Wrynn! The story begins with Paladin falling in battle and the all mighty God of their order sending Wrynn to heal him! But he is so badly injured the young inexperienced healer only knows of one way to heal him - with the kiss of life spell! This spell not only heals the great knight, it leaves their lives forever intertwined.

The story takes off from there! The two must face challenge after challenge to save the Kingdom and restore The Great Paladin's name! It's a wonderful journey and Ms. Foley has written the tale with great flare! This reader Highly Recommends Paladin's Prize and gives the book a huge 2 Thumbs Up! I truly look forward to the next book in the Age of Heroes series!

Vanessa Mozes says

I found *Paladin's Prize* on a fantasy/romance booklist a couple of years ago, loved the title, absolutely loved the artwork, and knew I had to read it!

Wrynn du Mere is a relatively new healer, but when she finds Sir Thaydor, The Golden Knight, mortally wounded on a quiet battlefield, she knows he requires the most potent healing magic she possesses. Bestowing the *Kiss of Life* on Sir Thaydor doesn't just heal his wounds, but binds him to Wrynn in ways she doesn't fully understand. United by their bond and their service to Ilios, the pair set out to fight evil and save their kingdom.

Gaelen Foley's writing is lovely, and she brings her world to life right from the start. I loved her descriptions as they made the world feel real. Wrynn is a confident, sure woman who only becomes more so as the story unfolds. Sir Thaydor is most certainly a paladin, and left me slapping my hand to my forehead at times, but his care for those around him is endearing.

I had a harder time connecting with Wrynn and Sir Thaydor's relationship. The pair are well developed over the course of the book, and they have great chemistry during the steamy scenes, but I never quite caught the spark of interest I'd been hoping to with them. Part of this may have had to do with them falling in love quickly. (view spoiler) Since one of the main reasons I picked up this book was for the romance, that affected my final rating.

Judi Easley says

This was a good read, but not quite what I have come to expect of a fantasy novel. Then I found out it's the author's first fantasy and that explained it all. The author needs a bit more practice at creating a fantasy world, a bit richer, stranger, more dense. It's like it was decaf when it should have been regular. That's not to say it wasn't good, because it was. And I may read the second book.

Molly says

When The Golden Knight, Sir Thaydor Clarebeld is left for dead after a brutal and costly battle only one woman Wrynn du Mere can save him by doing the kiss of light which will connect them. Wrynn must use the spell she can only perform once in her life. But Wrynn knows that Thaydor is the chosen one to save and guide her people and it is her duty to restore him to his place of honor in the court. Right now Thaydor may be banished from his rightly place but through her healing he will stand again strong regardless of where he might be called to lead.

Once his strength is restored Thaydor and Wrynn join together on a journey that takes them from the darkest of how in real their reality is. Their kingdom has fallen into depravity, the people fear for the people seek a savior who can save them. Individually Thaydor and Wrynn have strong magic and they realize there is a reason they have been joined for life.

Gaelen Foley has risen to the task as a great author who can expand her genres. I am read more regency romance but I really did enjoy this book. Each book she writes shows an unrivaled depth in her characters and a great storyline. So I hope you enjoyed it too.

Shea says

I was very excited to see Gaelen Foley had written a fantasy based novel. She is one of my favorite authors and I have always enjoyed her historical romance. I liked this novel very much. Foley has created a wonderful world of knights, healers, ogres, and evil sorcerers. I enjoyed the characters and how their relationship developed from friendship to love.

Karen Ampoorter says

When I heard that one of my favorite regency authors started writing fantasy, I hesitated for about a second or a half ? I already liked Gaelen Foley's style of writing, storyline and plots. So I was quite curious about this new adventure. After reading her Inferno club, where heroes and heroines find each other against an epic fight of good against evil, I knew she could pull this off.

And boy, did she come through. This book tells us the story of Thaydor the Golden Paladin and his soul mate Wrynn Du Mere. It's a story about goodness and its fight against evil, about faithfulness and faithlessness, about love and betrayal, about alliances between people who were adversaries. After reading 5 pages, the book sucked me right in. I couldn't stop reading and when I had to, I got grumpy and wanted to start reading again. What I like is that every book appears to have its own hero.

If you are looking for a fantasy book as dark and long as "the sword of thruth"-serie by Terry Goodkind then this is not the book for you. If you are looking for a well written book, with a beautiful described new world, with people who are not cardboard people but real people, with lots of adventures, suspense, a bit of magic and with a beautiful message at the end, then this is THE book for you. I highly recommend it. Enjoy!!

"I received a free copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review."

Adria (Musings and Reviews) says

Originally posted on Adria's Romance Reviews

* A copy of this book was provided by the publisher via NetGalley for the purpose of an honest review.

Sir Thaydor Clarenbeld has always served the kingdom of Veraidel with pride, loyalty and an unwavering sense of what is right. When the king becomes corrupt, Sir Thaydor speaks out against him and is promptly banished from court and sent on countless quests with the intent of getting him killed. After being mortally wounded in one of the quests, Sir Thaydor is rescued by a mysterious healer known as the Maid of the Mount.

Lady Wrynn du Mere devotes her time to caring for those in need of help instead of living the life of luxury she was born into. When she finds the famous Sir Thaydor dying she uses all her skills and a bit of dangerous magic that leaves their souls entwined. As they spend time together, Sir Thaydor and Lady Wrynn discover an undeniable attraction along with incredible danger as Sir Thaydor's enemies close in on them. Their only chance to survive and restore Veraidel to a land of peace and justice is to join forces.

Known more for her dazzling romances in set in Regency England, author Gaelen Foley's *Paladin's Prize* is about as far away from the London ballrooms as one can get. It's been a long time since I last read a fantasy romance and the adjustment was a bit bumpy for the first few chapters.

It takes a lot to craft a place like Veraidel, the fictional setting of the story and there are a lot of details that need to be shared in order for the reader to picture what the author envisioned. *Paladin's Prize* spent a lot of time on important things like the history of the people and places that were important to the story or may have an importance in later books. This attention to detail is common in fantasy romance but it was something I had forgotten and at times became frustrated with. If you're not used to fantasy romance, then this might bug you too. However, I admit that the images came easier than in the romances I usually read. So it is up to the individual reader to decide whether there is too much time spent on details or just enough.

I liked the role that Lady Wrynn played from the very beginning. She saved the Sir Thaydor when he was dying and while he may have been the warrior in the relationship, Wrynn was no slouch. That was part of the appeal of *Paladin's Prize* for me, the intelligence strength and power wasn't just on Thaydor's side, and his short comings were balanced out by Wrynn.

The only problem with the romance in *Paladin's Prize* was that there was so little of it. I felt Thaydor and Wrynn didn't have enough time together to really fall in love and make me believe in their relationship. It felt a little rushed, underdeveloped, too perfect and pushed aside in favor of the fantasy/medieval elements. Again, fantasy fans may not mind this but I'm a romance reader so it did bug me a bit. I wanted more passion and conflict between Sir Thaydor and Lady Wrynn to make me believe that these two were bound together by more than just magic. As standalone characters they were great, but as a couple they were a little too sugary sweet, too perfect and the relationship was just too easy. Some angst, a little drama and a load of development would have gone a long way in making me fall for them as a couple.

Paladin's Prize set up an amazing world of magic, mayhem and had plenty of action scenes. I enjoyed the overall journey Thaydor and Wrynn went on, there were rarely any dull or slow moments which in any

book is always a plus. Author Gaelen Foley didn't waste time in putting her characters to work for their victory. I wish there had been more romance and growth between the main characters but *Paladin's Prize* did a great job of setting the stage for the rest of the series. It may have been a long time since I've read a fantasy romance but with this one, I think it may be time to add a dash of them to my reading shelf.

Hmr28 says

Boy, I hope this crapper was a fluke (a bad one). I read Foley way back when and have loved almost all of her books. I am hoping the next one she puts out is more like every other book she has written than it is like this one!

Visionary says

Review courtesy of Romance Junkies AND I received a free copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review

Wrynn du Mere is the oldest daughter of the famous Building Baron and she has chosen to live the simple life of a healer over the pampered lifestyle of a young noblewoman. She is a Daughter of the Rose, one of two sects dedicated to the light god Ilios whose specialty deals with the healing arts. Wrynn heeds Ilios's summons and enters the blood-drenched battleground in search of the god's holy champion. She concedes on using an once-in-a-lifetime spell to heal all of the paladin's grievous wounds, and she gladly accepts the sacrifice such spell demands to save the realm of Veraidel's beloved hero. A vision gives Wrynn insight on the deadly machinations against Thaydor and the ones behind the plots on the warrior's life. She decides to accompany the paladin on his mission for answers. On the journey, she and Thaydor acknowledge the attraction building between them. Evil threatens to encroach on the kingdom from within, and only Thaydor, Wrynn, and their unlikely companions can combat the evil before it can wrestle control over Veraidel.

Sir Thaydor Clarenbeld is a paladin to Ilios, hand-chosen by the god himself to represent his denomination to the people of Veraidel. He is known to the public as The Golden Knight, the people's cherished hero, and the king's champion. As the king's Champion, Thaydor is charged with commanding the royal knights and influencing their conduct into one of righteousness. He elicits his monarch's displeasure by speaking disapprovingly and openly about the man's salacious behavior. Thaydor prepares himself for Elysium by sacrificing his life to keep a marauding band of barbarians from invading the kingdom. He never expects a dark-haired angel to intervene and bring him back from the brink of death. Wrynn tempts him as no other woman has. The young healer not only healed his significant wounds but she makes him accept his king's possible treachery. Branded an outlaw, Thaydor seeks a way to clear his good name and save the kingdom from its descent into depravity and evil.

Thaydor may be well loved by the people, both noble and common alike, yet the man never once allowed the power to color his actions or make him too conceited. On occasion I did get a little annoyed with the man, especially his closed-minded views on other gods and their practitioners, yet I like how the rigidness of his thinking starts to bend as he is forced to rely on people outside his faith. I never anticipated a holy paladin to be so adorable when it comes to the woman he fancies. For a mighty warrior, it is entertaining to see how uncertain and backwards Thaydor becomes around Wrynn at the start of their relationship. There are moments when his and Wrynn's relations struck me as too perfect and sweet, yet the couple proves they are not infallible to arguments. I did want to bash the man when he lectured Wrynn on her behavior whenever it clashed with his pious views.

At the start of the story, Wrynnne appears too meek and weak for my tastes, nothing like the strong types I prefer to read. Her demeanor and character changes gradually once she joins Thaydor's quest. The facets of her personality begin to reveal themselves when Wrynnne interacts with various sorts of people along the way. She is not as inflexible in her parochialism towards practitioners of other gods as Thaydor is, which allowed me to identify easier with her. Wrynnne proves throughout the story she is prone to the usual human weaknesses unlike the paladin. She sticks to her convictions and I did applaud the healer's gumption to stand her ground at the face of Thaydor's censor when it came to something she felt so strongly about.

I am no stranger to the author's books and have read many of Gaelen Foley's regency titles. I remember growing eager at the news that the author decided to delve into a favorite genre of mine, fantasy romance, a genre I wish more authors will consider in the future to write. The author demonstrates her ability to write in other genres than just historical romance.

PALADIN'S PRIZE is a rare treat for fantasy lovers, the perfect blending of high fantasy and romance. PALADIN'S PRIZE is the first book in Gaelen Foley's fantasy romance series, AGE OF HEROES. The author's world-building made me feel as if I was reading one of my treasured fantasy books so much so that I did not want the book to end. I do hope Gaelen Foley has plans to write books for the bard Jonty, the sorcerer Even Novus, and the hot-headed red knight Reynulf.

Eri says

Le doy 2 estrellas por darle algo pero meh, no me ha gustado la historia de amor (de un momento para otro ya hay amor eterno entre los protagonistas), ciertas acciones de algunos personajes eran incomprensibles y la trama a veces no sabía hacia donde iba a ir ni por donde me iba a llevar. Pensaba que siendo de Gaelen Foley sería algo mejor

Carla says

Paladin's Prize is romance, fantasy and action all rolled into one. Thaydor and Wrynnne are love itself. The lengths they go to show their love for one another is pure and beautiful. The fantasy setting is well thought out. The places and characters are believable, as well as, accurately described throughout the book. The action in the book holds you on the edge of your seat and wanting more. Jonty is definitely my favorite character with his laugh out loud antics.

I enjoyed this book and found myself wondering what would happen to the characters when I wasn't reading. I would highly recommend this book to fantasy lovers. My only complaint is that I wish the sex scenes had been more equally detailed throughout the book. At times I felt like the author should have put more into those scenes.

This book is author Gaelen Foley's first fantasy book. I'm excited to read the next book in this series.

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

Shauni says

Originally Reviewed For: Bodice Rippers, Femme Fatales and Fantasy

WOW! Just Wow! You know when I start a review off with a wow I am going to be a bit flustered. Why? Because the book is so good and I start gushing and swooning and... LOL..

Paladin's Prize is something of a surprise from me. As a long time fan of Gaelen Foley's work I tend to love her edgy historical romances, to discover this talent for fantasy.. yeah.. surprise! It wasn't perfect but it was awfully darn close.

Paladin's Prize is book one in Ms. Foley's Age of Heroes Series and it promises to be fantasy and magic wrapped in a medievalesq romance. There is enough hints to a time long past but this is definitely not earth.. it's a magical place where people believe and different individuals are embodied with different talents, ie.. healer, warrior, etc. A world that should be at peace but is on the brink of war and a betrayal the likes of which this kingdom has never seen.

Lady Wrynne du Mere is the child of wealth and privilege even if her father did manage to buy his title. But no matter the family has made a huge contribution to the kingdom and deserves their rewards. Wrynne on the other hand has been gifted with the gift of healing and she chooses to serve where she is needed, not for glory. A woman strong in faith and talent. So when marauders from the neighboring land come to her village, Wrynne was on site to heal those she could. When there she found, close to death, the greatest warrior of their time, Sir Thaydor Clarenbeld, The Royal Champion. Wrynne knows the land needs him and risks all on a one time only spell. Saving Thaydor but sacrificing her powers to self heal and creating a bond that can not be broken between the two of them.

Sir Thaydor Clarenbeld may be the Royal Champion but he has found disfavor with the King. It seems the rot has been growing within the kingdom and Thaydor has called everyone on it. Creating many enemies, the royal councilor leading the pack. Constantly being sent off on trivial tasks that risk his life. This time, he should have died but his god still has a purpose for him. Awakening after battle in the cottage of a Healer, Thaydor realizes that he has been healed in both body and spirit.

Thaydor and Wynne have an instant connection that both feel could be part of the Wynne's spell but gradually they realize that their feelings are real. They belong together but first, Thaydor must discover why someone is trying to kill him and sadly, he knows he must start with the king.

And and epic quest begins.. Wynne and Thaydor have a purpose and nothing is going to stop them. Not prophecies, betrayals or even each other.

This was a great book but like I said, not perfect. Thaydor is a bit overkill at times, yes he is a Chivalrous knight BUT sometimes he is just too perfect, bordering on self righteous.. but that's even ok because Ms. Foley makes sure other characters are on hand to keep him humble.

This has been catagorized as a children's book and romance and I disagree. It's certainly fantasy with it's epic quest and stalwart hero and heroine. I would also consider it YA rather than children's, but that's me.

One thing I really, really enjoyed was Ms. Foley's gift of bringing hints of our past into this story. Making this world, this kingdom of magic believable.

A Book for all ages..

Shauni

This review is based on the ARC of Paladin's Prize, provided by the author for an honest review.

Christa says

After Wrynn du Mere uses her magical healing abilities to save the King's Champion, Sir Thaydor, the two find it impossible to resist the feelings and desire they experience for one another. They join forces to find out what evil power is threatening their land, and they begin to believe that the battle where Sir Thaydor almost lost his life was deliberately staged in a manner that would ensure that he would not survive. As they seek to discover the evil treachery that is at work, their safety, lives, and the entire kingdom are at stake.

Paladin's Prize is a romantic fantasy adventure that is whimsical and charming. It has danger, love, and magic. The hero, Sir Thaydor, is a man above reproach, who values honor above all. Wrynn is a sweet young woman whose wish is to help those who need her power for healing. The two make a fine couple, and it was fun to read about them. I enjoyed the story of Sir Thaydor and Wrynn attempting to save their kingdom. I was engrossed in the book from beginning to end and am looking forward to the next installment in the series. I received a free copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

Sheila says

Gaelen Foley's newest book gives us a new genre to enjoy her writing. PALADIN'S PRIZE combines sci-fi/fantasy within a medieval world. It is LORD OF THE RINGS meets CAMELOT (okay, maybe not as epic.) While not knowing what to expect I dove into this world of knights, healers, light and dark. A whole world comes to life as Veraidel and its story is revealed on an as-need-to-know basis.

This is a departure from the Regency world Ms. Foley usually writes of but she captured the flavor of the medieval world. The cadence and rhythm of her story telling changes with this world. She speaks in a different voice that shows the ideal nobility and chivalry of the people of that period.

Chivalry, honesty, and purity define Sir Thaydor. Virtue, charity, and innocence define Wrynn du Mere. Thrown together because of evil deeds Wrynn saves Thaydor, bonding each to the other. Through their journey to save the king and his kingdom we learn who they are and what they stand for. At times light and dark must come together as one to defeat the evil that wants their world. Watching how the two sides work together to achieve victory over that evil fascinated me, especially when distrust had to be overcome.

The characters are well defined. The world building fantastic. The ideals that Thaydor and Wrynn live by are black and white; there is no gray in their light-filled world. Since Thaydor is used as an example to the other knights, he lives what he preaches. Departing from the male knows everything there is to know in the bedroom, I loved that Thaydor is almost as untested in the bedroom as Wrynn and that he doubts himself (of course, in true romance fashion, he is as accomplished there as the most notorious rake.) There is an innocence between Thaydor and Wrynn that is beautiful to watch as they go from unknowns to a couple.

With PALADIN'S PRIZE setting up the AGE OF HEROES setting, I look forward to more of these folks. There are secondary characters whose stories (past and future) I want to know. This promises to be a fun ride!

Mimi says

I expected a better constructed novel from Gaelen Foley, having read many of her previous historical romances. "Paladin's Prize" has a rough start. Shortly after the two protagonists meet, they are suddenly in love. We are not given enough time to see a relationship develop; it all appears rather rushed. However, the fantasy world of The Kingdom of Veraidel is well-constructed and contains sufficient detail that can be used for future stories in this series.

There is no indication how many novels are planned for this "Age of Heroes" series, but "Paladin's Prize" introduces plenty of characters that I would like to see more of, specifically Jonty, the bard (apparently the next novel will be his story), Novus, the sorcerer, and Reynulf, the warrior. As far as female characters go, Thaydor's and Wryne's sisters would also be good candidates for their own stories. I think that "Paladin's Prize" provides a good lead-in for more stories to follow.
