



Kingmaker's Sword

Ann Marston

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The Skai and the Tyr were one people long ago. But that day is lost in the mists of time. And now the Skai have sent a warrior to find the Rune Blade that could slice through the darkness of blood and violence that had falled across their land.

Kingmaker's Sword Details

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From Reader Review Kingmaker's Sword for online ebook

Camilla says

First installment of a fantasy trilogy. I had fun, but was frustrated by the way every single important detail was spoon-fed to the reader. Honestly, if you can't trust me to pick up on details and let my brain start churning them over on their own accord, then I'm not going to trust your storytelling. I want that "surprising yet inevitable" ending, and this story was too predictable, too stale for me to continue the trilogy. The epic fantasy storytelling elements were all there, but the stroke of a master storyteller was not.

Kelsey S. Hock says

Will definitely be on my shelf to read again! Along with a great plot and awesome characters, I really appreciated how the female-male dynamics were created. They definitely ring true to the medieval fantasy Europe that this -and many other fantasy novels- employ. Unlike some trash fantasy that tries to have this 'realistic' setting while also subtly perpetrating that if a woman was just as good as a man at being a warrior or had men's respect she would be equal, this book is very clear that even between friendships and relationships women and men are not equal. Accurate.

Angie says

Several years ago, while wandering through the science fiction and fantasy section of the local Media Play, I crouched down to see what was on the bottom shelf in the M section. My eyes caught on a book that was faced out and that featured two warriors, one red-headed and one blonde, both of them sporting copious amounts of cloudy hair and swooping kilts, clutching swords in their hands. I'd never heard of KINGMAKER'S SWORD or author Ann Marston before, but I decided to pick it up based on the fact that it was a mass market paperback (and thus inexpensive) and that I liked the colors and the soft, matte finish to the cover. I noted that it was the first in a trilogy--the Rune Blade trilogy--and that the other two books were on the shelf so I could easily come back for them if the first book entertained.

Mouse is a slave. Dubbed Foxmouse because of his flaming red hair, he is now known as just Mouse and he is about to make his escape. Two nights ago his sole friend in the world was savagely assaulted and murdered while he watched and that horrific act simultaneously crushed Mouse and did away with any reason he had to stay in the filthy hole he has lived in for as long as he could remember. While on his headlong flight to freedom, Mouse runs into his past in the form of a hulking Tyran clansman on a journey to find his long-lost nephew. Suspecting Mouse may just be that boy, Cullin dav Medroch dubs the boy Kian and takes him under his wing. On their way back to Tyra, Cullin and Kian encounter a determined swordswoman by the name of Kerridwen who is on a quest of her own. When Kerridwen and Kian accidentally cross blades a bond is forged that takes them both unpleasantly by surprise and shapes the direction their paths will take from that point on.

I was pleasantly surprised by KINGMAKER'S SWORD. Judging by the kilts on the cover, I should have known to expect a rollicking Celtic-inspired sword-and-sorcery adventure, and that's exactly what it was. Tyra is essentially a slightly altered Scotland, along with the island of Celi and the province of Skai, where Kerri hails from. The book opens with a breakdown of the different seasons in this world, a pronunciation guide, and a map--sort of the holy triumverate of opening pages when it comes to pulpy sword-and-sorcery

novels. There is nothing earth-shatteringly new in these books, but they are undeniably fun, smoothly written, and peopled with enjoyably heroic characters pitted against dastardly evil sorcerers against a suitably epic backdrop. I ate them up with a spoon and they have worn rather well over the years. This trilogy follows three generations of Kian's family, including his children and grandchildren. And while I'm usually dismayed when a series jumps generations like that, I have to say that is not the case here as the second novel, *The Western King*, is definitely the finest installment. Marston follows this trilogy up with another, the *Sword in Exile* trilogy, which continues the story of the rune blades and the line of the princes of Skai. It, too, is worth a read. Both series are now out of print, but if you can find a copy I do recommend them, particularly for fans of Jennifer Roberson, Susan Dexter, and Moira J. Moore.

Reading Order: *Kingmaker's Sword*, *The Western King*, and *Broken Blade*

Maria Elmvang says

I received this series via a Christmas book exchange, and picked it up knowing absolutely nothing about it, but it very quickly caught my attention. Set in a fantastical version of Scotland (very obvious, as the men wear kilts, say "ken" for "know" and even call outlanders a word very similar to *sassenach*) I fell in love with both the universe and the main characters. It's the first book in a trilogy, but unlike many first novels, I didn't feel like most of the page-time was spent establishing the universe and setting the scene for the future novels. It was fast-paced and action-filled and though the author didn't pull any punches, it didn't seem heartlessly so.

I'll be looking forward to seeing where she takes it from here, even though this book is so nicely contained that I don't feel like I absolutely *have* to read the next to get the full benefit from it.

Claire says

Oh I wish I had kept my copies of this trilogy and its follow-up set!!! Never ending thanks to my friend Betsy for introducing me. These books have been floating around in my mind for a couple years, but I had forgotten all important info that would help me find them (author, title, character names). Finally thanks to searching likely Goodreads lists, I found it on a Celtic Fantasy list. I've read that they are out of print, so I'm off to scour the internet to replace mine. Let that be a lesson to you kids, hold on to your favorite books, even if you feel you've outgrown them - you never know when you might suffer a bit of nostalgia.

Becca says

I was expecting this to be corny or stereotypical. It does have a lot of stereotypical characters, but the plot is wonderfully creative. I like how the characters make detour after detour, ending up where they need to be without realizing that they're there. I am also a fan of the ending, which I didn't quite expect. The one major flaw: dear feisty female lead, why are you marrying somebody who doesn't take you seriously and whose first thought is always to get you out of the way, even though you are capable and have helped him out before? Clearly he should be kept away from women until he gets it.

Sofia says

So I initially bought the Rune Blade Trilogy because it's a trilogy (and I'm a sucker for those), all three volumes were available at the same time (I loathe book hunting and am too cheap to shop much elsewhere other than half-price), and the people on the cover are wearing kilts! (I'm a reenactor and my first regiment was with a highland group, kilts mean it's got to be awesome, right?)

In the end, I was very pleased with this book purchase. It was enjoyable to read, I got invested in the characters and the new world they lived in. This place combined a historical setting with just enough magic to enchant the fantasy side of me. A host of characters trying to fight social norms as hard as they fight the bad guys and things turning out differently from expected. Also a touch of romance, but nothing too terribly cheesy or distracting from the main story.

I'm very glad I bought this book!

Sarah Mac says

Truly, I don't remember the details of this series except that I liked them & stuck them in my keeper box with Pern & the Sunrunners. I do, however, recall reading them instead of doing physics homework, which helps account for my dismal grades in that arena. *halo*

IIRC, they're one of the better Celtic-based fantasy sagas...but I was a teenager when declaring this, so take it with a grain of salt. :P Each book focuses on a different group of protags (sometimes skipping generations) with plenty of swords & magic & true love, fight scenes, invading darkness -- that sort of thing. Many of the couples resembled Eowyn & Faramir in looks & demeanor, which also helps account for my fondness. (Eowyn/Faramir = Tolkien OTP, yo -- bow down. ;))

There are 2 trilogies & I enjoyed both, though, as with the Sunrunner books, I preferred this first trio. There are some dark moments, but they're not 'dark fantasy' per se -- probably geared more toward female readership than the Sunrunners, but hey. No judging. ;)

Anne Gazzolo says

Great book, loved it! Loved the main three characters and their bond with each other. Definitely recommended if you want to read a wonderful AU Celtic/Scottish fantasy with a solid plot and marvelous characters. You wouldn't want to meet the bad guys in a dark alley though, unless the good guys with their swords were at your side.

Kate says

Kingmaker's Sword is well-written for its length. It had quite a simple storyline but I found it to be quite effective, featuring lots of swordplay and action. Compared to other fantasy stories I have read it could be said this is perhaps aimed at a younger male audience. The background and the world is developed throughout the story and it is all quite easy to understand and flows well.

I'm trying to decide whether I enjoyed this well enough to read the other books in the trilogy, but overall it was enjoyable.

Jean says

A Lost Sword..

This book centers around Mouse, his escape to freedom and the people he meets after his escape.

The characters, Cullin, Kian and Kerri were well written and vividly described.

The story line included swords, friendship, and loyalty making it an Overall, engaging fantasy.

Austin Vanfleet did well with the narration.

Note:

"This audio book was provided by the author, narrator, or publisher at no cost in exchange for an unbiased review."

Rebecca Smucker says

This book is probably my favorite of the 2-trilogy series. It sets up a very long story, both the interplay between two royal families in a fictional Celtic world and, later, the invasion of a much more Arabian culture.

If you are the kind of person who doesn't appreciate reading the same book over and over again, I'd probably just stick with the first 2 or 3 books. You will notice, if you read these back-to-back, that a lot of the scenes will give you deja-vu. I didn't actually check, but I wouldn't be surprised if the author lifted entire scenes and re-used them in later books.

That being said, this is a fun book and pretty well-worth a read. Just don't get sucked in unless you REALLY like it!

Sean Helms says

Enjoyable escapist story full of action in this 'Scotland-esque' setting. Kian is the central character and the story is told from his point of view. He has some pretty cool abilities and carries a sword that has a bit of a mind of its own.

This book is well worth the time and I'm going to read the sequel; hopefully it's as entertaining as this one was.

Nancy says

I first read this book when I was around 14 years old, and now, 16 years later, I can still appreciate it. I absolutely loved it the first time around, when I was a newcomer to the fantasy genre, and it was a great read now, when I qualify as a seasoned veteran.

The story follows the path of a boy turned man in a quest against darkness that takes the form of a evil man who uses blood magic to gain power. There's plenty of sword fighting, a touch of romance (rated PG), and a love between a father figure and son that I admire. And I always love a good, stubborn female protagonist, who rounds out the cast of characters.

An enjoyable read.

Joey Woolfardis says

Not interested enough to even contemplate finishing it off. It simply felt formulaic and that is not what I am looking for right now. Perhaps one day I could return if I even felt the need to read of fantasy-Scots within a run-of-the-mill story.
