



# The Rope Dancer

*Roberta Gellis*

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## **The Rope Dancer** Roberta Gellis

Unequaled in her art, Carys danced for the danced in manor and village. Love was a stranger to this little rope dancer until Telor came along, the wandering minstrel whose love for her made his songs sweeter and more passionate. An exquisite novel of historical romance during the golden age of chivalry, from the bestselling author of A Tapestry of Dreams.

## **The Rope Dancer Details**

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Author : Roberta Gellis

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## From Reader Review The Rope Dancer for online ebook

### **Karen says**

I have read this book a couple of times during the past many years. Why did it take me until now to appreciate the characters?

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### **Genny says**

It was okay. The one thing that bothered me about the story was that the action always seemed to be interrupted by internal dialogue, to the point that the character often repeated what he/she was thinking so that the reader would have to read it twice. It just didn't flow very well.

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### **Marya says**

4.5 stars; I really enjoyed this.

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### **Oana-Maria Uliu says**

Nice writing style, but the author takes her time building up sexual tension, even though it's not absolutely necessary to do so. Other than that, the characters are likeable and quite complex, and the description of life in the Middle Ages is fairly well done. A nice read for the weekend, though not a masterpiece.

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### **Jacqueline says**

This one is a favorite of mine by RG. The heroine instead of being a highborn lady is a wandering player with a troupe of troubadour types. Very well constructed story.

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### **Kristi Thompson says**

Points for being a medieval genre historical that focuses on people other than the nobility. (Admittedly, glamorous travelling troubadours.)

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### **Lieselotte says**

This book made me understand about the daily life in the Middle Ages, while also being an excellent adventure and a strong romance. A great favorite of mine.

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## Arthur says

The plot is always surprising. It's distinguished by from other stories because of being placed in a historic setting. Original. The life of nobles and servants and horse and cart and the list goes on.

I think it's a seriously well written story. I took this from the library. Where I found a lot of good books to read. I would read in my sleep if I would. There is a good act of morals in stories such as this.

Deri is a dwarf. Telor an minstrel. And they have been on the road with which they seek out lodging and money they border for their fortune. Telor is to be announced, as when he is invited for he is an expected entertainer, the minstrel and is treated well by these 12th century nobilities. He is a entertainer at weddings, and when this story opens. Then there is romance, passion, and time for action. There is the entertaining as minstrel by Telor and his lute or harp. And Deri as a constant servant, comprises them for safe lodgings in any of the towns along the road. But times are not right and there is suddenly great thieving and fighting to capture the power over as lords of the towns where Telor and Deri dwell.

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## Amy says

I was surprised that I liked *The Rope Dancer* as much as I did. It isn't typically something I would be drawn to read, yet it's a rollicking, adventurous, sweet and even kind of hot book.

Carys is the eponymous dancer, performing on ropes as part of a traveling troupe in medieval England. The men she works with, however, treat her with something less than dignity. Okay, a LOT less than dignity. Carys does not realize that she can - and should - be treated better, largely because this life is the only one she has known.

The land is rife with battles, skirmishes and outright wars between various fiefdoms, and to escape one, Carys takes a precarious fall. She is discovered by Telor and Deri, a traveling minstrel and dwarf, respectively. The two men entertain for pay, with Telor occasionally providing extra "services" to the ladies.

wink wink

Telor initially is put off by Carys's stench, which I found quite humorous. After she cleans up, he realizes that she's actually kind of attractive - he likens her to a fox. GET IT? She's FOXY! Carys joins the two men in their escapades, performing and escaping from various pickles in which they find themselves. Telor puts one lord in his cross hairs, determined to exact retribution.

Along the way, he finds himself beguiled by Carys, and she, in turn, is intrigued by him.

Carys found this difference between looks and character very interesting. Both men she had dealt with intimately in the past looked what they were: Ulric was strong and stupid, and Morgan, although he could hide what he was under a "player's face" for a time, betrayed the sly cleverness by his sharp features and narrow eyes when he was not acting. But Carys was sure Telor was not playing any role for her, which meant his face did not portray the inner man. Interesting ... and dangerous

Roberta Gellis takes her time in getting these two into a romantic relationship. Carys assumes she and Telor will sleep together, because Ulric and Morgan took her at their pleasure. For his part, Telor believes Carys is not attracted to him, and he is not the sort of man to force himself on a woman, especially when so many beautiful, supple women pursue him. But he's attracted to Carys, there is no doubt about that.

There are several adventurous scenes in this book, in which our merry trio attempts to extract itself from one scrape after another. There also is a lot of emotional depth. Each character has a struggle of some sort, and they need to heal.

Gellis writes with such detail that we see everything: the performances, the characters and the battles. This is a long book - it's 400 pages - but it flies by. Think of it as a three hour movie that feels more like two.

Published on cupcake's book cupboard. @VivaAmaRisata

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### **Christa Bedwin says**

I read this book because it's one of the few medieval romances out there so far. I mostly loved it - the hero is a nice guy, the heroine is fiesty, the historical research is fascinating and delicious, and the side characters (dwarves) are interesting and intelligently done. Everyone has depth and society runs like a real society.

I find it gets a little slow at times and skimmed over some parts, and I'd give it a 4.5 stars -- that rounds up to 5. I was sad to see the author is dead so she won't be putting out more, but I see she has many other works I can read too.

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### **Mell says**

Full of medieval historical detail about the less-than-ideal life of the working class and the dangers faced by women. I read this in high school, back when I could read for hours on end during weekends and breaks from school. (Those were the days!)

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### **Claudine says**

An interesting book. I wanted to read it because it featured lower-class protagonists, and I kept reading for the same reason.

The writing was pretty amateurish, in my opinion. A lot of telling, not a lot of showing, and I often found myself skimming through long interal monologues and passages where whole conversations were glossed over. Fortunately, the strong characters and excellent plot (once you get further into the book, the plot does develop and is well worth the wait) helped balance the book.

The heroine, Carys, is pretty interesting and unique-- she's a tightrope dancer, and heavily muscled, described as heavy and lean. Telor, the hero, is attracted to her, but neither of them jump straight into having sex.

Carys has a history of physical and sexual abuse, which she seems to think is normal and no big deal, which

is probably historically accurate but was a little bit disturbing to read. Still, her attraction to Telor takes some time to build, starting with physical attraction but then quickly becoming romantic attraction because of his kindness, generosity, and honesty. Carys is a smart, determined woman and a dedicated performer, and she quickly adapts herself to her surroundings-- matching other's speech patterns, but also quickly seeing that, among kind, honest people that she can (and should) be kind and honest as well.

Deri's character was an unexpected, but lovely, gem in this novel. Gellis also managed a pretty subtle but effective lesson in what life with a disability is like-- not only being singled out for blame, but the desire to be seen as a whole person and live a full and happy life, as well as needing to contribute to others in order to be happy (ie, not wanting to feel like a burden). Ann and Deri both were excellent characters and I'm glad Gellis included them in the plot, since they both had skills and talents that our protagonists lacked.

Gellis also managed to swap out the traditional gender roles in this tale: Not only does Carys rescue herself from danger at the beginning of the novel, but she single-handedly rescues Deri and Telor later on, and then her and Ann leave their relative safety to go assist the men. And, through their intelligent planning, they manage to incapacitate many of the enemy soldiers without killing them, as well as smuggle several of their own soldiers inside the keep.

A fun, satisfying read.

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### **Teri-K says**

Barely started reading this, then I lost it. sigh That doesn't happen with e-books. Now that I've found it again I'm going to put it back in my TBR pile.

Upon finding and reading-

This is a very good story, not your typical plot at all. I loved the feel of the road and the friendship that develops between Carys, Telor and Deri. It's a view of Medieval life you don't often get, realistic enough that it feels believable but not disgusting or too dark. Plenty of adventure that never overshadows the relationships between these people. And they don't think and act like modern Westerners, which is nice, too. Just lovely.

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### **Melissa says**

I sought out this book because it was recommended as a rare medieval romance that was not about the lords and the ladies, but instead about the working class. In that it was interesting, and I dearly loved, as always, reading about a romance heroine who is totally self sufficient.

However, perhaps because it was about a heroine of a different class than usual, there was just so much exposition...every time Carys made a decision or said something, we had to read through several paragraphs that kind of explained why and what her context was. This was great in a social-historian kind of way, but not so great for the pace of the story. I admit I gave up and skimmed through the last fifth of the book.

Though to be fair, from what I remember of my high school romance reading career, all that telling rather than showing was pretty much par for the course for historical romances 25 years ago, and I know for a fact that Gellis' Magdalene la Batarde historical mystery series (first one published 1999) are MUCH livelier and more tautly written, and has a heroine with just as interesting a profession--if not more!

