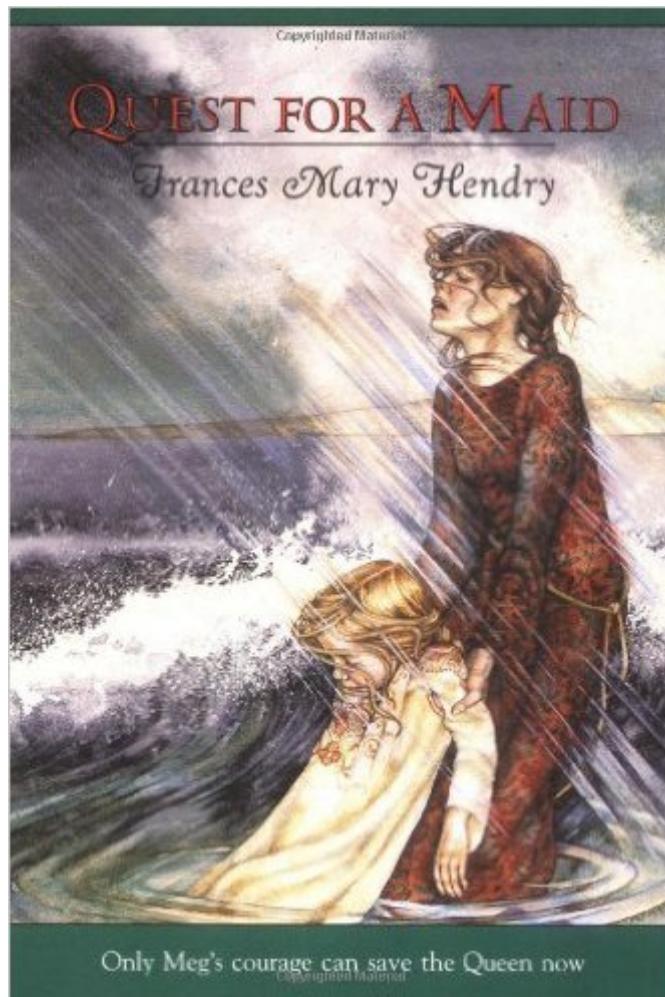


The book was found

Quest For A Maid



Synopsis

Meg Wright is nine when she hides under a table and hears her sister Inge kill the King of Scotland by witchcraft, setting in motion a treacherous power struggle.

Book Information

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR); First Edition edition (April 1, 1992)

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Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (33 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

This book surprised me and drew me in from the opening line, "When I was nine years old, I hid under the table and heard my sister kill a king." How could anyone resist an opening like that? Quest for a Maid follows its own guidelines about how a fantasy should be written. The evil villainess in this book is also the main character's idol. Our heroine has no magical powers or battle skills, only her wits and courage. Much of the book describes Meg's childhood, which lends the book a kind of innocence to contrast against the elder sister's intrigues. Meg, Davie, and Peem form an adventuresome and loyal trio. You may even find yourself liking the evil villain, though we see little of what she does. Much of this book is written phonetically, but after you get used to it, you'll find yourself thinking in a Scottish accent. This book will make you think twice about love, sin, and redemption. A rare book. Read and enjoy.

What a fabulous book this is! I read it out loud to my eleven-year-old daughter and 54-year old live-in love, and we were all riveted. We stayed up till eleven to finish it the night before my daughter went to camp! Great, complex characters (Inge, Meg, Sir Patrick Spens), gorgeous writing, thrilling plot--the big sorcery scene in the first chapter, the witch trial, the storm, the final struggle. I especially like the way Hendry suggests the medieval mind.

I accidentally "rediscovered" this book a couple months ago, and it captivated me the second read as much as it had the first. The first time I read it, it had so much impact that 3 or 4 years and probably 100s of books later (yes, I read a lot) it was one book that I always remembered, even when I couldn't remember the title or author. When I accidentally found it again while browsing the library book shelves, it was like finding an old friend! This book has an excellent and realistic portrayal of life in medieval Scotland, and really brings you into a different world. But also, the story is just really interesting and the characters are very well written. I loved seeing several years in Meg's life unfold and whatever was happening to her was always interesting to me, from the whale adventure, to sailing, to the witch sorcery, to living with Davy's family, to the actual 'quest for the maid' itself. I definatly reccommend this book to anyone interested in medieval times or Scotland, or someone who just likes a good story with adventure and a bit a romance. Though, if you are a reader who only likes really fast-paced books, it might not be for you, since while it does have exciting adventure parts, some parts are slower.

I chose this book because I had just heard about this fascinating episode in history - an episode which started with a king's death and involved a possibly pregnant widow, a power struggle over the throne, a princess from Norway, a shipwreck and even an imposter burned as a witch in Bergen, Norway (this is not a spoiler, just a fact mentioned in a history book). The story had already been made into a age-old ballad (The Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens) and was recorded in modern song versions by Fairport Convention (among others). I was thrilled to discover someone had written a novel about this intriguing part of history, and I decided to read this book even though it was supposedly intended for readers as young as 10 years and up. The plot was interesting and engaging from start to finish. I liked that one of the characters had a disability - young Davie Spens had a cleft lip that gave him a severe speech disability. The book includes a glossary at the end of the book because the author writes in Scottish dialect. This was charming and colorful, but it also made it more exhausting to read. It didn't help that the chapters were long (for example 34 Kindle pages). I rarely made it past one chapter per sitting. I do recommend the book, but be warned that the dialect could make it too difficult for some young readers (particularly ones who prefer short chapters). And I can't really imagine reading it out loud to a child, unless you're from Scotland.

I discovered this book when my daughter was 10. I read it to her at bedtime (and dad too). We all loved it so much. It's a real historical adventure novel for kids...exciting, touching, page turning, heartwarming and a wee bit of romance. Our family has Scottish heritage, so it served as a jumping

off point for family history and history in general. The characters behave like real children of the same age. Fear and bravery are both believable. Class differences and physical disfigurement are overcome as the children learn to understand and value one another as real friends. They learn that people and the world may not be what you expect...or they may be just what what you feared..

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