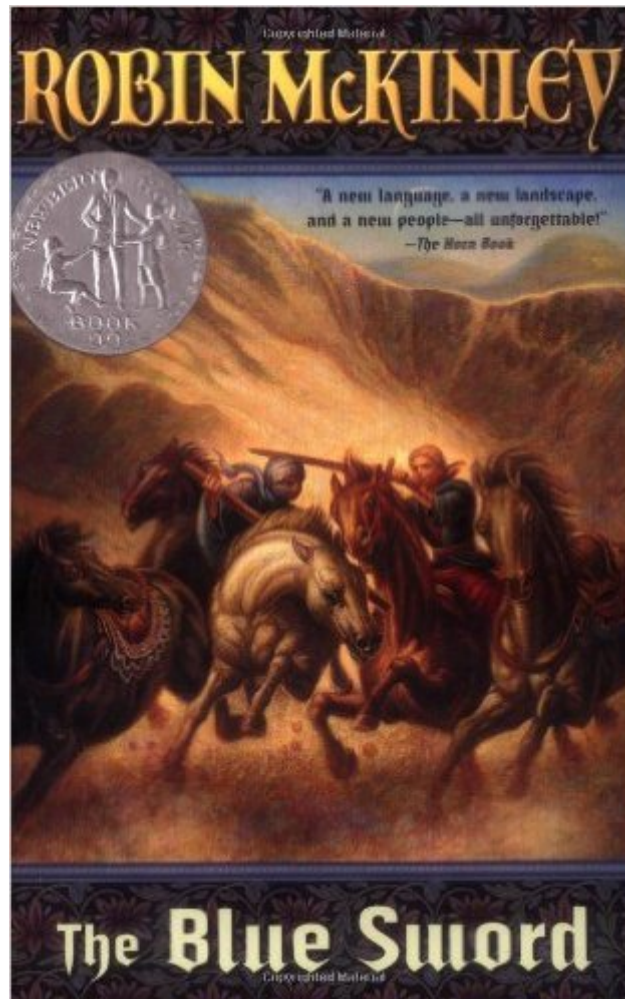


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The Blue Sword (Newbery Honor Roll)



Synopsis

Harry Crewe is an orphan girl who comes to live in Damar, the desert country shared by the Homelander and the secretive, magical Free Hillfolk. When Corlath, the Hillfolk King, sees her for the first time, he is shaken -- for he can tell that she is something more than she appears to be. He will soon realize what Harry has never guessed: she is to become Harimad-sol, King's Rider, and carry the Blue Sword, Gonturan, which no woman has wielded since the legendary Lady Aerin bore it into battle, generations past.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars Â See all reviews Â (348 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I am not a fan of science fiction, but this story is completely amazing! Having first read *The Hero and the Crown* in 7th grade, I had already liked Robin McKinley's writing style. But I was completely unprepared for this book when I read it a year later. It's now been 12 years since then and I have never forgotten it. It tells the story of this young girl, Harry, who feels like if she is missing something in her life. Now the first 3 chapters are a little slow but then, enters Corlath, golden-eyed king of Damar. Here is where the action begins. He possesses unusual powers of the mind and one look at Harry makes him realize she is the one who can wield the Blue Sword whose power is needed to save his country. So he kidnaps her and there begins an adventurous tale across a desert and mountains containing fight scenes, comedy, a magic sword, and a dash of romance. I completely got sucked into this imaginary world. It's a page turner, you won't put down. Never have I come across a book like this one and have been hoping all these years for a third part to continue the

heroine tales of Damar. Tattered and with loose pages, I still read my poor book whenever I get a chance.

At first Harry Crewe is not so different than a number of heroines you've probably met in your reading adventures. She's an orphan who must make a new life in a new place. This is difficult for a girl who has never really seemed to fit in anywhere. She longs constantly for something she can't quite name. All that sounds typical, right? Well, it's what happens next that will make this a book you won't soon forget...and it's nothing even close to typical. Almost by accident, Harry catches the eye of Corlath, King of the Hillfolk, who cannot seem to forget the woman. He returns for her and carries her off across the desert. Harry finds the culture strangely second nature and herself connecting with the King as no one else appears able to. Harry is surprised when the King begins having her trained as a warrior, and downright shocked when she becomes one of the best warriors in her new country's history. As war looms on the horizon and Harry finds herself falling in love with her King, she risks his wrath and her life on a daring mission she was forbidden to undertake. And all that is only a scratch on the surface of a truly engaging fantasy novel that kept me on the edge of my seat from start to finish.

"The Blue Sword" is about Angharad -- Harry -- Crewe, a recently orphaned young lady who moves to the desert area of the continent Damar. By chance she locks eyes with Corlath, the Hill-King, who had come to visit the residency. It was, perhaps, fate, but it changes their lives forever. To tell you any more might give it away, but you can always read the book jacket. This book was interesting in the beginning, and soon graduated to compelling and then impossible-to-put-down. I was reading this on a school night and used up 2 hours of precious homework time because I just HAD to know what happened. All the right details were there, but so subtle that it the end was a pleasant surprise. The writing was so vivid that you could feel your heart racing during the exciting parts. You have to read this book at least 3 times to get all the details. Then read Robin McKinley's other books to get a true appreciation for her wonderful writing talent.--Abigail Short

In seventh grade, I discovered magic with this book. It was the first fantasy book I ever picked up, and it effectively defined my future in immeasurable ways- because fantasy/sci-fi books have truly changed my life. In eighth grade, I shoved this book at every friend I knew, so they'd read it, too. Freshman year, I donated my copy to a shelter that had lost their library, because I thought it needed to be shared. Four years later, I can still pick up this book and become absolutely,

shamelessly enthralled all over again. The story seems cliché at first, but clichés don't catch and hold your attention for as many years as I have been able to enjoy *The Blue Sword*. Harry Crewe may be an orphan discovering an ability she needs to help a country in trouble, but she's a delightfully unique character (proof in her desire to be called Harry, not her given name, Angharad) that manages to avoid each and every trite, over-used, repeated female lead character personality trait. She's determined without being obnoxious and overbearing, confident without being arrogant, and even when her confidence falters, she never once becomes the wimpy, whiny princess in need of being rescued. She has human feelings, doubt, fear, and anger...and overcomes each of them with maturity and strength. She's such a real character, but at the same time, is the ideal any girl wants to be in the place of, which is part of the reason why this book is so enjoyable. Corlath and his kingdom of Damar are fascinating, and leave you rooting for both throughout the entire book. You'll fall in love with the desert and its delightful language, and come to admire the king who's trying to unite his formerly scattered country against a threat. The land of Damar, which is called Daria by the Homelander (colonials who have come from Home to 'civilize' the country, who don't understand or believe in magic) is exotic but always understandable. Unlike many fantasy books, you don't get lost trying to figure out which mystic city is connected to what magic plant etc, etc. The connections between the threatening demon magic of the north, the industrial strength of the Homelander, and the 'kelar' of the Hillfolk whom Harry is cast in with, are amazingly fun to follow along with. Narknon, the porridge-loving, entirely independent hunting cat, is just as fascinating a character as the king and the Homelander Harry. Everything, in fact, is so well-developed that it becomes fascinating. It's so well thought-out, so believable, that if you're anything like me, once you read it, it will be a favorite for years to come. My only regret is that there isn't more to read, because I'd snatch it up in a heartbeat.

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