



Masters & Slayers

Bryan Davis

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Expert swordsman Adrian Masters attempts a dangerous journey to another world to rescue human captives who have been enslaved there by dragons. He is accompanied by Marcelle, a sword maiden of amazing skill whose ideas about how the operation should be carried out conflict with his own. Since the slaves have been in bonds for generations, they have no memory of their origins, making them reluctant to believe the two would-be rescuers, and, of course, the dragons will crush any attempt to emancipate the slaves. Set on two worlds separated by a mystical portal, Masters and Slayers is packed with action, mystery, and emotional turmoil, a tale of heart and life that is sure to inspire.

Masters & Slayers Details

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Author : Bryan Davis

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From Reader Review Masters & Slayers for online ebook

Norma says

Disclaimer: I received this book free from AMG Publishers in exchange for an honest review. I did not receive any form of compensation.

I really like good fantasy fiction. Them seemed very promising. However, I really had trouble diving into this book like I would have normally.

Apparently, there is an entirely other series written by this author that is geared towards tweens & teens. This book is an adult tie in to that series. Instead of just writing a brand new series for adults, he decided to take the adults from that other series and tell the stories from their points of view. The main problem was that I felt like it really just jumped into the middle of the story. It really seemed interdependent on the reader to have read his other series.

I eventually got frustrated with feeling lost while reading and just could not finish this book. Maybe if I ever decide to read the other series, then I might pick this book back up again. However, I really am doubtful that I would do that. If I can't pick up a book in a series (even if it is the middle of the series) and figure out what is going on and who is who, then I really won't bother getting any other books in the series. Mainly because who is to say whether or not the author just doesn't know how to introduce characters or plot points.

If you have read his other series that this ties into and enjoyed it, then why not give this one a shot. If you haven't read the other series, then either read that one first or bypass this book. Sorry...

Christie Hagerman says

Masters & Slayers is the first book in the Tales of Starlight series for adults by Bryan Davis. This series is the slightly more ramped up version of the Dragons of Starlight series, written for teens. My daughters had recently read the first of their series and were excited about the plot, so I dove into my corresponding book.

At first, it seemed I'd entered in the middle of a book, or picking up where a previous one had left off. I was a little lost in the first few chapters, and had a hard time grabbing the characters. The rest of the book was worth the confusion, however. I followed the young hero and heroine from their world, an odd mix of modern and medieval, into the realm ruled by cruel dragons who'd enslaved humans generations ago. The two fight to free these captives, starting the series with exciting rescues and hints of a future relationship. They were assisted by various spirit beings, and a dragon who was difficult to judge, at times helping the heroes, and at times siding with his fellow dragons. Do these additional characters turn out to be helpers or hindrances to the cause?

I particularly enjoyed the similarities between the physical situations of the captives, and spiritual implications that apply in our own world today. Some slaves had given up their hope for salvation, choosing to accept their enslavement and live under the burden of their taskmasters. When the hero appeared, his way to freedom seemed too risky to some, too different from what they'd always known. At no part of the book, however, was there a preachy feel or direct mention of Christianity.

Several things made this book one I won't be sharing with my early teen daughters. A few violent depictions of murder or maiming, including children, put this out of range for their bookshelf. Also, several explanations of the breeding rooms included a bit too much detail, although there was much left to the imagination. I would definitely recommend this to any adult friends who enjoy the fantasy genre.

Simay Yildiz says

This is one of those books where I feel like if I get too excited and type away, I'll give way too much away. It was a busy time at work when I read this, and I'm even thinking it was a good thing 'cos the excitement was rather enjoyable. It will most definitely make you think "One more chapter before I go to sleep" as you see the clock hit 4am, especially if you're the "Dragons? Count me in!" kind of person like I am.

This is the story of young warriors who set out to save the humans kidnapped by dragons and kept at the dragon planet for forever. Adrian is one of the main characters, who gives up the glorious world of the tournaments to find the dragon planet and rescue the kidnapped. One of the popular warriors, Marcelle, is also in this with Adrian. They must figure out where the portal is, but they must be careful about it because their society will not like what they're up to.

To me, the characters are pretty much as important as the story itself, maybe even more. And I really, really liked Marcelle. Most of the times when there's a female heroine, they're either too girly, or stupidly brave. Marcelle was pretty much perfect in the way that she's a girl, but she's a strong girl who can take care of herself without going overboard and putting the reader off.

On their quest to find the dragon planet, there are also other characters who enter the scene, and there's lots of action, sword-fighting, slaying dragons... There's also the interaction between the characters-- they must decide whom they can trust, who's the enemy, who's on their side. Some of the characters we don't know much about yet, but I have a feeling they'll show up in the following books, and we'll have a lot more "whoa!" moments. *Masters & Slayers* has everything one looks for in a book: strong characters, betrayal, love and action.

Rachelle Sperling says

See my profile for my star rating system.

Thank you to AMG publishers for providing me with a digital copy of the book for review.

My Thoughts:

Fantasy is my favorite genre of writing, so I have been looking forward to reading *Masters and Slayers*. From the opening pages of the story, the tale captured my attention, making the book nearly impossible to set aside. (It's a good thing I started reading it on a day off rather than on a lunch break!)

I found the narrative interesting and creative. The characters were real, so real that often their motives often remained hidden and left you guessing at the true state of their heart and the source of their actions. I had not previously read any of the author's youth series set in the same world, yet I found the worlds and settings

fully explained. There were several characters that gave you only the briefest glimpses into their stories, so I assume they will be developed in later books.

This book is marketed as a Christian book. I would instead call it theistic and moral, but not distinctly Christian as it did not include the one message that is unique to Christianity, a God who provides himself as the sacrifice, offering salvation and redemption as a free gift that man can not earn or in any way contribute to by his own works. The book does include the presence of a creator god, a moral code, a high value of life, faith as central to life's choices, an underlying belief in justice and the responsibility to protect and defend the weak and oppressed. The book deals with issues of evil and the corruption of power. It also touches on the unmerciful fanaticism of legalistic religion, as well as issues of truth and deception.

This book is marketed for an adult audience including the adult themes of murder, brutality, slavery, lust and rape, but it does so in non-graphic ways, presenting elements of evil in the story without dwelling on the details. I appreciate any author who is able to discuss evil without having to paint graphic pictures.

I would recommend Masters and Slayers as a fascinating story, with varied themes and engaging characters. I look forward to the release of book two and the continuation of the Tales of Starlight.

Maria says

Note: There is another set of books out there titled The Dragons of Starlight Series. It's by the same author, but from some of the research I've done, it looks like that series is more YA while this novel is for adults.

With that being said - I loved this book :) I have to admit to being a little bias though, because I am a huge Eragon fan - and I adore books about dragons. So if you do too, this book will make you so happy, lol.

The basic storyline is about this idea that there is another world out there - inhabited by dragons - where humans are being taken as slaves. The dragons (most of them) treat humans like they're garbage. They abuse them, force them to breed with each other and barely give them anything to eat. But there are some who have made it their mission in life to save the slaves and make sure that the dragons never come back to their planet again.

What I love in this story is two things: first off, one of the main characters who goes out to "save the day" is a woman named Marcelle. She's a girl who hates wearing dresses, loves to show-up men in sword competitions and is ridiculously brave. I love her attitude and passion. The second thing I love about this story is the fact that Marcelle and Adrian (our other hero) don't necessarily realize that they're in love in the beginning. And even in the end, they still don't fully admit it, but you can see the feelings showing up. Far too many times, the two characters fall in love WAY to fast in these books - but I was so intrigued by the way this love-story works.

I really enjoyed this book, and think that you all will too. Check it out - 4 out of 5 stars :)

Maria @ GoodChoiceReading.com

Leah says

This one is definitely aimed toward specific readers; unfortunately, I am not one of them. Just didn't stir my Kool-Aid. The quality of the storytelling was good - engaging with a smooth pace - but there were [subjective] elements I would've had to actively overlook to enjoy the complete story.

While Masters & Slayers offered a well-written albeit familiar plot, most characters were way too black and white; the "good" guys were SOOO good they felt like characters, not real people.

The multiple mentions of "the Code" and "the Creator" were a little too blunt [for my tastes] - Christian fiction can be written subtlety - and the "lessons" were starting to feel preachy and aimed at the reader rather than Adrian or Marcelle.

Aside from the heavy religious overtones, the contradiction between their medieval-like world and the ability to have cool techs like courier tubes, which require a DNA deposit to open and then play video messages, or the litmus finger, proved too much for me to overlook.

Started and stopped on November 25, 2012. Read through page 170, chapter 10.

Danielw says

3 1/2 stars. Decent sci fi/ fantasy book that gets better as it goes. It does start slowly but if you give it time it does grow on you. The long and short of the story is you follow Adrian and Marvell's as they go to a Dragon ruled world to free their human slaves and bring them back to their planet. Some of the secondary characters are not very interesting but the main characters plus Cassabrie are well written and they carry your interest into novel 2 of the series.

Tiani says

I found it a little slow to get into, but really enjoyed it overall. I've read the companion series, and quite enjoyed reading about Adrian's experiences on Starlight.

Meagan Myhren-bennett says

MASTERS & SLAYERS
Tales of Starlight #1
By Bryan Davis

Masters & Slayers follows the same basic plot as Davis's Starlighter (Dragons of Starlight) but it follows the adult members of the story – Adrian Masters and Marcelle, instead of the teenage members.

Masters & Slayers also begins where Starlighter began with the Blood Tournament. But Masters & Slayers is

more grown up as it deals with more of the political under currents that make Major Four what it is. Yet the mission is the same – to find the “lost ones” the people who were stolen away and forced to serve the dragons of Dracon.

Adrian Masters’s mission is more personal as he is also searching for his missing brother Frederick, while Marcelle’s double purpose is to find the man responsible for her mother’s murder years ago. But before this can happen they must find the portal to Dracon. Aiding them is a glowing being who takes the appearance of a 15 year old girl. This being is named Cassabrie and she is the dragon’s messenger. But when Cassabrie returns to Dracon, Marcelle leaps through the portal with her and meets Arxad. Arxad takes Marcelle to the Southlands where the human slaves live.

Meanwhile Cassabrie goes back for Adrian and Edison Masters. When they arrive at Dracon danger soon strikes and Adrian and Edison are almost killed attempting to cross a frozen river. They are saved by the white dragon the King of the Northlands.

On Major Four Drexel finds the other portal to Dracon and has the genetic keys needed to open it - the fingers of a descendant who escaped Dracon. Once on Dracon he locates some of the slaves and promptly kills the four adults. He plans to take two of the five children back to Major Four with him. Drexel’s only goal is to be worshipped as a hero!

When Marcelle and Adrian meet up, Adrian is inhabited by Cassabrie as she guides them on their quest. They enter the cattle camps where the youngest slaves are forced to survive. Against Adrian’s advice Marcelle attacks the dragon overseer and Adrian is forced to help her. To save Marcelle and the children Adrian gives himself up to the dragon who comes to punish the camp. Marcelle then realizes that her temper and lack of thinking have gotten them into this situation.

Marcelle attempts to rescue Adrian though Cassabrie wants him give up so that they can be together forever. What will Adrian choose and who will be lost in this battle for Starlight.

Masters & Slayers is an exciting addition to the Starlight world. This book is most definitely intended for adults and older teens.

W. Lattimore says

As good as I hoped. I had never read a dragon-themed fantasy novel before. I think I will enjoy this series. Onto book #2!

Rachel Thomson says

Readers of the young adult fantasy "Starlighter" will recognize the opening scene of Bryan Davis's upcoming "Masters and Slayers" — that feeling of "we've been here before" is more than just *deja vu*. "Masters and Slayers" is the first book in the "Tales of Starlight" series published by AMG/Living Ink, a fantasy series for adults that shares a world, characters, and an overarching plot with Zondervan's YA series "Dragons of Starlight."

This time, as the book opens in an arena where the most gifted warriors of Major 4 compete, our attention is focused not on Jason Masters — hero of "Starlighter" — but on Adrian, his older brother, who is about to give up the glory and title of champion for the sake of principle and principle alone: his nearest competitor is a woman, Marcelle, and Adrian does not fight women. He steps down, and in that one act of character reveals to anyone who cares to look that he really is a hero.

A hero worth his salt, Adrian has greater things than tournaments on his mind. He is preparing to follow a series of mysterious clues to a portal that will take him to another world: Starlight, the dragon planet, where kidnapped humans have been held as slaves for generations. The passionate and revenge-hungry Marcelle goes with him, along with two more unexpected companions (sorry, no more details — I'm trying to avoid spoilers!). Their goal is to free the slaves — but first they must survive a conspiracy on their own planet, find their way through the portal, encounter a benevolent dragon who rules the Northlands of Starlight, and learn to work together before mistrust and mistakes destroy their hopes before they can even begin to be realized.

"Masters and Slayers" is a far more adult story than "Starlighter." Marcelle, who avoids being the stereotypical "headstrong female" by virtue of her fears and deep frailties, tries her hardest to fight, dress, and guard herself like a man because of the serial-killer-style murder of her mother. While Adrian's chivalry is noted and upheld, the very opposite attitudes of some villains (and the dragon habit of breeding their human slaves) gets more than a passing mention. The violence is also more realistic (read: gorier) and the villains more obviously despicable. But "Masters and Slayers" isn't just "adult" in the sense of earning a higher content rating. It's also deeper, more thought-provoking, and more disturbing in good ways — the kinds of ways that provoke us to compassion and force us to look more clearly at ourselves.

Had I not read "Starlighter" firs't, I might have found some of the plot intersections annoying (too many unexplained actions and dangling threads), but overall I thought the juxtaposition of the series works well — at least, so far! The worlds of Starlight and Major 4 are better developed in "Masters and Slayers," and in my opinion, are noticeably cooler. I still found the mix of science and fantasy hard to settle into (our heroes wield swords, arrows, and axes, but local government forces use DNA to convict criminals; video comes into play, as does genome mapping, yet the setting is medieval in most other ways).

My overall opinion? I read "Masters and Slayers" in a matter of hours because "Starlighter" hooked me on the story enough to make me want to know what else is happening in it. After reading M&S, I'm even more hooked. I have questions, I care about certain characters, and I want closure. I was going to write that as a negative — I didn't feel like "Masters and Slayers" offered much closure in anything. But when it comes right down to it, that just means I really want to read the next book. Recommended for discerning readers who enjoy fantasy and don't mind tackling tough issues that don't have easy answers.

- Rachel Starr Thomson, author of The Seventh World Trilogy, www.worldsunseen.com

Rachel's Book Reviews says

Masters and Slayers by Bryan Davis

Adrian Masters was taught by his father to always respect women and never raise his sword against them. Marcelle fights with a sword better than most men, she fights with vengeance. The fighting matches are good, and yes, entertaining, especially when she can embarrass her old friend Adrian about his old man's way of thinking. Chivalry is dead and it doesn't matter. If chivalry existed her mother would still be alive.

Adrian would be the best swordsman if it weren't for Marcelle (...er..swordmaiden). True to his honor and upbringing, he always forfeits against her. It never bothered him too much though. These matches were just practice. What he really wanted to do was go out and find the missing. People had been going missing for years, disappearing without a trace. There was one theory though. That they had been enslaved on another world called starlight. Starlight is rumored to be the most dangerous place in any realm, it's ruled by (mostly) ruthless dragons who will do anything to reap profits. Adrian's dream comes true when he is allowed to go to starlight, the only problem being his partner is Marcelle. While they both have amazing skills with a sword, Adrian would prefer a stealthy, strategic approach, while hot-headed impulsive Marcelle would rather just go on the attack. Adrian must get to Starlight, keep the two of them out of danger, and save the slaves. With his fierce devotion, Adrian will do anything to get Marcelle and the children off Starlight. Even if it means he has to die.

I love this book. First of all, I just love Bryan Davis. All his books are fantastic for a lot of reasons. I could blab on and on about them but one of the biggest factors is that his plots are complex and interesting. You have to own a brain to truly get the real message. His books always whisper to me 'can you handle it?' I love the challenge and I love his bighearted heroes. Not to mention, I love pretty much any book with a sword in it (one of my more shallow reasons.) It's not for the weak reader, but I enjoy them immensely. I definitely recommend this book.

Review for Rachel's Book Reviews

Jan Razil says

Holy crap. Never have I been this attached to a romantic scenery before. So much to anticipate in the 2nd book. Kudos to Bryan Davis.

Samuel Sylvester says

Well this book wasn't that fantastic, and seemed a little sketchy to me in some areas.

But the main theme in the book was...

Is very very good.

And that slavery is bad. Very. Very. Bad.

Scratches head and looks thoughtful

Yep, that about sums it up. I would have written a longer review, but as I was writing the draft, the computer shut down and I lost all my progress except a very early save.

We're talking less than a quarter. So I just haven't got the heart to try and replicate it.

One thing I had a problem with, was the lack of description on the dragons. I didn't even want to read a book about dragons at the time, and was hoping for more of a "young warrior in an army" kind of read. I can't be sure (It's been a few days since I read this), but I didn't get much of a description besides the fact that they vary in size, some are "Three men high", and some are small enough to struggle to hold a human in their claws. While others can have a human ride on their neck easily. They also have ears that can swivel.

Not much to go on there. I can't tell what is standard size, or what size some dragons are when introduced by name alone.

Overall, I was just confused throughout the entire book and was glad when it ended. It wasn't so terrible as much as just not my type.

So you are welcome to read this book if you love dragons and fantasy worlds. But personally, I don't think I'll be reading the next one.

Hope this review helps.

-Samuel

P.S

If you haven't noticed, this is my first experience using GIFs and images in a review. I like this, this is good. We should do this more often.

Rachel says

Mr. Davis reminded me once again why I love his writing. With intriguing, vibrant characters and a fast-paced plot, this book fulfilled (and even surpassed at points) my expectations.

For those who have read the "Dragons of Starlight" series, you'll be excited to discover what happens to Adrian and Marcelle. This is the other side of the adventure.

Although the stories have significantly different arcs, the plots could be nearly combined into one book. However, I do not believe that it detracts from the story arc at all, at least not at this point. Don't hesitate to pick up this book just because you haven't read the other series!

If you love fantasy and science fiction, this is certainly a great book to read. It's so difficult to find Christian books in these genres, so take this opportunity to read a great blend of the two.

Special note to younger readers: This book is written for an older audience than most previous books. In the front, Mr. Davis has a very nice description of how this has influenced the story. Please read this before continuing.
