



The Lady of the Sea

Rosalind Miles

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Isolde, heir to the throne of the queens, is now a sovereign in her own right. With the glories of the throne comes the responsibility of a queen, and Isolde knows she must return to her beloved Western Isle. She can no longer tolerate her marriage to King Mark of Cornwall, a marriage she has accepted for years in order to save her country from the threat of war and to be near her only love, Mark's nephew Tristan of Lyonesse. King Mark, always cowardly and spiteful, is too heavily influenced by his monks and counselors, who loathe the powerful and independent Isolde. And so she leaves Cornwall for good and comes home to Ireland, where her lords face a growing threat from the warlike Picti, who live in the barren highlands to the north of England. The Picti have a bold new king, Darath, who is determined to take the riches of Ireland for his own people, whether by war or by marriage with Isolde.

Isolde gathers her armies to confront the Picti and faces a violent conflict as well with King Mark, who vows he will not let a prize like Isolde, and Ireland, slip from his grasp. Isolde is last in a line of famous warrior queens who have guarded Ireland from time before memory, and now she—and her knight, Tristan—must play out their fate and face her enemies in a final battle, a war that could spell ruin for them both.

The Lady of the Sea Details

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Sue says

How oh so romantic! Normally, this isn't really my thing ,but this series was quite wonderful. I very much enjoyed Miles' feminist take on a very old story. Its like she stripped away the awful male-dominant Christian veneer a found the true tale of a time when women were strong and not broken down beings who were owned by their husbands. That being said, not all the men in this were horrible sexist pigs. Quite a number were Goddess worshipping and loved fierce independent women. A great book for anyone into fantasy or historical fiction and for those interested in feminist fiction.

Nicole D. says

This book was mind-numbing

I felt obligated to finish the trilogy. It was a mistake. This book was so unbelievably boring.

You see, Tristan and Isolde get separated. Then Tristan is beset by something and then Isolde whines to the Goddess, oh my love my love. Then they get back together, and then they get separated and then Tristan is beset by something and Isolde whines to the Goddess, oh my love my love. Repeat.

It's horrid. I wish I could get a refund. Truly, don't waste your time. Try the Kushiel series by Jacqueline Carey, it's a way better investment in your time (and reading dollar.)

Melissa says

interesting twist to the classic love story

Jody Baer-Swanson says

(SPOILERS)

Dear God or should I say Goddess Mother? (No offense to my pagan friends, and I do have a couple, however; I will say this book should definitely be offensive to them.)

I kept hoping that this story would somehow come up with a good explanation for some things, yet so many things made no sense.

Maybe I am totally clueless and if so then that's my misunderstanding and lack of knowledge, BUT...

If the Picts were so vicious and scary that Isolde thought her knights would be outmatched, why was her plan be to keep them stuck there until winter and they ran out of food rations? Don't you think if backed into that position they would just ransack her villages, take over the palace, and murder people for their food?

Then Darath had it in his head he was going to take Ireland and have Isolde as his queen, then he suddenly is okay with the idea of his men just courting the women to take as wives and supplies back home?

What?...What?

If Tristan was the King of Lyonesse in his own right why was he acting like Mark's little bitch all the time and worrying about Mark being mad if he left his service? I mean doesn't he have his own kingdom to run? How is it that Mark is able to just lock Tristan and Isolde up like he did for adultery? Even if they were caught and witnessed by Andred, Tristan and Isolde are both a King and Queen of other lands. Wouldn't that demand at least a trial in front of Queen Igraine?

Then such a big deal was made about Isolde taking the way of the Mother to open her womb so she and Tristan could finally have a child. I mean it was talked about repeatedly!! I kept waiting...and waiting...AND WAITING. I even figured it would be sprung on the last page that she was pregnant, but NOTHING. What was the point of that?

As I stated in my previous review of Book #2 I have not yet read the Guenevere trilogy so maybe there is something I am missing, but I really don't think I will be rushing out to do that now.

Prom says

I gave this book 3 stars, whereas I've given the other two books 2 because it was set at a faster pace and everyone got what they deserved. Plus, it was the last one and I don't have to feel obligated to read any more of them.

I have known Tristan and Isolde to be such a terrific tragedy. I've known their story to be one of epic love and soul crushing loss. This invention of them left me wishing for bad things to happen to them so that they would experience that burn for their missing half. So the way it ended was a little confusing for me and it felt like the author was reaching a bit. I actually found myself pinning for Isolde and Mark to work their marriage out! I guess what I'm trying to say is that the forbidden nature of Tristan and Isolde was either not conveyed well enough in this series, or it just plain wasn't there.

The supernatural, "otherworldly," happenings were a bit wonky and hokey, I thought. I mean, I am a very open minded person, but even I, in the last chapter, was like, "Whaaat?" I had to re-read that chapter to really understand all that was happening.

I don't know. I'm still an advocate for these books being appropriate for tweens or anyone looking for a really quick read and mostly historical possibilities instead of true romantic notions.

Elizabeth(The Book Whisperer) says

Great series!

Betty Strohecker says

Accepting her loveless marriage to King Mark and staying in Cornwall to be near Tristan and keep her country free from war, Isolde now finds she can no longer stay away from her beloved homeland, but must fulfill her duties as thir Queen. When she arrives, she finds her lords upset and facing an invasion from warriors to the north. Thus this final book in the trilogy brings together all of the major players to face their destiny. War, treachery, and passion play out in this exciting finale.

Erin says

The conclusion to the Tristan and Isolde story that started with and . I love Miles portrayal of Isolde, the Queen of Ireland as she maneuvers her way to becoming a fierce political rival and warrior queen. She had so much great and meaty dialogue that I really enjoyed reading.

Unfortunately, I continued to dislike Tristan throughout this series. I couldn't stand all the weeping and stamping out in temper tantrums when Isolde and he disagreed. Dareth, King of the Picts was so interesting and I felt he was a much better match for Isolde. I guess that probably distracts from the actual real love story.

Sarahz says

This book was enjoyable, but the writing was not extraordinary. A light, easy read. I rated the entire trilogy a 3, but I almost rated this book a 4 due to the last 25 pages or so. I particularly enjoyed Isolde's conversation with the arrogant envoy from "the ear of the Pope himself," "Dom Luis Carlos Felipe Arranganzo de Sevilla y Cadiz y Pinca y Salamanca and so forth and so forth..." p. 72

Arranganzo curled his long, elegant lip. "God has ordained that only men should rule. Why should we share that rightful power with you? Why should men give power to women at all? Think what you are, my lady, all of you. You are no more than the rib of Adam, the serpent's plaything, the dust of the earth."

Isolde sighed. "Ah, Christian, your ignorance is vaster than oceans, darker than a starless sky...Every woman is the vessel of the Goddess, bringing new life to the world. And she is the Goddess in her life, in her family, in her home... You Christians have stolen from our Goddess...Your holy Trinity is only our Goddess in her threefold incarnation of Mother, Maiden and Crone. Your holy communion is our Goddess's feast of love, where all are served and none are sent empty away. Even your Grail--why every woman is a grail! Every man is born to seek the woman of the dream and to find his finest self in that great search...what you call the Grail is a woman's vessel of her womanhood, forever rich, moist, and full."

The priest was quivering with disgust..."How dare you talk of a woman's body to a man of God?"

..."Our religion teaches us to delight in our bodies and to share with our lovers the joy the Goddess gives. And that sharing, that love, brings forth our offspring, the children we love in the way the Mother loves us. That is why we stand for birth, while you glorify death. Regeneration, not crucifixion, is our faith."

...All the earth is in the hands of our Great One, who is both land and sea. From her dim cavern underneath the earth she works at two mighty looms. At the first, she weaves life upward through the trembling grass, and at the second, she weaves death downward through the kindly mold. The sound of her weaving is all eternity, and the name we give it here is 'time.' But it is the warp and weft of all that is rich and rare. It is all we know of beauty in this world, though from time to time it comes to us as pain...There is no life worth living without pain. Even love becomes pain when our loved ones fail and die. But the pain of change is the price we pay for growth. Without love, without life, without growth, we are hollow husks. The Great One gave us this world to enjoy it to the full." pp. 335-337

While this book depicts one Christian devotee as loving and wise, the others are portrayed as women-despising, power-hungry men, willing to "adjust" their morals in the name of service to the Church. As a person insulted by hate-mongering, it was easy to dislike the remorselessly resentful Dominion and the

representative of papel power, Arranganzo.

The Lady tells Isolde:

"Three candles light every darkness: nature, knowledge and truth. Fear not, you have them all." p. 342

"We all fail...but we rise and renew the struggle every day. That is our task. At the end of our lives, we hand over the work we have done. We are only set here on earth to light the way for those who follow on." p. 342

"Watch the wheel, Isolde, always watch the wheel. The wheel is the sea, rolling around our world. The wheel is the world and the lives that flourish there. The wheel is the shape of life and of time itself. Our faith teaches us how to watch that wheel and to follow the wheel of the year every year of our lives." p. 344

"This is your destiny, Isolde, this is your fate. Now you will feel in yourself the force of all things that live and breathe in this world of ours. Every plant, every leaf, every tree will be alive to you, as real to you as you are to yourself." p. 345

As the story concludes, "A last whisper drifted down and around them like a wind from the moon. Go with your Gods. Make the world a better place." p. 349

Amen!

Amber Ly says

This put me through a whole lot of emotions and made my heart race a lot. The ending was intense and I loved it.

Katrina says

3rd installment of Miles' story of Tristan & Isolde. Excellent series and this book might have been my favorite one. I read every page not knowing how she would end the story and that's always a happy surprise. I hate when books are too predictable.

Tiffany says

This series is just awful and the third book is the most awful because the author only uses the Tristan and Isolde source material in books one and two. Book three is all the author and her fascination with the mother goddess and her plot conflicts that seem like they will last throughout the book until she suddenly resolves them midway through and picks up a new one. I love the original story but these three books were incredibly painful.

Abigail says

Would read again and buy

Erin Miller says

Rosalind Miles is a historical fiction author and has written an interesting trilogy on the original star crossed lovers Tristan and Isolde. The book The Lady of the Sea is the third book in the Isolde and Tristan trilogy by Rosalind Miles. It was interesting but could have been done better but it was definitely better than the second book in the trilogy.

Isolde in The Lady of the Sea by Rosalind Miles is Queen of Ireland. The King Darath of the Picts is threatening to invade Ireland so she sets to return to the Western Isle to take care of this threat of invasion. Now the way she had dealt with this threat was to use peaceful tactics and while I agree nothing gets solved by bloodshed I felt this part of the story was a bit unrealistic. Darath and the Picts were a race of men known to exterminate women and show no mercy to anyone so for a King of this type of people to follow Isolde's lead just didn't make sense to me although I do appreciate the idea.

Meanwhile, King Mark is growing jealous of the bond of Tristan and Isolde. Once again I have to remember the time period this story takes place because King Mark was having an affair on the side himself with the Lady Elva who he ended up casting aside. Still, King Mark becomes a blood thirsty tyrant because of his cowardice and the religious extremism of the Christians in the story such as Father Dominian and Arraganzo. It really was just sad. That's all I can say about that.

The love between Tristan and Isolde was just annoying. I mean it's great that they were each other's true loves or what not but really it seemed to two were way too codependent on another, at least in the beginning of the story. I admit I did appreciate the love between the couple towards the end of the story when Tristan rescues Isolde from a leper house and Mark goes hunting for them.

Still, this book has twists and turns within that can be enjoyed. I personally think it could have been done better but it wasn't that bad. All in all, it was a pretty good story. I rate The Lady of the Sea by Rosalind Miles a 5 out of 10.

Kathy says

The last book in the Tristan and Isolde series. If the reader is expecting a happy ending then don't read this book. Pretend it doesn't exist. That said the original is meant to be a tragedy. Both Tristan and Isolde are meant to die. Then two intertwining bushes or flowers grow on their grave. The symbolism is what make the original story so beautiful. Even in death their love endures.

Lady of Sea is Miles' interpretation of the ending of Tristan and Isolde. But, it's not as good as the original. Isolde gets sick of King Mark's behaviour and leaves to Ireland. Ireland is in another war. This time with the Picts which are the Scottish. Later with King Mark. This book is a hot mess. Miles should have ended the story with the second book.
