



Agnes Moor's Wild Knight

Alyssa Cole

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Agnes Moor knows her place in the court of King James IV—as one of the “exotics” in his employ. When the king makes a kiss from Agnes the prize of a tourney, a mysterious knight plows through his opponents to claim it. But it isn’t chance. The Wild Knight has come for her, and her champion is after after the most elusive prize of all: her heart.

Agnes Moor's Wild Knight Details

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From Reader Review Agnes Moor's Wild Knight for online ebook

Erika says

2.5 stars

Decent sexy parts, but I didn't really like the heroine. For such a short story, she was really negative, argumentative and b****y for most of the book. One thing I DID like: she actually had had lovers in her past, instead of being the usual virgin heroine.

The FountainPenDiva, Old school geek chick and lover of teddy bears says

I just wish this story had been a damn sight longer. Normally, novellas are not my thing because they feel so incomplete, but Agnes Moor's Wild Knight was a full, lush and gorgeous tale that didn't leave me feeling cheated.

I mean what's not to LOVE about a historical interracial Highlander romance? Not only that, but it's based on an actual historical incident known as The Tournament of the Wild Knight and the Black Lady. James IV was a wily ruler and it was known that he did have African courtiers in his court. While some IR authors want to wallow in Gone With the Wind-land, trying to portray an unequal power relationship between a Black slave woman and a White owner as perfectly normal (not that they never happened), they're ignoring a vast treasure trove of Black/African history that would not just entertain, but enlighten.

Agnes Moor is a young Black woman living in Scotland during the reign of King James IV. She's not a slave though, but a lady in waiting, trusted advisor and even a bit of a spy. This was a heroine who had agency and was full of wit, warmth and intelligence. She's also very aware that her skin colour marks her as something of an anomaly. What I especially appreciated (being an Elizabethan re-enactor myself), is Alyssa Cole showcases a far more diverse Tudor-era Britain.

The Wild Knight is a Scottish Highland lord named Gareth who has been smitten with Agnes since he first made her acquaintance at an unsuccessful attempt at unification at Gareth's keep. He's determined to do whatever it takes to win her hand, and her skin color be damned. Even James IV's own queen, Margaret, knows that the mysterious Wild Knight is in love with her lady-in-waiting. Meanwhile Agnes is trapped between the needs of her liege lord to unite the feuding Highland clans and that of her heart. And Gareth was the kind of stubborn Highlander who will not take no for an answer, despite Agnes' own reservations.

Race is not treated in a heavy-handed manner. Agnes knows she's a curiosity in a racially-homogenized country, some parts which have never seen anyone who looks like her. Moreover, this is a young woman who's had a sexual past of her own choosing, something I really liked reading about. She also had natural kinky hair. Nothing makes me roll my eyes faster than some Black/African historical heroine who's written like an ad for Garnier.

Damn, I wish this had been three-hundred pages long. I totally got lost in this story. My only complaint was the language/style sometimes seemed a little too modern for a historical novel. It wasn't jarring, but it's important that I feel immersed in a setting.

Katie Reus says

I adored this story and wished it had been longer!

LPJ says

So short, but nicely done. It's really too short to have a real emotional connection to these characters, though I do really like Agnes and respect her. Still, having a black woman in 16th century Scotland and pairing her up with a Highlander ... Alyssa Cole wins for that. The story was intriguing and developed nicely. The side characters were engaging, I really liked Queen Margaret. I want more from this world, more tales of the "exotics" - people invisible in our modern recollection of history but present in reality. An excellent quick read!

Kim says

I initially heard about Agnes Moor's Wild Knight on Facebook--not much information was provided by the poster other than that it was IR historical romantic fiction and set in Scotland. I figured I'd give it a shot--and I wasn't disappointed.

Set in the intriguing world of the court of King James IV and Margaret Tudor, Alyssa Cole's Agnes Moor's Wild Knight is inspired by a jousting tournament called the Tournament of the Black Lady, which King James held in honor of his black servant, Ellen Moor. The winner of the tournament won the honor of kissing Ellen. In Agnes Moor's Wild Knight, the prize is the same, this time it is Agnes whose kiss is the prize.

Agnes Moor's Wild Knight tells the story of two "misfits"--Agnes Moor, an African woman who is part of James IV and Margaret Tudor's court, and the Wild Knight--an unknown knight who refuses to reveal himself until the tourney's end--who is determined to win her.

It's a richly woven story with enough historical fact to whet the appetite of a history nerd like me without inundating the story. Romantic and intense, Cole does a fantastic job of getting the reader hooked as we, along with Agnes, long to know who is the mysterious knight and why she feels so drawn to him.

Loved it--didn't want the story to end. So now I am begging you, Alyssa Cole, tell us more of Agnes and her Knight's story. This would make for such a fascinating novel! :D

Suleikha Snyder says

Interracial Scottish medieval? Where do I sign up! Wait, I DID sign up, and it was well worth it! Alyssa Cole's short, sexy tale of an "exotic" in James IV's court and a mysterious knight is the kind of diverse historical romance readers need to see more of -- not just because of the (historically accurate!) representation, but because her writing is evocative and the banter is smart.

Melanie (Mel's Bookland Adventures) says

My aim is to read more fiction by authors of colour, ideally women and also to dip my toe a bit more into historical romance. This was short and very steamy.

Megan says

Rich and nuanced without being overwhelming in such a short format. I loved Cole's voice in this one. (I didn't like Sweet to the Taste very much, but this short-but-strong romance is SO GOOD.)

Connie says

This was an excellent story for it being under 50 pages. It was a complete story with distinct characters, great plot, the language and spelling fit the time period that the writer was trying to achieve (for the most part), and there wasn't any overcontrived drama. I felt the attraction between the characters Agnes and Gareth even though I didn't even know who Gareth was for the first at least 25% of the book. :)

A knight fought in a tourney to win the kiss of our fair Agnes. She was an exotic showpiece/emissary of the king. She was a slave bound for the New World when her ship wrecked and the King James IV and Queen Margaret assimilated Agnes into their court. She was smart, elegant and she served her adopted country with grace, class and style even though she knew not everyone accepted her as an equal. The story had some historical background based on the actual tourney of 1508 when King James honored his African servant Ellen. I really liked the story for the dance between the two characters. Agnes didn't trust him because she understood her position in court. Gareth didn't care about his position in court because the noble people thought of all highlanders as savages anyway, so they had that special kinship in where neither truly felt accepted by the noble court system, yet they both had their parts to play in the political arena. For Gareth to fight so valiantly for his lady love spoke of the love that he had for her in that no one was going to be able to win that kiss, except himself. It put a smile on my face. :)

I'm wavering between a 4 and 5 star for this story, so I'll go with a 4.49 because if I went with 4.5, I should round up. ;)

Tiffany Reisz says

I read this last year and forgot to review on GR. Something reminded me of it yesterday. This was a fantastic historical romance novella. Loved every page of it. Great premise, based on true events. Only complaint was that it was so good it should have been a full-length novel. If you're looking for a well-written historical, I highly recommend this one.

Delaney Diamond says

This story was short but was very satisfying in the details and the connection between the hero and heroine. I enjoy Highlander stories and was excited to read one that included a heroine who is an “exotic”—rescued from a Portuguese slave ship—in King James’s court. Very well written.

Heather Jones says

When I was reading Bernadette Andrea’s *The Lives of Girls and Women from the Islamic World in Early Modern British Literature and Culture*, I spotted a reference to Elen More, a black woman in the early 16th century Scottish court, and instantly realized, OMG, that’s the inspiration for that story I saw among Alyssa Cole’s publications! And then the chance of spotting the ebook on sale led me to pick it up, because I loved Cole’s story in the collection *Hamilton’s Battalion*.

So...this is not at all a criticism of *Agnes Moor’s Wild Knight* itself, but it was a useful calibration of what my tolerance is regarding the ratio of story to sex in historical fiction. This is a relatively short novella. The writing is technically excellent and the history is solidly portrayed. The depiction of the experience of a black woman in 16th century Britain felt solid and nuanced. But structurally, the story felt like it had just barely enough scene setting to justify setting up the sex scenes. And since I wasn’t there for the sex scenes, I didn’t get my story fix. It isn’t at all a criticism of the story because clearly there are a lot of readers who are looking for exactly this sort of balance. But it’s not for me and I’ve adjusted my buy-reflexes accordingly.

Monique says

Wow! I really enjoyed this little literary gem. Besides being very well-written and historically accurate, the story was very engaging. Yes - there could realistically be a tale of a African lady of King James IV's court, who is wooed by a Scottish knight. It was short, sexy and sweet, with a very likable H/h. (And the 'Wild Knight'...hot damn).

I hope that Alyssa Cole has more stories like this! 4.5 stars!

Note: There is a 10 minute animated film of the actual history behind this story, called 'The Tournament of the African Lady' made in 2003. I'd love to see it!

Sarah says

This was lovely! It was also quite short, but I liked it for what it is--a sexy medieval story about a powerful black woman in the Scottish court and a very attractive Highland laird. Where else are you going to get that?! But ultimately I wished it was a whole book. There was so much more I wanted to know about Agnes! If you're looking for a short sexy story though, this one's definitely worth it. Alyssa Cole does sexual tension so well, and this was a nice snack to tide me over as I eagerly await the next Loyal League and Reluctant Royals books.

Ines Johnson says

Fantastic read! Agnes is a strong, intelligent, witty character having to swallow her unfair lot in life, but still full of hope. There was just the right amount of racial angst in this book which did not overshadow the steamy and fulfilling love story between these two memorable characters.
