



The Iron Maiden

Resa Nelson

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Astrid is reluctant to travel the winter route beyond the Northlands, even though it's her duty. She'd rather stay home in her village, surrounded by friends and neighbors. Ignoring the bonds of tradition, she decides to spend the cold winter months in the warmth of her blacksmithing shop. Why should she leave the comfort of her cottage to serve and protect foreigners who might raid and harm her native Northlands? Everything changes when a traveling merchant steals Starlight, the first dragonslayer's sword Astrid forged and her last link to her sweetheart DiStephan. Having no time to alert her friends, Astrid races in pursuit of the merchant, determined to reclaim Starlight as her own and return home in time for dinner. Instead, her quest leads her to new lands, unexpected friendships with foreigners, and a harrowing encounter with the damage done by the followers of a new god that considers women as nothing more than servants to men. All the while, she must be ready to face any dragon traveling the winter route.

The Iron Maiden Details

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From Reader Review The Iron Maiden for online ebook

Mary Rowe says

Well done sequel to book 1, Dragonslayer's Sword. Still mysteries to resolve - how did DiStephan die? What is the meaning of the black stone? Is there love and family for the Dragonslayer?

Shirley says

THIS WRITER DOES A FANTASTIC JOB WITH THE STORY LINE AND THE BOOK IS VERY ENTERTAINING. I WOULD RECOMMEND THIS TO ANYONE WHO ENJOYS A SCI-FI BOOK .

Melissa Hayden says

Astrid's been a dragonslayer only for a few months, but thanks to DiStephan's ghost she's learning and knows much of what to do. Astrid's making her rounds through the area as the lizards migrate south this time of year, and looking forward to a relaxing winter by her anvil pounding metal. Taddeo, a true dragon, visits Astrid telling her where to go, on the dragonslayer winter route, in order to restore her arm - the ghost arm that only those eating lizard blood and meat can see and she believes in. Finding late hatching lizard eggs, Astrid decides to do the one thing against what dragonslayers are to do, she keeps them. Once she's back to Guell and settling in, a merchant arrives looking for the current dragonslayer since DiStephan is dead. He claims to have always traveled with DiStephan south in safe passage. Astrid refused to go and wakes the next morning to find her first made dragonslaying sword that belong to her deceased lover and her only connection to him, Starlight, has been stolen. When she catches up to the thief, she finds she needs to travel on as someone forcefully took it from him as well. Astrid finds herself unknowingly following the Dragonslayer southern route for the winter.

Start right off with Astrid fighting with a lizard and seeing how smart they are. Early on in the book we have mentions of DiStephan and I remember the heartache I felt in the first book. Yet by the end of the book I'm not as heartbroken over DiStephan, and have hopes of more with Astrid.

This seems to be a journey of much more than wandering the country side for Astrid. She is on a journey learning more about herself and others that she would protect. She grows to learn who she is and what she is to do, either a blacksmith or a dragonslayer. Astrid has some guilty feelings for the losses she willingly let happen in Dragonslayer's Sword, but they were bad and need to happen for the world. Astrid makes a new friend and we see a journey of a woman who was abused, not knowingly, and raising to more in herself to find more in life which she lost long ago.

We get to see Norah, the young scared dragon again. Taddeo sends Norah to follow Astrid's scent to the dragonwell with the dragon set free from the long prison of stone. To drink from this well the dragon will heal in any way they are hurt or harmed. We get much more of Norah here. Getting to know Norah along with Astrid. She is such a scared girl, dragon, after the torment she lived yet has a good heart. Even the things she did to Astrid as a kid, cruel, were done with her good heart in mind. You have to read to understand that. I liked seeing Norah grow as a character as well. She is finding herself through her own

journey as well.

We travel through the land in this story, spending time with new characters; Margreet, Gershon, and Vinchi. We watch the world unfold a touch more with mentions of the attacks by the Krystr (from first book) on people and much more.

We learn a touch more with the real dragons here. There is an unknown mysterious bond between dragon and dragonslayer. One created in a promise from long ago, now relating to Astrid and Norah. I'm liking this and want to know more about it and the history here.

I'm thinking the Krystr will come more into play in the future books along with the dragon link and real dragon existence. There are even the lizards that Astrid kept, I hope to see them again in the future. So much learned here in this book, yet so much I look forward to learning.

This series has captured my attention with the magic of the lizards and dragons and having grown more in the connection with the slayers. I've enjoyed reading this world created and do look forward to the next two books.

Kate says

After facing her past and realizing her dragonslayer calling, Astrid has been keeping lizards from her hometown of Guell. She's relieved that she'll be able to go back to blacksmithing in the winter, when the lizards move south, but when her sword is stolen, she must leave Guell to get it back. Along the way she makes new friends as well as new enemies and learns that she has to truly make a choice about her path.

I thought The Iron Maiden had much better flow than The Dragonslayer's Sword. While reading the first book, I found it difficult to comprehend some of the characters' motives at times, but in this one I didn't have that problem. Everything seemed well-paced and nicely written. Resa Nelson writes the kind of books that make me want to keep reading, and the writing improvements in The Iron Maiden made me enjoy it even more than the previous book.

Margreet's story was quite compelling, but I was shocked at its ending. I wish there had been another way to work things out so that Astrid returned to Limru. I loved seeing Margreet remember the kind of person she used to be, especially when she brought back the old ritual for her village. What happened almost negated that transformation, though a later conversation between Astrid and Taddeo did make me feel a bit better.

A lot of this book was about the role of women in different societies. Most of it was pretty well-done, especially the contrast between the customs of Guell and the more southern lands. Astrid's shock at foreign cultures was entertaining and informative. However, the misogynistic Krysters' evil seemed a little over-the-top to me. I would have found it much more believable had they actually been trying to do good and gone in the wrong direction. Still, I definitely hated them, so that was certainly successful. I'm sure they'll come up in future books, and I hope Astrid teaches them a sound lesson.

I have to admit, I was most excited about the baby dragons/lizards. What can I say, I love dragons. I was disappointed that they didn't end up being a bigger part of the story, not to mention a little bemused that, after all the trouble Astrid went to to keep them, it didn't bother her at all to leave them later. But when they were in the story, they were absolutely adorable.

Overall, I had a lot of fun reading this book. I finished it in a morning (and a bit of afternoon), and enjoyed it a lot. I hope to see more of the relationship between dragon and dragonslayer as well as a reappearance of the dragonets in the next book.

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Michelle says

In this book Astrid makes a choice to stay in her home village of Guell rather than perform the dragonslayer duty of following what they call 'the winter route' keeping the lizards under control for other villages as the lizards migrate during the colder months.

Unfortunately, this decision is changed for her when her beloved sword 'Starlight' is stolen and Astrid has to leave Guell to follow the thief and try to get it back.

It is this adventure that brings Astrid into new lands where the laws and customs are not like they are in her home village so Astrid has to learn tolerance and to accept the ways of others even if they are not what she is used to.

I thought this book was much easier to follow as far as the flow of the plot than the first book and again I was very easily swept up in the story and world of Astrid and the dragons. The refreshing differences in these books to other fantasy stories make it an interesting read and the short chapters make it an easy book to devour in a couple of hours or so.

In the first book you learn that Astrid is a very head strong and stubborn female character and these traits are also very apparent in *The Iron Maiden*. Sometimes this stubbornness gets Astrid in trouble but throughout the story she seems to grow and learn that her ways are not the only ways in the world. This character development is great and it's nice to see it happening as by the end Astrid is a much more mature person and also more accepting of her role as the Dragonslayer and what such a title means.

Overall I enjoyed reading this book and found myself starting to feel as if I was part of the world within it. I am definitely looking forward to reading the third instalment, *The Stone of Darkness*, just to see what adventures await next.

Sherre Copeland says

This book thoroughly emphasizes self growth and the power and strength even the smallest people have. It was a fantastical, unreal and wonderful addition to the first book and I definitely enjoyed it.

This story continues Astrid's journey as a Dragonslayer/blacksmith. I love how strong willed and set in her belief's she is. It makes her stubborn, but a little stubbornness is sometimes necessary to grow. One of the main themes I gathered from this book involved the position of women in the world. This book seems to be set in a medieval era, thus women were expected to be meek, docile, feminine and ladylike at all times, to follow their men and accept any fate presented to them. Astrid takes those ideals and buries them in the ground. She fights, makes weapons, dresses like men, and has shortened hair (all illegal events in some territories). She stands up for her rights and the rights of other women. Astrid is a true hero. This book takes us on her journey to retrieve her most prized possession, and along the way, teaches her (and us) the value of choices and change.

I loved this story and there were a few things I wish were done better. I hate shifts in narrator, thus, this book

became a bit annoying as I had to determine who was the narrator for each section. I also didn't care much for the flow of the plot. At some times, the plot would move from one event to another smoothly, but later, it would seem to jump and I wouldn't be sure exactly why we are where we are. Finally, the conversations seemed very full on and immediate. There were rarely any fun or lighthearted conversations teasing or bickering someone or just relaxing. It all seemed so serious. I wanted a few jokes.

All in all, I enjoyed this book. I would recommend it for people who, like the first book, enjoy fantasy a lot. I give it 3 Stars.

T. says

I received Iron Maiden, book 2 of the Dragonslayer series, as a free copy from the author (BookFunnel). The gifting did not determine the review/rating, which reflects my honest opinion. Another great installment in the Dragonslayer series, a couple major twists happened although, there wasn't as much overall story development as I'd hoped for (especially relating to the dragon stones Astrid has stashed away). I was also disappointed with the way Smoke, Fire, and Slag dropped from the story without resolution; hopefully that thread will be revealed in book 3.

Raewynn says

Follow Astrid on her life journey and....what a life it has been so far!

I think that reading these books in order is the best way to fully appreciate the storyline and to be able to follow more clearly the plot and happenings.

Well done Resa Nelson. I loved both books and can't wait for more!

Splash Of Our Worlds *Yiota* says

Only yesterday, i review the first book of the series in case you missed so i will try to review this one with as less spoilers as i can. ~~*Just finished writing the review, and there are not spoilers in it! Yay!*~~

At the second book much have changed not only for Astrid but for the book too. For starters and the author's thoughts seem more in order and better presented. It's a less confusing but still follows the same way as the previous, with you knowing only what Astrid knows too. It's also less around the the blacksmiths and more around Astrid. Also has different POVs as well. Which was a nice change, since we saw how other people thought too.

The reasons why i liked more this one than the previous were: 1) i was already used to the world and it was easier to adapt to it even if big part of the story it's in new places than before, 2)the whole traveling and adventuring around with new people is something i find more interesting, 3)we get to also follow two dragons and see how they think, 4)it had more woman power *yay!*, 5)and lastly the descriptions of the new places were wow! There is a certain scene regarding some frozen ghosts and a forest, which is still in mind.

It was so beautiful and sad! I wish i was good at drawing so i could draw it! Simply beautiful!

Of course there were things i missed like some of the oldest characters like Randim, Donel and DiStephan. Randim and DiStephan had such big parts at the first book, that i felt like there was a hole around Astrid just for them. Still, Astrid is awesome as ever. I like how she grows up after each event, how she makes mistakes and how she learns. It's great to see that a characters are not the same after major events in their lives. Even the not so important ones.

The Iron Maiden was lighter and easier to read. It didn't lose Dragonslayer's Sword magic but it made me get into the world even more, in a more calm way. If you had any difficulty or doubts after reading the first book, forget everything and get this one. You will most certainly enjoy it. If you haven't read the 1st....well....you should think about buying it. It's good ;)

Jarla Tangh says

This is my other all-time favorite book of Resa Nelson's. When another woman doesn't listen to her deepest heart and clings to the destructive, the dragonslayer, Astrid Scalding can only play sword master and witness the sad end. I will forever see the hair hanging from the tree branches at Limru. And after reading the book, I steel myself to live as an Iron Maiden. That's some mighty fine writing whenever one is inspired to take after a fictional character.

Steven Brown says

The Iron Maiden was an easy one day. This book was an enjoyable read and sees Astrid as having grown into something more once again. The idea of who and what you are as always changing is strong through out series. It again is an unquie story with twist and tragedies that I was not expecting at all and a few mysteries that gave more depth to the story as they were revealed.

What I enjoyed a great deal in the work was that Astrid is pushed as character. As she puts it forged into something more by her experiences. The realtionships that are shown have more depth to them than in the first book. It was a fun apporach to have the Main character not be able to understand what those around her were speaking. Also the additional POV chapters adds perspectives that made the story all the more engrossing. This book may have been the best of the four in the Dragon slayer series because of depth shown in all characters even the ones you hate. I particularly enjoyed how Margret is portrayed. She is both broken and strong. She is an interesting character and one of my favorites of the series.

This book it did suffer some logical “What the Heck” moments that you had to ignore to get by. They are not as bad as the ones they will come up in the third and forth books. Also the revelation of the philosophy behind the big bad religion Krystr did take away from the enjoyment of the book. It was a rather impractical religion that seemed designed to be the most intolerant and misogynistic religion as possible. There is one god you have to believe in and the tents of that belief is women are evil and deserved to be sex slaves at the pleasure of men. That is it. The sheer disdain that the men have for women is absurd to the point of being distracting and could not possibly be sustained through a population who have mothers, wives, and daughters.

Resa Nelson tells such a good story in the first two books of this series that I will end up reading the next series.

LooseBoots says

Excellent book. Thoroughly enjoyed this second book in the series. We follow the main character, Astrid , in her new role as a dragonslayer rather than a blacksmith. Someone steals her precious sword and we follow her adventures as she searches for it. A very powerful story full of twists and turns. Intense at times but always enjoyable to read. Looking forward to the rest of the series.

Crystal says

This is the second book in the Dragonslayer series and I feel it needs to be read in order. Astrid, the blacksmith, is now a Dragonslayer in the summertime. She wants to be able to both, spending the rest of the year as a blacksmith. She has learned that when she was a baby, her brother put her in a cage with a baby dragon and the dragon chewed at her to get her blood, he continued to allow her to live like that until she was sold off. This gives her the ability to tell the difference between the giant lizards and the dragons, allowing her to only kill the lizards which are the ones attacking the humans, not the dragons.

The writing continues to amaze me. This story just sucks you in and keeps you, only letting go once the last page is turned. Then you come back to reality and you realize that you want to go back for more. I especially loved the many plot twists.

At the end of the first book, there is a link where you can download this book from the author for free. This in no way affects my rating or review of this book.

Pat Raab says

If anything, I enjoyed this book more than the first one. The story has more depth, and the little blacksmith girl has grown in character and understanding. The journey to retrieve Starlight also helped her find herself.

Ben Mcpeake says