



Orphan's Quest

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Rokey, a poor orphan, has lived his entire life sheltered within the walls of the Noble Contemplative Monastery. Growing up, he never dreamt anything would haunt him more than the riddle of his parents' identity. But at seventeen, Rokey is discovering that while his roommate, Ely, can think only of girls, his own feelings draw him toward other boys instead. Soon the question of whether or not he is a "samer" is occupying his mind to the exclusion of all else.

But when a tragedy results in his expulsion from the only home he has ever known, and an unknown enemy begins trying to kill him, Rokey's mind abruptly returns to the mystery of his parentage. Solving that puzzle, he determines, could mean the difference between life and death. On the road, Rokey soon meets up with a charming elf named Flaskamper.

Captivated by the handsome young man, the elf promptly volunteers his help, as well as that of his three unlikely companions. Before long, the five become swept up in the effort to solve the riddle of Rokey's origins and to find out who is trying to kill him, and why. Along the way, Rokey endures some harsh lessons about disappointment and betrayal but also delights in the joy and excitement of first love. Foiled in initial attempts, Rokey's enigmatic foe escalates the attacks.

As the young orphan and his new-found friends pursue the trail of clues that leads them across the land of Firma, they find themselves battling an ever-deadlier array of assassins. When they finally do uncover the truth, it is in the last place Rokey had ever expected to find it.

Orphan's Quest Details

Date : Published June 1st 2007 by Glynworks Publishing

ISBN : 9780979591211

Author : Pat Nelson Childs

Format : Paperback 327 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Fantasy, Lgbt, M M Fantasy

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From Reader Review Orphan's Quest for online ebook

Jordan Deen says

I loved this novel. The mystical world Pat Nelson Childs creates is high fantasy and amazing. I love the sweet teasing and flirting between Rokey and Flackskamper. It's an awesome story. It is a visually dynamic book and I'm looking forward to reading the second novel!

Matthew says

This book is written by a friend of mine, and its great book in a narrow genre. Gay fantasy. I love the plot and I'm taken away into a world of acceptance, elves, and magic potions. I recommend it!!

Tara says

I really liked it, it has everything you'd want in a fantasy story and is still original and leaves you wanting more. I'll be getting the second book. And I look forward to what the author will come out with next.

Donna says

This was a YA book, which is fine with me, although not my usual chosen category! Much has been said about the plot and such in other reviews, so I will just skip right to my thoughts... We need more books like this one in the M/M genre! There are many young men out there, under the age of 18 that need stories that they can identify with when they are going through the same difficult time of discovering that they may be "samers" as they travel the same path that Rokey traveled in this story, but hopefully with perhaps a little less adventure! This story was very appropriate for that age group and I know that it is hard to find books that are "age appropriate" for young, developing minds that are in need of encouragement and some good clean entertainment! I noticed that the author says that he mentors GLBT youth, and that shows in the way the story was written! At least that is my thoughts on the matter! This story was a VERY good read and I would recommend it to any young man that is in need of reading material while going through the quest of discovering his own sexuality ... because whether gay or straight, I believe there is much to be learned from this book... right along with the excellent adventures and wonderful writing!

Nancy says

Posted at Shelf Inflicted

Rokey is a 17-year-old orphan who spent his childhood in the Noble Contemplative, a monastery where young men from all over are educated and trained for their future vocations. While his roommate and closest friend, Ely, thinks about girls, Rokey discovers early on his attraction to boys. An unfortunate accident has resulted in Rokey's expulsion from the monastery and the only life he's ever known. During a robbery, Rokey is rescued by a handsome blond elf named Flaskamper and his friends. Together, the group embarks

on a journey that will forever change Rokey and his friends.

Orphan's Quest is a riveting fantasy novel that kept me flipping pages until the wee hours of the morning. Despite the use of common fantasy tropes and some predictable situations, the author has created a well-drawn world filled with likeable and believable characters. The love that develops between Rokey and Flaskamper is touching and develops at a natural pace.

The simple language and uncomplicated plot make *Orphan's Quest* a story that should appeal to young readers. The adventures, suspense and romance make it a fun read for adults too.

I thoroughly enjoyed this story and look forward to reading more by this very talented author.

J'aime says

There is something primal in a quest story that appeals to readers, over and over again. David Eddings made a quest the keystone for every series he wrote. It is what made *The Lord of the Rings* and *Dragonlance* such popular fantasy epics. "*Orphan's Quest*" has all the necessary ingredients for a great quest - the young male hero, his misfit companions, a shadowy menace, elves, faeries, and the lot. The recipe is complete. So, one might expect this to be the same old story. Thankfully, it is not. Childs has imbued the story with enough originality to give readers something different while satisfying the need for the familiar elements.

Rokey is our young hero, an orphan. He has been raised by the Noble Contemplative, an organization something akin to a monastery where learning and knowledge are held in high regard. When a tragic accident forces him from the only life he's known, Rokey sets out to explore Firma. When brigands try to rob him, the young elf Flaskamper (Flash) comes to his rescue. Flash is immediately smitten with Rokey and convinces his companions to take Rokey into their group. The group is led by Stanford and includes Fia the bard and Lorq the giant. After they are attacked by ratmen, they realize Rokey is being targeted. The quest to uncover his past - nay, his destiny - is on!

Rokey and Flash are well developed characters, and their burgeoning romance is captivating. Much like Mercedes Lackey did with her "*Last Herald Mage*" series, Childs gives us a same-sex couple that is quite natural for the story. Sex occurs, but is not graphic and that works perfectly for this novel. This is not an M/M romance, this is epic fantasy where the main character is a "samer," as Childs describes him in the novel. M/M fans will certainly enjoy this, but traditional fantasy fans will also. The secondary characters are less developed in the beginning, but this is because readers come to know them as Rokey learns about them.

Firma is a classical setting, a medieval type world with many races, magic, kingdoms, just as you find in *LOTR*. The companions pass through a variety of societies from "Thieves World"-like cities to "Elfwood" and the realm of the Sidhe. There was only one aspect of this world building that I did not like at all. Toward the end of the book, the companions are captured by the "Saebrilites." They're an Amazonian society that keeps men enslaved for laborers and to breed with when necessary. Warrior women who disdain men are so over done. They crop up in many epic fantasies (such as the *Wheel of Time* and *Valdemar*) and I can't say I like them in any story. I think an author would knock me for a loop if they actually created a society where women were equals instead of being either Amazons or second class. Childs uses this conceit to introduce a new character to the companions, but I would have preferred her come to the group another way. That said, this was a small part of the story and did not ruin my overall enjoyment of a great novel.

"*Orphan's Quest*" is the first in a projected trilogy. The story and dialog are both very well-written. A few minor typos do appear here and there, but no more than what I find in big-house published books. The

characters have some stereotypical qualities of fantasy characters. Rokey has a mixed-blood heritage that impacts his destiny, and Flash is an Elven prince. But, our beautiful bard is not all she appears to be, and Lorq the giant really wants a pet bunny! Overall, they are fresh, engaging and realistic. I like these companions. Plus, the book has a lot of action and adventure. The companions flee for their lives, fight in skirmishes, visit oracles and have a grand time. The ending leaves many questions unanswered (it is the first book, after all) but the reader is not left hanging on the proverbial cliff. The sequel, "Scion's Blood," will be available soon and I can't wait to dive in. Very highly recommended!

Inara says

Rokey is a novice of the Brotherhood of the Noble Contemplative. He was brought to the Brothers as a young child, was raised by them and thinks that he will stay with the Brotherhood for the rest of his life. At seventeen he starts to realize that he feels more drawn to his own gender than to girls. This and the question who his parents have been occupy his mind the whole time. One day he is assigned to help the old abbot with his daily tasks but when he makes a mistake and a tragedy occurs he is forced to leave the Brotherhood and fend for himself. Out in the wilderness he gets ambushed by some brigands and is rescued last-minute by the handsome Elf Flaskamper who is part of a band of outcasts. Rokey joins the group and when they're attacked again by ratmen they suddenly realize that again Rokey has been the target and that someone wants him dead and they decide to solve the mystery about Rokey's origin and the attacks on his life...

I was at once captivated by the story and fell in love instantly with the two main characters Rokey and Flaskamper (Flash). The growing romance between the two was heartwarming to read and slowly building it took them some time to admit their feelings to each other. Sex scenes were only hinted and in no way graphic so if someone doesn't feel comfortable reading gay sex scenes – this should be no issue in this book. It's a real fantasy novel with all the right ingredients for me like elves, giants, ghosts, magical beings, adventure, romance, a young hero on his quest to find out more about himself and his origin – in short a very entertaining, suspenseful and magical book. I, for one was thoroughly enchanted...

Website of the author:
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Ralph Gallagher says

Rokey has lived in the Noble Contemplative, a place where orphaned boys are sent, since he was two. Ever since he was a child, he wondered who his parents are and hoped of one day reuniting with them. When he fails at a job given to him by the administration, he is sent out of the Contemplative, never to return. He is given a small amount of money and a recommendation for work and is set off alone. Rokey wonders what will happen to him, how he will survive. What he doesn't expect however, is to find love and find out someone is after his life.

I found this novel on my quest for LGBT fantasy novels and this popped up. I'm really glad I found this book too, since it was a good read. The story starts out good and sucks you in, but there's a brief lull in the plot right after he meets up with Flaskamper, though it does pick up again shortly after. Some parts of the story were a little hard to pick up at first since the author uses some terminology I'm not too familiar with (he calls minutes minmark, and hours marks), but it didn't detract from the story too much.

The only thing I didn't like during the story was when they would get into trouble. It seemed like every other chapter they were getting into some sort of trouble, but by the next chapter they're escaped pretty much unscathed. It's a little bit too unrealistic to go through all those battles, come out on top, then have what happens at the end, happen.

Nonetheless, I did enjoy the book though and would gladly recommend it to fantasy lovers. Rokey and Flash are loveable characters and I can't wait to see what happens in the sequel, Scion's Blood.

Alexander Draganov says

Quest fantasy about a group of misfits, which include a monk, who happens to be gay, a charming rogue Elven prince, a warrior with a dark past, a mysterious beautiful woman with a terrible secret and a gentle giant, who loves animals. They must travel through the magical land of Firma and unravel a deadly plot against the main character - the banished monk Rokey. The story is nice and the characters are likeable. I dock one star because of one part of the book which seemed poor and included highly annoying Amazon tribe.

Rebecca B. says

This book is an exciting and action packed romp through a world that comes to life for the reader. Rokey is a young orphan who, through a bad choice and much malicious plotting, is forced out of the only life he's ever known. Alone on the road he meets a wandering group of misfits who he instantly fits in with. As soon as he joins them, however, they are beset with a number of dangerous situations that seem to follow them. Throughout the book Rokey and the group search for the answers to why all these things are happening to them and clues to Rokey's past. They encounter many different groups of people, all with unique stories and cultures, but all united in a darkness that seems to be sweeping the land. The book has a satisfying ending but leaves many questions unanswered and I look forward to the next installment!

Ambre says

Genre books are different from pure literature because they attract a different sort of reader. A genre book follows a certain formula, and readers depend on those patterns, relying on a fun story and not demanding high quality writing. This book is a better fit for romance than fantasy, although it does have characteristics of both.

Romance wise, this is a clean romance. No sex of any kind. It talks about it after the fact, but basically reads like a YA romance. There are so few YA appropriate gay romances out there that I count this as a positive, although I personally like more heat in my books. Beyond that, it is a very slow to develop romance which may turn off some readers. The couple is cute, but not deep or particularly moving.

As a fantasy, this reads as a fairy tale. There are no politics involved- multiple countries are led by dictators who have ultimate power. There are no councils, no public opinion, no reality involved in the political sphere. Bad guys are bad and good guys are good, characters are very flat and unsurprising. The magic is very simplistic, and not well explored here. The author has coopted the word "sidhe" as a winged fairy race but has them alongside elves, which was odd to me, but romance readers will not mind this mixing of

folklore. Fans of fantasy based on British Isles folklore might find it annoying.

The plot is linear and highly predictable. No surprises at all.

And holy POV switching, Batman! I have never read a book that hops from character to character the way this one does. It is one reason the main characters feel so undeveloped- the narration doesn't stay with any character long enough to get into deeper motivations. It even switches to minor characters that are only present for a chapter or two. I know this is a pet peeve of some people, so that's a heads up.

So flat characters following an unexciting plot line through unrealistic political landscapes to a predictable finish? And no sex scenes to break up the boredom? I wouldn't have bothered to buy the second book if I hadn't purchased them both on discount. I think if you're a fan of very clean gay romance with light fantasy elements you will like this book. If you're looking for meaty fantasy with gay characters (a la Flewelling) you will be disappointed. If you're looking for moving romance in a fairy tale setting, you might find the romance lacking. If you're looking for high quality writing, this is not it. He can put a sentence together, but creating literature requires more than that.

Lb says

I didn't hate it but didn't love it either. Kind of cheesy by had ok parts. There is a second book but didn't have any interest in continuing the series.

Camilla says

After having finished this just now, I feel like I just read a 900 page book.. Its says thats its 332 pages but I cant believe thats correct. Nope.. 900 pages *at least*..

This is about Rokey, a 17 year old guy, who was on his way to become a *Brother* which I guess is some kind of monk, even though the novices had sex with the girls in town?

Either way, he gets kicked out for something that wasnt his fault, and he meets up with 4 *misfits* one night, where a young elf, Flash, saves his life. Yes, the elf and Rokey falls in love, but if you're looking for a hot m/m book, this is not it. Well except if you think a kiss is the hottest thing that is, because thats all you're going to get..

Anywho.. There are some evil peeps trying to kill poor Rokey, and they set out to find who is behind the attacks.. ALOT!!!! happens a long the way.. There is a map at the beginning of the book, to show you this world they travel in, and thank God for that, because Wow.. They travel a lot, and they see a lot, and do a lot, and they meet a lot of people, and.. yeah.. you get the feeling.. Thats where the 900 page comes in.. This book is just full of words! Ok, I know thats a weird thing to say, considering.. you know, that its a book? And I cant really use the word *intense* either, because its not, but it drains you.. Just.. drains you..

This book is apparently part of a trilogy, and from what I can see here on GR, the 2nd book came out in 2007, and the 3rd one hasnt been released yet?? (Please correct me if I'm wrong here) but even if it was, I doubt that I would read the 2nd and 3rd book.. This book kinda had an OK ending, and I will take that as my ending in the story of Rokey the wannabe-brother who had to take a loooooong road to find himself, his

family and his future love..

I would give this 2 stars, but I did have tears in my eyes a couple of times, so for that it gets another one. I'm not sure if the tears at the end was because of how it ended, or just because I was so happy the book was finally over though..
