



The Royal Dragoneers

M.R. Mathias

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*an alternate cover edition can be found **here***

Hold on to your dragon! You're about to journey through a brave new world of hearty survivors straight into a dragon riding, troll fighting adventure for the ages.

After struggling for more than two centuries to tame the inhospitable, dragon infested Islands where they washed up, the descendants of the survivors of a lost passenger ship are now striving to tame the Mainland they have found.

But the Goblin King, an Ivory antlered demon called Gravelbone, has a different plan for the men who are invading his territory. He and his Nightshade are rallying the trolls to defend their lands.

With the help of the dragons, goblins, and orcs they plan on rendering the wall the humans have built useless, so that they can drive man back to the islands from where they came.

When stubborn King Blanchard finally accepts that the kingdom really is under attack it may be too late, and the only ones who can save the people on the Mainland have been locked away in the dungeon.

Join some brave young men and their mentor, a grizzled old King's Ranger, and a particularly clever young magic wielding woman, as they traverse the wild frontier, and sail to King's Island to warn the King of the warring trolls. Then hold on for your life as you tear through the pages, because the pure blooded dragons they have befriended have another plan all together.

The Royal Dragoneers Details

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From Reader Review The Royal Dragoneers for online ebook

Thomas Maher says

Dragons

I was hurting in the beginning but soon found out peace. There are good dragons and hopefully mis lead can turn good again. I want more female dragon and male human rider bond type relationship but all saw was same gender with same gender dragon. Minus one. It was intense story. I kept reading till end. I want to see more dragon human bonding and time together. Mostly that dragoneer that bonded to female dragon. Hope book 2 good. Maybe more dragons can be saved. I hate seeing them hurt.

Cesar M. says

A Fantasy thriller from start to finish, this book has so many twists, turns and dilemmas that one should not be allowed to read it unless you're on the edge of your seat! It starts out with Jenka, a teenage boy who is out hunting for deer. Hitting the deer with an accurate arrow, it runs before dying, giving chase he ends up staying in the hills to guard his kill from trolls or anything else which may be around. Then, something very unexpected happens, a dragon saves him from a gang of trolls! As time moves on he comes to the understanding that he has bonded with the dragon, not only that, but there are other dragoneers out there.

In this very well described world of magic, orcs, trolls, goblins and dragons comes a new peril; a flying demon mounted by the Goblin King, intent on destroying the world of men is massing together all the trolls and goblins for war. Meanwhile, Jenka is taken on a journey to meet the King to tell his story of surviving the trolls and dragon. Along the way he meets and makes friends with characters who may or may not be fellow dragoneers (no spoilers here). But war hits the land behind him as he makes his journey to the King with the sole intent of requesting the bounty on the life of dragons to be lifted.

This book is a great start into this Fantasy Series called The Dragoneers Saga, and the book was left with a question mark about what might happen in the next installment. The characters are realistic, yet by far my favourite character was Zah, because of her very likeable personality but also because she wields the power of magic! If you like dragons, then surely this is the book for you, I promise you that you won't put it down until the last page has been read !!

Martha Cheves says

The Royal Dragoneers – Review by Martha A. Cheves, Author of Stir, Laugh, Repeat

‘He saw that his bow was lying back where he had dropped it. His knife wasn’t at his hip either. Beyond the flames, he saw the shredded remains of the stag’s carcass. The dragon had torn half the meat away in only a few seconds. The trolls would have the rest of it, he figured. After they had him. A fist-sized rock slammed into his chest, knocking all of the wind from his lungs. Other stones followed and the primitive troll beasts soon went into a frenzied ritual of howling and savage fighting over feeding position. Luckily for Jenka, a well-thrown chunk of stone bashed into the side of his head and spared him from having to see himself being torn to pieces. All he could think of as he slipped into unconsciousness was that he would finally get to see his father, and he hoped his mother would never have to gaze upon what the trolls left of his body. After that

was nothing but blackness.'

Sixteen year old Jenka De Swasso is out on a hunt in hopes of bringing fresh meat back to his mother. When he spotted the aging stag he knew he would have no problem bringing it down but the sun was setting which meant he would have to track the stag after hitting it with his arrow and spend the night trying to protect it, as well as himself, from the trolls that lived in the woods around his home of Crag. Jenka's mother was Crag's village kettle-witch, which meant she could cast spells and at times even heal. Jenka's father, whom he was very proud of, had died while saving the king's son Richard. With his father being one of the King's Rangers, Jenka's dream was to become one too. And if he could get his stag back to town, it might just give him an up on his training to serve the king. But, fate had it that the trolls would spot his fire and come in for the kill and the meal awaiting them. What the trolls didn't expect was an emerald green dragon named Jade to come to Jenka's rescue. The bond that formed between Jade and Jenka was eternal. Jenka would find that there were others who were bonded to the pure dragons and along with them they will sacrifice all to save mankind.

The Royal Dragoneers is a book of mystery, magic and love. It stresses the strength of love between man and his devoted friends and in this case his dragon. I must warn you though, The Royal Dragoneers is a very graphically visual book which should not be read by nor to young children. I see this as an adult version of Harry Potter. And since the story has come to no end, I'm looking forward to reading the next book in this series.

2009

301 pages

Review Stir, Laugh, Repeat at Amazon.com Stir, Laugh, Repeat

Clint says

Excellently written, great visuals

I picked up this book for free not expecting much. Boy was I wrong. The story had me entwined from chapter one. I always wanted to know what happened next. The detail in the battles made it very easy to picture what was happening, and the feel that even the main characters weren't safe made it all the better.

Sean says

I have been meaning to read this for while now. It was a fairly good story and concerned a couple of POTs and a couple of Dragons. What more could you ask for.

A good YA book(I am a lot older than that)?

The characters and setting was really good and I happy with the writing, in as much that I finished it, and want to read more.

Really good book for the series.

Sheila says

M.R. Mathias's *The Royal Dragoneers* takes place in a world of myth and mystery where dragons are ancient enemies, feared but rarely seen, and trolls and goblins roam the wilds. The scenes, a stag hunt, a rescue, a village, a town, build nicely onto each other creating a vivid picture of the world and its denizens. Meanwhile the dangers are nicely portrayed, new details gradually coming to light, till readers' and protagonists' assumptions fall to the onslaught of greater knowledge.

Sixteen-year-old Jenka grew up on the frontier, outside the massive wall that protects the realm, and far from the throne. He has always dreamed of being a King's Ranger, and now his chance has come. But the world of kings and rangers is threatened, and the magical druida Zah might hold the key. King Blanchard might have a part to play too, or his son Richard, and the dragon Jade is waiting in the wings.

Supplies are measured and supply-routes detailed with care reminiscent of Ken Follett's *Pillars of the Earth* or R.R Martin's *Game of Thrones*, though less weighty. A few unedited surprises lurk in the words, but many surprisingly down-to-earth images bring the world to life—a group of soldiers crying from the smell of rotten onions, an ogre like a large cherubic monster, dragon ballast protecting a boat through a raging storm.

Surprising wisdom and skills wait to be discovered in the youths of this tale. Fear and excitement abound as lines are drawn for the battle to come. Honor and power, love and revenge all have their part to play as magic spells, bright swords and dragons' claws rake the flesh of friend and foe. The story comes to a well-drawn end, with promise of more to come in the next part of the trilogy—an epic tale, in length and in scope, and the start of an epic fantasy.

Disclosure: I was given a pdf copy of this book by the author and chose to review after reading.

Michelle, the Bookshelf Stalker Queen of the Undead says

I had the pleasure of reading this book early. I am very happy I did. While fantasy is not my usual genre, I always love reading great stories and Mathias has the ability to tell a great story. In fact, I was often reading this book at work instead of doing my work. Oops!

Mathias has created a great cast of characters, but by far, my favorite was Zah. She, yes a she, is not only a strong female but she can kick some major butt. She also was very compassionate and I loved how her story progresses throughout the book. The other characters I loved were the dragons. I never thought I would be cheering for a dragon, but that is what I did.

I thought the 2nd half of the book was much faster paced because it was filled with non-stop action and seriously kept me on the edge of the seat.

A great read for fantasy lovers or anyone looking for a new genre.

Trever Tate says

I am sucker for stories with dragons, and this one pulled me in quickly. The story is unique and the pace is quick enough to keep you interested, but the best part has to be the descriptions of the dragons and their link with the humans. In the story, Jenka is a young man who wants to be a member on the King's Watch, and when he stops a troll attack and seemingly fends off a dragon he becomes a person of interest to the King. In reality, the dragon stopped the trolls and saved Jenka's life after the boy prevents the trolls from killing the dragon. Boy and dragon become bonded, and he realizes that not all dragons are the evil beasts he thought they were.

There are others who think dragons could be good, and who believe the trolls are going to attack the humans and attempt to wipe them out. Only the help of the good dragons can stop the trolls and their evil goblin king who rides a nasty black dragon. Confusing? Not really, because the author makes it much easier to understand than I can, and he does so in such a way that you finish the book with baited breath, waiting to find out what happens in the next one.

L. Gibbs says

The bulk of this book involves gathering four of the five dragon bonded pairs of dragon riders together in preparation of the coming Conflagration, an unexplained future conflict covered in the later books. Though four of the five dragoneers are focused on, Jenka, Rikki, Prince Richard and Zahrellion, and their dragons, the main narrative character is Jenka. Several conflicts develop early in the novel: orks, goblins, trolls and mudged dragons are entering the civilized portions of the mainland where man had been establishing a firm foothold. These voracious goblinkin are gathering in large numbers and becoming a danger to the small towns and cities in the outlying areas of the kingdom; there is a misconception about the evil nature of dragons which lies in the difference between a pure dragon and a mudged dragon (this difference is key in humankind surviving the rising strength of evil in the land); Jenka wishes to become a King's Ranger but his recent adventure involving a young dragon named Jade could derail all his youthful dreams; the powerful and feared druid assembly is claiming that an evil demon king in goblin form and a nightshade dragon are about to destroy all of King Blanchard's kingdom if he doesn't join with the pure dragons and ogres that will side with him if he recognizes them as valued peers; King Blanchard's views are colored by his hatred for dragons, his pride and his gluttonous lifestyle.

The world Mathias has designed in this first of three novels of the Dragoneer Saga is well proportioned in culture, mythology and social interaction. Characters are strongly drawn in a wide variety of type: druids, commoners, goblinkin, and dragons. However, the royals are a bit flat and stereotypical of once great and now degenerated but still salvageable stock characters. There is on occasion more telling than showing, but when the writer does dig deep into the action, the reader is enveloped in Mathias' dragon rider world.

The plot has numerous subplots as well as a strong arc to the finish; though, keep in mind it is one of a book of three. One major issue (the reason I gave the book three stars instead of four) I have with the plot design is in the physical battles the individual characters experience. The resolutions are highly repetitive. The character travels a constant rising action of attacks which reaches a point of no return, i.e., there is no possibility of survival; all avenues of overcoming the situation are gone and the hero (heroine) has given up hope, as has the reader. Then supernatural intervention arrives to pull the hero out of danger, though he/she is

often scraped up to the point of possible death which is also dealt with in supernatural ways. The problem with this is the reader loses faith in the character ever being able to come up with a means to save himself. More than once I read up to the point of the certain death, sat back and prepared myself for the arrival of a dragon while said hero was unconscious, or some other such unlikely distraction to divert the ravening goblins set to chew him up alive. Even the dragons find themselves in similar unrecoverable situations. Though I consider this a major problem in the plotting of this book, after the character was saved from destruction, I was always drawn back into the setting, human issues and battles of the story. Being tossed out on occasion and feeling less than impressed by whichever individual was currently focused on by the narrative was always brief, and the next shift in place and time again detailed, developed and distinguished by excellent writing. The tension is thick in this book and the roller coaster ups and downs of the plot are tight and electric, rolling ever forward.

Nicholas Singleton says

Despite what other reviewers have said about this being more for teens than adults, I read it because it sounded interesting and seemed like it would be a good book. I am not a teen, and haven't been one in many years, but I still found the book to be highly enjoyable just the same. I think the characters just happen to be young because they are at the beginning of their journey and this book was probably not intended for any age group in particular; it's just a fun book for fans of fantasy novels in general.

The story centers around the relationship between dragons and humans, particularly a handful of humans that are able to communicate with certain dragons telepathically. When an evil Goblin rounds up the trolls in order to lead a revolt to wipe out humanity, it's up to the few humans who believe that dragons are actually good to stop him. It won't be easy convincing the rest of the kingdom that dragons are allies, especially when some dragons are inbred and insane death machines.

There's plenty of magic, mayhem, and monsters in this fun book.

Tracey Alley says

Mathias is an absolute pleasure to read. Unique storyline, fascinating characters and a fast paced novel that practically reads itself. The Royal Dragoneers easily lived up to the promise shown in the prequel. Lovers of fantasy everywhere this is a fresh, new talent with plenty of truly original ideas. Do yourself a favour and treat yourself to this book.

Laney says

Adventurers, Druids, & Dragons! Oh my! Orcs & Trolls too! I enjoyed following each young person on their journey of self-discovery. Hidden powers exposed within one's self is a important theme throughout this book. M. R. Mathias delves into the soul of each human and dragon alike. Exposing the true emotions and feelings of the characters he pulls his readers in as they experience the adventures and hardships each character encounters and feels. I am eagerly awaiting the next book in The Dragoneers Saga!

Stephen Miller says

This is a great, fun read by M.R. Mathias. I enjoyed the Wardstone series of his and thought I'd check this one out. While it's not as 'epic' as the other series, this book definitely has promise to be another great series. The hero is really just a boy, Jenka, who wants to grow into a man in the King's Guard. That's really the only career choice with any prospects in his bleak world.

Set in a land settled by shipwreck survivors, people have begun to overrun the island and drive away the dragons. Some people believe that there are good dragons which are old and wise and should be saved; other dragons are 'mudged' or mixed blood and crazy for blood. Mostly the King wants them all dead, regardless of their color.

Jenka is saved by a baby dragon that he had saved from some trolls, and he becomes bonded to the pretty Jade dragon. He then meets a beautiful native girl who is full of fire and ice. She is also bonded with a dragon, and knows that they will share a destiny. They must join together to defeat the evil goblins and their demonic leader in order to save mankind. It's a fantastic premise and the dragons really are the coolest characters ever, plus the druids are great characters, too.

There's plenty of Mathias' usual gore and lots of beautiful descriptions of the island and its inhabitants. It's a pretty quick read, too, at around 300 pages. It's easy to get hooked, and thankfully there is a sequel. I would have given this book more stars if I could, but 5 is the max, so that's what I rate it and can't wait to read the next one!

Liviu says

The Royal Dragoneers is the beginning of a series that features more traditional tropes - from dragons, to orcs, goblins, prophecies, destined boy, magicians - but in a different milieu than Sword and The Dragon

The first half of the book is excellent and it promised a lot, but the second half did not quite deliver since it basically was almost non-stop action with dragons and humans battling other dragons and trolls and the like and it's very easy to get tired by this quickly; one can have only so many scenes with a dragon fighting another or a bunch of trolls or a prisoner being forced to make decisions by the cackling evil lord and stay interesting.

The ending redeemed the second half to some extent and I am definitely interested to see where the series goes next, but the action to story ratio is way too high for me.

I liked the writing style as in the Sword and the Dragon and actually the characters and setting here are maybe even more intriguing than there, but that one kept the balance much better than this one.

An A- and I will add the full FBC review later

Edit later: I am curious how it will stand the passage of time in my memory since this one has great potential. I thought more why and there are a lot of details that add up in ways they do not in more established fantasies - eg the economics of the world or the demographics; the naming is also pretty good, familiar and exotic with eastern European touches which I always favor. So I would say now that overall the really good stuff wins over the 'too much action' in the second part and I would go to a full A for it

Full FBC Review:

INTRODUCTION: Not long ago I discovered M.R. Mathias, the author of *The Sword and the Dragon*, book that stayed in my memory despite seemingly being the traditional fantasy I tend to avoid; though of course there is a twist in the tale, but the crucial fact is that the author's style just resonated with me.

When I heard about *The Royal Dragoneers*, a more YA oriented series debut from the author, I was curious since occasionally YA books by authors whose style I like a lot also appeal to me. Here is the blurb, though I would say that it only partly reflects the essence the novel.

"After struggling for more than two centuries to tame the inhospitable, dragon infested Islands where they washed up, the descendants of the survivors of a lost passenger ship are now striving to tame the Mainland they have found. But the Goblin King, an Ivory antlered demon called Gravelbone, has a different plan for the men who are invading his territory. He and his Nightshade are rallying the trolls to defend their lands. With the help of the dragons, goblins, and orcs they plan on rendering the wall the humans have built useless, so that they can drive man back to the islands from where they came. When stubborn King Blanchard finally accepts that the kingdom really is under attack it may be too late, and the only ones who can save the people on the Mainland have been locked away in the dungeon. Join some brave young men and their mentor, a grizzled old King's Ranger, and a particularly clever young magic wielding woman, as they traverse the wild frontier, and sail to King's Island to warn the King of the warring trolls. Then hold on for your life as you tear through the pages, because the pure blooded dragons they have befriended have another plan all together."

FORMAT/CLASSIFICATION: *The Royal Dragoneers* stands at about 350 pages divided into five named parts and 39 chapters. The narration is third person and from several POV's. There is also a map of the Dragoneers' Lands which you can find online [HERE](#).

Jenka De Swasso is a sixteen year old ranger's apprentice from the deep frontier lands who has an unexpected encounter with a dragon. Zahrellion (Zah) is a seemingly young looking and beautiful druida whose people tend to keep to themselves and study science and magic. Rikky is one of Jenka's friends who will have his own tale. Prince Richard, the popular dashing heir to the kingdom is seemingly the hero of a prophecy.

With a reasonable ending point, *The Royal Dragoneers* starts a YA-ish series of adventure, discovery and magic, written in the exuberant style of the author which is familiar from *The Sword and the Dragon*.

ANALYSIS: "Good" dragons, destined boys and girls, prophecies, princes, magicians (called druids) and witches with some of the funniest names in recent books like Linux and Mysterian, nasty demons, "bad" dragons, goblins, orcs, cackling villains and combat of the "my magic is bigger than your magic" type - all in a YA setting to boot; this seems another book I would run away as fast as I can from, but I actually enjoyed it a lot and read it in one sitting since it was very engrossing and I wanted to see what happens. I also reread it after to see the little things I have missed and get some clues where the action goes next. Why?

The major reason was the style of the author; hard to pinpoint the specifics but it just appeals to me and it makes me want to read his books. Luckily there is an extended excerpt (currently 36% of the novel) at the link above, so you can go and check it out for yourself. Narrative energy, earnest, likable main characters, a tone that is not ultra-dramatic or self important and a very well thought out world building are some of the conscious reasons that justify my statement above, but ultimately a lot depends if the book flows for you or not.

Regarding world building, little details that add up and show the carefulness mentioned are the number of generations from the shipwreck that populated the Dragoneers' Lands with humans, the rate of growth and

expansion and its economic underpinnings, the historical memory or lack of such - 200 years is a long time too and much more plausible than the usual millennium or more that too often is thrown around in fantasies together with a steady state society.

Jenka may start as the typical destined boy, but he is modest and likable and he grows well into his role, while not becoming the know-it-all conquering hero that annoys me to no end in similar tales. The mysterious Zah remains, well mysterious, to the end of the book and I am curious to find out more about her and the druids and witches in general. Even the dragons have a twist or two, though you gotta read the book to find out about that.

Prince Richard and Rikky are less well developed and more "stock" to the end, but both bring their surprises too and the novel has the author's trademark twists on the traditional storyline and keeps one guessing where it will go. The action is fast and furious though from time to time it barely stops from descending into farce, when the "my magic is bigger than yours" becomes the sole reason for how the heroes escape this or that battle.

While The Royal Dragoneers (A) does not transcend its narrative space - YA exuberant adventure fantasy - it is a fun book that I heartily recommend if you want such and on par with anything from that space. The series has a lot of potential - there are geographical expansion hints, possibilities in the explorations of the world's magic, the whole dragons ecosystem that may offer surprises - and I am eager to see the next adventure M.R. Mathias will send our heroes on.

Steven says

So, where to start? I guess the biggest note to make here is that this is a book best for the junior high to high school crowd. Younger readers may enjoy it if they have a long attention span, but older readers will probably lose interest (as I did).

The plot for this first book of a series is straightforward. Jenka, a boy of around 16 or 17, is out hunting one day and finds himself deep in the forest after making a kill. As he tries to wait out the night, a dragon appears, then trolls. One decision leads to another and Jenka and the dragon bond. But there's so much more. For the appearance of the trolls is not just happenstance. War is coming and the humans will need a strong ally if they are to overcome the suddenly organized and bent-on-human-destruction trolls and goblins. Jenka and his dragon aren't alone though, but will they be enough to overcome the hordes of trolls and goblins and their Goblin King who is riding a dragon of his own?

There is a lot here in this first book, some of it likeable. There is a good attempt at building a world where humans are encroaching and the natives are fighting back. There is the always alluring presence of intelligent dragons. And there is the evil leader of the trolls and goblins who is organizing the vermin who are trying to reclaim their land. But there just isn't enough depth to it for my tastes. The bonding between dragon and human is so totally glossed over that I still don't know how it happens. We know the trolls and goblins are bad, but it's hard to root against them because there just isn't anything about them given in the book that makes them "bad." They were there, humans show up and start killing them, they fight back. The dragons, for all the wisdom and power they're supposed to have, are far too willing to be directed by humans. And, the worst part for me, none of the humans (or druids) has enough depth to be someone I want to care about. In fact, there are more caricatures than characters here.

If I were back in high school, I would probably enjoy this book. There are dragons, magic, fight scenes, and

the threat of the advancing horde. But now, meh. There just isn't anything here for me to sink my teeth into. So if you like dragons and magic and books with abrupt endings that lead into the next, and are between 12 and 18, you'll probably enjoy this book. Otherwise, I'd recommend skipping this.
