



## Marlfox

*Brian Jacques*

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A villainous new presence is a prowl in Mossflower Woods—the Marlfoxes. Stealthy and mysterious, they are out to plunder and destroy everything in their path. And when they reach Redwall Abbey, they ruthlessly steal the most precious treasure of all—the tapestry of Martin the Warrior. It takes Dann Reguba and Song Swifteye, children of warrior squirrels, to follow in their fathers' heroic footsteps. Together with the young shrew Dippler, and Burble the brave water vole, they embark upon the seemingly impossible quest. . . .

## Marlfox Details

Date : Published January 13th 2005 by Firebird (first published August 18th 1998)

ISBN : 9780142501085

Author : Brian Jacques

Format : Paperback 400 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Childrens, Animals

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## From Reader Review Marlfox for online ebook

### Clint Nutter says

I hadn't read a Redwall book in around 10 years and still thoroughly enjoyed it.

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### Josiah says

Brian Jacques has to get credit for continually changing up the elements of the *Redwall* stories, always giving new peripheral looks to the basic narrative style that readers of the series become familiar with in the first couple of books.

This time, we see a brand-new kind of villain in the treacherous Marlfox sub-breed, a family of mystical, nearly magical foxes that inhabit a dark island far from Redwall Abbey. The Marlfoxes have been the stuff of legend in the past (though noticeably not mentioned previously in the *Redwall* series), but their sinister path collides with that of the abbey inhabitants when a group of the foxes and their army find their way to the peaceable redstone fortress and make war upon it. No one can stand in the way of a Marlfox, the evil creatures declare, and the abbey *will* be theirs whether its denizens like it or not.

Here the story splits into two main branches. The Marlfoxes successfully steal the priceless tapestry of Martin the Warrior from the walls of Redwall, and the brutally savvy Marlfox Makkon heads back for the island home of the Marlfoxes to present his prize to the queen. Chasing after him are the primary heroes of *Marlfox*, Dippler the shrew and squirrels Dann and Song, each of whom has their own strongly compelling personal reasons for setting off without permission on such a dangerous quest to restore Redwall's proudest possession. Along the way the three makeshift warriors encounter an enormous number of problems, their lives put in jeopardy repeatedly; yet they meet up with allies on their quest, as well, allies who will be essential to the eventual completion of their journey.

At the same time, the residents of Redwall are desperately trying to defend against the onslaught of the Marlfoxes and their armed forces. The ability of the Redwall creatures to continue to live in peace rides on the result of the war, but can they emerge victorious against the threat of this new foe, the daunting Marlfox?

After the first seven or eight books in the *Redwall* series, it seems to me that the entries began to diminish in complexity, though they still are fine stories told with wit and great linguistic skill. It's interesting to see the possibilities for complex continuity in a series of this length, as characters from way back continue to receive mention as they factor into the new stories.

*Marlfox* contains some good moments of flickering insight into the nature of emotion, especially in the honest speech given by the lonely hedgehog Sollertree as he tells the story of his family that was kidnapped by the Marlfox brood many seasons before. It is undoubtedly the emotional epicenter of the book, and so much of the novel's strength flows from it. I think that I would likely give two and a half stars to *Marlfox*.

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### Elizabeth says

Once again, a focused plot without irrelevant side-plots makes for a good Redwall book. I enjoyed the uniqueness, for Redwall, of the "family" villains, although I still don't like the fact that none of the villains

seem capable of love. I also found the quick demise of Lantur, after all her scheming, amusing.

Song and Dann (and Dippler and Burble) are probably the most endearing heroes that come from Redwall in a while. They're not bland or flat, like Samkim was, and they're not forgettable like Dandin. For once, theirs is a group that actually has a good dynamic and isn't overshadowed by one character or the other. None of them seem to be simply tagging along for the purpose of having another character (i.e. Arula and whoever it was that was with Bryony in *Outcast of Redwall* that was probably a mole). I suppose that Burble is there simply for comic relief, but the other three actually have character development.

Speaking of comic relief, Jacques usually uses the hares for that and it's especially noticeable here. Florian is probably one of my least favorite hares, but his inclusion makes for some of the funnier parts of the book.

But oh my goodness, the Dibbuns! They're cute in the first five or so books, but then they just keep getting more and more annoying with their way of speaking and their antics. Dwopple...sigh. Also, why don't we ever see vermin babies?

More retconning from Jacques, although that's pretty much old news by now. Or maybe for this one he did it on purpose, to illustrate the way that legends change over time? Anyway, this time, when describing the history of Marlfox Island, Cregga mentions that Urthstripe (from *Salamandastron*) went to the island, met his brother Urthwyte, and then traveled back to *Salamandastron* with him where they fought Ferahgo. Uh, well, it was Mara who found Urthwyte, and the two brothers never actually met face-to-face. But it makes for a good legend, I guess.

**Overall**, Marlfox has some of the better heroes in the series (of those that come from Redwall) and a unique set of villains. I still think Redwall is at its best when Jacques doesn't try to take on too much at once in regards to plot, and so far all the books that have one main plot are the best, Marlfox included. The Dibbuns are still annoying, though, alas.

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### **Elliot.Boesch says**

This book, like the others in the Redwall series, doesn't fail to exceed my expectations. Action, mystery and a little bit of humor goes along way when writing about animals.

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### **Sarah says**

#### **Fantastic read**

Oh how I wish I could visit the abbey of Redwall. Reading and rereading the books will have to do. Excellent writing and wonderful stories transport you to a land of peace and plenty

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### **Joseph Leskey says**

This was quite good. It deviated slightly from the other *Redwall* books [that I have read as of this review] plot-wise, which, of course, made for an enjoyable story, by cause of originality.

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## **Ben.c says**

12/18/10 Done

In the book evil foxes called Marlfoxes, take the Martin the Warrior tapestry from the Abbey. Song, Dippler, Burble, and Dann set out to retake it. Along the way they make new allies. In the end, they emancipate slaves at the island which Marlfoxes live on, Dippler becomes Log a Log, Burble becomes chief of the Riverhead water voles, Dann becomes the Abbey's champion, and Song becomes Abbess at the Abbey. A text to text connection is Song is mentioned in Taggerrung.

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## **Jing says**

There has been this new terror called Marlfoxes: foxes that were known as magic creatures who could reappeared and disappear like smoke. The Marlfoxes that came to face Redwall were six all told who were brothers and sister; children of the High Queen Silth and her mate who she killed. While attempting to conquer Redwall, there were a Guosim problem when one of the shrews betrayed his leader and killed him. The Marlfoxes also took the tapestry of Martin the Warrior and later on Mokkan the most devious of them all abandon his siblings making his way back to the island.

While that was happening, four Redwallers two squirrels of Warriors, a vengeful shrew and a water vole began their quest to get to the Marlfox island. While so, the Marlfoxes began to be taken out by the Redwallers one by one until a great battle finished the rest of them. The four travelers of the adventure travel on only to find great friends and family members they presumed dead. There they went to the Marlfox island for a final battle. There were two Marlfoxes which remained in the island. One was Queen Silth who was in the worst condition ever and her daughter Lantern. Lantern eventually poisoned her mother and became Queen for a short while. When her brother Mokkan returned, he threw her into the lake which was infested with pike which ate and killed her.

He was then the last Marlfox to rule all the water rats as his command. The heroes at that time already killed the Guosim traitor and were on their way to Marlfox. There was a great fight where slaves fought against the water rats. Mokkan was forced to escape and was later killed and the terror of the Marlfoxes ended. In some way, I felt sorry for the Marlfoxes because they used to be a family until they died one by one. Of course, they were deceitful creatures that would kill anyone who they had a good chance to put action on. They were somewhat cooperative compared to other villains and far smarter. The new theme is betrayal and loyalty. If the Marlfoxes had been loyal to each other instead of killing each other just for power, they would have been good and then Redwall had been conquered. If Fenno was loyal, he wouldn't have been slain later on. That teaches you in life to be loyal and know who to choose like an example for choosing a worker; a loyal worker at all cost or a worker with much potential that could provide a lot to the company, but might stab their backs later on with his back full of money.

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## **SophiaB says**

This book was mediocre.

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## **Emily Collins says**

I've owned this book forever but I don't remember as much what this one was about. Kudos to Jacques though for going for more than just regular foxes and adding an air of almost-magic into it. My favorite part of these books is often the food. Anyone else get hungry reading these?

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## **Joe says**

Snooze...

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## **Caroline says**

Mysterious and often thought to be only the stuff of legends, the Marlfoxes make their way into Mossflower and Redwall country. After a battle at the wall, the Marlfoxes make their way into the Abbey and steal the tapestry of Martin the Warrior. Three young friends, Dann and Song the squirrels and Dippler the shrew, must leave the safety of their home to fulfill Martin's prophesy and rescue the beloved symbol of Redwall. As always, the three adventurers have a perilous journey full of adventure, the making of new friends, and ultimately a heroic final battle on the infamous Marlfox island and fortress. Meanwhile back at the Abbey, Cregga badgermum--the former Cregga Rose Eyes, the badger warrior of Salamandastron--and the other Redwallers must defend the Abbey against other members of the Marlfox clan that continually try to conquer the famous Redwall. As always, Jacques does not disappoint, and manages to weave yet another tale of friends who set out on a journey to prove themselves and that good will conquer evil.

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## **Ms. Patterson says**

I was recently weeding books and pulled out Marlfox, because it's in bad shape and needs to be replaced. I decided to read it, because I remember one of my students recently mention that this was his favorite book in the Redwall series. I'm so glad I did.

Legend has it that marlfoxes possess magical powers and can appear and disappear at will. When several marlfoxes are spotted in Mossflower wood, the various creatures take it upon themselves to go and warn everyone at Redwall Abbey. The marlfoxes and their crew of water rats attack the Abbey and succeed in stealing the most valuable item in the Abbey -- the tapestry of Martin the Warrior. Song and Dann (both squirrels) and Dippler, a shrew, are told in a dream by Martin the Warrior that they have been given the task to find the tapestry and bring it home. Along the way the trio meet new friends, battle fierce enemies, and are met with a surprise or two. Ultimately, they must battle the marlfox and rats on their home turf -- the island at the center of the Hidden Lake.

I've been a fan of Brian Jacques ever since I was given his first two Redwall books in the early 90s. I remember when I heard him speak one time he mentioned how he wrote these books as a type of radio play for students at a school for the blind. That's why all the different animals have such distinctive dialects. I'm glad I knew that -- it made me more appreciative of the style of these stories. I know that at times, it can be difficult reading what's being said but you only have to listen to one of the full cast productions of Redwall books to know why it's perfect!

Now, to Marlfox.. I'm not sure why I liked it so much. On the surface, it seems to have the same characteristics as the other stories. Creatures of the Abbey going on a quest, sent by the warrior Martin, facing dangers and learning one's own strengths, etc. I guess one of the things that most attracted me to this one was Song. She's really the leader of the trio from Redwall. She's the one figuring out the riddle to guide their way. She's the one making the decisions on going, staying, etc. Although Dann is the one with Martin's sword, he's not the one doing the crazy heroic acts all the time. I love that the girl is strong and courageous, and the others accept her that way.

There's plenty of exciting battles in Marlfox to attract those fans of action/adventure stories. I'd recommend Marlfox to anyone looking for a thrilling story about friends on a quest. Even if you haven't read other Redwall stories, you could jump right in and be just fine. Wonderful story!

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### **Matthew McAndrew says**

This one was very different from the other books in the series, in some ways good, other ways bad. I remember not liking it as much as the others, but I still gobbled it up in about a day. I did like how mysterious this one felt, and the fact that it's different from the other books in the series brought some unexpected story perks.

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### **Emma says**

This book was very good. It was, I think, the largest book that I have ever read, so it was a little hard to get through for me. I liked all of the characters very much. I think Bryan Jacques does well in giving all the characters a personality. The story line was great. I am a little sad that the main male and main female didn't get married, but it ended well.

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### **Lora Shouse says**

A visit to Redwall Abbey in Mossflower Wood is always a treat.

This time three separate groups traveling through the woods are accosted by Marlfoxes – a rare breed of foxes who have natural camouflage coloring that allows them to apparently disappear into woodland surroundings, giving rise to the belief that they are magic. Narrowly escaping serious injury at the hands of the Marlfoxes, the Swifteye family of squirrels, the Wandering Noonvale Companions, and the Guosim shrews (who have had their logboats stolen by the Marlfoxes) each decide to head for Redwall to warn the abbey dwellers of the danger.

The sneaky Marlfoxes, however, manage to get in past the young beasts defending the abbey itself and steal the big tapestry of Martin the Warrior. Feeling responsible for the loss of the prized tapestry, Dannflor Reguba, Songbreeze Swifteye, and Dippler, a young shrew who has also been accused of causing the loss of the shrews' logboats by sleeping on guard, resolve to go fight the Marlfoxes and retrieve the tapestry.

The three friends travel across a lot of unfriendly territory making new friends and discovering some enemies. Meanwhile, the Marlfox who stole the tapestry heads back to the home of the Marlfoxes, after he has persuaded the other Marlfoxes they need to renew the attack on Redwall to avenge their brother who was

killed in the earlier battle.

As always in the Redwall books, the villains quickly turn on each other and unwittingly take much of their eventual defeat on themselves. And as always the Dibbuns – the abbey’s baby animals – are the most entertaining.

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### **Victor Espinosa says**

Brian Jacques was born to tell stories. He wasn't born to be a writer, per say, but he was definitely born to tell tales. Like traveling story-tellers from long ago, meandering from campfire to campfire sharing tales of legendary heroics in the face of absolute evil, Brian Jacques is a weaver of words. Telling stories of love that triumphs and wickedness that falls, friendships that overcome and betrayals that scar for life, Brian Jacques manages to keep his streak of incredible story telling going in Marlfox.

Do yourself a favor and pick up Redwall. Then, little by little for there is no rush, read through the series. You'll be a better person because of it.

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### **David Gillis says**

Marlfox was my first Redwall novel in the series, even though it does come into the series relatively late. It was also what hooked me into it. I loved the light fantasy storytelling it had with the characters being mice, squirrels, otters, and other woodland creatures. But it wasn't all light-hearted fun. The Redwall stories offer more villainous creatures such as rats, shrews, and stoats. In this case, the Marlfoxes are foxes that are larger and smarter than your usual fox. What's great about this whole series is the plethora of characters as everyone gathers together to defend their home (Redwall Abbey) from the evil characters. Although technically a children's tale, Jacques doesn't hold back with the war, death, and sickness that can plague the characters. It's a realistic, yet still positive story that is one of the reasons why Jacques became my biggest influence for writing as a child. Marlfox, in particular, is great because of this band of heroes that goes off on a journey, and the Marlfoxes themselves are deliciously sinister. If I took anything from it, it's that you can weave together humor, light-hearted fun, and more serious themes without having to overdo any of them.

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### **Jeremy Michael Gallen says**

In this tale of Redwall, the titular Marlfoxes, a special breed of vulpine, led by Queen Silth, haunt Mossflower Wood and steal the tapestry of Martin the Warrior from Redwall Abbey, with a party consisting of the two children of squirrel warriors, Dannflor Reguba and Songbreeze Swifteye, following them, with the shrew Dippler and watervole Burble accompanying them. The prologue features a poem about wandering players, with plenty of other good poetry throughout the novel, and the first main chapter introduces several characters including Song's father Janglur Swifteye, not to mention Ascrod and his sister Vanna, children of Queen Silth.

The wandering players, the Sensational Wandering Noonvale Companions Troupe, are en route to Redwall Abbey, where a squirrel, old Friar Butty, serves as Recorder, mentioning the dry, rainless summer, and the death of former Abbey Warrior and Abbot Arven, not to mention Abbess Tansy. Throughout the story, the Redwallers clash with the Marlfoxes and occasional rats and other “vermin,” with Dannflor having sporadic

visions of Martin the Warrior, along with a featured power struggle including another of the Marlfoxes, Mokkan. The story is generally good, though again somewhat recycled from prior entries of the series.

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### **Jenny Clark says**

Redwall is a lovely, safe place to visit. The villain always dies, their slaves are always freed, and Redwall always stands. There is never a single slave who dies in slavery. They always are free. That said, this is a children's book, so I overlook that and enjoy the lovely descriptions and humor.

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