



The Royal Ranger

John Flanagan

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Ranger's Apprentice, the international sensation, comes to a close in this twelfth installment.

For fans of **Tolkien**, **Redwall**, **Game of Thrones**, and **T.H. White**, **RANGER'S APPRENTICE** delivers fantasy-adventure thrills with real-world historical details.

John Flanagan returns for one final bow to the series that has conquered millions of readers worldwide with this pulse-pounding adventure that brings one era to a close, and ushers in the next

Will Treaty has come a long way from the small boy with dreams of knighthood. Life had other plans for him, and as an apprentice Ranger under Halt, he grew into a legend—the finest Ranger the kingdom has ever known. Yet Will is facing a tragic battle that has left him grim and alone. To add to his problems, the time has come to take on an apprentice of his own, and it's the last person he ever would have expected. Fighting his personal demons, Will has to win the trust and respect of his difficult new companion—a task that at times seems almost impossible.

...

The Royal Ranger Details

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Author : John Flanagan

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From Reader Review The Royal Ranger for online ebook

Annika Lundkvist says

Gosh... And here I thought the eleventh would be the last one. I don't know what to make of this. Personally I thought the last book was a perfect ending to the series, but...

Lady Vigilante (Feifei) says

4.5 stars and the only reason it's not getting 5 stars is because the series is over. Oh and the ending sucked too but other than that this was great!!

It was a pretty long book but this is how I finished:

1. Didn't study for Monday's test.
2. Didn't eat dinner and the next day's breakfast.
3. Didn't get out of bed until 20 minutes before class started.
4. Didn't shower (OK *now* I showered so shhhh!)
5. Didn't answer my boyfriend's phone calls.
6. Didn't meet an ARC deadline (oops!)

This series, books 1-12, has been with me since 2008 and I'm so sad that the story is over. These characters, both dead and alive, mean so much to me! I love that these books are readable to all age groups and has a mix of every genre in it! LOVE LOVE LOVE!

Again,

Will Wortner says

The Rangers Apprentice: The Royal Ranger

If you love The Rangers Apprentice series, you will LOVE this book.

4.5 stars

The perfect read for a Rangers Apprentice fan. This book gave me such a feeling of nostalgia, it was like visiting an old friend. Flanagan tore at my emotions and made me laugh from start to finish of The Royal Ranger.

Like others said, the adventure isn't as grandiose as previous novels. It does not make this story any less exciting than previous novels. The adventure Will and the new apprentice undertake is fitting and realistic first quest for an apprentice ranger.

The first book in the series follows Will as an apprentice, the last book follows will as a trainer of an apprentice. Will trains the newest apprentice, and he falls into a similar role as halt in the first novel. I felt like I was reading book 1 again but from halts point of view.

Pros:

The newest Ranger Maddie
The role reversal of this book compared to book 1
The emotion
How Flanagan writes conversations.
Added vocabulary

Cons:

Will seems to lose a step
Smaller adventure than we are used too
*****SOME SPOILERS BELOW*****

The Long:

Half a star was taken away because I believe Will could have eliminated more thugs than he did at the end of the book. He not being able to hit more of them didn't fit his legendary persona. That was my only concern.

This read is very similar to book 1. Will becomes a mentor and emulates much of what Halt does in the first novel. He starts using Halt's phrases and realizes he has become much like Halt. He sees traits in his apprentice, Maddie, that remind him of himself as a young apprentice. I laughed through much of the novel as it unfolded.

I kept remembering book one and how Halt acted and treated Will, and it was hilarious to see the same occurrences play out again. Only this time from the ranger, not the apprentices, point of view.

We stay in Araluen the entire time, which is fitting when you have an apprentice. I would have liked a bigger adventure, but it simply would not have fit the story line. It would have been like coming home from your desk job on a Wednesday, then call in sick on Thursday because the President said you are the only hope to save the world from an alien invasion, then go back to work on Friday like it was no big deal; That just doesn't make sense.

The character relationships between all of the main characters remain strong. Flanagan does a fantastic job of making all of their personas and relationships with each other feel very real. They have believable concerns and dilemmas throughout the novel, making the characters feel very real and human despite being fictional.

The royal ranger ends the series very well. Flanagan closed the book on Will's adventures, and I feel content with what happened. He has the option to open up a new series with Maddie, but Will as the main character has come to an end.

The Story:

We enter Araluen almost 2 years after Horace and Cassandra's Marriage. The King is sick, Cassandra is the regent, and everything in the kingdom is calm. Cassandra and Horace have a daughter, Maddie, who is as adventurous and headstrong as her mother.

>>>>>>>BIG SPOILER ON NEXT LINE<<<<<<<<<

(view spoiler)

>>>>>>>spoilers returning to normal levels<<<<<<<<<

Will and Maddie train at Will's cabin at Redmont Fief. We see both characters evolve because of the other

involvement in each other's life. Maddie introduces a new weapon to the Rangers' armory. The two of them eventually are given a quest by Gilan, the new Ranger Commandment. Will and Maddie embark on a classic feeling Ranger quest to destroy a slave trading gang, which inevitably leads to Will finding redemption when he least expected it.

The Writing:

Flanagan writes conversations that feel so real and natural. Many of the conversations will feel relatable to real life. Flanagan has always done an excellent job creating real world feeling situation.

The book is filled with challenging vocab words. Flanagan put in the perfect amount of vocab, and I was impressed with the amount of times I found myself looking up a definition. I was not expecting this, and loved that he is able to challenge readers with his writing.

The Characters:

Will- Is in a state of depression. He is on the verge of getting kicked out of the Ranger Corps. Halt and Gilan quickly find a way to save their friend. Will slowly becomes (an older, Halt like) version of his younger self with the help of Maddie. My heart went out to how Will must have felt at the beginning of the novel.

Halt and Pauline- See like a typical couple now. They banter and work well as a team and always seem to be on the same page as one another. Pauline has 1 pov chapter in the beginning of the novel. Both Halt and Pauline take supporting rolls through this novel, and are not present through much of the middle of the story. Halt is now a retired ranger; he denied the position of Commandment when it was offered to him.

Horace and Cassandra- are stressed with running the kingdom for Cassandras incumbent father. They have a lot to deal with. On top of the kingdom they have a rebellious teenager. They take on a role of parents who just don't know what to do; feeling like their child is on her last straw. They also appear in the beginning and end of the book, but are not present during most of it.

Maddie- acts like the typical royal brat in the beginning of the novel. She has some redeemable traits, like being very personable with the guards, and being a good hunter with her sling. She is very spoiled and pretentious. She evolves with her training with Will. By the end of the novel she evolves into a very mature and respectable young adult.

Gilan- has been awarded the position of Ranger Commandant. He receives the position when Halt refuses. He handles the job well, but is concerned that Will is close to being ejected from the corps.

Jenny- Is still running her restaurant and appears and is mentioned a couple of time through the novel.

Overall:

4.5 stars- A great end to a series I loved so much. Review will be rounded up to 5 on Amazon and Good reads because this book is worth it!!

Jonathan Terrington says

The advantage of living in Australia can sometimes feel like a disadvantage. Sure, we're apparently the envy of a lot of the world financially (if they've heard of us), we have a great environment, some wonderful sports and some of the world's best coffee, yet it always feels like we're last to get any of the good cultural acts. Most of my favourite American bands and films seem to come around after everyone else has had them (and

books too). Sure, we get the odd Marvel film early viewing but it's almost like a token gift.

Which is why it's nice when a popular (and favourite series of mine) is actually written by an Australian. I don't mean to boast, but I will since it rarely happens, that I got to read this novel way earlier than most of the world. It's not scheduled till an October 3 release date and yet the publishers got the novel early to my local bookstore where I had a nice pre-order to pick it up for almost 10 dollars cheaper.

Now, to the book itself. It must be noted that the 5 star rating is the result of all the entire novels in the series, though I have no doubt this may be the best among them. It was clearly a novel written with care, passion and insight and this to an extent helped make it a touch above the other novels in the series.

I have a tendency to rate YA and general children's literature books on a different scale or level to other novels. That is not to say I find them inferior as literature. Some of the greatest works of fiction have been primarily children's fiction texts (see *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Hobbit* or *The Chronicles of Narnia* for example). But like other types of 'genre fiction' they are different to other works of literature. And when I say literature I mean the literature studied in schools or universities as 'high-brow' works. To that extent I try and judge children's literature as a whole, by the various issues and concerns they deal with.

As an entire series *Ranger's Apprentice* has been superb children's fiction. It is the type of fiction written and appealing to all ages. Though John Flanagan's style could hardly be called beautiful it is wry and warm in its tone; inviting but never consoling. There is a subtlety about his writing, and though his tales are of other worlds I cannot help but feel the particular Australian vibe which leaks through his words. It is a familiar vibe and one which grounds the book all the more in reality. It is an odd concept that a work of fantasy could be grounded in familiarity but the best fantasy truly takes the normality of the world and exposes the fantastic elements of that normality.

The plot of this novel is hard to talk about without exposing any key spoilers. It follows a much older Will and his new apprentice as they go undercover on a mission, a mission with roots in Will's recent and dark past. It is a plot lined with tragedy and is about the process of recovering from tragedy. It is a moving and fitting end for the series, which in a way comes full circle as the reader by this point has seen Will Treaty move from Apprentice to Ranger to Master Ranger with Apprentice. I will warn readers that there is little of any of the other characters that you may be familiar with in this novel. That said, if you've read this far, why stop now?

There is a sense that the novel could continue on with another book following Will and his apprentice. However, I think it is fitting that John Flanagan end it here. Not only does it allow for the series to come that full circle. But it is a bowing out before the novels begin to recycle plots ad infinitum. There is a noted idea amongst storytellers that it is better to leave the audience wanting more than to outstay your welcome. And I believe John Flanagan has left his readers wanting more, leaving it up to his readers to imagine the future and beyond.

Lexie says

~ I wanted to rewrite my review for this book because it holds a really special place in my heart. Plus the old review was pretty crap, and this book deserves the best review I can write for it. I can't recommend this series highly enough to people, it will always be special to me and I love it so much and always will. Ok, now to my review.

This is one of the best books I have read. I loved everything about this book. It is my favourite in the series

and one of my favourites in general. I loved the whole story it was so great, I loved the characters, I over everything. This book was just so great.

I really loved the plot of this book. It was a really well developed story, and it was so great and beautiful and sad. In this one, Will is far from the cheerful, humorous, happy and kind to all character who lights up the place with his smile. No, in this one he's dark and languid. Consumed by grief after a tragic death of someone who meant the world to him - which the death so shouldn't have happened it was so terrible and sad! - Will is consumed by grief and anger at the unfair and senseless tragedy. He can think of nothing but getting revenge on those who were responsible and its consuming him fully and darkening his soul. He's not listening to anything his friends say and he just doesn't care anymore, even refusing missions, putting his position as a Ranger at risk, something that would destroy him if he lost it. He's lost all heart and spirit. Will's friends are extremely worried for him, but they can't find a way to stop him spiralling down this dark path. Meanwhile at the same time, Cassandra the soon to be queen, and her husband Horace the great warrior knight, are having trouble with their rebellious fifteen year old teenage daughter Madelyn - or Maddie as she's always called. Just the typical teenage stuff, always backchatting and having attitude and sneaking out of the castle at night, annoying the guards and driving her parents insane. When they all come together - Horace, Cassandra, Halt, Will's former mentor and father figure, now a retired ranger, Pauline, Halt's wife, and Gilan the Commandant of the Ranger Corps, another former apprentice of Halt and a close friend of Will - it is Halt's ingenuous idea to have Will take an apprentice, and for that apprentice to be Maddie. They're all shocked at first, as Maddie would be the first ever female Ranger apprentice, not to mention the fact that she's a princess, but after some thinking they believe it will work. So they send a letter to Will, asking him to help them by taking Maddie as an apprentice. It's something Will can't refuse. Somehow even in the dark place he's in, he manages to realise that he can't turn his back on his two closest friends, after everything they've all done for each other, how many times they've saved each other's lives, everything they've been through together and what they all mean to each other.

So Will takes Maddie as an apprentice. At first he's still gruff, uncaring and spiritless, and Maddie finds it difficult to cope with all her privileges as a princess being taken away, her 'uncle' Will being different and the tough job of everything. But over time, Will gets too occupied with Maddie to focus on his dark thoughts of vengeance, and Maddie's presence gradually lightens his mood and puts spirit back in him, she even makes him laugh finally for the first time in ages one morning. Maddie also matures, learning more responsibility, independence and sensibility. Eventually, Will and Maddie uncover this huge despicable crime of child kidnappings for a slave ring, and they must solve and stop it. The suspense climaxes in the last quarter of the book, and it seriously becomes nearly unputdownable!

SPOILERS

I just have to say this! The last part, when Will tells Maddie to run and get the kids to safety and he stays and holds off the band of slavers as they're called and lets himself get captured. Jory Ruhl, the one who was mainly responsible for the death of Will's wife Alyss, and who also turns out to be the leader of the criminal gang, plans to burn Will to death 'in honour' of Alyss, who died in a fire in a building. I know this is gonna sound very weird, but I don't think Will would've minded if he had actually died like that, just as Alyss had died, that's probably how he would want to go. Wow I loved that whole part though, when Will was captured, the SUSPENSE! My hear was pounding as I read! Then Maddie went back for Will and saved him! Oh I loved that so much, that whole part was something else. The climax was something else. Truly amazing. When Jory Ruhl fell into the pile of wood and the fire began and he was burned alive, in the fire that he was going to kill Will with, that Alyss died from, and Will rolled clear of it just in time. And the end of that scene was so beautiful, when Will was carrying Maddie who had been gravely injured by Jory Ruhl's spear and came dangerously close to death, up the cliff and treated her. He cried for her, desperately hoping her for her to make it. And miraculously, Maddie pulls through. Maddie then becomes an official member of the Rangers, and Will is back to his normal self. This story was just absolutely beautiful... I love you so much Will! And all the characters!

Spoilers end.

Stories like these are always special to me. Those stories with a kind of dark character, driven by grief or pain or suffering, who slowly changes throughout the story as a result of another character or adventures. I just love those kind of character developments, those transitions from dark, cold and bitter, to strong, lively, and realising what life is really about, what it can really be, defying the odds, and whatever their dark past is to be great, to take their life back and live it to the full. Those kinds of characters are my favourite, my most highly regarded and respected. They are great characters, so special and amazing, and this story is a sensational example of a beautiful story for a character like that. The underlying themes and depth of this story make it a thrilling, beautiful and wonderful story to behold.

I never got bored throughout this book. In this series I loved even the casual interaction between characters. Even just a typical day in the world of these characters was enjoyable. John Flanagan's writing style made sure that every little thing that happens is an enjoyable read, and keeps you hooked until the end. I remember reading the first book of this series, *The Ruins of Gorlan*, knowing nothing about it and just giving it a shot, it was the first different book I had read in a while, and I just got hooked instantly and pulled into this series, devouring the rest of the books like a wildfire. I'm so glad I picked up *Ranger's Apprentice: The Ruins of Gorlan* that faithful day, and so glad I got to experience this amazing series. *The Royal Ranger* was of course, my favourite, a spectacular conclusion to this awesome series. My second favourite was *The Sorcerer in the North*, and other favourites of mine would probably be *The Ruins of Gorlan*, *The Burning Bridge* and *The Lost Stories*. I loved every one of the *Ranger's Apprentice* books, and even though I read other amazing series that may become my favourites, *Ranger's Apprentice* will always hold a very special place in my heart. I will always remember it. And best of all, it's the work of fellow Aussie author John Flanagan! This provides so much inspiration for me, a young Australian with a dream to become an author. Thank you John Flanagan, for this truly amazing series, and for providing so much inspiration and ideas for me as an author. I owe one of my own series that I created to you, it came to exist thanks to the inspiration of *Ranger's Apprentice*. So thank you John Flanagan, for *Ranger's Apprentice*.

Look, I have to give *The Royal Ranger* a 10/10. I just loved everything about this book. And the things it made me feel when reading it make it worthy of a 10/10 book. I absolutely loved the story, I love the characters so much, they are amazing! I love the world, the Kingdom of Araluen, and I absolutely love the whole concept of the Rangers. The pace was perfect in this book, and I love John Flanagan's writing style. Everything about this book is just amazing, even the freaking cover is absolutely beautiful! Plus it's my favourite kind of book, medieval fantasy, yes! I will remember *Ranger's Apprentice* forever. It may get lost amongst many other great books as I broaden my horizons, but it will always be there, I will always have the whole series - oh except book 10, oops, (laughs nervously) - sitting on my bookshelf, a reminder of my first real favourite series, and one that continues to inspire me. Thank you for reading, and please if you haven't, go pick up *Ranger's Apprentice* and read it! As soon as you try it, I'm sure you won't be disappointed. I can't wait for the movie! I'm so excited! You can be sure I'm gonna go see it as soon as it is released! The wait is killing me!

Nina394 says

I'm disappointed with the *Royal Ranger*. I love *Ranger's Apprentice* series and J. Flanagan writing. I really do. I grew up with the series, I'm going to read it to my children one day (I hope). But to me some stories are better left unfinished. For me, the 11th book is the end of the series. What happens next...well I don't really need to know. The same things like in real life. People die, get old etc...And I don't really need my favourite characters for so many years suddenly grew old or die in the last book of the series. The time difference between 11th and 12th is too big for me and I found it very hard to accept the changes. The last time we saw

some of the characters they were ok, even smiling, then we get a new book, start to read only to find out that they dead, old or sick. More, the way the two of the characters die is really not very believable. I felt like it was forced. They dead because perhaps author felt it was required for other character's development. Or to remind us that all good things eventually come to the end. I wasn't really looking for this.

Putting that aside, the plot was the weakest of all the books in the series. Too much focus on training Maddie get me bored and I don't think that it happened before with the previous books in the series. There were good moments there, I have to admit, that really got my attention and some good action and humour too. But I didn't find idea of princess becoming a ranger believable. In addition, I found she changed too quick. I felt a bit like I was being forced to like her in the end...and I really do believe people change or grow up, just it rarely happens that fast in real life, especially when you deal with spoiled 15 years old girl. And suddenly she also became so skillfull that she was a hero in the end. Too predictable. Too good to be true. It was like she was even better than Will when he was her age. Besides, the only reason that she got a chance to train with Will was her family. If she wasn't a princess she would never get a chance to be apprentice to a ranger. The one thing that I found that can save this book (a little) is Will. The way he treated and taught his apprentice was priceless. He was a great mentor, just like Halt was. There are few scenes in book with Will and Maddie that I really loved.

In the end, I still wish that Royal Ranger wasn't written. What I'm looking for are prequels to Ranger's Apprentice. I don't want any more books about Maddie.

C.G. Drews says

Before anything is said, this is the LAST RANGERS' APPRENTICE BOOK. Let that sink in a moment, okay? LAST. Okay, now I'll hand out the nostalgic tissues and we'll move forward with a comprehensible review, right?

Ha. Ha. Yeah, I'm funny. HERE COME THE FEELS.

The last two Ranger's Apprentice books (THE EMPEROR OF NIHON-JA and THE LOST STORIES), I was vaguely disappointed and dissatisfied with the series. Shoot me now, die-hard fans! But they were kind of boring. HALT'S PERIL was my top-favourite. I laughed, I cried, it moved me, Bob. So I went into THE ROYAL RANGER expecting a lot, full of nostalgia and feels, and did I reap the benefits of sticking with this series for the last few years? Heck YEAH. 5-stars, baby, though mostly because I love Rangers and I love apprentices and I love Will and Halt...er, I mean, I love, um, archery! (Let's move on, shall we?)

Will returns as a grumpy senior Ranger. He doesn't laugh/joke/smile – so basically he's Halt. Only Will is dogged by the murder of Alyss (who died in an anticlimactic way, and I think the author could have amped it up a bit, since our souls had to be shattered by Alyss dying at all). He wants revenge. Fair enough. I mean, Alyss was the love of his life...after he figured out he wanted her and not Evanlyn/Cassandra. But they were perfect for each other! I wanted to read about little Wills running around the place. Come on! No kiddies to pull out Will's greying (you heard right! GREY) beard? Disappointed. But still. Will is cranky and sad and Gilan (who has Crowley's job) is worried he'll have to dispel him because Will doesn't take missions. He just searches for Alyss' killer. Also fair enough, but hey! I don't call the shots. Gilan does.

I looooved seeing Will with an apprentice! It was a trip down memory lane (yep, I need one of those tissues now). I mean, aw, gosh! He's so much like Halt was when Will was a wee mite of 15-years, getting bashed up by Horace. (PS Horace is married to Cassandra and all now, so yeah. No more bashing, I guess.) And who makes a better apprentice then...drumroll...Cassandra and Horace's daughter: Maddie.

Hereto come my complaints (yeah, I have some, keep your shirt on). Maddie was portrayed (read the blurb)

as “rebellious” and “unwilling”. Whaaaaat?! I found this mildly offensive, actually, since the depth of Maddie’s “rebellion” is sneaking out of the castle to hunt. She gives the game to the guards too, so they can share it with their families. ALSO, she does this because Horace and Cassandra are horrible, stifling parents, who stick her in bubble-wrap, don’t listen to her, and never let her do anything – even though one day Maddie will be Queen. CAN I RIP MY HAIR OUT YET?! Also, nothing is ever rectified about Cassandra and Horace’s parenting. They’re the close-minded parents you hate in YA literature. Gaaaah. After all Cassandra went through? She had adventure upon adventure with Will when they were kids. She learned how to use weapons and fight, and saw so many countries, and nearly died fifty-billions times...and she turns around and refuses to train her daughter. Did Cassandra like needlework and being kept in a castle? NO. So why the heck is she inflicting it upon her daughter?! My opinion of Horace/Cassandra dived in this book. It’s sad, because this is the end and in all honesty, I disliked Horace/Cassandra to the umph degree.

Maddie is merely a princess. She just has no idea about the world because, hellooooo, she’s never been allowed in it! She has fine airs and is a snob, but “rebellious” and “unwilling” do NOT fit her. I think, maybe John Flanagan could have made her meaner/annoying/snob/stuck-up...but he didn’t. And therefore, I don’t see why everyone was so mean to Maddie. (view spoiler)

The action and adventure was as fun and interesting as ever! I loved seeing Maddie be trained as an apprentice. I laughed out loud! I loved how Will slipped into a few of Halt’s old mentor habits. I loved how Maddie didn’t like coffee! (Go girl!) I loved how the author detailed weapon training, so I honestly felt like I would love to try some of the stuff Maddie was doing. Someone pass me a bow! (And safety helmet...)

The writing was typical-John-Flanagan style. I admit, I’m not a fan of omnipresent. While this isn’t strictly omni-present, we dip in and out Will and Maddie’s heads a fair bit. One paragraph we’ll be with Will, two sentences later, we’re in Maddie’s thoughts. I don’t like that. It’s just not the best writing, I reckon, but that’s personal opinion. There is also a lot of telling rather than showing. And needless detail. And, I don’t like it when we’re TOLD someone’s being sarcastic. Come ooon! This is RANGER’S APPRENTICE. We expect sarcasm like we expect arrows and coffee with honey.

The humour is there, just not as sharp as in previous books. Still. I had to put down the book I was laughing so hard. (This phrase “put down” doesn’t mean “lay aside”. It means, rest-book-upon-my-bed-while-I-snort-and-cackle-and-then-pick-it-up-again-as-soon-as-I-can.)

I’m devastated to see the series end. Knowing there’s “one more” is a great feeling. But it’s over. Done. (Wait, pass the tissues again.) I’m sad to see now mini-Wills or mini-Halts. I’m sad there’s no more adventures. I’m sad this IS THE END. But I loved this series. I’ll always sing its praises. I’ll always remember fondly how obsessed I was with it and took up archery (yeah, hay bale in the backyard kind of archery) because of it. Go Ranger’s Apprentice! Woot!

Now, excuse me, I’m off to reread the series. (Logical conclusion to missing the series, isn’t it?)

Dan says

Very good. The best of the series, I think.

Cordelianne says

I loved the repetition with the first book, that Will was giving the same answers as Halt used to do! To conclude: great ending to a wonderful series. It was a long one, but a very enjoyable one as well :)

Kyle says

Not the best installment in the series but I still like it.

The Ranger's Apprentice series is one of my favorites so I was very much looking forward to reading the latest installment. Overall, I guess it's my less favorite of all twelve volumes. My biggest problem with the novel? Character development.

The book centers around Will and Maddie who is the daughter of Cassandra and Horace. Maddie is portrayed as a rebellious princess who sneaks out of the castle at night to go hunting. She unselfishly gives the game she hunts to the castle guards so they can help feed their families. When confronted by her parents, Maddie explains how she wants to learn to defend herself, to have some adventure just like her parents did when they were her age. Now, this is where things go off track I think. We know from previous books in the series that Cassandra hated being stuck in the castle learning needlepoint and the other things a princess was expected to do. So you would think she would have some understanding of how her daughter feels. But, no, she does the opposite of what you would expect her to do. It's like Flannagan forgot what Cassandra did in the previous volumes of the series. It's so completely out of character that it's absurd.

So we have Maddie who wants to learn to fight and use weapons, to have adventures like her mother and father did. She's given the chance to be the first female Ranger's apprentice and what does she do? She shows up at Will's with a maid and a ton of fancy clothes thinking she can spend time with the local baron enjoying time at court! Okay, what happened here? It's like someone kidnapped the first Maddie and put a different one in her place before she got to Will's. If this Maddie was back with Cassandra they'd be having a grand time and there'd be no problems at all. It's like Flannagan had to reinvent Maddie so he could create conflict between her and Will. Not good.

Now once we get all that out of the way and the character development is finish the book is quite good. Will and Maddie go off to investigate the accidental death of another Ranger and the action starts there. This part of the story is typical Flannagan and I enjoyed it almost as much as I did the other novels. It was just way too short.

Not sure if Flannagan plans on making Maddie the subject of a new series or not. If so, my suggestion - skip it.

Nicole Marie says

That last gif is like my sister and I when we found out about this book.

Lila Kims says

OH MY GOSH. OH MY GOSH. THIS FINALE, Y'ALL. THIS FINALE.

Out of the three parts of a story, Flanagan is the best at ENDINGS, I tell you. He may be the best ender-of-stories EVER - I always emerge from a Ranger's Apprentice book feeling ALL THE FEELS. But seriously, this whole book was awesome. Darn. Awesome.

And I'm gonna shut up now, before I start running around in circles with fangirliness. :D

Tay says

YES. THERE ARE SPOILERS AHEAD. DON'T BLAME ME IF YOU IGNORE THIS, AND READ AHEAD WHEN YOU . . .

- 1) shouldn't because you don't have much of a grasp on the series.
 - 2) don't want anything spoiled (like I sadly had).
- &
- 3) just don't want some additional information on JF RA series book #12.
 - 4) however, if you have randomly read the 11th book, then I think you would be okay to read on. It's not like you have become emotionally attached to any of the characters as such. yah.

So, please. Caution has been given. Read at own risk people.

^ _____ ^

Okay. **clears throat** Ever since I started reading John Flanagan's first RA book -- The Ruins of Gorlan, I became immensely captivated by the man's work. When I finally finished the series, The Lost Stories helped me through the pain, but it only satisfied for a short time. SO, when I found that there was a 12th book, you could say that I was excited. VERY EXCITED.

but OMG. OCTOBER. Really? Why?

When I read the descriptions on Goodreads, I literally started freaking out that Halt had died or something, but from other descriptions it is definitely evident that he lives. SO, then that got me extremely worried that it's rather Alyss that has passed on. If Mr. Flanagan does that to me, I think I will need to be issued into psychiatric care. Seriously, though. But hang on, we have many other characters we have come to love immensely, so what if it's Gilan, Jenny, Horace, Evanlyn, Pauline, etc. These are some pretty important questions that we have no answers to! UNTIL OCTOBER! Poo.

I'm so conflicted it is killing me. By the sounds of it, Will's apprentice will be the royal princess - Horace and Cassandra's first born child. I'm not sure if I'm thrilled with the idea of a female Ranger; it just really doesn't seem to be sitting well with me. It almost disrupts the awesomeness of the Ranger Corps. Like, I'm a girl and everything, but in these books believe that men are the tiny bit more superior in these novels, even though there are those females who kick arse for sure in them. I just think it was a risky move on Flanagan's part.

Who knows how many are going to be for or against it.

But seriously, if it's Alyss that has died, I don't know if I could ever look at The Ranger's Apprentice the same ever again. :(

October cannot come soon enough either way.

Review to come, that is, when I actually buy the book online in friggin OCTOBER.

UPDATE 18/06/13

(view spoiler)

Lynette ~ Escaping Reality – One Book at a Time ~ says

Check out my Alyss costume HERE: <http://escapingrealitybookreviews.wor...>

Excuse me while I go cry in a corner.

Wow, was this book perfect, or what? It was definitely worth the \$12 in shipping fees to get it from the UK, rather than waiting for the USA edition in a month. My life is complete, and yet destroyed. This book makes you cry, it makes you laugh, it makes you happy, sad, scared, worried, pretty much every emotion you've ever felt. In one book.

There is a sort of... conclusive feeling to the whole novel. Everything is wrapped up, all loose ends tied together, and you put it down with a feeling of immense satisfaction.

This is one of the most beautiful books I have ever read. It's perfect. It's magnificent. It's better than any other (aside from HP, which it ties) book I have EVER read. Any book. This is the best book, I have ever read. Wow. I loved it. So much. The characters! Getting to see Will all grown up and so much like Halt! And yet, he was still my Will. It was all so perfect.

I'm 16, and I HIGHLY recommend this book.

Kathleen says

The second half of the book gets nearly 4 stars, but the first half gets only 2 from me. This book takes place about 16 years after book 10. Ranger Will has gray hair and a gray beard (but he's only about 40, so that didn't fit). He's grieving a personal loss, feeling bitter and vengeful. Quite understandable. But he's also petty, petulant, and mean-spirited with his new apprentice, and to the kids at the party, and to the curious blacksmith. The drunken hangover scene went on far too long and Will was far too harsh, preachy, and cold. After all, it was a first offense, done in youthful ignorance and immaturity.

Why end the series with characters acting out of character? Why end with a downer? Would be better to stop after book 10, Emperor of Nihon-Ja. Much more upbeat story!

Gradually, by the second half of the book, Will became more like the cheerful fellow we know and love.

Thank goodness for his canny horse Tug. His "discussions" with Will added some light relief. There were a few humorous scenes in this book, relieving the otherwise unpleasant tone.

Plot-wise, I found some holes and inconsistencies: (view spoiler)

But I choked up when Will finally cried his dammed-up tears. That felt credible and poignant. And I liked the epilogue.

Flanagan is a good writer, but he went a bit too far on the "willful teenager" trope, and he does tend to reiterate things we know from prior books (e.g., that Will doesn't tie up his horse, because ranger steeds don't run away). Moreover, anachronistic words like "dad" and "kid" pulled me out of the medieval setting and shot me back to modern America. And too much focus on coffee!
