



Midnight Masquerade

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Stavos Voronin was not as blind-eyed as many nobles and royals. Evony's physical gestures—even the simplest movement of her hands—revealed that she had not always been destitute. The same was true of the children—of their polished manners and the boy's knowledge of horses and tendency to be bold and fearless of strangers.

Ah yes, Stavos enjoyed a good mystery. After all, interest in the inexplicable circumstances surrounding the royals of Abawyth was the very thing that had lured him to the kingdom—the enigma of Abawyth's twelve sleepy princesses. And yet now—now his mind was all the more intrigued. Not only was the obscurity of what had caused the profound and baffling torpidity of Abawyth's princesses laid out before him, but also he found his curiosity intensely piqued over the riddle surrounding the very lovely Evony and her siblings.

As Stavos strode through the village resting on the outskirts of Abawyth Castle, his mind reeled with possibilities. His musings were drawn back to why he had come to Abawyth at all—to solve the conundrum surrounding the twelve beautiful princesses of Abawyth kingdom—to solve the seemingly impenetrable crux and thereby win the hand of one of Abawyth's princesses, as his father, King Letholdus of Ethiarien, had commanded.

Midnight Masquerade Details

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Author : Marcia Lynn McClure

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From Reader Review Midnight Masquerade for online ebook

Kristen Kooistra says

2.5 stars.

I definitely think I'm the odd duck out here. Everyone seems to love this book but me. I'm not sure what I missed here or if this is just not my thing. The writing was nicely done and the plot moved smoothly. The characters were well-defined and there was a lot of good points to this book. I didn't hate it. I just felt annoyed by the end.

There were three things that came to mind. One is relatively minor, but I thought there was a lack of scene description. The rooms and outdoors were not described to a level I enjoy. This especially was evident when Evony (view spoiler)

The other two items were really what sunk this book for me. Which is too bad because as far as plot goes, this was a genius twist on the 12 Dancing Princesses.

1. Purely personal taste, but these two characters only know each other over the course of a few days and the amount of kissing and so on was just... over the top. And Evony is pining for him and mourning the fact that he could marry someone else. Also some of the remarks that were said in front of her siblings were... I thought they were unnecessary. Regardless of whether they went over the youngest's head or not, neither kid should've had to hear crass comments like that. I'd rather see kids get to be kids for as long as possible. So the remarks about Evony being a kept woman and how she should be the prince's mistress didn't agree with me.

2. Stavos carried this story. At the beginning we learn what Evony has found out, so she's useful. And shortly into the story we learn what she did in the past to be an active character. But besides what happened pre-story and the info she gives out at the start, Evony is useless. More than useless, she's a liability.

I. Hate. That. I hate watching one of the main characters/love interest be a piece of furniture. She gets run over, needs to be carried home and cared for. It's Stavos that pushes her to quit her job and provides for her. She insists on following Stavos to watch through a window. WHY?! She couldn't do any good watching through the window. She couldn't hear anything and everything she saw, Stavos saw.

Like, why the heck did she go? And then! (view spoiler) Liability.... making things worse.

She can't even handle simple things. When it's finally time to enact the rescue (view spoiler) like come one, we really needed that lame of a plot point just so they could get half-nekkid in bed?

AND THE CRYING! Evony cries all the flipping time. I mean she cries and cries and cries. First chapter, tears. Last chapter tears. Eyes welling, tears brimming, tears dripping down cheeks, choking back sobs.

Basically Stavos(who's only real flaw was you can tell which part of his body he thinks with) is the proactive character who has to save everyone and take care of everything. He's the hero of the story.

By the end I have to give credit to the idea, and the writing, and the fact that the author did a good job of describing her characters. But I do not like passive main characters who not only do nothing useful, but are actually a hindrance. And the crying, yeah, not my thing.

This is for readers who like damsels in distress who get swept off their feet by a dashing, slightly roguish prince who takes care of their every whim and they never need to lift a finger.

Kelly says

First off- I love love love Marcia McClure books! I buy her books before I even read the synopsis. I can guarantee that I will love it. "It's all about the kissing" is her motto. They always take me to another place and time and I can really escape reality. Her books are clean and fun. I love that she puts real personal touches in her books at the end. At the end she tells another story of how the book came to be and "snippets" of information contained in the book. In this book she talks about her social phobia and her children she teaches at church and how they helped her and this is where some of the names in the book came from. I love that. It is a whole other world of writing and understanding not only the background of the book but Marcia McClure. She is real there and tells it like it is. It always puts a smile on my face.

This is a retelling of the twelve dancing princesses. Stavos's horse nearly tramples on Evony in the beginning of the book. Stavos is a prince and he is more humble than, I don't know what, but he is humble! He sees Evony for not only her beauty but her character. He isn't easily fooled and is quick to figure things out. See in the beginning, we have to figure out Evony as well as the rest of the story.

Stavos becomes entwined in Evony's life because he is there to solve the mystery over the 12 princesses being lethargic. If anyone could solve the mystery, they would be rewarded with the hand of one of the 12 princesses to wed. Stavos's father sent him there to solve it and choose one of them for his bride and Stavos is obedient. Evony has information that would help him on his quest. He trusts her and she in turn, trusts him. But she holds back at first for fear of her family. When things are discovered that Evony didn't originally tell him, Evony reveals all to him and together they solve the mystery.

Along the way, kisses are stolen and given and hearts are also given. Also a little bit of jealousy. But, there is the matter that in the end Stavos must choose one of the princesses to wed. Evony is heartbroken.

But you know that all her books have HEAs. And so my heart was beating like a jackhammer out of my chest, truly it was, at the end trying to see what would he do so he could be with Evony? Because, I wasn't 100% sure that was going to happen.

There are a lot of things to solve and learn throughout the book and I don't want to give it all away. Evony's family is strong in character and helps one another. I love that there is a strong family theme here. Because families are the most important thing in life.

4.5 stars for me. I think I am partial to her cowboy stories.

If you like kissing, families, a little mystery, story retellings, chivalry, royalty, clean romance, honor, duty, and a little killing of the bad guys then this is the book for you!

Celestine says

You can always count on Marcia Lynn McClure to whisk you away to another world filled with manly men and smart women who work together to solve the big plot problem. I've read a handful of her books (many,

many of which are available on Kindle Unlimited, so I really should be downloading more!), and they always delight. The books I've read have had either historical or fantasy settings, but one thing stands out in what is billed as her "clean" romances: the kisses. She is able to impart such yearning and desire in activity that doesn't go below the shoulders that seriously, my smutty friends, you won't miss it.

"He was undone then, taking her mouth with his in such a kiss of unbridled, fiery passion that he feared for a moment it would harm her somehow."

"She looked up to see Stavos raking both hands through his hair repeatedly as he attempted to control his labored breathing. His massive chest rose and fell with the residual exhilaration he had also experienced."

"It was what his heart felt for her-- and what his body felt for her he dare not entertain."

Midnight Masquerade is a retelling of the "Twelve Dancing Princesses" fairy tale. In this version Prince Stavos from a neighboring kingdom has come to solve the riddle of the exhausted princesses. Before presenting himself at court, he encounters the lovely Evony, who professes to be a seamstress yet has the mannerisms of a noblewoman. Their fateful meeting takes them on the path of solving riddles, all the while falling in love and avoiding danger.

McClure is a talent. She can take a familiar, and somewhat dark, Grimm story and turn it into a page turner full of hope and love and trepidation. I was totally immersed in the fantasy kingdoms she created, hardly taking a note the whole while. This book is seamless storytelling at its best. Even the too-stupid-to-live moment that loomed was avoided, much to the credit of the author. My only complaint - why, oh why, does the man always get the credit? Evony was as instrumental in solving the riddle of the princesses and the danger to the kingdom as Stavos. I guess behind every strong man is an even smarter woman.

Kathryn Cooper says

Reviewed on Clean Teen Fiction

I would consider this book a New Adult since the main character is in her early 20s, but lucky for us lovers of clean romance this book was clean just like all of Marcia's wonderful romance novels.

I love fairy tales! This was such a unique retelling of The Twelve Dancing Princesses. I didn't know what to expect at every turn. Evony was a wonderful heroine: strong and brave, determined and kind. She was a joy to read. She only made me think, "No! Don't do that! That's a stupid choice!" one time. It's annoying to read a book that has the main character making a bad choice at every turn. Thankfully that was not the case with Evony. She was smart and just . . . lovely. I don't know how else to describe her.

Stavos was such a dreamy prince. I love to read Prince and Princess stories. I'm such a girl! Stavos did not disappoint as the hero. He was everything a prince should be, full of honor and bravery. It didn't hurt that he was thought to be the most handsome man alive!

As with all of Marcia's books there was a wonderful intriguing plot that kept me turning the page while full of breath taking romance that kept me smiling. If you've ever read a review for one of her books you've probably heard about her talent for writing kissing scenes. Those scenes were very swoony. ;) This book also had a good amount of peril and action. It was easy to read late into the night.

Midnight Masquerade was a fairy tale laced with faint inducing romance and pulse stopping mystery.

Content Ratings:

sexual: moderate

language: very mild

violence: mild

I received the book from I Am A Reader for the blog tour. I am not paid for my reviews. My reviews are solely my opinion.

Heather says

I received a copy of Midnight Masquerade in exchange for an honest review and I'm so glad I did!

What an absolutely perfect fairy tale. I loved loved loved Midnight Masquerade. The characters, the setting, the story, it was beautiful. Evony was amazing. Stavos was perfect. The bad guys were evil. The queens were missing. I literally sighed when I finished it. This book brought back my love of fairy tales I had forgotten that I had as a child. What girl doesn't want to be a princess with her own Prince Charming (or Prince Stavos in this case). I had never heard of the fairy tale The Twelve Princesses, but now I need to go look it up and read the story that inspired this gorgeous book. Also, I need the rest of Marcia's books. New favorite author. Such a talent.

When I swiped my finger to the very last page, I put my iPad down and called my sister and my mom. I told them if they didn't buy this one that I was going to gift it to them. It's one of those book experiences you just want to share with everyone, let them feel the enchantment that is Midnight Masquerade. I have to say it again, perfect fairy tale, the kind that leaves you filled with hope, just like fairy tales are supposed to. (Well, at least the ones that aren't by the Brothers Grimm, those twisted Grimms.)

If I were you, I wouldn't just put this on my TBR shelf, I would grab it and move it to the top of the list. I know Marcia said that this book took her a long time to write. She shelved it out of frustration a few times, but I am so glad she pulled it back out and finished it. I needed this book. Beautiful.

Melanie says

What a fun and unique take on The Twelve Dancing Princesses! Stavos Voronin is on his way to solve the mystery of the twelve lethargic princesses and literally runs into Evony. He meets her brother and sister and knows there's more to their story than they're letting on. The rest is full of mystery and romance and so unique that I don't want to give any more away. If you haven't read one of Marcia McClure's books before, you should know that she's known for clean romance with some great kissing and this book is no exception!

I loved Evony and her family and cheered her on as she did what she needed, even though it wasn't easy. The three siblings get along well and are supportive of each other as they try to figure out what's going on. Stavos is a hunky champion! He's willing to help them and enjoys being in their company. The only problem--if he solves the mystery, he's promised the hand of one of the twelve princesses, so Evony has to be prepared to let him go. She knows any of the twelve princesses will make him happy and even has her favorite one for him to choose. There are also some great side characters (both good and bad) who add a lot to the story.

Another thing I love about Marcia's books is that she always includes an Author's Note at the end, where she fills us in on the background of the story and how it came to be written (fun behind the scenes type of stuff). I enjoy this as it gives me some insight into the story and helps me appreciate it more. I feel like she really opened herself up in this one and I teared up as she shared the story of how she came to name the twelve princesses. Oh, and I love the cover, too!! I highly recommend this to anyone looking for a fun, clean fairy tale romance!

Mel's Shelves

Jessie says

Midnight Masquerade is a retelling of the Twelve Dancing Princesses. Evony is a princess of a kingdom that I'll never be able to spell. Her Aunt, the queen of the neighboring kingdom, disappears. Within a week, her own mother vanishes too. Her uncle sends a steward to watch over her kingdom since her brother is not of age, but Evony quickly sees that her brother's life, and her own may be in danger. Evony and her younger brother and sister go into hiding. Meanwhile, Evony's cousins are lethargic each day and the king offers a reward to any man who can figure out why (enter the twelve dancing princesses). The handsome Prince Stavos arrives just when Evony is needing a champion. Can he help her save her cousins and regain their kingdoms? And what will happen to her heart if he is successful and receives his reward of having one of her cousins for his bride?

I loved what Marcia Lynn McClure did with one of my favorite fairytales. She took the bones of the story and gave the princesses a believable reason to dance (no evil sorcerer king in this version). She gave us a smart heroine, and a prince who is willing to follow her advice without question, and then take her burdens for his own. And of course, MLM, being who she is, gave us some great kissing scenes! As a person who's read just about every Twelve Dancing Princesses story she can find, I would say that Midnight Masquerade keeps up with the rest. It was new and delightful! And like any good fairytale, good triumphs over evil and it all ends happily ever after.

For other Twelve Dancing Princesses stories try:

The Twelve Dancing Princesses (picture book)

Wildwood Dancing (young adult)

Princess of the Midnight Ball (young adult)

Entwined (also young adult)

Stacey (Sassy Book Lovers) says

This is my first book by Marcia McClure's and I have to say, it won't be my last. This was such a beautifully written story, a retelling of The Twelve Dancing Princesses. I so love fairy tales, don't you?

I truly loved this book! From the very first page I was captured, each page after that was just pure bliss. This is the first book in awhile that I've been able to finish within a day, with three kiddies it's a really hard thing to do.

Evony, she's such a wonderful character, she's strong, sweet, beautiful, loving and would do anything for her family. With her mother missing and an evil King out to kill her little brother, Evony has no choice but to flee and protect her siblings. The responsibility she's had to deal with would be overwhelming, working for a wicked seamstress and worrying about having food to feed her family. I really felt for her, but her strength

always shows through.

When Evony meets Stavo's things start to change, for the better. Stavo's earns Evony's trust and she makes it her mission to help him solve the mystery with the twelve sleepy princesses.

I loved Stavo's, he's like the perfect Prince Charming.

With a few toe curling kissing scene's, you have the perfect story.

Make sure you get yourself a copy! ^_^

Kathy says

I'm a huge fairy tale retelling lover and this one was awesome!!

I've always loved the 12 Dancing Princesses. I've watched Lesley Ann Warren in Faerie Tale Theatre's The Dancing Princess more time than I care to admit. So take a favorite fairy tale of mine and cross it with Marcia Lynn McClure and you end up with something I can rave about!

This basics of the story I love were all there.... 12 princesses, a silver forest, a hero to solve the mystery... but Marcia took the story and made it her own by telling it in such a original way. Add in a unique setting and reason for the all night dancing as well as a lot of romance and mystery (and of course Marcia's signature kissing scenes) and you have a story I couldn't put down.

My advice? Put everything else on hold so you can grab a copy of this book and read it. It's sure to leave you with a smile on your face!

Rating: 5 Stars - I loved it!

Content: Clean

Source: Ebook review copy

Midnight Masquerade was just released and is currently available only on Marcia's website. In a few weeks it should be available on Amazon and at other retailers.

Kathy * Bookworm Nation says

I really enjoy MLMs fairytale retellings and I hope she does more. This is a retelling of The Twelve Dancing Princesses. There have been quite a few books based on this fairytale to come out lately, I really enjoyed Marcia's take on it and how she was able to make it her own. I liked that there were still the elements from the original fairytale, but was told from a different perspective. I also liked the reason behind the dancing, seemed more plausible than enchantments and magic.

I liked our main characters Evony (pretty name) and Stavos. They of course have good chemistry together and I felt their connection was realistic. With the setting and with everything going on I was able to believe them falling in love so quickly. Usually that's a tough sale for me, but I bought it here. Evony is of course sweet, beautiful and kind. She is also selfless and has put her life on hold to protect her siblings and help her family. I like that she didn't sit back and let someone else do the rescuing, she was an active participant in making sure everything turned out right. Stavos is what you want in a hero. Not only is he good looking, but he has a caring heart and is fearless. He has high morals and stands up for what he believes in. Like I said, they are great together.

The overall story was fun and kept me entertained, and I just love the cover!

Content: Clean, PG. Kissing!!

Elaina says

Wow! What a fantastic story and on the edge of your seat adventure. Looking at the title I was thinking of a different way the story was going to turn out. Then reading the story came out differently than I was thinking. Marcia did a fantastic job! Enjoyed this book immensely and couldn't put it down. Love it!!

Ruth Hill says

For quite a while, I have seen this author's name, and her books have been highly recommended. But this is the first of her books that I have ever read, and I had no idea what to expect. I sincerely anticipated that I would enjoy it. I didn't even read the synopsis--I just knew I wanted to read a book by this author. Maybe not the most brilliant thing to do--I have been burned before--but I hoped that this would become positive.

From the first few pages, I was rather persuaded that I would enjoy this book. And once I realized that it was based on the lesser-known fairy tale of the twelve dancing princesses, I was even more intrigued. In fact, I somehow missed the boat (I read the author's remarks at the end of the book), and I didn't read any of the other versions of that tale. Hers is the only one I have read, and Marcia Lynn McClure, I am definitely a fan! The story couldn't have been any better, and the characters were fantastically conceived. Okay, so maybe I knew how the story would end, but that honestly did not hamper my delight in this tale.

There are absolutely no "red flags" in this book. There is no profanity, and the romance is clean as can be

(but that doesn't mean it's not romantic nor spicy). This book is acceptable for any age to read. I think even tweens would savor this book, but that's just my opinion.

If you follow my reviews, you know that fantasy and cheesy romances do not generally resonate with me. While this doesn't fit into the fantasy genre, it is a fairy tale adaptation. I am generally pretty quick to criticize such books, but this one does not deserve any constructive criticism, in my opinion. In addition to that, I would not place this in the cheesy romance category. Yes, it's a fairy tale without any edginess, but I find that the author's romance writing is sweet, involving, and definitely above average. Based on this book alone, I have become a fan of her works, and I look forward to reading more in the future!

I was sent a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review. I was not financially compensated, and all opinions are 100 percent mine.

Jennifer Jensen (Literally Jen) says

I received a copy of this book for review from the author for promotional purposes. All thoughts and opinions are entirely my own.

I am a total sucker for fairy tale retellings—especially when they are for my favorite fairy tales, one of which is Twelve Dancing Princesses. When I got the e-mail informing me about Marcia Lynn McClure's upcoming blog tour, I didn't even finish reading the blurb for the book; I was already filling out the form on the website.

Midnight Masquerade is told in third person from the point of view of Evony, the princess of Elawyth, who has gone into hiding with her younger brother and sister to save their lives from a plot to overtake that kingdom, as well as its sister kingdom, Abawyth.

The overall tone of the novel is set when Evony meets Stavos, a prince from another realm who has journeyed to Elawyth to solve the mystery of the twelve sleepy princesses. If he is able to find out what is causing them to stay so tired throughout the day, he will win one of them for his bride.

Evony, who is the cousin of the twelve princesses, vows to help Stavos save both kingdoms, even though it means her heart will break when he becomes betrothed to another.

Midnight Masquerade is full of romance, court intrigue, and adventure. I was rooting for Evony and Stavos from the beginning; I just knew they belonged together—even if perhaps they did not know it themselves. Stavos is charming from the moment he meets Evony; he isn't a stuck-up royal and treats Evony and her siblings with kindness and respect—well before he learns of her true identity. Evony shows that she is strong and not the average princess; she puts herself in harm's way to help her cousins and gain information for Stavos.

If you love fairy tales, read Midnight Masquerade for a retelling that takes out all of the supernatural and paranormal elements of the original tale, yet fleshes it out in such a creative way that you won't even mind.

Julie says

Anytime I pick up a book by Marcia Lynn McClure I know I'm in for a deliciously romantic read with

amazing kissing scenes and at least one scene when the hero removes his shirt. I'm happy to say that Midnight Masquerade delivered on all three fronts.

When I realized that Midnight Masquerade was a re-telling of the fairytale The Twelve Dancing Princesses I was even more excited to carve out some precious time to read this book. I'll admit that The Twelve Dancing Princesses is my favorite of the many Barbie movies that as a devoted mother I have watched alongside my little girl. (mom points, right?) Needless to say, I was curious to see what MLM had done with this enchanting tale.

I loved that in this version, the heroine isn't one of the twelve dancing princesses - she is their cousin. Princess Evony is a beautiful, intelligent, and determined young woman. She is hard working and compassionate - she's the perfect big sister to Prince Mikol and Princess Tressa. Prince Stavos - our hero - couldn't be more perfect. (And I would expect nothing less from the beloved MLM.) He's the archtypal male - easy on the eyes, considerate, passionate, courageous - and he is perfectly selfless. I mean, how many men would strip down to their skivvies to share their body heat with a princess at risk of expiring from hypothermia? Oh... well... yeah I guess that would be any guy, huh? But it makes for a wonderfully romantic scene nonetheless :)

So, if you are an MLM fan - you will love Midnight Masquerade. If you aren't familiar with MLM and you like sappy romantic stories with lots of good kissing scenes and stereotypical heroes & damsels in distress - you should put this on your "to-be-read" list. And if you are a fan of fairytale re-tellings - this is one to pick up.

Katie W says

Marcia Lynn McClure is a master at taking a story and putting her personality into it. She has such a delightful way of crafting a story and engaging the reader, not to mention, her kissing scenes are epic (and clean, of course)!!

I love fairy tales and love to read what different authors do to re-tell those beloved stories. This is a great version of the Twelve Dancing Princesses. I love the unique twists and turns and the interpretation.

Prince Stavos is determined to solve the mystery of the twelve sleepy princesses--even though no one else has come close to doing so. Evony has secrets of her own, yet she goes out on a limb to trust this handsome stranger. A fun romance (kissing) is blossoming, while danger lurks and mysteries are solved. Loved it!!

Content: kissing (clean), a couple of mild swear words, a little violence.
