



# The Crossing

*Kathryn Lasky*

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**The Crossing** Kathryn Lasky

The fourth book in bestselling author Kathryn Lasky's stunning foray into paranormal romance.

## The Crossing Details

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Author : Kathryn Lasky

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## From Reader Review The Crossing for online ebook

### Jassicca says

There's not much suspense happening in this series, easy reading with a simple conclusion. The last book was concise; I wish it were longer, where there's more story of their happy reunion with the others on the island and how they were settling in there with their beau. My next reading also having the same title, Daughters of the Sea, but it was written by Kristen Day, and I hope the story would be much more interesting than this one.

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### Randi (The Artist Formerly known as Guitar Chick) says

Spoilers, because there will be spoilers (and swearing about a children's book)

What  
The  
Fuck

This is literally the weirdest thing that has ever happened to a series that I loved.

First of all, something must have happened with publishers and whatnot, because this book is apparently only available in kindle format. I've never paid over five bucks for a kindle book, and yet, I was so hype for this that I paid up. It had been a long time coming and the first three books were really charming and had all kinds of interesting things going for them. This leads me to believe that things were pretty dire with the fate of this series and as such, was part of the hold up on getting it released. I would care to venture a guess that this book probably was not really intended to see the light of day. Maybe it shouldn't have.

So I devoured this in like two hours and I nearly threw my phone at the wall when I was done. There are very few books that have ever caused me to even consider throwing them. Congrats, Ms. Lasky.

It almost reads like a bad fanfic. Pretty much everyone is completely out of character. Stannish, previously one of the sweetest characters in the series, is a complete asshole to everyone. Hannah lacks any sort of personality besides "sad" until the very end of the book (I'll get to that later). The whole thing is basically a retcon of previous books. I mean, the Laws of Salt appear to be pretty damn bendable. Or you know, just not set in stone in the first place, just a cool plot device to conveniently carry our characters from point A to point B with minimal effort. I already had issues with this weirdness in the earlier installments, but I could look past it because I liked the characters and the history behind the settings and such. But here, it just becomes too much to keep my disbelief suspended.

That's another big issue. Previously all the historical funtimes and mermaid plot were mixed together pretty seamlessly. This book is almost entirely about Ettie, a character that is great on the side but not as a major player, becoming a suffragette. I'm not even kidding. It's literally just about her being plucky. Which is all fine and well, she's just not who I wanted the book to, you know, focus on. There is probably more about the women's college in Massachusetts than there is about mermaids.

I was willing to play along with all of this until I hit the final third of the book. That is where everything went completely bonkers.

Remember Lila? She has the most random reappearance in the finale of the story. That plotline was tied up rather neatly, allowed a little bit of asylum history into the book, and was all peachy keen. It would have made perfect sense to just keep her locked up. Instead, Lasky brings her out to be.....creepy as hell with no explanation (also one of my nitpicks with book 1). I mean, sure, she explains some stuff about laudanum, but like.....there is not other reason for her to be here other than to complicate already tied up plotlines, or lend

even more silliness to a convoluted one (Stannish having an affair, because you know, drama). And as if that wasn't ridiculous enough, we don't even know what happens to the whole mermaid gang + boyfriends! We just see Ettie reading a newspaper article about how Stannish died! THE ENTIRE FATE OF THE CHARACTERS IS JUST IMPLIED. We don't get to see the girls meet their weird aunt, we don't get to see if May and Lucy's boyfriends stick out the complications and go live on the fun island that sounded really interesting, we just get Ettie. Again, I liked Ettie's character, but these books are not about her. Also, did Stannish commit suicide or not? Is Lila still on the loose? She's literally a sociopath. That's kind of dangerous. I mean, if you're gonna put her back in the story, at least tell us what happened to her! That's just straight up laziness.

Maybe it's just because the ending is so goddamn vague, but I also feel as though Lasky is trying to set up for another installment. This is strange for a multitude of reasons, the foremost being the strange circumstances surrounding the release of this one. It really looks as though the interest just isn't there for a continuation of this series, and with the quality of this one, I can see why.

Honestly, the only way this book could have happened the way it did is a lack of caring. And it shows.

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### Tatiana says

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### Maciej says

Spoiler alert! Some plot details revealed further in review!

Well, this seems to be final "Daughters of the Sea" book, therefore the review will necessarily evaluate not just this book but the whole series.

"Daughters of the sea" are about mermaids....No they are not! .They are about belle epoque, the mermaid story being only "occasio scribendi", a useful device plot. Mermaid identity here is simply metaphor of women's identity. Just as the three mermaid sisters brought up on land, mature and embrace their identity and associated freedom, so does regular "human" protagonist of the series, the real, non-metaphorical heroine. Of course, this is all happening at the very end of XIX century so such embrace is actually a difficult journey, with many perils along the way. Yet, we accompany three sisters, poor scullery girl Hannah, smart daughter of lighthouse-keeper May, and sensitive Lucy, adopted by respected Episcopalian priest. Each sister comes from different background and social class representing the different part of fin de siècle America's social spectrum.

Kathryn Lasky is therefore obviously more interested in America's past and women's struggle for recognition than in mermaids as such. What distinguishes her novels and what keeps me giving her books five-starred reviews, despite some shortcomings, is the mastery of depiction. Lasky simply knows how to introduce us to past epochs, inform us about its customs, values, and prejudices and how to do it in straightforward manner, to ensure that young readers will understand it. Writing is relatively smooth, just as the style which, while customized for young reader, still preserves some meanings and words from the past it describes. There is some elegance in this exposition and delicacy as well. The books are definitely partisan somehow: the contrast the values of past with that of the present (embodied by the main protagonists) showing why we should prefer the latter. Courage as well as ability to make free choices are lauded throughout the books as well as knowledge and education, which are means to freedom and independence. The stories are therefore,

ultimately the stories about the present (as all good stories about past should be): they show where we had come from and why we live the way we live as well as why we SHOULD live certain way. This pedagogical dimension is of course to be expected by Scholastic books but here it is of the best quality. Those book make great case for human freedom.

The final book starts with the court verdict. Lucy framed in murder by her own foster mother is sentenced to death. The two sisters, along with Lucy and May boyfriends seek to save her. But Hannah has problems of her own, concerning choice of the destiny: will she marry former-mer-turned-famous-painter or will she return to sea. Over the course of events sisters receive help from long lost relative and the former nemesis also makes comeback to strike just before the very conclusion...

Even here Lasky presents America as building its present on diversity, education, and tolerance: "feminist", agnostic, Jewish and gay (?) people make appearance throughout the book signifying the solidarity of minorities in building modern tolerant society.

Of course, there are many shortcomings as well. May's "investigation" is somewhat funny as Lucy could pass her the identity of murderer through Phin (she knew, as I recall from the third book). It also ends abruptly and has no continuation in punishing Marjorie. Long-lost-uncle acts as almost-too-convenient Deus ex Machina solution, while jewish lawyer is exploited only slightly after introduction. Hannah's issue with Wheeler and her focus on him makes her looking like inconsiderate jerk who does not give a damn about her sister being about to die, and ,to some extent, the same goes for May's relations with Hugh and her visit in Cambridge. As a matter of fact the whole series is not exactly balanced. May seems to be the most cultured, intellectual, among three sisters and is also the most "marysuish" - gets the smartest boy who loves her unconditionally and even comes from upper class (but as an intellectual is a "good" guy). Hannah and Lucy are much more "miserable". Lucy gets framed despite coming from upper class and Hannah is poor and somewhat "lost" (emotionally) at least throughout the fourth book due to her jerk boyfriend. Lucy and Hannah, are technically also "cultured" (painting and music) as May, but this never seems to be as important as May's education concerning astronomy and mathematics.

(I will skip part concerning the real main protagonist of the series, Ettie, leaving it to the reader to learn about her on his/her own.)

Despite these hurdles the books of Mrs. Lasky do represent superior form of pedagogy, by introducing us to both past and present with most intelligent and elegant mannner. Five stars.

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## **Kayla says**

Thank the mermaids below that I've now completed this series.

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## **Eliza says**

I loved the other books in the series, but was disappointed by this one. It was not a satisfying conclusion, though I did enjoy seeing the characters again. The plot was a bit random. Although I did find parts of the story good, I found the overall book rather unsatisfying.

## **Bonita Vear says**

I was extremely disappointed with this story; the other three stories in the series were enjoyable, and well crafted. Each character stood out well and had strong stories.

The last book felt like a whole bunch of characters got turned topsy-turvy for no particular reason except to suit the plot - which also felt very weak.

I felt like the whole book suffered like it was being rushed - the writing was not as thoughtful or as strong in the first three books, and the story definitely did not have the same depth as the first three books had.

The only character that seemed to stay true to form was Lila who was even more creepy, and as horrid as the first time we met her.

However, the end was a redeeming point - I did like how the book ended; it seemed to work quite well and wrapped things up nicely. Although there are many questions left unanswered about the girl's aunt and what she has to do with any of the story?

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## **Shonda says**

I have been reading and following this series since I was twelve years old, when the first book, Hannah, came out in 2009. It has been an integral part of my teen-hood and I have reread the series countless times. So you can imagine my excitement when I heard about the final book coming out. It certainly did not disappoint.

### **SPOILERS FROM HERE ON**

I particularly liked the way that it all ended. At first I did not like it as much, and in truth I was thinking that this book really could have used about 5 more chapters to it. The other three books had around 30 chapters each, so I suppose this one just felt a little shorter. But after some thinking it over, I have come to terms with the ending and really do love it. Perhaps it was also because I was coming to terms with one of my all time favourite series coming to an end as well.

It ended in that sort of way that lets you imagine what happens next, while still implying exactly what happens. It sort of leaves it up to the reader. It certainly implies the futures of all of the main characters, and even the death of one. The part that agitated me at first was the fact that we didn't get any sort of dialogue between the sisters and their aunt, Avalonia. I was really really looking forward to their reunion throughout the entire series, being as she is the sister of their deceased mother. I was hoping for some stories to be shared between them and such, but all we got was the wave of Avalonia's tail as she leads her nieces to their new home together. But, again, I have come to terms with this ending, and shall just have to resign myself to imagining all of their lovely times together as a new family.

The parting of the ways between the girls and their beaus was a little abrupt I felt, but I suppose they were in a rush to escape with poor Lucy, who practically spent the whole of the book in jail. I was hoping to get a bit more of Lucy, as I really took to her character, but alas, it's understandable as she was in quite the

predicament.

My opinion of Stannish has changed dramatically since the first book. I now loathe him, and spent the entire book just yelling at Hannah to dump him and swim off. He was so stupid and disrespectful to her the whole time, and she couldn't even see it. She was considering leaving the sea for him, only because he wrongfully convinced her that she had to choose between land and sea, when she could in reality have both. I think Stannish was bitter about losing his own mer-ness, or resentful at maybe having it taken from him. We don't know the official story of how he lost it, whether it was completely by choice or by accident of forgetting to swim regularly. Either way, he regrettably took out his anger and bitterness on Hannah, or as he likes to call her, "Anna", and tried to change everything about her from her hair to her very nature. And poor little Ettie couldn't stand a bit of it the whole way through.

Speaking of Ettie, I did enjoy seeing more of her. I didn't think she would grow into more of a main character, but she was a wonderful addition and always good fun to read about. Her stubborn personality, her dreams of becoming a Radcliffe woman, and breaking the suffocating chains of the society she was born into. Again, at the end of the book it is implied that Ettie might have a better chance of going to Radcliffe now that her sister has been outed as a mad murderess. I certainly hope Ettie does get to realize her dreams later on, I really am rooting for her. "This is your century!"

Speaking of murderers, I loved the return of the chilling Lila. She is both a hilarious and terrifying villain of the series. I feel her and Marjorie Snow would make quite the menacing duo. This series really does have some of the most entertaining and interesting villains yet. Every one is different, and they all have such a presence about them. They're those villains you love to hate, and even those you secretly love simply because of the grand scale of their dramatic personalities.

Altogether, it was a wonderful conclusion to the series. I really do hope that Hugh and Phin make it to the Hebrides and live happy lives with their mer wives. It is a little funny to think of how the Harvard man, Hugh, would be able to just up and leave his entire life behind, but when you love someone and find out much they fulfill you, you really don't need all of the extravagant lights and piles of money that life in high society has to offer. You really just need love. I do feel a little sorry for Phin's father, but I suppose he'll just come up with some excuse saying he'll be taking up work across the pond, which I imagine he will. Hugh could even continue his studies over there as well.

I am both much pleased and saddened that this series is over, but I have loved every single minute of it. I shall continue to cherish and reread this wonderful series again and again in the future to come. Thank you Kathryn Lasky, for creating this series. It has taught me what it means to be free, and has helped me realize that I really can choose to be free in this life. I can only hope I find a beau as perfect as Hugh in the future.

A fantastic series. Five stars.

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## **Hannah says**

four word SO GOOD MIND BLOWN

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## **Erynne says**

Wow! Finally I read the last book! I was really disappointed that it was only an ebook though. I finished it in one day!

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### **Kyla Stan says**

I loved that this series finally wrapped up. I waited years for this book to come out! However, I feel like it lacked the mermaid essence that the other three books had. It focused too much on Lucy's "issue" instead of their heritage. Also, the ending was a bit ambiguous.

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### **Brandee Terry says**

I don't love this series and this book was pretty terrible.

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### **Caitie Foster says**

This review is for the last(?) book in a series, so elements spoken of in this review might be spoilers for previous books. Just a fair warning.

*The Crossing* is the fourth, and possibly last, book in the *Daughters of the Sea* series. It deals with the three sisters (Hannah, May, and Lucy) learning how to live with their mermaid selves.

I came away from this book feeling very unsatisfied. Although it was a very interesting take on the mermaid legend, the specifics for how mers work in this world don't feel very well thought out. Things told to us in the first book don't seem to apply in the last book, and plot conveniences seem to be a dime a dozen.

For example: The Laws of Salt. This is the ingrained code of conduct that all mers live by, as well as rules for how their transformation and underwater life works. However, the Laws seemed to work far more often as a convenient way for Ms. Lasky to have her characters 'sense' things that they have no way of knowing. For example, in the first book, Hannah knows instinctively how to play a harp, and play it well. In the fourth book, it's told to us that she plays better than even a concert harpist. How can she play so well, and knows she can play, the first time she so much as lays eyes on a harp? The Laws of Salt. All three sisters feel a void where the two others should be. How do they know that they have two other sisters, and know that one day they'd all be drawn together? The Laws of Salt. Way across the ocean, in Scotland, their aunt keeps tabs on their progress. Not only does she find out that all three live, she can tell when they each "cross over" (become aware of their mer nature), and even when they've found each other. Why? 'Cause the Laws of Salt. At one point, in the fourth book, she even plays a harp, to try and draw the sisters to her, and they can hear the harp in the room with them (in Maine) vibrating.

Then there's the issue with choosing between living as a mer or a human. As told to us by the previously-mer-now-human Stannish Whitman Wheeler, once a mer reaches adulthood-ish, he or she must choose between the land and the sea. This seems like the sort of thing that was initially supposed to be a hard decision, to create tension, but as the plot progressed became less and less of a big deal. By the end, it was like, why even have that exist in the first place? As told, Stannish was a mer, who chose to live on land as a human in order to pursue his painting career. All well and good, except why? It's told us that all a mer really has to do to keep the mer lifestyle is to swim every so often; preferably once a day, but it can be less.

Stannish always makes it a point to live in cities close to either a river that feeds directly into the ocean or the ocean itself; why is it such a big deal to just slip out and go for a quick dip every other night or so? It's not his age; the aunt can easily transition between forms, and she's far older than he is.

Speaking of Stannish ... what happened to his character? In the first few books, he was always somewhat sweet, and very attentive to Hannah. Then, in the fourth book, (SPOILERS!) all of a sudden he's this total control freak? He has her cut and dye her hair, despite the fact that her hair was one of the things that initially drew him to her in the first place. He even has her change her name. None of this feels consistent with the character we had come to know in the past books. I feel like Ms. Lasky suddenly realized that she needed another antagonist, and so decided to completely change his personality to suit. (END SPOILERS)

Nor did the book end very concisely. The last book ended with Lucy charged with murder; this book begins with her being found guilty, and sentenced to death via hanging. (SPOILERS!) Almost the entire book deals with them trying to get the sentence overturned, but most of the details happen off-screen. A character mentions that they've appealed; then, a few chapters later, all of a sudden it's mentioned that the appeal was overturned. Finally, they succeed by ... just busting her out, via some guy who was never even mentioned before this book. Lucy escapes, May helps her swim, they're joined later by Hannah, and all three swim to Scotland to meet up with Auntie Ariel. It's sort of implied that all three have chosen the sea, just like it's sort of implied that Hugh and Phineas (May and Lucy's boyfriends, respectively) will follow them there, where it's implied they'll live happily ever after. There's no reunion scene with the aunt, there's no reunion with the guys, there's not even a scene where they reach Scotland or Phineas finishes the boat. All we get at the very, very end is a newspaper clipping telling us that Stannish has died (with a sort of serves-him-right flourish), and the characters shrugging over whether his death was foul play or suicide. (END SPOILERS)

It seems that Ms. Lasky might be setting this book up for a fifth book in the series, but I won't be sticking around long enough to know. This last book was a long time coming, and when it did it felt very rushed; almost like Ms. Lasky had lost interest halfway through and was just going through the motions. The end result was a somewhat-nonsensical mess, and I don't want to see what she does with a fifth book.

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