



The Hawkman: A Fairy Tale of the Great War

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A great war, a great love, and the mythology that unites them; *The Hawkman: A Fairy Tale of the Great War* is a lyrical adaptation of a beloved classic.

Set against the shattering events of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, at the tale's heart are an American schoolteacher—dynamic and imaginative—and an Irish musician, homeless and hated—who have survived bloodshed, poverty, and sickness to be thrown together in an English village. Together they quietly hide from the world in a small cottage.

Too soon, reality shatters their serenity, and they must face the parochial community. Unknown to all, a legend is in the making—one that will speak of courage and resilience amidst the forces that brought the couple together even as outside forces threaten to tear them apart.

The Hawkman: A Fairy Tale of the Great War Details

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Author : Jane Rosenberg LaForge

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From Reader Review **The Hawkman: A Fairy Tale of the Great War** for online ebook

Marialyce says

3.5 stars

What attracted me to this story was not only the synopsis but also the gorgeous cover. It is a story of the aftermath of war. An American schoolteacher plus an Irish musician have been touched by the ravages of war. They come together in an English village where they try to hide from the world that has shattered them. However, the small minds of the community wage against them and break into the quiet and serenity this couple so very much need.

This was a beautifully told story, the writing was the key to what occurred to this young man and how, because of the things he had to do, becomes something considered less than human. The man, Michael thought he was a bird and the woman, Eva tried to restore him. The time period was that after World War 1 and again for this reader the writing was the key. There is fantasy and reality in the telling.

While the story was well told, it was a book that required much time and concentration to read. It was a bit of a brooding tale and one that might not appeal to many readers.

Thank you to Jane Resenberg LaForge, Amberjack Publishing, and NetGalley for providing an advanced copy of this novel.

Jayasree B says

The first thing I did was read the previous reviews. And I was glad since I was not the only person to feel a bit disconnected with this book.

While the book is good as a one time read, personally it did not call out to me. Usually, readers associate with one or more characters or discover a sense of camaraderie, sympathy or something. I found none of that with this book. I was interested in *The Hawkman* first for its cover, and then its blurb. Sadly the book was not evocative enough.

I'd give it two and a half stars, but round it off to three for the beautiful cover.

For more book reviews, visit [Frost At Midnite](#).

Petra says

I received a copy of this book from Netgalley, in exchange for an honest review.

"He had for himself no expectations other than to survive, to start over, to live as he had not during the war, as a human."

This is a very beautifully written book. I feel bad for not liking it. The premise of the book is interesting enough, the characters' backstories are fascinating. However there was too much rambling for my taste and I found myself skimming through the last few chapters of the book.

Lolly K Dandeneau says

via my blog: <https://bookstalkerblog.wordpress.com/>

'Yet it was his eye, or both of them, that attracted the most notice and gossip- their unnerving brilliance. It was hungry and restless; and it earned him his nickname.'

In this fairytale for grownups, an American schoolteacher (spinster, nay old maid) Miss Eva Williams, falls under the spell of the Hawkman, Mr. Michael Evan Sheehan. Sheehan is suffering from the torments of the war, including his time of imprisonment. His vagabond ways have damned him as an outcast, and his yellowing, 'hungry and restless' eyes make him more birdlike than human. Mrs. Sheehan knows there is more to the man, tormented by children's taunts, rocks and even attempts at poisoning. He is more than a scavenger, certainly not a threat when he doesn't fight back, though the children's cruelty would deserve a firm punishment in a better world. She herself is a misfit in England, a foreigner, teaching at a lady's college, horror of all horrors she is on the shelf and unmarried, progressive (never a welcome trait in a woman bygone times). He becomes her cause.

Lord Thornton wants nothing more than his world to return to the normality of before the war. The Hawkman is a reminder, a constant stench of war and all its horrors. To make his village safe and 'clean' for it's young ladies seems to be his sole purpose, ridding it of such scavengers as Sheehan. The villagers, especially his son Christopher(recovering after his own war wounds) are in compliance to Lord Thornton's plans, but not Miss Williams. Even Thornton's wife, Lady Margaret wants nothing more than to be 'ride' of the Hawkman. Miss Williams has a far better understanding of the 'protagonist' of various countries and sees in the Hawkman no difference. Sifting through the fears and myths, she sees past the 'filth' and reclusive behaviors for what they are the reactions of a broken, damaged man.

Eyes wide open, Eva invites Mr. Sheehan into her world with empathy and compassion. She goes gently with him, as one might a wounded animal. She sees the man, not the myth. Hiding him in the cottage won't last, but she will not be cowed or bullied into giving up on him. When she comes to need him, one wonders just who needs salvation. With war weaved into the story, it is a unique twist on modern fairy tales and the true shame and horror is that people always find ways to invent monsters, to condemn those who need the most help to the shadows.

A quiet, yet moving tale.

Publication Date: June 5, 2018

Amberjack Publishing

Linda says

Golden eyes dulled into silence.

Hounded and ridiculed, he swept up the trailing ends of his long tattered coat attempting to flee from the taunting fever that surrounded him. Scavenging in alleys behind butcher shops. Bruised and battered hands extended in prayerful begging motions. Bird-like scratchings of the earth.

Until she appeared.....

The aftermath of the Great War leaves a pallid and sallow hue blanketing those who have been touched by its worldwide sepsis. The town of Bridgetonne, led by Lord Thorton, attempts to shore up some semblance of normalcy. The women's college prides itself in educating young ladies to enter into a world shattered by war and its uncertainties.

Eva Williams, an American, lives in a small cottage on the edge of Lord Thorton's estate which houses the college. She is the author of several books of fairy tales and poetry and teaches courses in those areas at the college. Hers is a simple life now after leaving behind a most painful life in the states.

What draws us into the inner circles of strangers is a tiny beacon of light that illuminates and recognizes one's pain aligned to another's. Eva is touched by what she experiences in the presence of The Hawkman. She extends her hand and he hesitates before holding it tightly in his. Eva brings him home to the cottage and it is here that simple humanity is revealed.

Jane Rosenberg LaForge creates a vivid spectrum of colors into the inner mechanisms of what drives and motivates the human spirit. This story line is laced with sharp "tellings" of the composites of one's dangling chain of life experiences. She intersperses this story with fables and fairy tales that come to life and draw you in. There is an instant flicker of familiarity as we associate past events happening here to those still lingering in the modern world. You can almost hear your own gasp in its truism.

Although *The Hawkman* is a work of brilliance, it may not affect everyone in the same light. I was fully and willingly caught up in the backstories of these two main characters. The multi-layering of experiences may prove too maze-like for some readers. But I would say that we are far from simple creatures sharing a combined human nature. The last 50 pages are wrapped in wonder. Simple wonder.

I received a copy of *The Hawkman* through NetGalley for an honest review. My thanks to Amberjack Publishers and to the very talented Jane Rosenberg LaForge for the opportunity.

Lucy Banks says

I received a copy of this book from Netgalley, in exchange for an honest review.

Beautifully prosaic, richly imagined blend of realism and folklore.

This book intrigued me for the tagline if nothing else - *A Fairytale of the Great War*. I wasn't sure what to expect, and certainly wasn't expecting to be so spellbound with the story.

It's a tale of two people; Mr Sheehan and Miss Williams. Mr Sheehan is considered the town misfit; he doesn't speak, is filthy dirty, and his yellowing, watchful eyes earn him the nickname of the Hawkman. Miss Williams is an American spinster, who takes the man under her wing, and nurses him gently back to health.

As you might expect, there's a lot more going on here than just a simple 'saviour' tale. Using echoes of past folklore, Mr Sheehan is depicted as a transformed figure - doomed to be trapped in a bird-like form, thanks largely to his post-traumatic stress after the war. Miss Williams, in saving him, almost damns herself, and her progression through the story is likewise transformative, though with a less happy outcome.

It's a simple plot, but that really is the beauty of it - without the dense plot, the characters are allowed to fly, and the reader is at liberty to ponder the meaning of it all.

So - what did I love about it? The real stand-out quality is the haunting prose and the clever interweaving of folklore and realism. I loved the notion of physical transformation as a way of exploring the damaging impact of war, and the resonance of silence too; how much can be said without ever opening one's mouth.

Is it an easy book to read? No. The author does make you work at it, because that's kind of the idea; it's not a poolside throwaway read. But the challenge is worthwhile, especially if you're happy to muse over the deeper meaning of it all.

A very good book indeed, and above all else, refreshingly different from your average novel.

Phrynne says

I was a bit disappointed in this book. That glorious cover and an intriguing description of the story made me read it but sadly it did not live up to my expectations.

A bit like that pretty cover being spoiled by the rather macho sounding title, the book itself seemed confused about what it was supposed to be. Sometimes it told the story of the two main characters living just after World War One in England. Then it wandered off into fairy stories told by one of the characters, after which we might return to England or go back to experience our characters' childhood or wartime experiences. Added to all this were the touches of magical realism which culminated in a very strange ending.

This sounds as though I did not like it. In fact it was a fairly enjoyable read which just tried a bit too hard. Three stars.

Thanks to Netgalley for the opportunity to read and review this book.

Amalia Gavea says

"Bridgetonne was not without other misfits: old maids who, in an earlier time, might have been mistaken for witches, and bachelors who, likewise, would have been called out as warlocks. But by no means was the village haunted."

It seems that books set during the Great War or a few years later have become really fashionable recently. Not that I am complaining because this is a very interesting era but there are many examples of such novels that are more melodramatic than meaningful. Magical Realism is also a trending genre and one of my literary obsessions so "The Hawkman" ticked quite a few right boxes. And although it wasn't perfect, it was really, really good. And look at this beautiful cover....

The plot is inspired by a reading of the Grimm Brothers' fairy tale "The Bearskin" and by recorded experiences of POWs in German prison camps during the First World War. The action is set in a sleepy county and we follow Eva and Michael, two characters with many demons to defeat. It sounds simple enough but trust me (if you want, that is...) when I tell you that there is much to be discovered and much to think about in the course of the novel.

Jane Rosenberg LaFarge certainly has a way with words because the prose is beautiful, mystical and yet accessible. She chooses to start the story with a powerful, peculiar scene of a death on a wedding night, reminiscent of Victorian fables. What seems initially a mystery novel with elegant touches of Magical Realism (more felt than seen, though), quickly becomes a story about courage and acceptance, about society and the stupidity that rules over it. The writer decides to compose a story out of a number of themes and she succeeds, in my opinion. An interesting point is the conflict between the English and the Irish which causes major implications in Michael's life. His own compatriots prove to be worse than the German soldiers in a society that is eager to ostracize the ones who "fail" to meet its criteria of "acceptable" behaviour. So Michael is easily brandished as a "turncoat" and Eva becomes the "naive woman from the other side of the Atlantic".

Through the snippets of Eva and Michael's lives with their families, we come to understand them as characters and care for them. Eva loves stories as a means to escape and Michael sacrifices his voice and identity to protect his life. But what kind of life can he lead under these circumstances? And then there is Christopher and his father, Lord Thornton, a horrible creature blinded by the stereotypes of the English upper class during the early 20th century. If you allow me a personal note here, I must confess I fully identified with Eva. She shows to everyone that there are limits to one's kindness, understanding, patience and respect. "Respect". Such a violated word...She accepts different people, different opinions but to everything there is a limit. When the others offend her principles, when they refuse to respect her as an equal, she stops "respecting" and returns the favour. She is straightforward and avoids conflict but when she sees that they try to play her for a fool, she strikes. So, I saw myself in her. In my experience, when patient people witness the other's hypocrisy and double-faced words, they become ruthless and send the parasites out of their lives.

My one complaint is the length of the novel. I found it too short, I felt that the relationship between the characters wasn't fully developed and the implications of certain actions weren't explored to the end. The protagonists were excellent and I wanted to see more of them. Still, I'm not one to complain about "distant" narrations (...let us be serious...) so my final conclusion is that I enjoyed it, right until its beautiful, bittersweet end. I just wanted it to be more powerful and memorable hence the 4 stars.

Many thanks to Amberjack Publishing and NetGalley for the ARC in exchange of an honest review.

My reviews can also be found on <https://theopinionatedreaderblog.wordpress.com/>

Dannii Elle says

A magical realist tale set during the Great War and sporting a cover this beautiful could not fail to appeal to me! What I initially loved about this, however, failed to continue to enthrall me. This story was, perhaps, too quiet in its telling, for me. As evocative as the writing was and as sublime as the story-line continued to be, there was an almost treacle-like quality to the pacing that often had me wishing to pull myself free and hurry ahead rather than sit still and appreciate the current sweetness that surrounded me.

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. Thank you to the author, Jane Rosenberg LaForge, and the publisher, Amberjack Publishing, for this opportunity.

Marquise says

With the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I being commemorated today, I decided to read & review a couple of novellas that retell one of my favourite fairy tales in the time of the war. Not a bad idea, Brain said. It'll be novel and fun, Brain said . . .

Alas, my hopeful brain missed the mark: the stories I read were neither good nor fun to read. I'll review the other in its own space, so let's get down to *The Hawkman* here. It's a retelling of a German *märchen* called "The Bearskin" that the Grimms collected, whose plot is a destitute soldier coming empty-handed from a war and finding the Devil on his way, who offers him immense riches in exchange for spending seven years without bathing, grooming & taking care of his appearance, on top of wearing a filthy bear's fur. Lacking in options, the youth accepts and lives like a disgusting savage beast, but he meets a kind peasant and falls for one of his daughters, eventually redeems himself and marries the girl. As you might have guessed, it has similarities to both "Donkeyskin" and "Beauty and the Beast."

Mrs LaForge seems to have wanted to modernise the tale by reworking it as the story of a shell-shocked English veteran that comes from No Man's Land so traumatised he forsakes his humanity and believes himself a bird, behaves like a bird, moves like a bird and lives like a bird. That's an excellent premise, isn't it? Wonderful, put that way. I thought so, too. Unfortunately, premise and execution went separate ways.

The first problem is: where was the editor? If there was an editor at all, because reading this would convince one of the absence of such a necessary assistant. The writing is so poorly edited and so all over the place that it's difficult to keep track of the plot. And that's a pity, because prose-wise the author is good at the craft. Not so good a storyteller, however, as the second (and probably biggest) problem is that the structure of the plot is even worse. Flashbacks here, flashbacks there and flashbacks yonder, all jumbled. Those of Michael Sheehan (the shell-shocked soldier), I can see the need for, but those of the female main character, not so much. I believe the parts with him at the trenches and the POW camp should have been the only flashbacks and better structured, better dosified, and better distributed throughout the storyline. Hers were pure filler and shallow given what was the intention for the story.

Third problem, to me, is: what on Earth was Magical Realism thrown in for? It was so infuriatingly unnecessary and so out of nowhere. The magical in "magical realism" is evident by the end of the book only, as earlier everything looks like just a good old plain historical fiction story, no magic, no I-wanna-play-at-being-García-Márquez (-without-his-talent) shenanigans. Until that moment, I'd taken this as a fantasy-less retelling, workable if somewhat unsatisfying, and then . . . that happens. And, of course, it has to happen while in bed. Tacky.

I'm sorry that such a great opportunity for a good story was missed. World War I gives plenty of room to inspired retellings of "Beauty and the Beast," I'd say even more so than World War II, given the legions of shell-shocked and disfigured soldiers, many of whom wore masks like these, that make for a perfect Beast figure without the need for magic, enchantresses and otherworldly stuff. The opportunity for "Phantom of the Opera" retellings are good as well. But, apparently, authors still insist on doing it with magic and fantasy (and not that well, either).

BAM The Bibliomaniac says

Netgalley #52

Many thanks go to Jane Rosenberg LaForge, Amberjack, and Netgalley for the ARC in exchange for my unbiased review.

The book starts with a death and a bridegroom, so one knows that's happening at some point. Then we are introduced to Miss Williams and a homeless, shell shocked soldier looking for his next meal and a roof over his head. Williams seems to be a bleeding heart. Well I think two and two can be put together. It's the fantasy portion of the story that has me still a bit thrown. I can't quite put my finger on why it happened. Like what's the meaning behind it? I think I missed something monumental? I know what I read, but it's just not clicking. Regardless the selflessness was beautiful.

LaForge teases me enough with this book that I'm interested to see what she produces next.

Alaina says

RTC <3

Patrick says

OK, so I'm totally biased because I watched this book get born, then grow up. I'm married to the author. (I am of Irish descent but I am not a giant bird.) It started as a slender tale, two stories really, then grew ever more complex and robust, with a mysterious finish that avoids stereotypes. I'm a guy so I was more interested in the war story, and the somewhat mysterious piano. But the story is woven into something much more, so if you like genre-bending literary fiction, with a historical flavor, this will be your cup of tea. When I first read it, the story left me wanting to know more about "The Bearskin," the main source material from the Brothers Grimm (greatly transformed). That story is just a springboard into a story about spiritually and physically damaged people finding each other, if only for a brief moment. (The independent publisher, Amberjack, is a women-run company based in Idaho. Great job on the gorgeous cover!) If you do write a review, please also post it on the Amazon page for the book, because real reader reviews cause Amazon to bestow promotional blessings.

Jennifer ~ TarHeelReader says

4 mesmerizing stars to The Hawkman! ?? ?? ?? ??

I knew in reading the description that this book would be a stretch for me. It combines a genre I love, historical fiction, with fantasy/mythology, and I was intrigued with how the two would mesh. I had to open my mind as a reader and really focus on this story, and once I did, I found it remarkable.

World War II is a time I read about frequently, and I was pleased that this book actually takes place during World War I. Inspired by the Grimm Brothers' fairy tale, The Bearskin, as well as experiences of prisoners-

of-war in German prison camps, *The Hawkman* is a completely original and absorbing tale.

At the heart of the story are an American school teacher and an Irish musician, Eva and Michael, who meet in an English village. The peacefulness of their life together is tested, and a "legend" is in the making at the same time.

The author, Jane Rosenberg LaFarge, writes with colorful, beautiful prose. *The Hawkman* has the mysticalness one looks for in a fairy tale. As I said above, it took patience and concentration on my part to enjoy this book, but I did. Oh, how I did.

Thank you to Jane Rosenberg LaForge, Amberjack Publishing, and Netgalley for the ARC. *The Hawkman* will be available on June 5, 2018.

My reviews can also be found on my blog: www.jennifertarheelreader.com

Alaina says

Second time read. First time review.

I received this ARC via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

The first time I rated this book, I gave it a 4. Second time around, I did find myself getting a little bit bored here and there but it still deserves a 4.

The Hawkman: A Fairy Tale of the Great War was a pretty interesting book. The world and the characters were still intriguing that it kept my tapping my little page arrow on my kindle. Yet, again, I definitely did get a little bored. Now I'm not completely blaming the book or the characters, because my work days are filled with boredom but I will say that it was definitely better the first time I read it.

This book is a fairy tale about war. Well, it's more like it's about an Irish musician, Michael, and an American school teacher, Miss Williams. Out of the two, Michael was probably more of my favorite character. He lost a lot, mostly himself, after the war. He goes through what so many veterans, and mostly anyone that has been in a war, he is abandoned and left alone to rot. Well, until the day that Miss Williams finds him and takes him in. She showed so much compassion for someone she didn't know that it definitely gave me so much hope for humanity.

Yes, I know that this is a book and that these are characters - it will still give me hope that people will end up doing the same thing today. Back to Miss Williams, well she hasn't had a cheery or happy past either. Nope, she has been fighting depression since day one. Now I have no idea what depression feels like but I know that it's a very serious thing to struggle with on a daily basis. It made me feel so sad for this character because of how she acted and treated other people while dealing with her own demons.

Throughout the story you will feel that emotional tug at your heart strings. You might also fall in love with one or both characters and their amazing story. Michael and Eva had terrible childhood but they cared so much for each other that it made their lives that much better.

Overall, the ending of this book was even more amazing the second time around. I will definitely be diving

into this book for the third time sometime soon (maybe next year??).
