



To Ride a Púca

Heather McCorkle

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Invaders are coming to take what isn't theirs, again. Neala wants to stand and fight for her homeland, but as one of the last druids, she may be standing alone. Persecuted, hunted down, forced to live in obscurity, the druids have all but given up. Can the determination of a girl who has barely come into her power bring them together? Or, just when she finally finds her place among her kind, will they end up losing a homeland their very magic is tied to?

To Ride a Púca Details

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From Reader Review To Ride a Púca for online ebook

Karen says

Advance read this one. Be jealous. ;)

Hold onto your horses. To Ride a Puca is an exhilarating ride through a magical world filled with secrets and danger at every turn. Just like the legend, this wild tale of love, family, and friendship will leave you forever changed--in a wonderful way.

Heather McCorkle says

I've written novels for fun, for adventure, for good causes, and for love. But this is the first novel I've written because my heart and soul demanded it. Though this novel is certainly filled with magic, adventure, and discovery, it is a bit dark at times in its honesty. It is meant for mature YA and adults.

Brooke (The Cover Contessa) says

I would like to thank author Heather McCorkle for providing me with a digital copy of this book to read and give an honest review. I have heard such great things about Heather's books, I jumped at the chance to read and review this one!

Blurb from Goodreads:

Invaders are coming to take what isn't theirs, again. Neala wants to stand and fight for her homeland, but as one of the last druids, she may be standing alone. Persecuted, hunted down, forced to live in obscurity, the druids have all but given up. Can the determination of a girl who has barely come into her power bring them together? Or, just when she finally finds her place among her kind, will they end up losing a homeland their very magic is tied to?

I will first off be honest and tell you that I did not read the blurb for this book, so I had no idea what it was about when I went into it. I had heard such great things about Heather's writing, I didn't feel the need to find out. Plus, I didn't want my reading experience to be skewed by anything I might have "assumed" through reading the blurb. I also did not read any reviews prior to this book, for the same reason as stated above.

First, I would like to comment on this awesome cover. I just love the face of the horse. At first I did not understand why the horse had to be the main focus for the cover. I thought, as I was reading, that perhaps the main character should have been placed on the cover. But once things were revealed to me, I began to understand why it was important to have this very cover! It really does fit the story perfectly once you have read it.

Second, can I just say that I love the names the author picked for the characters in this book. The book takes place in Ireland, so of course you figure there will be Irish names. However, I was not expecting older names, of course I did not know the time frame of the book, either. Once that was revealed, I was pleased to see that the author must have done her research to make sure the names were appropriate. The historical

significance of the names really does give so much credit to the author.

Now, for the characters. What can I say about Neala? She is such a great character. So well developed. her arc is awesome. You really see her grow and come into herself during the book. She is not your typical teenager, filled with angst and annoyance. She is independent and almost always self-assured (which I really loved). She easily recognized right from wrong and didn't put herself into situations she thought would be too hard for her to handle. She shows her love for family. And, despite, not having any friends for most of her life, she is able to easily accept people when they finally show an interest in befriending her. She stands up and fights for what she believes in, even when she knows those around her might be unhappy with that decision. The one thing that bothered me about her was her quickness to fall for a guy. During the course of the book, I could not believe how many romantic interests she had.

What can I say about Bren. He is obviously sexy. He is confident, that is for sure. He knows what he wants and he pursues with such enthusiasm it is surprising he doesn't run right over everyone he thinks might be standing in his way! He does portray a typical teenage boy whose mind is filled with hormonal feelings and wonderings about the opposite sex. But he is also committed to his friends and loved ones, and would put his life right on the line for them when necessary.

Dubh, what a horse! Big and strong. Beautiful and graceful. And completely protective of Neala. I love how he is not afraid to "stick his nose" into situations, literally, when he knows that things might not be right. He is definitely Neala's guardian angel!

And what to say about Tyr, the sexy Dane. Well, just picturing him on his steed at the end made me want to cry for him. He is strong and lovable and makes certain that Neala knows he is unlike the other Danes from which he is descended.

And to all the other characters, which are too many for me to name and describe, well, let's just say Ms. McCorkle really knew what she was doing by introducing them to us. They become Neala's family, if they are not already, and they help take us on a magical and mystical journey through the history of these Druids. All the characters are really well developed in this book. I could picture each and every one of them in my mind and felt a connection to all of them, good or evil. They lead you on an adventure that is unlike any other you have been on before.

I don't read much fantasy, but I really enjoyed the mythology associated with this book. It was a new and completely unusual world for me. I was drawn into the hills of Ireland and overtaken by it's people and their way of life. The world building was really well thought out and described. I also loved that even tho Heather has written other stories in this series, there is no reason to read them to understand this particular book.

I have to say that the multiple love interests of the main character got a little overwhelming and seemed a bit unrealistic. This was the only downfall I found with this book, and the reason why it did not get 5 stars from me.

The book was engaging and, for me, a page turner. I really got immersed in the reading and didn't want to put it down. If you like books along the line of Percy Jackson, Harry Potter and other mythical type novels, then you will love this novel. It's a dark and sexy historical novel that will keep you enthralled from beginning to end!

Bravo, Heather, for taking me on a journey I never knew existed! I am looking forward to reading the other books in your Channeler series!

4 out of 5 stars from me!

Review also posted on the following sites:

<http://thecovercontessa.blogspot.com>

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0985...>

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/to-ri...>

<http://www.librarything.com/work/1276...>

Rachel Sh says

When it comes to fantasy books, I'm a pretty hard critic. The one thing that I absolutely need to have in these sort-of books is to be able to lose myself in a completely new and unusual world. That's a big thing to ask from an author, I know. But now that I've read *To Ride a Púca* and it met my criteria, I can fully recommend both this book and the wonderful author behind it!

What else can I say but I absolutely LOVED Neala's world! The world-building was, put simply, exquisite! I was in awe. In awe. All I can do now is thank the amazing author who created it! I literally did not resurface the whole time I was reading. I was just completely caught up in the whole world and never wanted to leave. Can you blame me? Would you like to leave a world full of faeries, brownies and magic? And by brownies, I mean the magical creatures, not the treats. ;)

The main character, Neala was very admirable in the way she was always ready to stand up and fight for what she believed in. Multiple times throughout the book she showed her bravery and I loved her for it. She was a strong heroine, not one who constantly needed to be rescued which, by my standards, make the best female leads.

The only slight criticism I have with this book is the romance. It started off with Bren. First impressions: I loved him. But as everything progressed and he started changing, I started going off him. Enter Tyr. I LOVED Tyr. He was so sweet. Then came the next suitor. It wasn't quite a love square... but it was. I know I just contradicted myself but I really can't describe it any other way. I just felt like too many possible love interests were introduced only to be knocked down at the end.

Overall, I really enjoyed *To Ride a Púca*. I adored the world-building and the main character. Only the romance let me down a little. It wasn't that the love interests were terrible characters, it just felt a bit too much. However, that didn't affect anything that badly! So overall, yes, I highly recommend this book. How can you resist such a beautiful cover anyway?!

Debbie I Heart YA Books says

I have really enjoyed and loved reading Heather McCorkle's *The Secret of Spruce Knoll* series. So I was excited to hear McCorkle had written another novel in this series. *To Ride A Puca* is an amazing Historical/Fantasy adventure about the Druids of Ireland, and the war they're waging against the barbaric

people known as the Dane, who are trying to take their land and kill all Druids. I loved McCorkle's first two novels in this series, but *To Ride A Puca* was special. Being able to go back in history and get to know and have more of an understanding of the first Druids of Ireland gave me better insight into the first two novels that are written for today's time.

Neala is sixteen, and her parents have sheltered her and lied to her about their Druid heritage and her warrior power. When she meets Bren (Brendan), who is also a Druid warrior, he begins to teach Neala how to use her warrior power even if it goes against her parents' wishes for her. The only thing Neala has thought about since her brother Lorcan died fighting in the war is to learn to fight and to defend herself against the barbaric Danes, so she can also keep her home land. The only two things they brought back to Neala of her brother's when the Dane kill him, was his sword and a black horse. But this horse is a very special horse. This horse, who's name is Dubh, has waited three years to share his secret with Neala...and hopefully his heart.

Being sheltered as she was, Neala has never known boys or had a boy like her, but all that's going to change now that she's met Bren. Not only Bren, but also Tyr, who is a Dane warrior and Donal who fought by her brother's side in the war. Now Neala has no problem with guys liking her, she just has a problem with the one she's in love with and who will be her Druid bond. This was hard for me, because I fell in love with Tyr, and even though I know why Neala went the way she did and I also like who Neala's true love is, I still love Tyr. But I always have had a soft heart for the guy who losses.

To Ride A Puca is an awesome, mature YA Historical Fantasy adventure. McCorkle writes such fantastic characters in this story that I love them all, especially the horse, Dubh. I recommend *To Ride A Puca* as a must read.

Zoe says

To Ride a Puca is a perfect choice for fantasy fans - it has brilliant world-building, great fantasy creatures and a very unique quality. I haven't read a book like this before which is really saying something!

The main reason why *To Ride a Puca* stands out among other YA fantasy novels is due to the Irish culture. I really enjoyed the Celtic feel and how McCorkle used this so naturally. I've never read a book that has had an Irish Celtic feel to it thus making the book even more original. Once you get used to the terminology, you can easily slip into the story.

The only part of this book that I didn't particularly get along with is the romance. In my opinion, Neala's relationships all happened too sudden, one after the other. Even though some emotions were portrayed, I think it would have been better if we saw more closure and how Neala feels towards each one.

Heather McCorkle brings a great credit to the self-publishing industry. I will definitely be looking out for her other books in the future. :)

Sarah says

A thank you to Heather McCorkle for providing me with a copy of the book in exchange for my honest review.

I love books based on mythology and legends and this one is no exception.

Neala has lived a sheltered life, and has been lied to about her Druid heritage. Until Dane Warriors invaded Ireland and Neala's world is turned upside down.

I loved the characters, Neala is a strong, brave female. Just the kind of girls that I like! I loved Bren, but I also loved Tyr.

This book was a highly engaging historical fantasy with a little romance, adventure, danger, unexpected twists and some dashing guys. It was fast paced, I couldn't stop reading it, I was completely submerged in Neala's world. I liked how Neala grew within the story, I like books like that where there's the characters grow within the story.

Recommended for YA fans or anyone who likes fantasy.

Jules cressall says

To Ride a Puca (May 2012 release) by Heather McCorkle takes place in long ago Ireland and tells the coming of age story of Neala, a young Druid girl learning about her powers. Druids are being persecuted to near extinction and she and her family must hide their powers from their neighbors. Sheltered by her parents, Neala must discover her power and her connection to Ireland and decide if it is worth fighting for.

There is a distraction of being wooed by 3 attractive men to take the edge off of the threat of death and battle. Neala doesn't have a type, so there is a guy for everyone, and each guy really wants to win her heart! There is Bren, a fellow Druid, who teaches her about her amazing Warrior powers. Tyr the Dane, who is the country's mortal enemy, but who will betray his own family for Neala. Last, there is Donal, an enigma to Neala and a friend of her deceased brother. He appears out of nowhere ready to defend Neala against all threats.

The layers of reinterpreted history, magic and an average relatable girl give the story originality. Plus, there is the legend of the Puca. A puca is a shapeshifter of Irish legend They are feared because they can destory people's lives. The relationship between the girl and her horse is an important element in this YA story. As Neala chooses between following her friends or family, she learns the importance of facing the truth and not denying it. Will she be able to help save the Druids and her homeland? Whatever happens, you know it will

be with her puca at her side!

This was an engaging story from start to finish. If you love reading about Irish folklore and legends, you will love *To Ride A Puca*. It is also a fast read, geared for the mature YA fan.

Linda Gray says

This is a wonderful historical fantasy focused on a Viking invasion of Ireland in the last days of the druids there. A brave young druid warrior, a girl of sixteen, is the protagonist. She discovers her deepest true self, her heart's desire, and love, in the ravages of war. By the end of this book you can't help yearning along with her for the survival of the druids and of the land they love so much. Dark and painful in many ways, the story nonetheless leaves you believing there's no doubt that hope is worth fighting for, and that a great spirit can never be crushed. I think teens and adults alike will enjoy it.

Stephanie says

WOW WOW WOW WOW WOW..... I don't really know what else to say. Thank you so much Heather McCorkle for allowing me to read this AMAZING book. well as you can tell I loved this book so let me just tell you a few things but I don't want to give away too much because everyone on earth should read this book okay here goes...

Neala is a druid they are hunted and killed by the Danes because of their power she has lived sheltered by her parents after her brother dies fighting to protect their land and family. Neala has lived a very lonely life trying to hide who she is but all that changes when she falls in the woods and meets Bren (also a druid) her life changes and things are looking up for her but the Danes are coming and Neala longs to fight for her people. I loved Neala she is strong willed and knows what she wants and what she believes in her love and loyalty to her family and friends is inspiring and her willingness to fight for what she holds dear is so compelling and I was rooting for her the whole time.

Just when I thought I had it all figured out another curl ball was thrown my way loved how this book kept me guessing and entertained all the way through not a page wasted.

Thanks again Heather for the gift of reading this book I hope everyone reads it and I know if they do they will LOVE it.

Terry (Ter05 TwiMoms/ MundieMoms) says

I enjoyed this book and it probably was a 3.5 for me. It didn't just totally draw me in but there were some really fun elements in the story. I listed it as fantasy but it was not in a fantasy land or world, but there are Druids, shapeshifting, and magic so that is fantasy...maybe. I love books with horses in them and that added to this one for me.

Neala's family are Druids and they must keep it a secret or they will be killed, so their kind live in isolated areas and only deal with the regular world to trade and to buy what they need. Her parents are healers, but Neala seems to have no talent for it. She just knows that she is different. When she encounters a Druid boy

when out riding her black stallion Dubh, she finds out that she has been born to be a warrior which is exactly what she wants. Her brother was killed off fighting the Danes and all she has left of him is his black stallion and his sword.

There are several love interests in this story for Neala, the Druid boy who finds her in the woods, a Dane boy who is terribly injured and brought to her mother to heal by his cruel deadly father. He is left with them on threat of death if he is not healed in a week's time. And then there is another....

This story kept my interest and it had some great possibilities, but there was just something lacking that I can't put my finger on. it is YA and there are some things in here that I think would be good to make teens think but perhaps not young teens. There is no sex but some of the temptations that Neala encounters and considers may not be suitable. I did enjoy the loyalty and dedication that Neala and her friends had for their land and their people and the relationship between Neala and her parents. They had lied to her as to her abilities and she is very angry with them - but that does not stop her from loving them. I enjoy anything with fairies and in this one the fairies are the little kind that flit around, but when it comes to battle, they are there.

"Dubh nickered at her as she came in the barn. Grabbing his bridle, she stepped into his stall and found he wasn't alone. Two fairies floated in the air near his mane, weaving his black hair into delicate braids. He stood very still, head drooped as if he didn't want to mess them up. Both of the fairies were female and wore a gossamer type of fabric that covered less than their long blond hair did."

Sylvia says

First of all I want to thank Heather McCorkle for providing me with a copy of the book in exchange for my honest review. I am utterly grateful and thankful that I put my hand up when Heather was offering. All I can say is WoW! I'm actually quite saddened that the story is over. I had grown quite attached to the characters and to the beautiful and haunting world of Irelands past. The image that will forever remain in my mind is of the Dane Tyr, sitting mounted up on his horse on a hill, watching the ship with the Druids sailing off, leaving Ireland. It actually leaves an ache in my heart and brings tears to my eyes. It's completely poetic and mesmerising. I cannot say enough great things about this book.

To Ride a Puca is a coming of age story set against the harsh realities of yesterdays past, where Dane Warriors invaded Ireland just for the hell of it, slaughtering and killing everyone in their way. They cared nothing for the land or the people, and were hell bent on annihilating the Druids. These Druids remained hidden amongst the clans, in fear that their fellow countrymen would turn on them in order to save their own hides. One of these Druids is our female protagonist, Neala. She has lived a sheltered life for most of her 17 years. Her parents had kept her Druid heritage and warrior power hidden from her, in fear that she would follow in her brother's footsteps and fight in the war, never to return. Which, sadly is what happened to Neala's brother. In his place, was his sword and a black horse. Dubh, the name of the horse, was not just any old horse. He had a secret, which for almost 3 years, he carried with him, until the right moment presented itself.

While out riding on her trusted Dubh, Neala stumbles and hurts her ankle. With no way of helping herself, she is soon confronted by a handsome young man named Bren. It turns out that Bren is a fellow Druid, which surprises Neala since she never had come across another Druid before. Neala begins to learn about all

that has been hidden from her, and soon discovers, with Bren's help that she is a Warrior Druid, just like him. Well, being strong and determined, Neala goes against her parents wishes and trains with Bren. Learning the art of combat and using her power to enhance it. I love Neala's resolve and strength in this story. She is feisty, yet knows her boundaries, and really doesn't like being told what to do, especially by Bren, who often insists that she not fight in battle. Just because she is female, does not mean she cannot defend herself and others. Bren, although I liked him at the start, becomes a little over-possessive and tries to force something with Neala, when her heart is really not in it.

Now, to complicate matters, Neala also ends up meeting two other young men. She went from having no friends, to suddenly had the admiration from three suitors. Besides Bren, we are introduced to Tyr, a Dane on the brink of death. He's father found out that there were Druids in the village, thus being Neala and her family, and demanded that Neala's mother heal him. If they did not, then they were going to kill them all. Even though he is the enemy, Neala can't help befriending him and is quite taken by him and he's ways. He is nothing that she imagined a Dane to be. He was quite friendly, thoughtful, sweet and tender. He was the opposite of the ravaging beasts who murdered thousands.

And then Dorlan enters the picture. He is a young man who fought alongside Neala's deceased Brother Lorcan. He saves her from a terrible accident and suddenly she feels totally drawn and connected to him like no other. It's quite overwhelming the feelings she has for Dorlan, but you can totally understand why as you read on. He comforts her like no other, and treats her as an equal, which is what Neala wants.

Whoa, three young men, vying for Neala's attention and affection, while war rages on. It really is some predicament that Neala has found herself. Who will she bond with? I secretly loved all three in their own right, but deep down my heart belonged to Tyr. I just felt more drawn to him and his was a melancholy story and I much prefer my men tortured *sighs* especially one wielding a long sword *oh my* LOL

To Ride A Puca is a great fantastical story that will take your breath away and catch you unawares. It's captivating and enthralling, and will have you wanting to go riding bare back, through the long grass, feeling the breeze whip your hair and losing yourself. It's savage and raw, and invigorating and honest. I love this book, and I hope you do to.

Karlene Petitt says

To Ride A Puca is a fabulous read! Highly recommend it to anyone...and everyone. Historical fiction with creativity, passion, compassion and all that teens go through. Loved it!

Nata Romeo says

Love all of Heathers books!

Her words will reel you in and won't let go of you until you have read the last page!

Christine Fonseca says

This is a fabulous YA historical paranormal romance that is as sexy and dark as it is fantastical. Set against

the history of the druid clans near the end of its time, this story examines young love, coming of age, and reconciling that which you have learned from your parents vs that which you discover on your own. I enjoyed the characters of the story, as well as the mythology woven intricately throughout the story. And yes, this is definitely a sexy story that stayed with me for days afterwards.
