



One for Sorrow, Two for Joy

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Darkness has fallen over the realm of Birddom. The skies rain blood, no nest is safe, and the winds are thick with fear, pain, and death.

Driven by an unslakable desire to kill and conquer, the black-feathered magpies-aided by their brutish cousins, the crows-have hunted down and slaughtered countless species of smaller birds into extinction. Led by the malevolent, power-mad Slyekin and his sadistic assassin, Traska, a reign of terror has laid waste to the beauty and freedom that was once Birddom. Now, Slyekin is preparing to launch his final assault against all that was once pure, and proclaim his vile dominion.

To stop the gathering storm, Kirrick, a lone robin who witnessed the massacre of everything he loved, must undertake a journey beyond all reckoning. Through danger and deceit, Kirrick soars to all corners of the land, rallying those who would fight to save Birddom. From the proud might of the eagles, to the ancient wisdom of the owls, to the unlikeliest earthbound creatures, the allies of good must join together to oppose the shadowy menace that threatens them all-or fall from the sky forever.

In an epic conflict of bloodied beak and razor-sharp talon, of undaunted courage and unspeakable evil, of love, loyalty, and wings of honor, the battle for very soul of Birddom is about to begin.

One for Sorrow, Two for Joy Details

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From Reader Review One for Sorrow, Two for Joy for online ebook

Dena Koplos says

3.5 stars. A really good book in the vein of Watership Down mixed with the perilous journey of The Lord of the Rings, One for Sorrow, Two for Joy is an interesting fantasy novel. The world is set up beautifully, and the characters all are great. The endings of each book are a little anti-climactic, since the protagonists seem to fail, only for a Deus Ex Machina to save the day.

Kirrick and Portia are lovely, and each bird is well thought out and have a role to play

Tulara says

I bought this a long time ago and lost it in my library - I just moved and was unpacking - there it was. I've been so busy - I thought, "I really don't have time for a book with all these boxes to unpack." Famous last words - I consecrated my new library by reading this book in two days.

Funny how I always looked at robins without really seeing them. I mean, owls, eagles and hawks are the favorites - conjuring flights of fancy and daring.

The bird world is in trouble - an evil magpie has united his flock and they proceed to wipe out bird species.

The mayhem spreads to other magpies and suddenly there are no safe places for small robins and nuthatches. One small robin has three tasks - convince other bird species to help - the eagles, the sea birds and the insects to stop the killing and torture done by the magpies and crows.

This book had me engrossed and taught me a lot about birds. I do admit I love ravens, crows and magpies (sports car crows) and I felt bad that they were the villains. It's a good read!

Holly says

Kinda hard to believe this is a young adult book as it has a great deal of violence, murder and rape within.

Even harder to believe (after listening to the interview with the author at the end) that Disney has bought the rights to make an animated movie out of it. That aside - it was pretty good. Kept my interest and didn't make me question the "reality" of Birddom. Will I read the sequel? Maybe, but not as a rush. One for Sorrow, Two for Joy wrapped up all the loose ends at the end and didn't leave the reader in a cliffhanger.

Penny says

What a disappointment! "An epic tale in the tradition of 'Watership Down' and 'Lord of the Rings'..." it says on the front cover, but the only resemblance (as so often with that sort of comparison) is that the birds can talk.

Almost from the first page I was inwardly shouting "show me, don't tell me!" as Clive Woodall laid out his ideas in turgid and predictable prose. By page 7, the plucky Robin hero had found a friendly Grebe who advised him to search out the wise old owl in the ancient Tangelwood - and the author had completely lost my respect. This is a children's book, but there is no excuse for lazy cliché and awkward in-filling of plot

where there should be real dialogue and action. I've struggled on to p.43, but that's far enough, and this book is on the way out - I don't want my children to read it, they can read something more interesting instead.

Sara says

Very good - all the characters were well written. I liked the varied perspectives. Not quite ready for the end of part one. It was sad. But moved into part two without skipping a beat.

Scarygargoyle says

Borrowed this from the library because I like animal POV when it's done well. This wasn't done well.

The story is basically recycled from millions of other books that use WWII nazis as the villains. Changing them to birds doesn't make it original. The writing itself can't seem to decide what it wants to be (is it for kids, or an epic fantasy in style of Lord of the Rings?) and too often resorts to using purple prose which would actually be kind of hard for kids to understand.

Topping it off, the story is filled with blatant examples of research failure. Crows are depicted as the stupidest birds in the books, magpies apparently are a race of evil, and worst of all; Bird rape.

Bird. Rape.

Which would have been believable in a book about ducks, not magpies.

Chris says

I think this is suppose to be a child's book. I'm not sure because it reads like the book itself doesn't know what it wants to be. If it is a children's book than why does it have a rape in it? If it's an adult book (or even YA), than why is the writing childish? Is Woodall trying to sound like Adams and not just doing a good job? One problem with the book are everything is oversimplified. This wouldn't be a problem if it was a children's book, but that brings us back to the rape, which is a bird rape. It's not overly graphic, but considering the simplification and writing level, it seems out of place. I also find it hard to believe that any bird would give up eating bugs. Females characters are very flat and rely on the male characters too much. The excuse of "they're animals" doesn't work. Look at *Watership Down* and the female rabbits there; look at Horwood and his moles. Additionally, the motivations of several characters were too simple and not deep enough.

Katherine Bonnabel says

Initially intriguing, but the violence escalated quickly. Just a bit too graphic for my taste. I would not recommend this as a children's book.

PaperTigerMaddy says

The fact that a book starring a robin, an owl and a bunny rabbit manages to be both sexist and classist almost makes me think Mr Woodall deserves some sort of prize.

First things first. So despite the legitimate complaints of plenty of reviewers here, I actually really enjoyed part one, *One For Sorrow*. The simplistic storyline and cut-out characters lends this a fairytale-like quality which is very absorbing if you're prepared to suspend disbelief. The dialogue is dreadfully affected and exposition is dropped with all the subtlety of a doodlebug, but if you take its pompous nature as part of the package it's an exciting and almost moving story. Grimm's fairytales are pretty brutal, so I didn't find the savage horror and gore jarring here either.

Oh yeah. Apart from the rape. Yeah. Clive, just stop.

I think the weird combination of simplistic writing/ at times horrific content worked on me because I'm essentially a young adult with the mental maturity of a three year old. But I can totally understand why others found it unbearable.

However, then we get to part two, *Two For Joy*. How do I put this.

Two For Joy is atrocious.

Everything I enjoyed about the first half became a pet hate in the second. The tension of the story pales in comparison to book one - it's like an extended epilogue. As though we're idiots who've already forgotten what happened 20 pages ago, Woodall frequently reiterates the story line of the first half of the novel in...mindnumbing...detail. I don't see why it was written but to make up pages. The dialogue goes from jarring to just plain offensive. So here's where I got the whiff of sexism:

As this book stands, there are basically zero female characters which don't fit a stereotypical mould. Damsel in distress, pure and innocent victim, etc. I was expecting that, so I didn't let it bother me. But it irked that in book which rarely bothered to include proper dialogue, the entire of page 164 consisted of a male friend randomly and pointlessly telling the female lead that she is beautiful. In fact the number of times that Portia was referred to as 'Beautiful' in lieu of any other positive adjectives - brave, clever, loyal, whatever - started to really piss me off.

And then. The entire subplot of Katya's rape, and bringing her child up to exact vengeance, I found both belittling and offensive. In the end, it actually turns out to be pointless anyway - which left me disgusted. Why write it if both characters eventually serve no purpose to the story? Why focus on something so vile in what is, at the end of the day, a children's book (...I think...)?

Okay. So as for the classism? Mickey the bullfinch.

Mickey is the only character - apart from some of the henchbaddies - who doesn't talk as though he's a duchess in a bad Austen adaptation. In fact, his speech pointedly suggests a regional accent. He uses contractions, occasionally swears, and says the word 'mate' a lot. He's also subtly called Mickey in a book full of Olivers, Celines, and Merions.

It's dumb, but I can deal with it. Until a bizarre transformation comes over Mickey, and somewhere between pages 193 and 197, his accent mysteriously vanishes, and he starts using Received Pronunciation like the rest of them. Then on page 203 we get this gem:

Mickey had gradually lost his façade of chirpy coarsenes... Portia had begun to suspect that her companion's way of speaking was a contrivance to hide his intellect.

What, because he uses colloquialisms his speech must be a façade? And excuse me, why is that 'coarse'? And bloody hell, did you just link accent to intellect? Dick move, Clive. Last time I checked this wasn't the 1950s.

By the end of this book, (which is a crap anticlimax, btw) I was so annoyed with it that I revised my half-way decision to give it three stars. My advice? If you pick it up, don't even bother with the second half of the novel.

Kate says

This would have been a great story... if it was written by a fifteen year old. The writing is really souless and plodding. I couldn't even make it past twenty pages.

Kaye says

I guess I liked this book, but I wasn't loving it. The audio was fine, but not compelling, the story interesting but not riveting...maybe some day I'll come back to it, but now is not the time.

Aura Nizharu says

Oh boy, finished the second part and, god, is worse than the first one, bird rape aside.

All in this book is bad, from the storytelling, simplistic and asinine to the characters and their black and white morality.

the worst of all is the treatment of the corvidae; of all species, the magpies are one of the smallest, they're omnivore but carrion eaters, the magpies usually don't hunt, - well, I'm talking about the ones at home, the Iberian Magpie, so I can't talk about the rest of them - at least, they do not hunt other birds, they steal eggs and eat chicks, but they don't HUNT ACTIVELY.

Also, the corvidae are ver intelligent creatures, so reading about crows and ravens as if they were retarded was not pleasant at all, seeing them acting like that was a pain in the ass, I think that in the author mind only the magpies are allowed to be intelligent.

Also, all of the corvidae are evulz in this book, how original, is the same shit as always.

But of all the offenders, the jewels of the crown is the magpie rape, not only that was out of place and out of nowhere, is fucking rape in a fucking children's book!

Fuck this shit!
Fuck it, I'm out of here!

Cece says

I still remember this book so I'll write a review for it. Besides I think I should warn the young kids out there. I wish someone had warned me. I read this book when I was eleven happily thinking it would be something like The Guardians of Ga'hoole series. I was wrong. Maybe I was a sensitive kid but I don't care what anyone says this book is not a children's book.

It's written in two parts (One for Sorrow then Two for Joy) and after reading the first part, it took me a few weeks to read the second part. That's how much the (view spoiler) scene freaked me out, a few other scenes in both part one and two didn't help. In my mind those scenes were probably a lot worse than they actually are. To this day I still don't know what age group Woodall intended this book to be for, but it's not for children. The only reason I finished reading this book is because I had bought it, and even then I refused to spend money on a book and not read it.

Oh and something else I remember, some of the characters lacked depth. Especially the female ones. The general idea and story line, if I remember correctly, was pretty good, appealing, and I liked it, part of the reason I was able to force myself to read the rest. I think that's why I still have to give it three stars. I just wish Woodall clearly defined the age group.

It sits on my self... I don't think I could bring myself to read it again.

Hazel says

A shockingly cruel tale, but somehow gripping. I don't think I can say I enjoyed it, but I certainly found it memorable!

Geoff Battle says

Fans of animal literature aren't spoiled for choice and when a new angle appears in a novel it can generate quite a bit of hype. Clive Woodall's story of one Robin's fateful part in a war between magpies and the rest of the bird kingdom should make great reading. However, it doesn't. The story never really creates any depth in with it's characters, although the evil magpies get most of the exploration. It's adult at times, with some quite graphic and visceral scenes and it's the menace of the magpies which keep you interested. The hero's however are quite replaceable, which is a great shame. The most disappointing aspect is that the book is split in to two stories, with some overlap in terms of characters. I feel a more canny author would have have crafted this in to one story, which would have created a more epic novel. Overall, it's rather predictable, a tad shallow, but a pleasant enough book to wile away a few hours.
