



The Huntress

Susan Carroll

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In a time of intrigue and betrayal, the Huntress is on a quest that could jeopardize two empires and two great queens: Catherine de Medici and Elizabeth I.

The year is 1585—and prophecy has foretold the coming of a daughter of the Earth whose powers are so extraordinary they could usurp the very rule of the Dark Queen herself, Catherine de Medici. Dispatched from Brittany to London, Catriona O'Hanlon, known as the Huntress, must find this mysterious young girl and shield her from those who will exploit her mystic abilities, which have the potential to change the course of history.

Catriona's skill with weaponry is all she has to protect herself and her young charge from spies who snake through the courts of Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen—including the girl's own father, whose loyalties are stretched to the breaking point. But Catriona will soon face menacing forces and sinister plots unlike any she has ever encountered.

From Susan Carroll, the celebrated storyteller of historical fiction, *The Huntress* is an unforgettable portrait of power and passion—and one woman's courage to risk everything for those she loves.

The Huntress Details

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From Reader Review The Huntress for online ebook

Andy Kornylo says

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Megaera – the Silver Rose – is still at large in the French court even though her father carried her away to England and the Silver Rose was supposed to have died with Cassandra. But the Silver Rose still has followers who are looking for Meg, and the Dark Queen is hot on the trail because she knows that Meg also has the elusive Book of Shadows. Ariane is displeased to hear that the Dark Queen is on Meg's tail, and sends out someone of her own to help protect Meg – Cat – considering that she is in no state to go herself.

Cat is more than happy to go and help her Lady of Faire Isle, but there is one thing she didn't count on. The protectiveness of Meg's father – Martin le Loup – and his stubborn attitude that he doesn't need Cat's help protecting her from the threat of the Dark Queen and those that still believe she is the Silver Rose. Eventually, he reluctantly agrees to let Cat stay on and protect his daughter, and things get rather interesting with these two hard-headed people living under the same roof...

Rosario (<http://rosario.blogspot.com/>) says

Years ago I really enjoyed Carroll's Faire Isle trilogy. I loved her 16th-century France setting and the mix of history and fantasy, peopled by really interesting, fresh characters. There were some obvious threads left hanging at the end and I was really interested in reading the next book, which was not yet out. This was in 2006, but when the book came out the next year, I didn't read it. I think it was a bit on the expensive side when it first came out, and then I moved to England and got a bit distracted. Well, 9 years later I remembered the series and decided to go back and read The Huntress. I'm now really sorry I didn't read it back then, not because I liked it now, but because I think I might have liked it more back then.

The last book of the original trilogy, The Silver Rose, had as an antagonist a woman whose daughter had huge magical powers. Problem was, the antagonist meant to misuse her daughter's powers. At the end of the book she was stopped and killed (not really much of a spoiler, it's kind of part of The Silver Rose having an HEA), and her daughter was taken away by her long-lost father, Martin Le Loup, determined to keep her safe from all the other people wanting to abuse the girl's powers.

As The Huntress starts, Ariane, the Lady of Faire Isle, hears that there are rumours about where the girl might be and that a particularly powerful book, which was supposed to have been destroyed when her mother was killed, is actually still around. Ariane decides to send Catriona O'Hanlon to warn Martin about the threat to his daughter and to, ideally, bring both back to the safety of Faire Isle.

Catriona, originally from Ireland, is none too happy about having to go to London to carry out her mission (that's where Martin and his daughter have settled), but she considers herself Ariane's "gallowglass" (I had to look that up: it's "(in Ireland) a mercenary or member of a special class of soldiers in the service of a chieftain.") and is steadfastly loyal, so she'll do her best.

But once she finds them, Martin won't even consider going back to Faire Isle. He's sure he can keep his daughter perfectly safe himself, plus, he's spent many years setting himself up as a respectable Englishman,

and he wants to give that status to his daughter and help her make an advantageous marriage. Cat considers just kidnapping the girl, but after seeing the love between her and her father, she decides to simply stick around and add her considerable powers to Martin's protection.

There were some good things about this. The Elizabethan London setting is vivid and rich, and there's plenty of intrigue. Martin has got himself involved with Francis Walsingham, Queen Elizabeth's spymaster, and is in the uncomfortable situation of having to spy on a nobleman who helped him with his patronage, while hoping against hope he doesn't discover anything damning... like, say, that the man is involved in the plots Walsingham knows very well Queen Mary of Scotland is hatching against Elizabeth.

My problem was that the book had a very old-fashioned feel that put me off. Cat was a particularly frustrating character. She is genuinely powerful and is no unbelievable virgin warrior, but way too much of her characterisation is stereotypical "fiery Irish lass". She's stupidly impetuous and confrontational when it doesn't make sense for her to be, and even worse: she speaks like Nora Roberts' Irish characters.

Martin I just found annoying. I did sympathise with his love for his daughter and his wanting to give her the world, but he came across as yet another man who thinks he knows best and refuses to even contemplate that a woman might have ideas of her own. He is completely blind to all evidence that she might have some interest in magic and still some mixed feelings about her late mother. Oh, no, Martin has decided that it is best to just completely forget all that happened in the girl's life before he came into it, and therefore she has forgotten it. Period. Honestly, I thought he was rather thick.

I read about 2/3 of this pretty long book before realising there was no point forcing myself to pick it up every time I put it down (which was usually after about 20 pages, as I got bored or annoyed). I wasn't really interested in the plot (other than in the very peripheral thread of Ariane's pregnancy, which seemed to be dangerously sapping her strength), and I didn't see any chemistry whatever between Cat and Martin, so the romance really wasn't working for me.

Very disappointing. I think back when this came out I was a bit more tolerant about some of the things that annoyed me here, so it's a shame I didn't pick it up then.

MY GRADE: A DNF.

Melanie says

I wasn't aware this book was part of series as I randomly picked it up at my local bookstore. I think I will check out the other books in the series. I liked it. I was a bit lost at first trying to figure out the world in which the story was taking place. Perhaps it's because I started in the middle of a series. Not a bad novel. Again I'm not a big fan of the quick resolution in novels plus I like character development and evolution. The characters pretty much remained the same throughout. But I will see if I can find the first book in the series and start there.

Shelley Stoker says

This is my second favorite in THE DARK QUEEN Series. It was a true joy to read more about Meg, the

character that received quite an introduction in THE SILVER ROSE [my all-time favorite of the series:]. Also, finally, Martin Le Loup gets to be more than a sidekick that's suffering from unrequited love, and it's about time! Being such a gorgeous, larger than life character, it's very satisfying to follow his lead as a grown man.

The heroine is spunky and unique, and her relationship with Meg and Martin is truly touching. THE HUNTRESS also introduces Queen Elizabeth and Sir Francis Walsingham into the picture, so with "The Dark Queen" approaching her end-of-days, and "The Virgin Queen" beginning her reign, it continues the mystery and page-turning political intrigue of the previous books.

Jacki says

Catriona O'Hanlon finds herself in London during the reign of Elizabeth I in order to protect the Silver Rose, a young daughter of the earth prophesized to become a great sorceress. Caught in intrigue, deception, and a fateful love with the young girl's chivalrous father, Cat wishes only to return to the Faire Isle and her friend Ariane Cheney-Deuville.

This was the fourth book of the Dark Queen saga and likely my least favorite. While Cat and Martin were enjoyable characters, I missed Faire Isle and the Cheney sisters. I also am not a fan of the London setting, never really being a fan of English history.

The romances in this series have become a bit predictable, as the women always fight the love and passion that they feel. It would have been nice to have at least one woman just enjoy the first stages of love.

The book was enjoyable, and I imagine anyone interested in the history of Britain would find it much more intriguing than I. This is not a book you can pick up and read without the background of the first 3 books however.

Ruth says

Wonderful book!

Angie says

It's almost like someone took a template for a romance novel, and the template for a historical fiction, and mooshed them together into one okay but not awesome book.

Granted, I do admire the template idea, and since this is #4 in a series it's gotta be working out, you know? But it was too predictable to be very interesting, and yet somehow not a quick read to make up for that. It's more that it had an enjoyable nugget here and there but not overall.

Gretchen says

I loved the interplay between Cat and Martin the Wolf.... the resolution was a bit lack luster - but I guess we must focus on the Silver Rose still.

Laura says

This novel is the fourth in a series set in the 16th century during the reign of Catherine de Medici and follows the Cheney sisters, daughters of the earth. Once you've read one book in this series you might as well have read them all. They all follow the same formula and plot development with happy ever after endings with only the main character and love interest changing with each book. The first book was worth reading but this was only okay. I would consider this to be more of a beach read than anything substantial or memorable.

Jen says

Over a year has past since Miri chose Simon over Martin, and the Wolf has left France with his daughter Meg to start a new life away from magic and wise women now that Cassandra is dead. Martin is determined to protect Meg and keep her from becoming the sorceress that Cassandra always wanted her to be. But fanatics of the Silver Rose cult are still out there searching for their lost leader. And Meg, is still a witch, whether Martin wants her to be or not.

Determined to protect Meg, Ariane sends Catriona O'Hanlon to England to look after the girl. Vowing to protect Meg with her life, Cat falls for the girl and her charming father rather easily. Knowing that Meg is hiding her desire to learn more about her gifts, Cat keeps her secret from Martin realizing that each is trying to be something they aren't for the other and no one can keep that kind of secret for long.

Susan says

The fourth novel in Susan Carroll's splendid series about the Wise Women of Faire Isle, The Huntress is in my opinion the best so far. Use caution however because it will not really stand on its own; you need to read the Cheney Sisters trilogy first.

Catriona O'Hanlon, a fiery Irishwoman and true daughter of the earth, serves Ariane, the gentle Lady of Faire Isle. When news reaches them on their secluded island that the coven of the Silver Rose is being resurrected, Ariane sends Cat to London to locate Martin le Loup and his young daughter, and to bring them back to Faire Isle.

Cat is a free-spirited and refreshing heroine. She is able to wield a sword and shoot a bow with the best of men. She always speaks her mind and can be quite cantankerous at times, but all of her bluster hides a vulnerability and insecurity that she carries inside due to the her cruel treatment at the hands of her clan back in Ireland.

Since the end of *The Silver Rose*, Martin le Loup has grown into a doting and protective father for his little Meggie. They fled to England in hopes of escaping the coven of the Silver Rose, and Martin has grown very cautious about anything magical. Lamentably, he has decided that he will make young Meg into an proper English lady and has forbidden her to use any of the mystical arts she learned from her mother. He has ensconced himself in English society and is working by day as an actor and by night as an agent for Queen Elizabeth's spymaster Sir Francis Walshingham.

Meg is tortured by the things her mother and the coven of the Silver Rose did in her name back in France. She is confused and fearful of her natural abilities and the knowledge she gained from translating "The Book Of Shadows." She loves her father fiercely and would do just about anything for him, even if it means learning to do needlepoint and playing the lute.

Of course the Dark Queen, Catherine de Medici, is still searching for "The Book of Shadows" and has dispatched yet another witch hunter to London to find the Silver Rose and the infamous book and return them to her palace in France. And if the threat of "That Italian Woman" wasn't bad enough, the coven of the Silver Rose has found Martin and Meg in London as well, and are very close to achieving their own goal of kidnapping the girl and harnessing the power of "The Book of Shadows."

The historical fact and fiction are combined flawlessly in this book (as always in a book by Susan Carroll.) I was thrilled that she wrote this one as a continuation of the Cheney Sisters trilogy. It has been my pleasure to read these quality books of historical fiction. Unfortunately, I have to put Susan Carroll on an ever-growing list of authors that can't keep up with my demand for new reading! The next book in the series (I think) is "The Twilight of a Queen" which is not due out until May of next year. I guess I can wait though. My to-read list is still a mile long and I know I'll find something to occupy my time.

Jen McConnel says

Hubby picked this one up for me on an impulse at the library ("Oh, she likes historical fiction!"), and I finally got around to it. Oops: this is the fourth novel in Susan Carroll's Dark Queen Saga, but I didn't realize that until I was already fairly invested in the story.

This is a great romantic read. Cat O'Hanlon is a daughter of the earth (some might call her a witch), and she's been sent on a quest to find the a witch called the Silver Rose. There are waring forces looking for the girl, including Catherine de Medici, the dark queen herself. The Silver Rose, a young girl named Meg, supposedly has more power than any witch for centuries, and it has been prophesied that she will bring down empires. Cat wants to protect her from those who would abuse her power, but the huntress didn't bank on Meg's father. Martin le Loup is overbearing, devoted, and wants nothing to do with witchcraft. Cat has her work cut out for her to convince him to let Meg receive training in her natural abilities, and matters are complicated further by the crackling tension between Martin and Cat. How can the huntress keep her wits about her if she's falling in love?

This novel has intrigue, romance, mystery, and a healthy dose of magic. Fans of Deborah Harkness and Diana Gabaldon will enjoy this tale.

Janet Miller says

In a time of intrigue and betrayal, the huntress is on a quest that could jeopardize two empires and two great queens: Catherine de Medici and Elizabeth I.

The year is 1585—and prophecy has foretold the coming of a daughter of the Earth whose powers are so extraordinary they could usurp the very rule of the Dark Queen herself, Catherine de Medici. Dispatched from Brittany to London, Catriona O'Hanlon, known as the Huntress, must find this mysterious young girl and shield her from those who will exploit her mystic abilities, which have the potential to change the course of history.

Catriona's skill with weaponry is all she has to protect herself and her young charge from spies who snake through the courts of Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen—including the girl's own father, whose loyalties are stretched to the breaking point. But Catriona will soon face menacing forces and sinister plots unlike any she has ever encountered.

From Susan Carroll, the celebrated storyteller of historical fiction, *The Huntress* is an unforgettable portrait of power and passion—and one woman's courage to risk everything for those she loves.

“Susan Carroll writes sparkling dialogue and exquisite prose.”

—Teresa Medeiros, author of *After Midnight*

Christy B says

With each book in the series, I think I've met my favorite heroine. In **The Huntress**, we meet Catriona O'Hanlon, an amazing woman who can match wits and swords with any man.

Catriona has been given a mission to protect a young girl and bring her back to Faire Island before a group of evil witches or Catherine de Medici can get to her first. I can't say much, for folks who haven't read the series thus far would be confused and spoiled.

I started reading this book to find out what happen to Martin, but I ended up staying for Catriona. I can't express how much I loved her character. However, I was happy with Martin's ending, after the heartbreak he was dealt in the previous book.

One more book in the series, and the heroine of the next book was introduced in this book. I don't think she's a daughter of the earth, like the heroines of the first four books, so I'll be interested where that book goes.

Christine Staszko says

For some reason whenever I see the books in this series that I have left to read, I'm never very excited to jump into them. However, they consistently impress me with their stories and characters which has made me stick to the series. This book was no exception and I think it was my favorite. Thus far, each book has been about a different sister of the Lady of Faire Isle or about Lady Arianne herself. This one mixes it up by following Lady Arianne's loyal friend Catriona and her interaction with the familiar Martin Le Loupe and his

daughter Meg. Adding Meg to the mix also puts a new element to the series because you are constantly second guessing what her intentions are for her magical abilities. This book feels different from the rest because it isn't just about the heroine dealing with some drama while also falling into a passionate love affair. Le Loupe's mysterious daughter adds a new dimension that keeps you reading to find out what she's hiding and where she will steer her future.

The only qualm I have with this book, and this is one I've had with all of them, is that the plot takes awhile to unfold. The story is well paced but at the same time there are points where I'd wish that I was already at the height of the climax instead of enduring the slow dance of the buildup. This is what usually makes me look back at the books negatively. With frilly historical romance books I usually prefer them as quick reads, so these books always look daunting on the shelves and I remember feeling a little worn out from the length of one of these books by the end. However, if the stories weren't as great as they are, I wouldn't keep picking them up so I guess it's not that big of an issue in my case.

This book has brought my excitement back for this series and I actually can't wait to read the next book. Hopefully, I'll remember this positive feeling next time I glance at my book shelf and not the length of the book. Make sure not to miss this book; the twists and turns, the romance, and the historical elements mesh into a great read.

Rusty says

Catriona O'Hanlon journeys to Paris at the request of Ariana, The Lady of Faire Isle, to find The Wolf and his young daughter, Meg, who was named The Silver Rose by her wicked mother. Now Meg and her father are the run to escape those who wish to use her and her talents or destroy her forever - The Silver Rose coven, The Dark Queen, and Queen Elizabeth's spymaster. The tale moves quickly as Cat and Wolf fight their way through numerous adventures to protect and hide Meg. Unfortunately, for both Cat and Wolf, the emotional entanglement between the two complicates the issues. This is a delightful story about quite interesting characters - particularly, Wolf, Cat and Meg. A very good read.

Gaile says

Continuing the black magic vs white magic series, Catriona O'Hanlon is dispatched from Fair Isle to search for the child called the legendary Silver Rose. At the same time Catherine DeMedici sends her own courtier to find the same child.

The Silver Rose is actually a little girl named Meg who had been sequestered in London by her father Martin De Loup who does not own a player's theater. Cat's mission is to find out how much danger the girl is. Instead she finds herself charmed by the child besides falling in love with Martin. Martin himself has been courting Lady Jane Danvers when his eye is diverted to Cat. Catherine DeMedici's courtier Gautier has been ordered to find the Book Of Shadows and bring it back to the dark queen who herself is growing old.

Cat doesn't want to fall in love. Lady Jane Danvers is unaware her brother has set up an alchemist's lab in their own home.

In the meantime, the Queen Of Scots has her own loyal men who have involved in the Babington plot but Sir Francis Walsingham for whom Martin works is aware of the plot and determined to catch all the guilty ones and be rid of the Scottish Queen once and for all. Unfortunately innocent Lady Danvers is also arrested and Meg feels she must go to Elizabeth I and confess all.

All this fuss over a Book Of Shadows said to contain the most powerful and dangerous black magic spells! Two books remain to be read in this series.

Ariela says

Ever since I read Carroll's "The Dark Queen" I've been a fan of her writing. A mix of historical fiction and romance novel, Carroll has a knack for capturing the atmosphere of 1500's Europe while also showcasing the indomitable personalities of her heroines. The first three novels in this series recount the adventures of the Cheney sisters, who are "daughters of the earth" – called witches by some – skilled in the ancient arts of healing. "The Huntress" shifts focus by telling the story of Catriona O'Hanlon, an Irish warrior woman of sorts sent to England by the eldest Cheney sister. Her quest: to find a young girl who some believe to be a powerful dark sorceress. Cat uses her skills with a sword, her beauty and her wit to accomplish her mission – meeting a handsome gentlemen along the way, of course. "The Huntress" was not as action packed as "The Dark Queen" (a book I finished in one night), but was nevertheless an enjoyable read. I only wish Queen Elizabeth I and her spy master Sir Francis Walsingham had played more active roles in the storyline.

Diane says

I liked this book quite well. This is the 4th book in the Dark Queen series. I thought the characters were very well developed. I thought the plot was very interesting. This particular book took place in London for a change, which was a nice change of pace from France and Faire Isle. I particularly liked the way the development of the romance between Cat and Martin was developed. I found the plotting to be pretty exciting. Overall, The Huntress read very quickly.

Bird says

I really enjoyed seeing Ariane and Renard, as they are probably my two favorite characters in the series. I was also pleased that Martin finally got his own story after chasing after Miri for so long! Cat was a great protagonist, strong-willed and loyal. The story dragged out a bit with neither of the main characters being able to admit their love for one another, but that is fairly typical in romance books.
