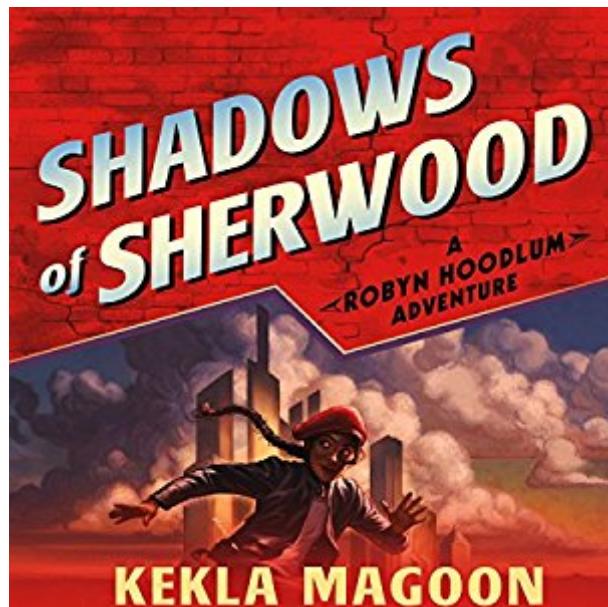


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Shadows Of Sherwood: A Robyn Hoodlum Adventure



Synopsis

The night her parents disappear, 12-year-old Robyn Loxley must learn to fend for herself. Her home, Nott City, has been taken over by a harsh governor, Ignomus Crown. After fleeing for her life, Robyn has no choice but to join a band of strangers - misfit kids, each with their own special talent for mischief. Setting out to right the wrongs of Crown's merciless government, they take their outlaw status in stride. But Robyn can't rest until she finds her parents. As she pieces together clues from the night they disappeared, Robyn learns that her destiny is tied to the future of Nott City in ways she never expected. Kicking off a new series with an unforgettable heroine, listeners will be treated to feats of courage and daring deeds as Robyn and her band find their way in this cruel new world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Robyn Loxley is naturally stealthy and inquisitive, and when she avoids capture by pure luck on the same night her parents disappear, she's left to fend for herself in Nott City. As new governor Ignomus Crown restricts the civil liberties of the citizens of Nott City, Robyn falls in with a bunch of street kids and finds herself fighting against Crown by accident. Her cause starts out small--stealing food that Crown confiscates and returning it to the hungry people--but escalates quickly. As she becomes the most wanted outlaw in all of Nott City and Sherwood County, Robyn uncovers a mystery about a prophecy that is somehow connected to her parents, Crown's hostile takeover, and her own destiny. I enjoyed reading this book so, so much. Robyn is a fantastic character, and Magoo does a really great job of portraying her as the privileged kid from the upper crest who is jolted to reality when she hits the streets and learns about what life is like for the lower classes.

Robyn is naive at first, and she grapples with doing what's right, but she doesn't shy away from doing what she needs to survive and help others. While she is certainly a brave and caring person who is motivated to help the less fortunate, Robyn's actions are mainly motivated by the desire to discover the truth about what happened to her parents at the beginning of the story, and solving the mystery her father left behind for her--sometimes at the risk of alienating her new friends. Fans of the Robin Hood legend will really enjoy the little nods to the original tale, but Magoon is so great at world building and creating complicated characters that this novel feels very fresh and original. Middle grade readers who are fans of The False Prince and the numerous fantasy novels based on world myths will love this first book in the Robyn Hoodlum series, but it's no stretch to assume that YA readers will be attracted as well. It hits all of the sweet spots of a good futuristic adventure novel--a controlling government, vivid details that ground readers in the world, a well-developed and fascinating cast of characters, and a highly compelling plot. I loved every page. Basically, the world needs at least five more Robyn Hoodlum books. And you need to get your hands on a copy. That is all.

A great modern twist on Robin Hood that kids (and adults) will love. Lots of action and suspense; engaging and sympathetic characters; and a well-developed world that will draw readers in from the first page. Both boys and girls will admire the brave, smart, and street-savvy protagonist Robyn. Can't wait for the next installment!

I love the concept of a futuristic Robin Hood story, with many of the main roles being women instead of men. Robyn Loxley is a girl living in the rich sector of Nott City when her parents are disappeared by the Sheriff (also female in this story). She barely manages to escape, and has to figure out how to live life on the margins with the help of some others who have been managing: Laurel, Scarlet, and Key. It's right up my alley, but SHADOWS OF SHERWOOD never quite gelled for me. Robyn's parents apparently followed a moon lore, an old religion that seems like magic. It's a good way to add a folklore tie to the story, but I felt like the dystopia and fantasy elements didn't mesh very neatly. The moon lore mostly seemed like a way for convenient things to happen. There's also use of villainous point of view, which I find is difficult to pull off well. The Sheriff's passages give some hints about Governor Crown's dastardly deeds but otherwise add little to the story. Since this is a Robin Hood retelling it is particularly egregious, because everyone knows where the story is going. Even younger readers can be assumed to know at least one version of the story, if only the Disney movie. I think the class conflicts were done well, which is important since they are a central part of

the legend. Robyn has been part of the upper class and is now learning how bad everyone else in the city had it. Rescuing her parents is a top priority, but she's learning that innocent bystanders could get hurt in her activities against the Sheriff - which leads her to question how she can help. SHADOWS OF SHERWOOD has some nice heist scenes and an appealing cast, but it left me cold. I'm just not sure the biggest departures from the traditional story worked for me. It felt like a separate story welded on that didn't quite fit. Does Robin Hood need a prophecy? No, not really.

Grade: C This e-galley was provided by Bloomsbury USA Children's in exchange for an honest review. The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Well that was...something. Shadows of Sherwood was a book with which I had to suspend a lot of disbelief. These were kids (Robyn's twelve, Key is said to be a year or two older, Laurel's younger than Robyn), and they're pulling off grand heists with very few problems. There's also lots of discussions about moon lore and a prophecy and all of that was confusing and felt a bit disjointed in the plot. I loved the idea of another genderbent Robin Hood retelling, especially one with a biracial protagonist. Speaking of Robyn being biracial, there's a weird moment towards the end of the book where something connected with the moon lore becomes a metaphor for the color of her skin and it left a weird taste in my mouth. The other characters didn't interest me too much. Key seemed almost like a love interest, although he never was. I did like Scarlet, but I don't remember how old she is and her computer and technological skills were a bit unbelievable. The point-of-view jumps between Robyn and the Sheriff didn't work well for me. Their only purpose was to share information that Robyn could've learned herself later on. The Verdict: Kind of fun, but a bit slow-going and there were weird plot threads.

This book brings together so many elements that young readers will love--the Robin Hood backdrop, the blend of sci-fi, fantasy, and adventure, and the smart and infinitely relatable young heroine. Bringing social justice into the picture feels natural and exciting in a Robin Hood story for a new generation. Love this book--can't wait for the sequel!

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