



Raider's Heart

Marcia Gruver

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Steal away to the Old South with Marcia Gruver's Backwoods Brides series. Two brothers—one violent and one gentle—belong to a family of bandits. While Duncan McRae can hardly stomach their raids, his brother Hooper revels in the violence perpetrated by the band of thieves. When they meet mild-mannered Dawsey Wilkes, the competition steps up a notch as the brothers vie for her hand. Which marauder will steal Dawsey's heart? Meanwhile, Dawsey holds the key to Dilsey McRae's past. What will Dilsey do when she discovers the truth?

Raider's Heart Details

Date : Published February 1st 2011 by Barbour Books (first published January 12th 2011)

ISBN : 9781602609488

Author : Marcia Gruver

Format : Paperback 320 pages

Genre : Christian Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction, Christian, Romance, Christian Romance, Westerns

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From Reader Review Raider's Heart for online ebook

Savannah Grimes says

I loved loved loved this book!!! <3

Elizabeth "Eli" Olmedo says

Marcia Gruver opens her new series, Backwoods Brides strong with Raider's Heart. A tale of romance, adventure, and faith unfolds grasping the reader's attention. Raider's Heart is a story of forgiveness and letting God take control amidst tragedy. I thoroughly enjoyed this novel and couldn't put it down, consequently reading it in one sitting. The novel has one of those "feel-good" endings that while not the most realistic because it's a bit too perfect; it is a nice break from real life. Sometimes one enjoys breaking away from reality for a few hours. I strongly recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a good, clean romance.

Review copy provided by publisher.

Regina says

An exciting read!

This was a different story but a good one. It had quite a few twists and turns I wasn't expecting. I'm not sure what book two will entail but I'm excited to find out. Hopefully a clue to one of the boy's past?

Noela says

I feel like I've unearthed a treasure in discovering this author and her books! I had no idea what to expect when I read Raider's Heart, but within just a few chapters I was completely enraptured in this fascinating and extremely well-written story! Set mostly in the 1870's in the Carolina swamps, it immediately drew me in with its unique setting that was both stimulating and exciting, and teeming with intriguing history and rich culture. Raider's Heart contained so many wonderful, humorous and heroic characters, and was full of adventure, drama, emotion, and love! And you will see how God can and does weave all things together for good, as well as how forgiveness for a truly terrible deed, can bring immeasurable love and healing into lives.

Katie says

I haven't read any of the author's books previously, so I went into Raider's Heart - first in the Backwoods Brides series - ready to see if I had found a new favorite. While the book was certainly captivating, I had a few minor problems with the writing. But this didn't completely ruin the book for me and I'll be keeping my

eye out for this author's works in the future! I loved the story plot! The characters were a bit paper-thin at times and I thought a few of their actions were a bit extreme for the occasion. The idea for this plot was great and will doubtless give countless other readers enjoyment as they read – as it did me.

The sister's names – Dawsey and Dilsey – were both interesting. I had never heard of them before. I always enjoy reading books where the characters have uncommon names; it makes the story that much more neat and special! The brothers Duncan and Hooper were fun to read about. They seemed to get along so well, yet still had their spats and faults they needed to work on. I liked that Gruver didn't make the hero's flawless – it makes them more real to the reader. There were a few aspects of the brothers actions I thought a bit odd or unnatural. For example, I thought the way they both proposed to Dawsey was very strange. Too out of character for the two brothers and just simply something I don't think a guy would do to a girl he loved.

The book was fun from start to end. Probably my biggest problem with the book was the way the author wrote some scenes. If someone suddenly appeared on the scene or something unexpected all of a sudden happen – the author took a long time explaining what it was. She would first describe all the characters reactions to the sudden surprise and then let the reader know what was going on. I found this a bit weird and unbalance. Sometimes I would think, "Wait, what's going on? Why is she...oh! Some stranger just popped up." And at others I would feel like skimming ahead just to find out what had the characters so ruffled. So this was probably my biggest – and nearly only – problem with the book. I just felt like it unbalanced the reader...

The story plot was well thought out and unfolded amazingly. I don't want to give away anything in the book, so I won't delve into anything in this review. It's one of those stories that's full of surprises and you can't explain too much about the book without giving it all away. :-) And the ending was so sweet. It just made me sigh contently at the McRae's life. It was certainly a perfect ending to an exciting book.

* I reviewed this book for Barbour Books. All thoughts and opinions expressed in this review are entirely my own. *

Melanie says

A love story to the end. The author kept the reader guessing, not sure of what was to happen, and the twists that she incorporated throughout, like the rejection and insecure reactions were thoroughly entertaining. A book to my own heart.

Laura says

Title: RAIDER'S HEART
Author: Marcia Gruver
Publisher: Barbour Books
February 2011
ISBN: 978-1602609488
Genre: historical

A silly little lamp has turned Dawsey Wilkes's life upside down.

Hooper and Duncan McRae grew up hearing their father's tales of the little golden lamp that eluded his possession. Hooper, always the daring brothers, seizes a once-in-a-lifetime chance when passing the Wilkes house to get a peek at the legendary lamp. But simple curiosity could open a Pandora's box of trouble for the McRaes.

Whisked from her opulent home in the middle of the night, Dawsey Wilkes wakes up deep in the Carolina swamps, the prisoner of a rowdy family who support the infamous Henry Berry Lowry, a vigilante intent on bring justice to the poor.

Wooed by the competitive McRae brothers and shunned by their sister, Ellie, Dawsey remains intent on getting back home to her ailing father. But has it been God's plan all along to unite these two very different families?

Book one in Ms. Gruver's Backwood Brides series, *RAIDER'S HEART* stands true to what fans have come to expect from her books. Vivid details, so real you can almost smell the stench from her ill father, the despair Dawsey feels both from being unable to care for her dad right as well as when she is kidnapped, and see what she sees. The characters come alive, the setting as well, as you get deeper into the book. Readers will feel for Dawsey and can almost pray that everything in her life will be made right. The second book in the series, *Bandit's Hope* is available, as well as *Hunter's Prize*. If you like historical romances, don't miss *RAIDER'S HEART*. \$12.99. 320 pages.

Jill says

I read the sample and became very confused with all the different characters. I had a hard time following the story even though it was just the first couple of chapters.

Rachel Brand says

Living a life of luxury in a blossoming North Carolina town, Dawsey Wilkes does not suspect that the root of her family's problems is hidden in the bandit-ridden backwoods. Dawsey has never questioned whether her father's mental breakdown was due to anything more than her mother's death, which left the lonely and heartbroken widower to raise infant Dawsey by himself. But when she comes across thieves in her father's study, Dawsey is literally ripped from her privileged life. She finds herself deep in the woods of Shuffletown, where one of her captors is a girl who could be her doppelganger. Could Ellie McRae hold the key to her family's troubles? And will Dawsey make it back to her father before one of Ellie's brothers wins her heart?

What sounded like a fast-paced, action-filled historical romance about bandits and imprisoned girls didn't quite meet my expectations. It wasn't until chapter thirteen that anything actually occurred to bring our hero and heroine together, and I was almost ready to give up. While I was immediately captivated by the story of Dawsey, her mentally unstable father and her guardian aunt, it took me longer to warm up to the McRae family. We're introduced to the character of Ellie – whose name isn't on the back-cover of the book,

confusingly me immensely as I tried to work out who she was and why she had so much page-time – and her older brothers, Duncan and Hooper – neither of whom interested me, making me wonder why one of them would turn out to be Dawsey's love-interest. Thankfully, once Dawsey was kidnapped in chapter thirteen the story picked up the pace and was able to keep my interest.

I eventually warmed to the McRae family and they were a very endearing, entertaining bunch of characters. They explained to Dawsey why they were living in the backwoods of North Carolina, and we got a very small history lesson on the suffering that Native Americans experienced during the Civil War. At least, I think that's what they were talking about. The details were so vague that someone who hasn't studied this period of US history might not have understood the McRae's explanation. I prefer my historical romances to actually have some real history in them, rather than just having a general "historical" feel because the characters ride horses, hunt and occasionally reference a war gone by. However, I did enjoy reading about the McRae's and witnessing Dawsey's growing relationship with them. Hooper became an interesting character, but he didn't seem as fleshed out as Dawsey and Ellie. As for Duncan, he had so little page-time that I immediately suspected that he would lose the fight for Dawsey's affection. Despite this, it was still amusing to see the two brothers fight over our heroine, if a bit redundant.

Ellie got a little romantic subplot of her own, and I have to admit that at times I preferred her story to Dawsey's. My only complaint about Ellie would be her slightly awkward, unneeded discussions with Dawsey about God and prayer. Every so often, the author would chuck in a scene where Dawsey witnessed to Ellie and it felt very forced, making for uncomfortable reading. I'm not sure why the author decided to add these sections when Dawsey's faith in God was already apparent and succeeded in classifying the novel as inspirational. Other than this, Ellie and Dawsey were wonderful characters. Even if Hooper and Duncan weren't entirely convincing, the girls were, suggesting that perhaps the author needs to work on her portrayal of male characters. That said, I would be interested in reading more about Duncan and I would consider continuing this series if further books featured him and Ellie.

While I have a lot of criticisms of this book, I'll admit that it was a pleasant read and kept me entertained. *Raider's Heart* doesn't bring anything particularly new and original to the genre of inspirational historical romance, but readers can rely on Marcia Gruver's *Backwoods Buccaneers* series to provide an interesting setting, plenty of conflict, clean romance and a splash of history. 7/10

Jane says

A story woven around a gold lamp in a very unusual way. A raider, a Colonel, a vigilante and 3 people who think they are brother and sister who may never learn the truth of their path. Ellie/Dilsey does learn the truth of her past.

A story of forgiveness and God's plan sometimes is not what we think it would be. Circumstances may seem to turn out different than we could have imagined but in the midst of it all God can work. Ellie/Dilsey has a twin Dawsey and grows up not even knowing it. But one night things happen that bring Dawsey as a prisoner to the home where Ellie is at.

Hooper, Donovan and Ellie are sure they are blood relatives but they are not. Yet they have learned to love one another and fight for each other's safety.

My heart went out to the Colonel because to have a baby snatched from her crib haunted him all his life when he could not find her. It also caused her Mom to go off her meds and give up on life.

Making the best of a bad situation draws you into the story from beginning to end. You'll find it hard to put it down.

However at the end I was reminded of Joseph in the Bible sold into slavery but yet God raised him up to reunite with his family and provide for their needs.

I was a little disappointed at the end. I'm not sure I could have been as forgiving as the Colonel and Dawsey was or even Ellie/Dilsey when she learned the truth of her birth.

Yet it is a story that will captivate you.

Renee says

If you're like me there are probably a few author's who you turn to if you want a guaranteed romantic read, a few you go to for that suspense laden drama and a few you turn to just for an escape. Marcia Gruver is one of the author's whose books I turn to when I want to read a book that has an out of the ordinary setting. Don't get me wrong her stories have romance, some suspense and they are definitely great escapes from everyday life but the thing that grabs me the most about Ms. Gruver is her knack for picking an incredible setting for each of her stories. Yes she has set her books in late 19th century which has been done before but I've never encountered bandits, gamblers and oil all in one little town before!

This latest series is set in the South, not in the cotton fields, on a plantation or a bustling city like Charleston but rather the backwoods and swamps of North Carolina! When you read a lot (and I mean a lot) of historical fiction like me, sure the characters are usually always interesting but the the settings are just kind of...well...blah. I never thought that a place called Scuffletown and the folks who reside there could have captured me so fully. Life on the swamps may be simple but it is far from easy!

The McRae family and the entire Scuffletown gang are about as closely knit as any group of folks you'll ever meet in a story. I loved the Robin Hood like feel that this story had. It was so cool to see the old legend kind of brought to life in this book but with a new, unique twist! Although that wasn't the whole of the story, it was what I liked the most about Raider's Heart.

To me this wasn't really about romance, although there was a bit of a love triangle, it was more about family and forgiveness. I loved to see Dawsey Wilkes evolve from a somewhat spoiled "city" girl to accepting the McRae family. I also enjoyed seeing Ellie aka Dilsey, stubborn as she was, soften up a bit. To date, Raider's Heart is definitely my favorite book by Marcia. I can't wait to see what happens next in the swamps of the Carolina's in Bandit's Hope due out this Fall!

I received my complimentary copy from the publisher in exchange for posting my honest review.

Sarah Locke says

This was a pleasing find at a local Goodwill. I read it and couldn't put it down. There were enough twists to keep me interested all the way through. Ordered the next two in the series as soon as I had finished the book.

Courtney says

Two lives...the wealthy and lonely and the loving family of outlaws!

Dawsey, a young lady from a wealthy family gets suddenly taken from her home and ends up with a family

of outlaws! They keep her prisoner while they try to decide how to fix the mistake Hooper has done by taking her in the first place! Dawsey is mad, obviously, at the fact that she is a hostage but somehow the McRae family of outlaws is working their way in to her heart! Set in the late 1800's.

I really enjoyed this book!! I won this book on someone's blog a long ways back but had yet to read it because the book blurb on the back didn't sound too interesting! Well, once I started Raider's Heart I could not put it down!

There is so much that happens in the story that I'd love to mention but I'd ruin it for you so all I'll say about the plot is that it's exciting, full of surprises, and keeps you guessing all the way to the very last page! This is such a unique story that isn't like anything I've ever read. This was like reading a modern day Robin Hood story with a bit of a romance twist - which made for a fun tale!

The characters were all really likable and fun to read about! I especially enjoyed the two raiding brothers Hooper and Duncan! They remind me a lot of brothers; always competing, always messing with each other and ready to brawl at any chance!

My only complaint is that at times I felt the story moved just a bit too slowly and I wish the romance would have played out more than it did! I still loved the story and I will be watching for the next book in this series about the nephew Tiller.

Content: This is completely clean romance wise but there was a tad bit of violence but not much.

Kate says

The author creates a unique story about two families, the McKays and the Wilkes. Distance apart from each other and so alike yet so very different. It's a story of love, heartbreak and forgiveness, of have and have nots and the desire to be different. How the love of two young women for their families, the secret that separates them and the truth that brings them together. It's the story of a young man called Tiller who discovers love through discipline. It's a story of two brothers Hooper and Duncan vying for the attention of a young woman, complete with outlaws and gunmen woven into one very hard to put down book. Lots of twists, surprises and downhome fun await the reader in this creative easy to read novel! With characters the reader can relate to makes this a true keeper novel to reread and savor again, and a truly unforgettable novel you won't want to miss! I look forward to reading the next in this series! Thanks to Barbour Publishing for providing this ARC copy for me for my review.

Anita says

It was a little slow in getting my interest at first but I soon decided I would read it and ended up liking it very much. there is a lot of backwoods behavior and thinking that I had trouble getting into but that is the name of the series. And I thought Marcia did a good job depicting the characters and the culture and wove it into a interesting, informative & heart warming story. I would recomend it to anyone interested in the backwoods

southern lifestyle.
