



All the Crooked Saints

Maggie Stiefvater

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*Here is a thing everyone wants: A **miracle**.*

*Here is a thing everyone fears:
What it takes to get one.*

Any visitor to Bicho Raro, Colorado is likely to find a landscape of dark saints, forbidden love, scientific dreams, miracle-mad owls, estranged affections, one or two orphans, and a sky full of watchful desert stars.

At the heart of this place you will find the Soria family, who all have the ability to perform unusual miracles. And at the heart of this family are three cousins longing to change its future: Beatriz, the girl without feelings, who wants only to be free to examine her thoughts; Daniel, the Saint of Bicho Raro, who performs miracles for everyone but himself; and Joaquin, who spends his nights running a renegade radio station under the name Diablo Diablo.

They are all looking for a miracle. But the miracles of Bicho Raro are never quite what you expect.

All the Crooked Saints Details

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From Reader Review All the Crooked Saints for online ebook

C.G. Drews says

Well, I mean, OF COURSE I loved it. I'm an intensely wild fan of the way Stiefvater crafts and uses words and it makes writing reviews very *very* hard because HOW DO YOU WORD. However I will fully admit this is very different from her typical novels. I definitely didn't like it as much as The Raven Boys. (And The Scorpio Races is The Ultimate Honey Cake Of Them All™) but I also enjoyed All The Crooked Saints just for being *different*. It's whimsical and reads more like a mythological fairy tale and it said some beautiful things and was full of interesting characters.

And I'm a freaking Stiefvater fan I mean just don't even bother with my review here I'M BIASED AND IN LOVE WITH HER WORDS.

+ It's magical realism, but more MAGIC than usual.

It reminded me a lot of When the Moon Was Ours, but this one had a plot. Thank God and at least four saints, maybe five. It's set in Colorado in a very dusty part of the desert where a family (the Sorias) run a ranch (not the salad dressing kind) where they offer miracles. The trick is: they give you the miralce, the miracle exposes your inner darkness, and then *you* have to deal with it. So **it's taken for granted that people are magic and weird here**. Like there's some girls entwined with snakes, a giant, someone who gets rained on all the time etc. etc. And everyone is chill with that.

+ I admit I got confused about the miracles at first??

The Sorias can't help anyone cure their inner darkness AND I JUST WANT TO KNOW WHY. Then it sort of got explained like so:

"You barter with sadness or you fight with grief or you eat arrogance every morning with your coffee. There are saints in this valley who can heal you. You and every other pilgrim can canter to Bicho Raro to receive a miracle. A miracle, you say? A miracle. This miracle makes the darkness inside you visible in amazing and peculiar ways. Now that you see what has been haunting you, you overthrow it, and then you leave this place easy and free."

OK man sounds great. And if the Soria saints *help* the pilgrims, they turn into Ultimate Darkness™. Which seems unfair.

Welcome to a Stiefvater novel.

+ It's written in omnipresent which takes a bit to get used to.

I'm going to be honest (AND NOT BIASED FOR A SEC WHOOO LOOK AT ME GO) and admit **I don't like this style very much**. I wish the book had focused on Daniel, Joaquin and Beatriz. But we get dozens of other POVs and backstories and it can jump from one head to another ANY SECOND. #Not #My #Favourite *However*. Once I got into the swing of it, I really appreciated how interesting and melodic the flow was. It feels like a rambling story you tell your grandkids, with lots of detours, that made it feel juicy and deep.

+ Also loved LOVED the setting.

I could totally see the ranch and the desert and the box truck.

+ It's the kind of story that leaves you wanting MORE.

Which is great, because I swear I've seen a tumblr post from Maggie Stiefvater which says that's her #1 wish for people who finish her books. WANT MORE. But like??? I want so many spin-offs??? My TOP request is for a story on Daniel's childhood because he was a ratbag who turned into a saint and like PLEASE TELL ME MORE.

+ It's whimsical and steeped in bizarre and altogether addictive.

It wasn't what I expected and I *admit* it's my least favourite Stiefvater novel. (And I've read all the others....a million times so.) I liked it but I wouldn't imprint it on my face with The Raven Boys let's just say. I wanted MORE, particularly more focus on the three Soria cousins and their illegal radio station and their darkness. And I wanted to know more about Pete who loved to work (what the heck is wrong with him) and was so earnest and pure.

This book is a bit like being told wild dusty folklore stories with black roses and owls with strange eyes and strange box trucks and girls who like boys' elbows. It's unusual and it's slow and it's pretty and there are SAINTS.

#stamp #of #approval

Melanie says

ARC received via #arcsfortrade on Twitter!

(Thank you so much, Payton! ❤)

???: You can get *All the Crooked Saints* and more of Maggie's books signed from Fountain Bookstore!

???: And you can read Chapter One online for free [Here!](#)

This is the first Maggie Stiefvater book that I'm not giving five stars to, and it honestly hurts my heart to even write this review.

“You can hear a miracle a long way after dark.”

All the Crooked Saints is a story set in the 1960s and is about love, loss, hope, fear, saints, demons, roses, owls, and an illegally homemade radio station that brings a small community together.

Most of you probably know the controversy with this book: This is Maggie Stiefvater's take on magical realism. Magical realism is a genre that was originally created by the Latinx community, and Maggie Stiefvater is a very famous white writer who has already been called out a few times because of her representation. I haven't read enough magical realism to know if Maggie's take is inaccurate or offensive, but I do know that not everyone's story is meant to be told by white women.

Plus, I'm a white book reviewer. I didn't find anything outwardly problematic or offensive, but I did feel uncomfortable reading a few of the phrases (like *Diablo Diablo*). Once this book releases, I would love to link you guys to some actual Latinx own voices reviews, who will be much more educated on this genre and

the representation at hand.

But my problems with this book didn't even stem from questionable cultural appropriation; this book was just boring to me. Yes, Maggie's lyrical writing style is still present throughout the book, but I never once felt fully immersed with this actual story. I have so many tabs in my ARC of gorgeous passages filled with whimsical prose after whimsical prose, but the beautiful writing didn't help me to actually care about these characters. This actually pains me to say, but if this wasn't an ARC I probably would have DNFed this book by the half way point, just because I was so uninvested with the main characters.

“Humans are as drawn to hope as owls are to miracles.”

All the Crooked Saints surrounds and stars three very different cousins:

- **Daniel** - the Saint of Bicho Raro, who performs the miracles.
- **Beatriz** - a girl incapable of feeling emotions, until a special boy comes to town.
- **Joaquin** - the boy in charge of the radio station, Diablo Diablo himself!

The Soria family live in the small town of Bicho Raro, Colorado, where people come from all over so that they can receive a miracle. But what the people don't know is that once Daniel performs the initial miracle, they have to perform a second miracle to be truly healed from their darkness. Therefore, a lot of outsiders are still residing in Bicho Raro, waiting for that second miracle to come.

“No one wanted to see their darkness made manifest, but the reality was that it could not be fought until you saw its shape.”

Even though Daniel helps manifest the outsiders' darkness that they are harboring inside of them, all of the Soria family are forbidden to help them perform that second miracle of banishing the darkness for themselves. That is, until Daniel is faced with his own darkness and is forced to flee into the desert in hopes of protecting his family.

We get a super unique and full cast of side characters, because of these outsiders (they are called pilgrims in this book) that are unable to heal themselves. My favorite was, hands down, Marisita. Her darkness is manifested into constant rain following her, which leads to constant butterflies on her white dress and I loved that imagery every time it was mentioned.

“Here was a thing she feared: that the prettiest thing about her was her exterior.”

But besides the beautiful writing and Marisita, this just fell so short of every expectation I had for this story. The Raven Boys, Shiver, I've love them all, but this one just wasn't for me. I'm not sure if it was the 60s setting, or the desert environment, or maybe it was because I haven't read that many magical realism novels before, but *All the Crooked Saints* just didn't work for me at all. It also felt like such a slow burning buildup of a story, that just turned into a very rushed ending and epilogue.

Overall, this book was just okay in my personal opinion. I honestly feel like the story itself is only a two star read, but the writing, in true Maggie Stiefvater fashion, is a tier above most out there. Her lyrical prose

deserves an entire star on its own, therefore I'm giving this three stars. But yeah, this is for sure one of the biggest disappointments for me in regards to 2017 book releases.

Maggie still crafts absolute magic with her writing, and I still plan on reading everything else she continues to write in the future. I know this was a miss for me, but hopefully if you decided to pick it up this fall it won't be a miss for you. I'm also really looking forward to see what everyone else thinks about this one! Happy reading, guys!

“You can hear a miracle a long way after dark, even when you are dying.”

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The quotes above were taken from an ARC and are subject to change upon publication.

Buddy Read with Mary ♥

Kainat ?HUFFLEPUFF & PROUD? says

It's no secret I love The Raven Boys and Scorpion Races with all my heart. That being said, I most likely will never read this book. Not because I think it's racist and offensive in any way, it just doesn't sound interesting to me. How about we all put our big girl panties on and try acting like adults?

Some dickhead flagged my prereview because It stated we shouldn't judge a book before we've actually read it? Meanwhile, GR has no problem people personally attacking each other, and rating books that aren't even complete yet? What the fuck is this shit? Goodreads, you need to get your shit together. I am so frustrated right now.

Most readers were angry because The Raven Cycle doesn't have many "nonwhite" people and now you are whining because Maggie is creating a Mexican character? What the hell is your problem? If you have an issue, don't read the book! Easy. No one is forcing you!

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

I love you Maggie and most of the time, all of your books but this one wasn't for me ?

Emma says

I absolutely love love loved this. As per usual with Maggie's books, it was full of magic and complex characters. There were some moments in the writing that took my breath away. I had to pause a couple times and reread certain passages. It was just so beautiful.

Vanessa says

This book can be summed up in a single word: *magical*. Because there are no other ways to describe it, or to define Maggie Stiefvater's writing. I'm not going to delve into the plot - being the novel this short, it's better to leave it vague - but you gotta know that *All The Crooked Saints* is about: saints and miracles, losing and finding yourself, owls and desert, music and darkness, supporting each other just as trying to heal yourself. The characters are quite amazing - especially Marisita, Beatriz, Tony and Daniel -, even in their own flaws but I think that *this novel should have definitely been longer*: the ending was way too rushed and I would have preferred to know each character better, to understand their reasonings and past better. The atmosphere is marvellous though - it's like you can actually feel the desert's heat on your skin, leaving you thirsty and tired and yet lively and open to any fantastic vision - and the messages behind every miracle, how it's not about being suddenly healed by someone but being faced by your worst nightmare or issue and learn how to overcome it: it's something I enjoyed more than I thought it could be possible.

P.S. as I previously thought, **this book's representation of latinx people and their culture is not harmful and the saints' theme isn't problematic at all, having been raised as catholic.**

pre-reading: (view spoiler)

destiny ? howling libraries says

"Bicho Raro was a place of strange miracles."

I am so grateful to have been given an ARC of this by my friend Julie! Thank you again! ❤

The synopsis for this book sounded so good, and the cover is gorgeous, and there are owls, and I *had* to have it. I was not disappointed in the slightest.

✖ PLOT

In the desert of Colorado, there lives a family - the Sorias, who have been blessed with a generational ability to perform miracles. These miracles are unusual, though; they draw a person's darkness out of them, so that it might form a physical entity or trait to be defeated. The only problem is this: once the miracle has been performed, it is that person's own responsibility to defeat their darkness, and no saint can help them, for fear of creating the vastly stronger and more frightening darkness of the Sorias.

When Daniel Soria is forced to face his darkness, he retreats into the wild to keep his family safe, but his family knows there is a puzzle to be solved if they are ever going to save their beloved saint.

✖ CHARACTERS

This book is brimming with amazing, complex, lovable characters. There are the cousins - Beatriz, Daniel,

and Joaquin - who are each so different, but so attached to one another they might as well be siblings. There are the adult Sorias, each of whom is cursed with their own difficulties and griefs that they must overcome. Last, there are the Pilgrims: those who have been given their first miracles, but have not yet vanquished their darkness.

I loved the way Maggie took the time to delve into the back stories of so many of the characters. I don't really feel like there was ever just one main character, because so many different individuals felt so important and crucial to the story, even among the older Sorias and the Pilgrims.

✗ WRITING

How can I review a Maggie Stiefvater book without talking about her writing? I know it isn't for everyone, but I loved it in *The Raven Boys*, and I loved it even more here. Every line is lyrical or metaphorical, and she constantly hides little gems in her words. You can't skim a book of Maggie's, because you'll miss half the beauty that lies simply in the way she writes. I wish I could share all of my favorite quotes with you, but half of them would be spoilers, and really, they're just words that you should read in the context of this beautiful story she created.

✗ CONTROVERSY

I know this book has been a bit controversial, and I don't want to say much on that, but I didn't feel right leaving it out altogether, because I know a lot of you guys will be curious about it. I did not *personally* feel as though the Hispanic culture was being represented poorly in this book. Maggie threw in tidbits here and there about historical figures in the Latinx community that had done great things, and from these tidbits, I actually learned some really cool, positive things!

HOWEVER, I am not Latinx and can not speak for an entire group of individuals that I do not belong to. I would be extremely open to hearing opinions from Latinx reviewers who have read this book, and would encourage all of you to open your minds and hear their viewpoints on this as well! Nobody can ever give you as well-formed of an opinion on a piece of "diverse" art as the marginalized groups that the author is trying to represent, especially when it is not an own-voice piece.

✗ FINAL VERDICT

I loved this book. I was delighted to have the opportunity to read it ahead of its release, and I thought it painted such a beautiful story about this family and how much they loved one another. The magical aspect of it was portrayed in such a fun and unique way. Plus, owls are some of my favorite creatures on earth, and I loved the idea that they were attracted to the miracles and so massive groups of them constantly inhabited Bicho Raro.

I would highly encourage anyone who enjoys Maggie's writing - or beautiful, lyrical writing in general - to pick this up, especially if you're a fan of realistic fantasy.

You can find this review and more on my blog!

Maggie Stiefvater says

This book has owls and rock n' roll in it.

Sana says

Hi, my name is Sana. I am on page two. I am confused. Pray I make it through this entire book.

Mary ~Ravager of Tomes~ says

Actual Rating: 2.5 Stars

The Soria family have been courting miracles for years.

Wayward individuals find their way to the little town of Bicho Raro in search of a miracle that will change their lives, but the manifestations of these miracles are often not what they expect. Forbidden from interfering, the Sorias house these pilgrims until they can work through the curse of their darkness.

Needless to say, I had very high expectations for this novel. I am a big fan of Stiefvater's *The Raven Cycle* series and The Scorpio Races. Conceptually, this book caught my attention immediately. Upon finishing, I must say I'm a bit disappointed.

I liked the book, but it wasn't amazing.

First, I want to address the controversy about cultural appropriation & insensitivity. **Personally, I didn't see anything particularly offensive going on in this novel**, but I realize I may not have the appropriate knowledge to recognize instances of incorrect representation.

One thing that I didn't love was that one of the characters adopted the name "Diablo Diablo" for his radio personality. This seems to me like a white person's interpretation of something a Latinx person may find "badass."

Say, for example, I was writing about Japanese characters & one of them called herself "Kawaii Kawaii." Would an actual Japanese person find this sensible? I'm not sure, but something about this naming just didn't feel incredibly authentic.

Otherwise, my best advice would be to listen to Latinx reviewers **who have actually read this book** & see what they have to say about the controversy surrounding this novel. No, not folks who just listened to the interview Stiefvater gave. **I'm talking about people who actually read the book.**

Now that that's out of the way, let's talk about the book!

The **divine writing** we've come to expect from Stiefvater absolutely shines through here. I always love how atmospheric her stories tend to be, as that makes it easy for me to sink in & get lost in her world building.

While reading, I got the distinct feeling that Stiefvater wanted this novel to be similar to *The Raven Cycle* in ways that don't necessarily work outside of *The Raven Cycle*. Even though the plot directions are not comparable, *All the Crooked Saints* doesn't get its own **unique weirdness** the way her previous novels have.

There are a **ton of lovely ideas** floating around all throughout this story; giants & sentient deserts that fall in

love & dresses with fluttering butterflies - there's no end to Stiefvater's imagination. But I feel as though the narrative tries too hard to be quirky & philosophical, and thus ends up reading like a **beautiful mess without much substance**.

Certain aspects of the novel ended up feeling like **unnecessary decoration** instead of vital inclusions, which in turn causes the novel to **lose a bit of its staying power with me**.

As pointed out by my friend Melanie, the first 100 pages of this novel are a lot more interesting than the last 200. The pace slows *dramatically* as it edges toward the conclusion, & while I felt engaged when I was in the book, I had to convince myself I wanted to pick it back up again.

There was a lot of potential for this cast of characters to be highly individual, but **unfortunately they end up feeling like distant cousins of characters we have already seen Stiefvater use in her stories**. Pete read like a filler Gansey, Beatriz like a more stoic Blue.

The climax was **lovely & fascinating**, but very narrow in its scope. Complicated consequences for what I (and I think many readers will) consider uncomplicated solutions. Perhaps they would be considered more complicated in the 1960's, but I don't think any of the central conflicts or their resolutions really *went there*.

Overall, I wanted to like this a lot more than I did. It has a solid premise, and some beautiful moments here & there, but **it doesn't pack the punch of the past favorites I've read from Stiefvater**.

So glad I got to buddy read this with the beautiful Melanie! ?

This review and other reviews of mine can be found on Book Nest!

Publication Date: October 10th, 2017

Melanie (TBR and Beyond) says

STOP with the rating books you haven't even read! You lose ALL credibility when you do so. If there is an issue with this book then discuss it in your REVIEW when you have actually read the thing.

Why is this a confusing concept?

Em says

I always have the same singular emotion whenever I'm reading a Stiefvater book and I still don't know what it is. I guess her books just launch me into another dimension every single time and I don't know what is going on planetarily right now but I need to lay in a flower field for like, ten years at least.

Tony said, "This is a madhouse!"

"The world's a madhouse," Padre Jiminez corrected. "This is a place to heal it."

This book had such a soft atmosphere to it: soft music, soft characters, soft words, soft emotions. The kind of book you finish and just feel so....warm? like, not *warmth* as in temperature-wise but just this sense of general comfort and coziness that seems to be ingrained on a deep emotional level. The spiritual equivalent of whenever you step into a patch of sunlight and you can actually feel its warmth creeping back into the icy corners of your heart.

My very first impression on All the Crooked Saints was: “this is so *vague hand gesture* *maggie stiefvater*”. As in, it was a little bit of ????? with some of *uuuu* and a lot of !!!!!, and you of course get the “why is Maggie stiefvater like this” moments at least five times a chapter but you learn to just _(?)_/_ your way through it.

“Have you ever felt like that, listeners, like you only exist in relation to someone else in your life? It’s a terrible feeling. People are like sweet, sweet chords—we love them when they’re playing all together nicely, like in the pretty number I’m going to spin next, but it would be a crying shame to forget what a lovely little noise a D major makes strummed on a single guitar.”

So. What is this book about?

Bicho Raro, Colorado is a place for owls and the strange miracles that draw them. People travel from faraway lands to meet the Soria Saint and receive a miracle. But that's not the end point of that journey. See, the first miracle is where each pilgrim's hidden darkness is made manifest in the most peculiar ways. The second miracle is where it's healed and ultimately banished.

However, it's not as easy as it might sound. In order for this process to be successful, each pilgrim must walk abroad in multiple obscurity and track their way to their selves despite of the wind that's constantly veiling their footprints. They must confront their darkness and most importantly, **they must do it alone**. That's the only catch: the Sorias are forbidden from interfering, directly or indirectly. Otherwise, they will bring the darkness on themselves as well...only it will be tenfold more terrible.

So what exactly happens when a Soria falls in love with a pilgrim?

I can only say this: this book left me with the overwhelming desire to run away with maybe nothing but a block of cheese, a loaf of fresh bread and some apples and wander through the flower-specked mountains of Colorado, wrapped up in a shawl, during hours of a road trip until I hit an infinite stretch of deserted lands and hope to saunter into Bicho Raro to find real power and real significance simultaneously.

“Imagine ... you have a tormented mind,” Diablo Diablo said, his voice dramatic. “You barter with sadness or you fight with grief or you eat arrogance every morning with your coffee. There are saints in this valley who can heal you. You and every other pilgrim can canter to Bicho Raro to receive a miracle. A miracle, you say? A miracle.”

The characters:

I found myself falling in love with literally everything and everyone in a dozen small different ways despite the statistical unlikelihood of their existence: **the devil of the airwaves** and his illegal unlicensed radio station; **the Saint** with the spider eyes; **the scientist** who's stripped of feelings; **the soft boy** who's only ever wanted to fix a truck and the giant who's only ever wanted to be less visible; **the perpetually sad woman** with the ever-present wedding dress and the rain that is originated from nowhere; **the part man part coyote**; **the girl who has no words of her own** and can only repeat what is said to her; **the twins** who are corded by an enormous black snake; **General MacArthur** the (kidnapped) Rooster; the family turned to wood and heck, even the goddamn stray dogs.

I actually wish there was a way to film everyone and edit little movies about their lives so you can see how beautiful they all are.

“If you’re missing someone tonight, know that I, Diablo Diablo, am, too. It’s an enormous sky out there with a lot of stars above it and a lot of folks underneath it, and all of us, stars and human, are missing someone in the dark. But I, Diablo Diablo, think that if we’re all out there missing someone, that means that we’re all really together on that one note, aren’t we? So none of us are really alone as long as we’re lonely.”

I absolutely adored this book.

The likelihood of all these weird miracles might be relatively low, but All the Crooked Saints was essentially about the promise that acknowledging and knowing your darkness is the only healing practice that has the potential to create miracles within yourself and within your interpersonal relationships.

After all, the only reason we have daylight is because we happen to be facing a shining spinning ball of actual doom.

“But we all have darkness inside us. It is just a question of how much of us is light as well.”

Cesar says

4 stars

“It is, after all, not the tasks people do but the things they do around the edges of them that reveal who they are.”

People, it has finally happened. **I have read All the Crooked Saints** and I have a lot to say about it.

But before I do, I want to address something. As many of you know, I had posted a ranty review on how I think people rating a book 1-star shouldn't do it if they haven't read the book. A lot of non-Mexican/Latinx people were saying how the book is problematic even though the book wasn't released at the time. It did make me slightly mad because of how so many people were being ignorant about this and choosing to rate it 1-star without even reading it.

That was when I posted my now famous rant that has opened up a lot of eyes. I just want to say thank you all for liking and commenting on it. I never expected it to blow up. Once again, thank you all so much. And don't worry, if you are new and want to see my rant, keep scrolling until you find it.

Now that that's out of the way, let me get on with my review.

All the Crooked Saints is a weird book. Weird in the sense that it involves magical realism but still manages to keep grounded with the plot and characters. I know some people don't like magical realism so this may not be the book for them. For me on the other hand, I really did like *All the Crooked Saints*!

I thought it was a short but well-written story about family, faith, and learning to deal with difficult moments.

Mind you, it wasn't perfect, but overall, it was a good book. And the months I've been waiting for have been paid off!

IT WAS WORTH THE WAIT!

The story is about the Soria family as well as the group of pilgrims who live in Bicho Raro. We follow three cousins, Beatriz, Joaquin, and Daniel, who are living there and to the best of their extent, trying to understand their current life. Beatriz is a girl who shows little emotions, Joaquin is an aspiring radio DJ who goes under the name Diablo Diablo, and Daniel is the Saint at Bicho Raro, performing miracles on the pilgrims. It all seems fine (and a little weird) when something happens and this causes a rift between the Sorias. A miracle is needed to heal them.

I want to start off by saying that some people may not like the plot. I know I said that some may not be on board with the magical realism aspect, but there are other parts of the book where I can see not many people will enjoy it. But for the most part, *All the Crooked Saints* tells the story of a family trying to comprehend the sudden rift and the pilgrims trying to find a miracle so they can feel free.

It is a story about family and having faith in yourself.

The Good

One thing I liked the most was the good rep of Mexican people. As a Mexican-American myself, I did not find one thing that was too bad. If anything, I liked how Maggie was able to mix family ties while keeping in check with how Mexican families act. So no, there wasn't anything problematic about this book despite what others may say. *cough cough* Those who haven't read the damn book *cough cough*

I have read magical realism books before (A.S. King) and it's one of my favorite type of sub-genres out there. The use of magical realism with the use of Saints made the book more interesting. Miracles are performed by Daniel and these miracles aren't just snap-your-fingers-and-make-it-all-better kind of miracle. It's a type of miracle where you have to find it in yourself in order to get better. The use of the miracles can speak volumes especially when they are being presented with characters who are unsure about themselves.

The writing is absolutely phenomenal. I am not kidding when I say that Maggie could literally write a grocery list and make it sound magical. Since I have read her **Raven Cycle** series, I know that Maggie is an exceptional writer. Just read this.

"Love in the high desert is a strange thing. There is something about the climate—the remoteness, the severity of the seasons, the dryness of the air, the extreme beauty—that makes people feel more deeply. Perhaps without trees or cities to dampen the enormity of the feelings, they spread out hugely. Perhaps the hard-packed dust of the San Luis Valley amplifies them, like a shout into a canyon."

Tell me that isn't beautiful! Anything Maggie writes is purely magical.

The characters themselves are interesting, to say the least. Actually, interesting would be an understatement. The best way I would describe them is, they are rare animals that you can see but not get too close to them. Each of the cousins is piecing together their current life and coming to terms with who they are. Beatriz with her emotionless persona wanting to understand how others feel. Jauquin wants out of Bicho Raro and continue to pursue a career in radio but can't seem to understand what it is the people who are listening in want, and Daniel is dealing with the aftermath of a mistake. They may not be like the Raven Boys, but they are good characters.

The Not So Good

I'll admit, there were at least two things I wasn't too fond of. Not to say that I hated them, but they did prevent me from giving this a 5-star rating.

As much as I liked the writing, there were times when it seemed like Maggie was rambling a bit. There was literally a long paragraph talking about a salt lake. Yes, that paragraph was a euphemism for something, but I really didn't need a long paragraph describing it.

And because of the ramblings, the book is a bit slow paced despite how short it is. That, and I was busy with school so that didn't help with my reading schedule. Other than those two flaws, nothing else stood out to me.

Verdict

All the Crooked Saints was met with mixed reactions from people who were too focused on their feelings and gave the book 1-star (without even reading the fucking book, I might add.) Despite this, I sat down and typed in what I felt about it. And you know what, I'm glad I did and I don't regret it. I never let my emotions get in the way of it and it paid off.

While it wasn't perfect, I did enjoy All the Crooked Saints. Maggie does it again with another great book. I'm looking forward to reading more books from her. (Especially the trilogy centered around Ronan from the Raven Boys. I NEED IT!)

Thanks for reading my review!

-Cesar

Me before I heard about the 1-star reviews: Oh my God! A new Maggie Stiefvater book! I'm so happy!

Sees the 1-star reviews complaining about nothing

takes off glasses

takes a deep breath

puts glasses back on

Listen. Listen, you social justice keyboard warriors. I am tired of hearing this "white authors should stick in their lane" bullshit I've been hearing about the last year. Who the hell do you think you are telling an author what they should and shouldn't write? Who are you to tell others not to read a book **WHEN YOU HAVEN'T FUCKING READ IT!!!!**

I'm Mexican-American. I am happy that Maggie Stiefvater is writing a book that has Mexican characters and goes into Mexican folklore and Saints! I love her writing and have been a fan since I've read the Raven Cycle. I'll read any book by her, regardless if the main characters are white, black, Mexican, male, or female. She writes amazing stories and amazing characters.

And to all the SJWs: **where are your priorities?!?!!?**

First, you want more diversity. Then when an author does their proper research and has sensitivity readers, you're still mad. **Make up your minds!** Seriously, you are the ones who are making things worse by calling everything racist. "Oh, a white author writing a character that isn't white even though they did their research? RACIST!" Fuck out of here, you keyboard warriors.

And to those who are saying it's cultural appropriation, it isn't. Maggie didn't steal anything. She didn't appropriate Mexican Culture because the people in Mexico and anyone else are STILL able to celebrate their beliefs and holidays. Maggie didn't steal Mexican/Latinx culture. Culture isn't a physical object that can be taken and locked in a drawer. That's not how it is.

And if you do a simple Google search, Saints belong to different ethnicities. You have Italian people who believe in Saints, along with others across the world. It just doesn't belong to Mexican/Latinx culture. If you look even further and search the origin of Catholicism, it originated from Judea. Last I checked, Judea isn't a Mexican or South American country. Also, I went to a bible study group last week with a friend and one of the people there was Asian. She was there of her own free will wanting to learn more about God. So don't you spout how it's cultural appropriation when religion can be practiced by millions of people.

I swear to God, I am sick and tired of these SJWs who think they know what's best when really, they don't. This is just like Ramona Blue all over again.

There is a reason why authors do their research and if they can, have access to sensitivity readers before their

book is released so they can change some things. I trust that Maggie did her research well. If she managed to cram a lot of lore and myth into the Raven Cycle, I'm sure she did the research for All the Crooked Saints. She wouldn't have written the book if she didn't do her research.

What pains me the most is how some people are mad about how the town being translated to weirdo or weird. As someone who grew up in south Texas, weirdo is nothing compared to the insults my classmates (who are a majority of Mexican-Americans) say to one another. Trust me, I've been on the receiving end a couple of times. And for those who think the translation was penis, that is a slang. If you're that sensitive that the translation was meant to mean penis (again, a slang I found on Urban Dictionary), then go back to your safe space.

And another thing: Stop coddling Mexicans/Latinx people so much. It angers me that so many SJWs see Mexicans/Latinx as minorities and feel like they should speak for us and defend us from the harsh realities of life. **News flash:** You do not have to treat us all like we're some sort of lesser being just because we are of Mexican/Latinx culture. I see it almost all the time of how white people or any other race/ethnicity try and coddle a minority group. I do not need protection. I don't need to be coddled. Stop treating us like we have no voice, especially if you're not even Mexican/Latinx. You may think you're protecting them, but you're only speaking **YOUR** feelings, not everyone's. Stop being offended on behalf of all Mexican/Latinx. Sure, if someone called them derogatory names that are clearly offensive and overtly racist, then yes, call it out. But when it comes to trivial stuff like this that isn't even offensive, stop it. We have a voice. Do not treat us like we don't have one.

People are so sensitive these days. If it doesn't fit their quota, it's not a good book. Meanwhile, there are people out there (the ones with rational thinking) who want open discussions. But the SJWs will not even respond knowing their words would backfire against them and go running away with their tail between their legs.

Don't rate a book 1-star if you haven't read it yet. The book isn't even out till the fall!

Did your future self time travel back to tell you it's bad?

Did you get an ARC and read it?

Did a trustworthy friend tell you it's bad?

If all the answers were no, then there's no reason to rate it 1-star if you haven't even read it yet!

Seriously! Stop complaining about nothing!!!!

I am so fucking mad I can't even... UGH!

Oh, and a little reminder... Blue and Henry from the Raven Cycle aren't white! Blue has olive skin and Henry is Korean. Let that sink in with you SJWs.

You know what's funny? A lot of the people who left 1-star reviews are white. Oh, the fucking irony. If they were Mexican/Latinx, then maybe I would listen. Maybe. But the fact that most of them are white shows they're sensitive little 5-year-olds who aren't capable of rational/cognitive thought.

I'm sick of your SJW feelings and I'm calling you out.

I'll say this: I'm Mexican-American. I love Maggie Stiefvater's books. And I will gladly read this one.

? jamieson ? says

“Here's a thing everyone wanted: a miracle.
Here's a thing everyone feared: what it takes to get one.”

Nestled within the rolling desert hills of Colorado is the small town of Bicho Raro, a town that's neither here nor there but attracts visitors of the strangest kind. It's here Maggie Stiefvater sets her odd but charming, **All The Crooked Saints**, her first foray into fiction since *The Raven Boys* ended. *The Raven Boys* is a favourite of mine, and I wanted this one to be too. But I don't think Maggie Stiefvater managed to recapture the magic. Where I found the writing of *The Raven Boys* beautiful and lyrical, here I found it slightly edged on overdone. Where I found the quirkiness of *The Raven Boys* endearing, I found it irritating here, and felt that the realism that grounded the characters was absent. The only thing I truly loved was the setting, again Maggie Stiefvater managed to capture something magical and whimsy about a rural American setting.

“Humans are as drawn to hope as owls are to miracles. It only takes the suggestion of it to stir them up, and the eagerness lingers for a while even when all traces of it are gone.”

Stiefvater introduces us to our central characters within the first chapter. Joaquin Soria, introduced as someone who wants to be famous but fears dying alone in the parched dust outside Bicho Raro. Beatriz Soria, who wanted to devote time to understanding how a butterfly was similar to a galaxy and feared being asked to do anything else. And Daniel Soria, who wanted to help someone he wasn't allowed to help but feared he would ruin his entire family for his private desire. At first I found this manner of introducing the characters interesting and lyrical, but the sentence quickly became overused and cliche. This is similar to the writing throughout the book. Stiefvater has talent but the organic beauty of her writing seemed lost here, for me the writing felt forced. There are sparks of brilliance, I think Stiefvater is a great writer and an interesting writer, and the strength of her writing carried this book through the rough patches, but she couldn't carry the style as flawlessly as she has done previously.

Similarly, where *The Raven Boys* had characters who were incredibly compelling, the protagonists of *All the Crooked Saints* were not so. I liked them, but I didn't love them. Their quirkiness intrigued me, but there wasn't enough substance. Odd characters are fun, but they need some grounding in reality to seem real to me. I want something hard and truthful. For me, there wasn't enough of that. The Soria's felt almost like caricatures rather than real people. I also felt like there was an element of stereotyping and otherness in the depiction of the characters. The Soria's feel like typecasts and often the way the culture and folklore was incorporated felt like Stiefvater was fetishising the culture. Often, it felt as if Stiefvater was overusing iconography and language in order to make this book feel "ethnic" and it ended up feeling fetishised. It is very disappointing that the publishers didn't take the time to hire someone to make the Spanish included correct and grammatically coherent, that would have taken five seconds and would have made me feel less as

if this is a book trying to profit off of depicting this culture of a quirky other. I will include links to ownvoices reviews at the end of this review.

“This is the way of our work: We cannot help but color it with the paint of our feelings, both good and bad.”

While Stiefvater has proven in The Raven Cycle she has talent, a lot of it fell to the wayside here. The action, character development and coherence of the plot was lost in favour of portraying beautiful writing. But beautiful writing a book does not make, and the rambling nature of this book, as well as muddled character concepts and unsatisfying character development prevented me from loving this. I enjoyed reading it, but I found myself more and more unsatisfied as I neared the end. For me there was some nuggets of brilliance, but overall All the Crooked Saints fails to live up to the high expectations many of us have set for Stiefvater, and the problems I had with The Raven Cycle were, if anything, exacerbated rather than solved here.

ownvoices reviews

Giselle, a Latinx reviewer (3 star review)

Laura Pohl on representation of in YA specifically related to ATCS

A twitter thread about this book, especially related to lack of nuance and translation issues

Fatma's goodreads review

may ☺ says

[Full review posted](#)

I read the book and loved it so much and yet I understood exactly zero things and if you asked me to tell you what it was about I'd just sink to the floor and stare at the ceiling with blank eyes, bc HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN WHAT THIS BOOK IS

- I don't have enough words or eloquence to describe this book and what it made me feel someone help me
- Maggie has this style of writing that's incredibly dramatic like it doesn't even make sense but it makes you feel things that you can't name
- “*What a shame that both miracles and radio waves are invisible, because it would be quite a sight: ribbons of marvel and sound stretching out straight and true from all over the world.*”
- ^ what on earth is that and why does it make me feel like a philosopher from the year 403??
- The characters are so sweet, so precious, so pure
- As like all of Maggie's other characters, they're just so real and different and have so many dimensions to

them honestly you could tell them apart even without a nametag at the end of the dialogue they're THAT unique

- The plot?? What is the plot?? I DON'T KNOW HOW TO IDENTIFY THE PLOT when so many things were happening and they didn't make sense but somehow they did at the same time
- I just, I wanna know what goes on in Maggie's head bc im slightly concerned for her
- The setting is gorgeous, the setting is wonderful and eerie and spiritual and it's so flipping fantastic take me back to the 1960s
- There are so many povs and so much beautiful backstories and so much tender moments and weird as hell humour I just
- Wow I love this book
- There's family and friendship and love and pain and anguish and forgiveness and miracles and just wowowowowowowowowow
- Okay the only reason it ain't 5 stars is bc it took me time to get into and even though it was incredible it wasn't one of those books that SHAKES UP YOUR WORLD and CHANGES YOUR LIFE and inspires you to CHUCK reality and BUY A PLANE TICKET TO A COUNTRY OVERSEAS AT 3AM (bc that's what 5 star ratings are reserved for)
- This book inspires you to take your car at 2 am and drive down a deserted farm road, sticking your head out of the sunroof and screaming for no reason
- That's the vibes I got at least

"I was looking for a miracle, but I got a story instead, and sometimes those are the same thing."

4.5 stars!!

Buddy read with the uni kid

~~~~~

**3/21/ 2017 update**

I THOUGHT WE ALREADY HAD A COVER REVEAL BUT NEVERMIND, I'LL TAKE THIS BEAUTY.

SO MYSTIC AND UNIQUE LOOKING. . .  
I'M ALREADY TRASH!!!

~~~~~

Just imagine, in 256 days, 5 hours, 1 minute, and 30 seconds from THIS MOMENT, all my dreams, (20 seconds) hopes, and desires will be fulfilled (10 seconds) by THE RELEASE OF THIS BOOK !!!!!

YES, THAT NOISE IS MY SCREAMING!!!!
