



The Leatherstocking Tales, Vol. 2: The Pathfinder / The Deerslayer

James Fenimore Cooper, Blake Nevius (Editor)

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When Cooper's most memorable hero, Leatherstocking, started an American tradition by setting off into the sunset in *The Pioneers*, one early reader said of his departure, "I longed to go with him."

American readers couldn't get enough of the Leatherstocking saga (collected in two *Library of America* volumes) and, fourteen years after he portrayed the death of Natty Bumppo in *The Prairie*, Cooper brought him back in *The Pathfinder*, or *The Inland Sea* (1841). During the Seven Years War, just after the events narrated in *The Last of the Mohicans*, Natty brings the daughter of a British sergeant to her father's station on the Great Lakes, where the French and their Indian allies are plotting a treacherous ambush. Here, for the first time, he falls in love with a woman, before Cooper manages to bring off Leatherstocking's most poignant, and perhaps his most revealing, escape.

The Deerslayer (1842) brings the saga full circle and follows the young Natty on his first warpath. Instinctively gifted in the arts of the forest, pious in his respect for the unspoiled wilderness on which he loves to gaze, honorable to friend and foe alike, stoic under torture, and cool under fire, the young Leatherstocking emerges as Cooper's noblest figure of the American frontier. Enacting a rite of passage both for its hero and for the culture he comes to represent, this last book in the series glows with a timelessness that readers everywhere will find enchanting.

The Leatherstocking Tales, Vol. 2: The Pathfinder / The Deerslayer Details

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From Reader Review The Leatherstocking Tales, Vol. 2: The Pathfinder / The Deerslayer for online ebook

Carol says

Finally! Just seemed to go on forever!

Cherae Slater says

I liked this series. At times I was annoyed by the excessive descriptions of landscapes especially when it did not help the stories along but the tales were honest and unapologetic and a little romantic.

Ben says

We live in a world of transgressions and selfishness, and no pictures that represent us otherwise can be true, though, happily, for human nature, gleamings of that pure spirit in whose likeness man has been fashioned, are to be seen relieving its deformities, and mitigating if not excusing its crimes.

Todd Stockslager says

Omnibus volume 2 of 2 in the Library of America edition of the "Leatherstocking tales"

JFC disinterss and resurrects his hero Natty Bumppo nearly 15 years after sending him off into eternity from "The Prairie", the third installment of the Leatherstocking tales. "The Pathfinder" picks up the tale as a sequel to "The Last of the Mohicans", and the first quarter of the new tale is a virtual repeat of the earlier plot. Leatherstocking, now called The Pathfinder almost exclusively in this tale, guides the daughter of a British officer and her companion through the wilderness of upstate New York to a British fort.

The variations on the theme in this installment arise from placing most of the action on Lake Ontario and its islands, and giving The Pathfinder an active romantic interest in the female lead (while the movie version of "The Last of the Mohicans" made much of the love interest, the original story did not). This takes The Pathfinder out of his natural element and gives Cooper new opportunities for farce and romance. While these scenes sometimes seem quaint or stilted today, the story holds together, and Cooper's handling of chase and battle scenes still holds up well today.

Not so for the finale. "The Deerslayer" is the worst by far of the series, Cooper over-indulging in his tendency for repetitive, wordy asides with no editor willing or able to trim the mess down to readability. Very little action takes place on this account of Leatherstocking's first time on the "warpath." Your best is to skip it, unless you are determined, as I was, to complete the series.

Joe Slavinsky says

I'd, previously, read the first three "Leatherstocking Tales", in volume 1 of this publication. Those three books, were written between 1823, and 1827. It was fourteen years later, that "The Pathfinder" was written, and "The Deerslayer" came a year later. Cooper was 53, that year. The fourteen year gap changed his writing style relatively little. Both these stories are fairly well-paced, with great characters, some action, and suspense. My only difficulty with this volume, is that Cooper spends a lot more time explaining, and pontificating, as he's telling the story. Maybe that was much more the standard practice, of novel-writing, in the early 19th Century. His are the only books, so far, that I've read from that period. This doesn't mean that I don't recommend the books, just that you should be prepared for the archaic language, and Cooper's verbosity.

Belinda says

bleccccch. See review of Vol. I.

Bagehi says

Fantastic collection of stories.

Scott says

A cool story, well worth the effort if you are excited about the French and Indian War or Last of the Mohicans, or epic outdoor adventure in general. Cooper's language is laborious to the point of nausea at times, and he had to have been paid by the word, probably in serial form, because he will drag a two-paragraph piece of action or dialog out across several chapters for no good reason. This type of book is what "abridging" was invented for. I'll be the first to assail any miscreant who meddles with Tolkien etc., but this book seriously needs it. Also, it has seriously messed up philosophies on gender roles and Victorian morality. (It's okay for Injuns to scalp people alive because they were born to do so, but white people shouldn't...)

Michael Sypes says

As difficult as it might be to read a 19th century novel, the feel you have for the world Cooper presents is phenomenal. I can see the woods around me, and smell the leaves. These final two novels in the Leatherstocking series were both a lot of fun, as Natty Bumppo becomes more of the main character.

Erik says

There are good stories in here, but Cooper isn't the one to write them. Overlong, repetitive, and mostly boring.

Doris Raines says

How. True. This. Is. A. Book. For. Everyone. To. Read. And. Own. Doris.
