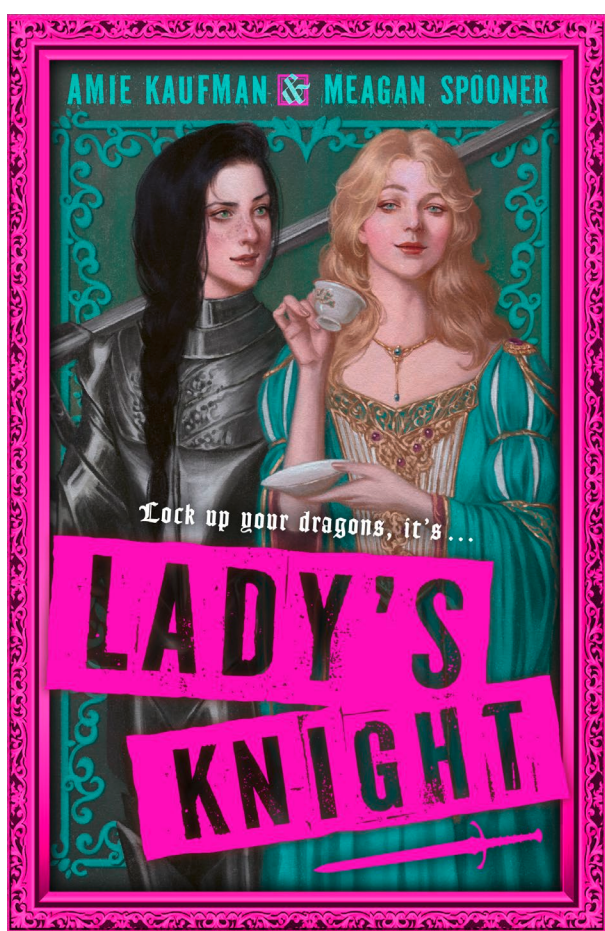


Lady's Knight

By Amie Kaufman and Meagan Spooner



A rollercoaster of a medieval romp and a sapphic love story, set in a world of dragons, witches and excellent snacks from NYT bestselling duo, Amie Kaufman and Meagan Spooner. Perfect for fans of *Gwen and Art Are Not in Love*, *Twin Crowns* and *My Lady Jane*.

RECOMMENDED FOR

14 – 18 (Secondary)

THEMES

Feminism, courtly love, LGBTQI+ romance, humour, duty, honour, courtesy, bravery and dragons

ISBN (AUS)

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SYNOPSIS

A blacksmith's daughter with a secret.

A lady with a plan.

We're in for one unforgettable knight...

Gwen has spent the past several years manning the blacksmith's in place of her father, an open secret in the village in which she lives. A much more covert secret, however, is that she knows not only how to craft but also how to wield a sword, and an incognito stunt at the local jousting tournament manages to catch the eye of the wily Lady Isobelle.

Isobelle has secret dreams too, but she's been promised in marriage to the winner of the whole stupid tournament, which means an end to any freedom or choices for her.

Desperate to avoid this fate, when she connects the newcomer knight to the female smithy she saw earlier that day, she begins to hatch a scheme...

Petty knights. Backstabbing noblemen. A prison breakout. Cheesecake on a stick. One particularly large and angry dragon.

Will our ladies survive the night? And can our knight save the day?

AUTHORS' MOTIVATION

'This book is a love story.

'We both vividly remember the night we created *Lady's Knight*. In the middle of the pandemic lockdowns, we were on opposite sides of the planet – Amie in Australia, Meg in the US – trying to find ways to feel like we were together, facing down a stretch of seemingly infinite time until we'd see each other in person again. We looked at each other through our laptop screens and said, "Let's watch something joyous."

'We picked the 2000s-era classic, *A Knight's Tale*. We'd always loved the cheeky anachronisms, and who can forget that crowd stomping and singing Queen's "We Will Rock You" at the jousting match? But as much as we'd love to say that movie cured us...it left us wanting. Justice for Kate the blacksmith (Yes, she had a name)! We spent all night talking about all the things we'd change if *we'd* written that story, until (after an embarrassingly long time) we realised we COULD write that story.

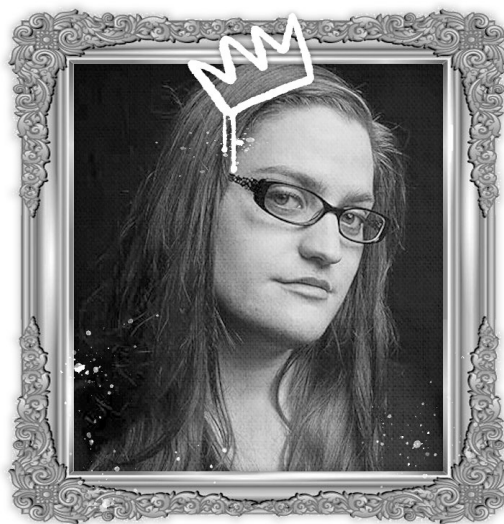
'The first thing we decided on was *joy*. Everything in this book would be something we loved. Every trope, every joke, every little anachronistic touch, every line of dialogue, every look and gesture and detail. We'd write for our inner children, for that little glimmer of joy that the pandemic was trying to squish. We'd set aside our combined decades of writing experience telling us what we *should* do and write what we *wanted* to.

'The result is *Lady's Knight*. There are cheerleaders at the jousting tournament. There are crocodiles in the castle moat. And we're not saying magic is *real*, but that one guy who pissed off that hedge witch gets more parking tickets pinned to his horse's bridle than anyone we've ever met, you know?

'This story is also fiercely feminist, deliciously queer, full of humour, and bursting with our love for each other and for stories. It turns out that even when we decide to write for pure joy, we can't stop writing about what's meaningful to us. Perhaps, when we write for joy, what's meaningful shines through even more brightly.

'This book is a love story. It's about the slow, sweet burn and the tentative yet courageous way in which our characters fall in love. But it's also a love story between two best friends, stranded worlds apart, writing their way back to joy together. We hope you fall in love, too.'

Amie Kaufman and Meagan Spooner



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Amie Kaufman and Meagan Spooner are *New York Times* and international bestselling authors, longtime friends and sometime roommates who have travelled the world together, creating a few new worlds along the way. Meagan lives in Asheville, North Carolina, USA, and Amie lives in Melbourne, Australia. Though distance divides them, they are united by their love of road trips, second breakfasts and stories. You can find them online at www.amiekaufman.com and www.meaganspooner.com.

DISCUSSIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Characters

- How does Lady Isobelle break or reinforce stereotypes of women in medieval times?
- What do you admire most about Gwen – her bravery, her skills, or her sense of humour?
- If you were friends with both Lady Isobelle and Gwen in real life, what advice would you give each separately and together?
- In what ways do Gwen and Isobelle mirror each other, despite their very different social classes and roles?
- How does each grow by knowing the other?

Photos © Christopher Tovo

- Which secondary character is your favourite (e.g., Olivia, Hilde, Jane, Sylvie, Sir Orson)?

Themes & Setting

- What does the book say about the expectations society places on women?
- Does the book successfully turn the trope of the 'damsel in distress' on its head?
- How is power shown throughout the story – who has it, who's denied it, and how does that shift?
- If you could visit one place from *Lady's Knight*, where would it be? The market, the castle, the lists, Gwen's village or Jinna's bar?

Humour

- Did the narrator's chatty, direct and humorous style make the story more enjoyable for you?
- Does the book's humour add to or detract from the overall themes of gender roles and societal expectations?
- Notwithstanding the book's medieval setting, Gwen and Lady Isobelle consume a lot of modern food – croissants, cheesecake on a stick, tornado potatoes, to name just a few. Why do you think the authors included these 'extra' details?

The Book's Origins

- The authors say they were inspired to write *Lady's Knight* after watching the 2001 film *A Knight's Tale*, starring Heath Ledger. Both *Lady's Knight* and *A Knight's Tale* blend modern humour with medieval settings – think fourth-wall breaks or the use of modern language. How do such moments affect your connection to the story? Do they make it feel more relatable or just totally chaotic fun?

- In *A Knight's Tale*, William hides his identity to become a knight. In *Lady's Knight*, Gwen does the same – but with even more risk. How do Gwen's and William's motivations and obstacles compare? Who do you think has more to lose?
- Which romantic relationship did you prefer – William and Jocelyn's or Gwen and Lady Isobelle's? Why?
- Amie Kaufman and Meagan Spooner say that after watching *A Knight's Tale* they spent a long time discussing what they would have changed if they were the screenwriters, and that out of that discussion came *Lady's Knight*. What do you think are the three most important changes they made?

And Just for Fun ...

1. Which character in the novel is the most like you?
2. Which character is the least like you?
3. Gwen hides who she is to chase her dream. Have you ever felt like you had to act differently to fit in or go after something you really wanted?
4. If you could train with Gwen or hang out with Isobelle for a day, who would you pick and what would you do?
5. Who would you cast to play Gwen and Lady Isobelle in the film version of *Lady's Knight*?