



# Lioness Rampant

*Tamora Pierce*

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## **Lioness Rampant** Tamora Pierce

"I'm not sure I want to be a hero anymore."

Having achieved her dream of becoming the first female knight errant, Alanna of Trebond is not sure what to do next. Perhaps being a knight errant is not all that Alanna needs....But Alanna must push her uncertainty aside when a new challenge arises. She must recover the Dominion Jewel, a legendary gem with enormous power for good -- but only in the right hands. And she must work quickly. Tortall is in great danger, and Alanna's archenemy, Duke Roger, is back -- and more powerful than ever. In this final book of the Song of the Lioness quartet, Alanna discovers that she indeed has a future worthy of her mythic past -- both as a warrior and as a woman.

## **Lioness Rampant Details**

Date : Published January 1st 2005 by Simon Pulse (first published 1988)

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Author : Tamora Pierce

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# From Reader Review *Lioness Rampant* for online ebook

## **ambyr says**

In a lot of ways, this is my favorite of the Alanna books. I love seeing Alanna come into her own; I love seeing her gain confidence, throwing herself in the face of impossible odds, and accepting herself as both a woman and a knight. I love, love what this series does with relationships, that Alanna's allowed to date multiple men, that it's okay that some of the relationships don't have long-term potential, and that it hurts when they fall apart anyway. That the relationships are ultimately about *her*, not about the men; that it's not about choosing which man she likes best, but which man's goals and lifestyle match those she's already chosen for herself. I wish more modern YA authors would take a page out of Pierce's book, here, because it's one of the only portrayals of a love triangle (quadrangle?) I can stand.

I like all the new secondary characters we meet, too, and Pierce does a great job characterizing them with very little screen time. I want to give it four stars. But I don't think the plot and pacing quite justify them. There's a real chopiness between the first and second half the book, and while (view spoiler)

Still, a satisfying end to the series. And the final scenes make me tear up every time.

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## **Jennifer says**

This review will be looking at the whole series.

I have to admit I amazed that some how in my adolescence of female oriented fantasy reading I never picked up the Alanna Quartet. The series is most definately unique in the world of fantasy directed to girls;the sex is frank, the main character has the unique attributes of red hair and violet eyes but is at one point described as short and stocky, she works to callous her hands, and has chosen the road that will most definatly at the end of her life leave her with a great deal of physical scars. And this still seems utterly refreshing twenty years later. Although, there can be clunky bits through out this series, I must applaud Tamora Pierce for giving young women and girls a heroine that in the end holds her own. I admit at times I was yelling at Alanna's insecurities for the simple fact that this character was such a strong warrior, but in the end Alanna is not a perfect character and maybe that is why the character is better for that.

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## **Robert says**

Five stars, for this, surely I must be kidding? That, or delusional.

It was worth every single second to read. I can usually tell how much time passes while I read, not here, not with this volume. I was sucked into it with glee(a pinch of foreboding too).

The first half of LR finds our Alanna and Coram continuing the plotline from the end of "The Woman Who Rides Like A Man". They are off to decipher the package Alois(the doomed sorceress) had given over. Things progress quickly from here a series of meetings, attempted assassinations and of course a meeting with our lovely, somewhat helpful and terrifyingly vociferous Goddess.

More Tortall lore gets expounded upon(which is great). More romance ensues(which is...well I guess a girl has got to have a life). More characters are introduced(also great). Then, when all that is done, about halfway through at the end of more great fighting, the "Silent War"(my own name for it) recommences.

The Silent War(the one between George and Claw) has been bloody and gets bloodier. The war splinters into the overarching plot around here and things begin to come to light. I won't spoil anything, just to say "If you thought the first half of the book was gripping, you poor soul, what will you do now."

The rest of the book tells all and spares none. The end, while not what I would call unique was not one that you could guess with even 50% accuracy(I am talking about the whole sequence here not the overall outcome).

Now that all my praise is out of the way, here is my one gripe with LR. Alanna cried a lot, I mean abundantly. I don't know if a chapter passed(with her in it) where she did not cry/shed a tear, once. I found it ridiculous.

That out of the way, I am sad that this saga is finished. One loss in particular was hard to take but I think predestined(not the one that was obviously predestined, that was obvious as daylight and quietly done). I'll revisit Tortall sometime soon and see what more she has to tell. "So mote it be."

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## **Susan says**

Tamora Pierce was the DEFINING author of my childhood. I loved fantasy, and she introduced me to fantasy with heroines who take charge of their own lives. I learned more from her about feminine strength than almost any other author (save, perhaps, Anne McCaffrey). This series is a must-read for growing girls and grown women everywhere!

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## **Heidi says**

Epic.

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## **Nadia says**

I'm just posting this to say that I was thoroughly impressed by Tamora Pierce's fight scenes. Like it's obvious that she thought about how Alanna could win fights against people who are physically stronger without any magic short cuts. Most of the time when I read action scenes in books I have no idea what the fuck happened or the author takes a cop out and writes something like "and then everything happened at once" and then skips to the aftermath but in these I always had a vivid mental pic of everything that went down and it was rad. The last few action sequences were especially amazing and I wasn't expecting that.

I kind of wish that the last two books of this series had been cut down into one, because I feel like there was a lot of filler that I could've done without.

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## Katie says

[Except I am more curious about Alex. So he just needed to be the best and that is his whole character??? I also wish more time had been spent on Thom. (hide spoiler)]

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## Sophie says

Aw, I'm all verklempt now. A bittersweet ending to this series. It's plain to see why the Alanna books created so many die-hard Pierce fans.

This could have easily been broken into two books, but I'm glad it wasn't, after the weird cuts between books the series made earlier. Still, it's pretty much two stories: the first being the quest for the Dominion Jewel, and the second the plot against Jonathan's life. While the first was fun, I liked the second half better. I love Corus and things are way less interesting when George isn't around.

But (view spoiler)

Off to read everything else Pierce has written, and then to re-read the Beka Cooper books! Because MOAR KITTY.

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## Beth says

Here's my favorite thing about *Lioness Rampant*: it's an epic story that focuses on great storytelling instead of its own legend. It's aware of its importance, and it believes in its importance - but it's not obsessed with its enormous future impact. It's content to tell a great story, and let the legend grow naturally from there.

And I think this is a great story. I love that it opens with a young Alanna - young despite her knighthood! - not knowing how to flirt with Liam. I love the way Alanna is determined to be a hero for her country's sake, and that she doesn't stumble upon greatness unexpectedly but deliberately goes after it.

And I love the nuance. I think this is the first Pierce book where I can say that. Think about the scholar who tells them about the Dominion Jewel, about how it works for those who are rulers and conquerors by nature, which is why it's often used best by a commoner. Think about the person Alanna believes to be king: how would Roald have used the Jewel? *Could* he have used it?

Alanna tells Liam, when he asks her if she's the best in Tortall, that she doesn't know, because she only fought knights. "There may be some commoners better than me" - Alanna, who's very conscious of her nobility! But it doesn't make her blind.

I like her relationship with Thayet. I like how perceptive Thayet is, especially about Alanna. She shows she's smart and diplomatic just by the way she explains to Alanna why she cannot take the Jewel for Sarain. She knows to give the longer explanation so Alanna knows Thayet isn't shirking her duty, and that, more than anything, is what convinces me that Thayet will be a great queen. Showing, not telling: good stuff.

More nuance, possibly the most nuance-y of all:

Alanna blushed. "Thayet, you're flattering me. It was easier for me to rebel than stay and make something of myself. Why didn't I go to convent school and prove ladies are more than ornaments that way?"

I CANNOT EXPRESS THE EXTENT OF MY JOY AT THAT LINE. I LOVE IT SO MUCH. Showing, not telling, part the second: Alanna is really growing up. (Maybe she didn't only teach the Bazhir. Maybe she learned something, too.)

Then there's the finale. Alanna thinks, "He expects you to fight. So - stop fighting." I've never been quite clear on how that worked out for her (view spoiler) but I love how it comes full circle: when Alanna first found the blade with Myles, she had to stop fighting, too.

And then there's Jonathan, grief-stricken over his parents, not understanding how you could love someone so much you would forget your duty to your people - which is something Thayet voices understanding of, even before Jonathan states it. This book does so much quiet legwork to persuade me that Jon and Thayet will make a great couple.

Stuff to ponder: the current plot that centers around Roger seems to have been started by Delia of Eldorne. Which makes me wonder how exactly Roger planned his eventual resurrection. Did he know time was ticking during book two, and if so, why? He must have, because if he'd been really dead, Thom's spell wouldn't have worked. But Delia wasn't at court then, was she? Or is this shades of Voldemort, and he was just paranoid about death all the time? And how about Thom? Wasn't he still pretending to be stupid at that point? On whose magic prowess was Roger depending?

Please note that Roger telling Jon straight out, "But they can be defeated, Jonathan. The right man can shake their thrones" tells readers Roger's plans quite neatly, *but it also informs Jonathan*. Is Roger stupid? DO NOT GO ANNOUNCING YOUR PLANS TO THE PERSON YOU WANT TO DETHRONE, YOU EGOMANIAC.

One last point - Alanna's a healer and she knows Thom is dying. Why does she accept that? Why doesn't she try to do anything for him?!

The Best Supporting Character award is presented to the Lord Provost, by the way. He's so much fun in this book.

I JUST LIKE THIS SO MUCH. And I love how it's referenced in future books - as a major turning point - and here it's a great story that lives up to that label.

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## **Andrea says**

I can't believe this series is already over!! God I loved it so much. So in this book we have the addition of the character Liam, who is a Shang warrior. I loved how tough he was and the effect he and Alanna had on each other. I think they learned a lot from each other and not just about fighting. I was really annoyed with Thom in this book and how he let his pride and arrogance get him in deep shit. I liked how this book wrapped up, but I'm sad to see Alanna's adventures end.

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## Lexie says

Yep, I just re-read all of these books for the first time since I was 12. Damn you, Kindle!

I enjoyed them the second time around-- not as much as I did when I was 12 and feisty and just beginning to understand that being a teenager meant wanting to fight EVERYTHING ALL THE TIME. Alanna was a pretty great outlet for that.

Things I liked that I missed the first time around:

- Sex positivism. For real!
- Awesome and strong female characters consistently passing the Bechdel Test.
- Awesome male characters.
- Descriptions of getting stronger and developing callouses. I work out more than I did back then, and I love the feelings Pierce describes.

Things I didn't like as much the second time around:

- The writing was a bit less engaging than I remember, but it's still awesome. There are a few too many "the amethyst-eyed girl looked at the blue-eyed boy" things, and several abrupt perspective changes.
- Everybody just seems to be okay with a talking cat. I mean, okay.
- Duke Roger wasn't as engaging a villain as I remembered him to be.

Things I still liked:

- Aw George.
  - Aw Faithful.
  - I will always love that Alanna's such a badass.
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## kris says

[first read: 6 January 2008]

Alanna gathers her own band of merry wo/men as she continues her adventures outside of Tortall. Her adventuring takes her through war-torn Sarain, to the Roof of the World where she reclaims the Dominion Jewel for Tortall.

I will say that I think this is the most fulfilling of the Alanna series, for me. I enjoyed reading about Alanna's adventures and growth into a warrior and a woman confident in her abilities and desires! The myths and legends of Tortall and its world are fascinating!

As many of you have stated, I was not impressed with the handling of the Thom plot-line. Would Alanna truly shrug away the resurrection of Roger? The realization that Thom was ill? The over-enunciation of her worries over Jonathan, too, felt a bit heavy-handed. (I will admit that I found a certain joy in seeing Alanna shrug off Roger's slights and Thom's meddling, as well as the explanation as to *why* she was able to do so. It did not break her characterization as tempestuous, merely expanded her horizons to include all she had accomplished. LOVE IT.)

I also wanted more George: I suppose his reasoning for pulling away after Alanna's return to Corus was because he believed she wanted to get back with Jonathan, but it wasn't very well captured?? Other than his initial greeting and his final proposal, he's very reserved and it made me frustrated. I like that George has power and strength, but he never utilizes that power to try and force Alanna into doing anything she doesn't want to do. Both Jonathan and Liam do, to a certain extent, try to impose their wills on her and it rankles to see it go directly unchecked.

OH AND AS AN ASIDE: Alanna, please stfu about "dying alone". You're, what, 20 at best? You've just ended things with your Shang lover that you picked up at an Inn without so much as a by-your-leave; you happily send your first lover off to be married to his new hot Princess; and you haven't had a good heart-to-heart with your middle lover in a year. **YOU ARE IN NO DANGER OF DYING ALONE: YOU ARE AN ATTRACTIVE, BADASS LADY WHO HAS HAD LOTS OF LUCK FINDING PARTNERS PLEASE STOP.**

Also FAITHFUL.

I finished this book feeling content with the story and what had happened in it (I mean, from an authorial-what-is-art kind of way; not in a "I'm so glad so many people DIED" kind of way). I liked the heroic aspects, and how many references there are to the spread of stories and songs. How legends aren't created by any one person, but rather all the other people. I liked that Alanna sought her destiny instead of allowing it to find her.

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## **Andree says**

4.5 stars, and it may be possible I'm just being picky.

Unlike "The Woman Who Rides Like a Man," *Lioness Rampant* certainly doesn't feel like the first half of a story (and while it shouldn't - it is the final book in this particular series). It really is quite well done. I really enjoyed a lot of it.

Jonathan as King and friend is so much better than Jonathan as love interest. He makes a good King, in general. I very much appreciate how focused his is on getting to know his people, and understanding them. And he wants to be just rather than just going easy on people. That is a nice distinction. I like where he and Alanna end up in this book.

Liam, le sigh. I feel like I liked Liam better on my first read-through of this. I *understand* Liam; I really like the lesson Alanna learns about why they were doomed from the start (both reasons). But, he's just so *extreme*. I have an issue with characters who are that unwilling to bend in any way, or really even acknowledge that they're wrong (which Alanna is at least better at, though like most people she doesn't like it). I'm not saying he's not noble, and courageous, etc. But I don't think I like his personality much in this one.

Gary and Raoul! Gary loves being Prime Minister and running a government! *Of course* he does. And I always enjoy Raoul. I also like Lord Gareth the elder's appearance in this, and Alanna's reaction to him. Also Myles! The moment where George is all, "We have to watch out when Myles is riled." I continue to adore Myles.



I had actually forgotten a lot of the plot of the second half of this book. I remembered Alanna getting the jewel. I remembered Liam. I semi-remembered Buri and Thayet. I remembered (view spoiler). I remembered little else. Everything really does come together all at once, doesn't it? (view spoiler) I enjoyed everyone just living at Myles'. That was pretty great. I wish we'd gotten to see more of Buri (though I know she shows up in later books). My Lord Provost was pretty entertaining. I enjoy how proud the city is of him.

George. I liked George in this. I think the resolution felt neat to me, the first time I read this. But (and maybe it's because I've now read the later series'), (view spoiler)

My one sort-of-fly in the ointment? Thom. (view spoiler).

Oh, I remembered another small issue I had. Alex. Why so underdeveloped? Is his whole thing (like Thom) to prove that he's the best swordsman ever? If so, why ally him so completely with Roger? Sort of do not get it. He just sort of feels like he's there...

But yeah, mostly I like it. (A little nervous to reread Daine now though, just because they were always my favourites.)

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## **Madeline says**

Having reached the end of the Alanna books, I'm really sad to be done with the series. Not just because Alanna is a fantastic heroine - seriously, I'm currently drafting legislation to make these books required reading for sixth grade girls everywhere - but also because this is one of those rare occasions where I feel like a book could have been longer, and should have been longer. The entire Alanna series has felt very rushed, since Book One when we sped through two years of knight training in about two hundred pages, and I wish that these books had been published at a time when children's series were allowed to contain 700-page epics.

At the very least, it feels like there should be one more book in the Alanna series. As always, Pierce is racing through her plot points as quickly as possible, but in this book it's especially obvious that there are two major plotlines that each deserved their own book: first, Alanna goes on a quest to retrieve the Dominion Jewel, a super-powerful magical item that will make Jonathan a super-powerful king and unite the kingdom somehow; and while she's doing this she also meets a fugitive princess and her scrappy teen bodyguard, and we're introduced to more of this universe's complex socio-political climate. Then, once Alanna gets the jewel, she goes back to the capital city and lives at court for a while, where we have two intersecting plotlines of George Cooper trying to hold onto his role as King of the Thieves and Prince Jonathan trying to uncover whatever plot the only-mostly-dead Duke Roger is cooking up.

That's a lot of plot to cram into 300 pages, and both storylines have to fight for space, and both suffer for it. I really, really wish this last book had been split into two books: the first one could be all about the quest for the Dominion Jewel and the people Alanna meets on said quest, and the next and final book would be about her time at court, the struggle with Duke Roger, and the conclusion to the Dominion Jewel plotline. I wish this had happened, not just because it would have meant that these stories would have been better developed and fleshed out, but also because, at the end of Alanna's series, I still have a lot of questions. The biggest one is the question of what, exactly, the Goddess has had in mind for Alanna this whole time. She gave Alanna the magic sword, the magic jewel, the magic cat...for what? So Alanna could fight Duke Roger? It feels almost like there was supposed to be something bigger, something more epic, at the end of this book, and it

was scrapped to make room for a classic Boss Fight between Alanna and Roger. There just wasn't enough time: to learn what Alanna's exact connection to the Goddess was, for minor villains like Alex and Delia to be properly developed as human beings, to find out just what Faithful's deal was (view spoiler)...like I said above, I rarely find myself wishing that a 300-page book was twice as long, but that's how I felt about *Lioness Rampant*.

Frustrating length aside, this was a great conclusion to Alanna's story. We got to see her discovering more of who she is and what she wants (often this self-discovery occurs thanks to her affair with a Shang warrior named Liam Ironarm, which, *damn*. Four for you, Alanna of Trebond, you go Alanna of Trebond!), while also questioning whether the life of a knight is one that she actually wants. Again, I would have loved it if this particular internal struggle had been explored in more depth, but I understand that the young adult market at the time didn't really make it possible for Tamora Pierce to write five-hundred page volumes for her series.

It's too bad that I didn't get to spend as much time with Alanna as I wanted to, but I enjoyed every single adventure and every page. The writing never really elevated itself to the level I wanted, but ultimately it didn't even matter because Alanna is such a great heroine, her adventures were fantastic, and these books are so important for little girls. Books about girls with swords will always be my personal crack, but this series is the gold standard.

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### Sanaa says

[3.5 Stars] I don't think I enjoyed this one quite as much as the last. It was wonderful read, but there is something about it that I just didn't fall in love with and I can't quite put my finger on why. All in all, however, this is a fantastic series though it could use a little more depth.

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### Julie says

I should have stopped reading this series after the first book. And I'd like to dock half a star on this for the needless murder of a cat.

SIGH.

Maybe high fantasy isn't really my thing. Maybe I needed this magic system more fully explained than it was. Maybe I needed something more in-depth than a middle-grade series could provide. I'm not sure where this series went wrong.

(And speaking of middle grade, Alanna sure gets laid a lot for a middle-grade series. I'm just throwing that out there. And don't try to tell me that this book isn't middle grade, because it's not written above maybe a fifth grade level.)

I just couldn't get behind this. **SPOILERS** There was just no doubt that things would happen the way they did. Of course Alanna would be able to pass as a boy with no problems. Of course she'd become Jon's squire. Of course she'll pass her trial and become a knight. Of course they'll defeat the whatever it was in the first book. OF COURSE Jon isn't offended that she's been masquerading as a boy and basically abusing his trust.

Of course Roger is evil, of course he isn't dead, of course he still has magic. Nothing is a surprise or suspenseful and everything turns out exactly the way you assume it will.

It's just boring. I think if it weren't middle grade, there could have been a lot more to it, a lot more development, that would have made it a much better series.

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### **Jennifer says**

This isn't the most subtle series, but I do like its positive messages (even if they're not subtle), one of which is that it's possible to be true to yourself, which in Alanna's case means coming to terms with the fact that she doesn't need to fit neatly or exclusively in a "man's world" or a "woman's world."

I also find it interesting that, unlike in most fantasy novels, especially those oriented toward younger girls, Alanna not only has several lovers, but uses a magic birth control amulet! (Not so sure if conservatives would be so happy if they found out their daughters were reading this series ;p) Although simplified I was intrigued by the fact that the relationships were more realistic, or at least touched upon common relationship themes:

Boy #1: High-school sweetheart (or in this case knight-in-training sweetheart) whom you still love but whom you are not going to marry because you've grown into different people and your lifestyles aren't compatible

Boy #2: The guy you love who makes you laugh and has always accepted you for who you are. Obviously you're going to end up with this guy, but I thought it was different that Alanna ended up seeing Boy #3 for a while

Boy #3: Someone that you're attracted to and like as a person, but, for whatever reason, can't accept all of who you are but you still care about

As a girl who never got along as well with other girls as with guy buddies, I thought that it was also refreshing to read a book about successful opposite gender friendships, including some that lasted after the "romance thing" was over.

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### **Lindsey Rey says**

[3.5 Stars]

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### **Adrianna [SypherLily] says**

After adoring the first, liking the second and hating the third, the fourth came somewhere in-between. The first half of this book was a bit of struggle for me, but honestly once the adventure for the jewel was over, the story picks up a bit.

I didn't like how Alanna's brother Thom was practically non-existent throughout the entire series, and has a small (or rather large) part in this book and. . . no, just no. The author made it seem like just because they

were twins, they knew everything about each other and were each other's other half, but really they had only sent a few letters to each other throughout their lives and never even visited each other. The end of the book just didn't touch me like I suppose the author meant.

This is a story that can be stopped at the first book if you'd like to skip all the frustration, rambling and whining and just imagine the rest. For honestly, not much happens in the last three books worth mentioning.

Oh and also, this would have had only 1 star, but I liked who she wound up with, and he was the only character I've loved whole-heartedly the entire time.

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### **Jessica (Canadian Bookshelf) says**

A decent (though slightly rushed) conclusion to a series I should've finished a while ago. I'm content.

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