



A Gift of Dragons: Illustrated Stories

Anne McCaffrey, Tom Kidd (Illustrator)

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For more than thirty years, Pern has conjured visions of brave men and women mounted upon the backs of dragons. As anyone knows who has been touched by the storytelling magic of Anne McCaffrey, to read of the exotic world of Pern is to inhabit it—and to experience its extraordinary dragons is to soar aloft with them and share their dazzling adventures.

Now, *A Gift of Dragons* brings together three beloved stories and a thrilling new tale of Pern in a single volume illustrated with beautiful artwork by Tom Kidd.

In “The Smallest Dragonboy,” -*Pern (Publication Order) #4.5-* Keevan is the youngest dragonrider candidate, determined to impress a dragon when the next clutch of eggs hatches. But what transpires will surprise everyone—Keevan most of all.

In “The Girl Who Heard Dragons,” -*Pern (Publication Order) #8.5-* a young girl’s rare ability to communicate with dragons puts her family in danger and will bring her face to face with her greatest fears—and with her most secret desire.

The “Runner of Pern” -*Pern (Publication Order) #15.5-* is a girl named Tenna, who follows family tradition by delivering messages—and who will find her destiny on the mossy traces that runners have used for centuries under the dragon-filled sky.

And finally, a very special gift: an exciting new Pern adventure, published here for the first time, fresh from the imagination of Anne McCaffrey. “Ever the Twain” -*Pern (Publication Order) #16.5-*

A Gift of Dragons: Illustrated Stories Details

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From Reader Review A Gift of Dragons: Illustrated Stories for online ebook

Evelynn says

I really enjoyed these stories

Lois Johnson says

I started with McCaffrey's Pern books many years ago, enjoyed them immensely. The themes were fresh, the characters engaging, the story line sometimes unpredictable. So when I saw this book with short stories set in this world, I anticipated a good read. I was disappointed, the stories were very predictable, boy wants to be dragon rider, boy is hassled, bonding with dragon happens anyway, girl hears and speaks to dragons, rescues family, etc. I could have predicted the outcome (happy ending) after reading the first paragraph or two. In a phrase from Lewis Carroll's "Through the Looking Glass", this was a "much of a muchness".

Jacquie says

“The Smallest Dragonboy,” -Pern (Publication Order) #4.5

“The Girl Who Heard Dragons,” -Pern (Publication Order) #8.5

“Runner of Pern” -Pern (Publication Order) #15.5

“Ever the Twain” -Pern (Publication Order) #16.5-

Tori says

I definitely understand that this is really a book for people who have read the other stories of Pern, which I haven't. So it was difficult for me to really get into any of these stories. I still don't understand what the Thread is. Or even what klah is. Oh well.

Sarah says

I really enjoyed this book. I love McCaffrey's world of dragons, holds, halls and guilds, and this book had a little of everything I loved.

I'd read two of the stories before (*The Girl Who Heard Dragons* and *The Smallest Dragonboy*), but the other two (*Runner of Pern* and *Ever The Twain*) were new to me.

The Girl Who Heard Dragons tells of Aramina, who has the rare gift of being able to 'hear' all dragons, and finds herself in danger because of her talent...

The Smallest Dragonboy introduces Keevan, who is a dragonrider candidate, but whose size causes him to be bullied, and injured just as the dragon eggs begin to hatch...

Runner of Pern is about Tenna, who is following in her family's footsteps (literally) as a courier, carrying messages across Pern on the 'traces'; mossy paths planted for and maintained by the runners - paths where she would not expect to meet a mounted rider...

Ever The Twain is the story of Nian and Neru, twins who have never been separated. Neru dreams of being a dragonrider, while Nian just wants never to be alone. And then the dragons come on Search...

A treasure for any McCaffrey fan, this book is filled with illustrations. A lovely read.

Kerri says

Don't feel like wading through Anne McCaffrey's short story collections just to find an episode from your favorite dragon-infused world? Well have no fear, *A Gift of Dragons* is here! In this lovely little book you'll find four short stories set on Pern, all of which, with the possible exception of the incredibly sappy "Ever the Twain", are really fun and generally good reading for long-time Pern fans. One of the great things about the included stories is that they examine aspects of Pernese life that haven't been touched on much previously: the lives of the Holdless in "The Girl Who Heard Dragons", the Search and Candidate processes in "The Smallest Dragon-boy" and "Ever the Twain", and the lives and work of Runners in "Runner of Pern". Overall I enjoyed this book very much and would recommend it to both long-time Pern fans and those new to the series and world.

Susan Kennedy says

What a great book. This is a book of four short stories all related to Pern. The short stories are "The Smallest Dragonboy", "The Girl Who Heard Dragons", "Runner of Pern" and "Ever the Twain". All four stories were different and very enjoyable.

The Smallest Dragonboy is about a boy, Keevan, that is going to be a candidate on the hatching ground. He is a small boy that grew up the Weyr and is picked on by his peers because of his size. As the hatching draws near the bullying becomes worse and there is talk about the younger boys not being allowed onto the hatching ground as candidates until they are older. His biggest bully ends up injuring him in the end with a head wound and a broken leg. He still hobbles his way to the hatching ground during the impression and impresses a bronze dragon. He is a great character full of heart and you are cheering for him all the way through. Even though he is a small boy, he has a huge heart and personality. This was a great story.

In The Girl Who Heard Dragons, Aramina can hear dragons and speak to them as well. She is with her family who is holdless after the tyranny of Faxx. Bandits are trying to use Aramina because of her talent of hearing dragons. With that, her family flees and is on the run from these bandits. With threadfall imminent, they are forced to find a cave to take cover in. There is an accident with her father and she ends up reaching out to the dragons that she sees and they hear her and respond. They save her father and move them to the cave so that they are safe from threadfall. All this time the Lord Holder for the area and the dragonriders are looking for the bandits that are after her. The bandits elude everyone and find Aramina who calls for the dragons. This is a heartwarming story with a lot of emotions that are misplaced due to fear. Everything works out in the end. Great story.

Runner of Pern is probably my favorite of the four stories. Runner of Pern is about runners, literally, people who run messages from one place to another. This is mostly about Tenna who is a new runner. She is from a family of runners and she is beginning her career as a runner. Runners use tracks that have been laid out by the runner services. They are narrow paths that are to only be used by runners. She is running one evening on a runner track to make a delivery when she hears something coming. She is pushed off of the runner track by a runner (beast/horse) and rider. She is pushed into a bush of thorns that can be very dangerous. She makes it to her destination where they see to her wounds. She finds out she was almost run over by one of the Lord Holder's sons. It takes several days for them to get all of the thorns out and for her to be on the mend. During this time, there is a gather. She promptly approaches the man that was pointed out to her as the one who ran her off the track and she punches him and knocks him out. She finds out that she has knocked out the wrong brother. She has knocked out his twin instead. This story is full of humor. I couldn't help but love Tenna's character and charm. She is a strong woman. There is laughter and romance. A fantastic story!

Ever The Twain is about a set of twins that are searched for the hatching that is to come. The boy has always had the dream of being a dragonrider. The sister is the one that is chosen during the search, but she refuses to go without her brother. This is a heartwarming story that was enjoyable as well.

This set of short stories is a great addition to the Pern series.

Ariel says

Love these books and wish Mom and I had all of them.

Brightfeather says

Absolutely visually stunning.

Wonderful short stories perfect for a fast catchup of what's happening on Pern
Such a beautiful edition, I'm delighted ?

Lita Acevedo says

A delightful collection of 4 short stories from the Pern universe. From a small lad wanting to impress a dragon hatchling to a girl who can hear and talk to dragons telepathically to a runner completing her first complete run across the continent and finding love along the way to a set of twins picked as potential future dragon riders to come to a hatching, these stories captivate and entrance in the way only Anne McCaffrey's stories can. It's been a long time I've been able to read something new by her. I've gobbled up her stories as soon as they were released for several years. She will be missed.

Karen says

I'm a huge fan of Anne McCaffrey's dragons and dragonriders, so I will enjoy any story that includes them. This collection of four stories is the first short story collection I have read by McCaffrey, so I found myself

wishing that each story had been made into a book. The Smallest Dragonboy is my favorite of the four, but I enjoyed all the others as well.

Casey says

I love the style Ann McCaffrey writes with in her Pern novels. I love her dragon stories. I am fascinated for the most part by the majority of her characters.

But her sexism kills me! She started off the series with a beautifully feminist character in Lessa, whose passion and refusal to take "no"s based on her sex for an answer, creating changes where she saw they needed to be made without disrespecting the aspects of tradition that had purpose. I loved Lessa, I loved the emphasis McCaffrey made to include girls and women in *Dragonflight* where Lessa, and Pern, debuted.

I have been consistently disappointed to see that the further McCaffrey went in her stories, the more sexist she became. Her stories about colonizing Pern were the most sexist of all in some ways, and it's been downhill ever since. :/

This shift is especially frustrating because of the constant reiteration that dragons are drawn to empathic people—which is constantly interrupted by the fact that most dragonriders seem to be stuck-up toxically masculine male jerks, and not the calm, kind, and loving women that are in plentiful supply as kitchen aides for Pern. Ew. What even.

Disappointed. Still fun to read. It's complicated.

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

I loved McCaffrey's *Pern* series, but this little collection of middle-grade short stories are nothing short of terrible. There are four stories in all, first two were a'ight. The third is where it gets truly awful. It's about a **pretty Runner girl**. A runner being a delivery messenger who runs from one location to the next, and let me recount to you *most* of the times the word **pretty** is used in this story. Not all, just most.

"Running with a pretty girl's not hard to do," he told her when they took one brief pause.

"Not when I'd a chance to run with such a pretty girl," Mallum said.

"New one, too, at that, for all you look familiar to me. A pretty face is a great sight on a fine morning."

"You'd better tell him. Maybe a pretty runner'll get it through his thick skull because the odd crack or two hasn't."

She felt redeemed. Though she couldn't see why being pretty would be an advantage if you were giving someone what-for.

"Like that in a young runner. Shows you're not just a pretty face."

“Pretty runner girl, you are.”

“And why is ‘pretty’ a help?”

“Haligon likes pretty girls.”

“You’re prettier than she was and she was some pretty woman.”

“Even if they weren’t as pretty as you are.”

“You’re a very pretty girl. Blue becomes you.”

“And he said how pretty you are, so that helped, you know. Haligon likes his girls pretty. So does Lord Groghe but he only looks.”

“It’s sure true that a pretty girl gets more attention than a plain one like me.”

“Pretty girl’s always heard, ya know.”

Holy fuck. The story itself was pointless too. Girl falls into a bush, vows to get even with the guy who accidentally knocks her into it. Ends up falling in love with said guy.

Final story: also terrible. Boy/girl twin, boy twin wants to be a dragonrider, but the dragon chooses the girl twin instead. Girl twin does everything she can to make sure her twin brother wins. Now there's a lesson for the ages. Not.

If you must read YA Anne McCaffrey, the Harper Hall trilogy is far better.

Kym says

Setting: planet Pern, unspecified future

Genre: Fantasy/sci-fi, young adult

A collection of 4 stories set in the Dragonriders of Pern series. All are well written. They have engaging characters and interesting plots. They are more active voice than the other Anne McCaffrey works I've read this week.

Audiobook 5h 47m. Very well narrated by Lee Meriwether

Snail in Danger (Sid) Nicolaides says

Nothing out of the ordinary here. I was looking for something else and snagged this too; it happened to be nearby.

I was reminded that some of the sexual dynamics in the author's Pern setting are, well, weird.

Melissa says

I love this book, have read it many times. It is a collection of 4 shorts in the Pern world.

The Smallest Dragonboy is the story in this collection. It follows Keevan the youngest and littlest candidate to stand on the hatching sands. Will he succeed in impressing a dragonet? Especially when he gets injured and is not there when the hatching starts?

The Girl Who Heard Dragons is the next story. Aramina is of the Ruthan blood line, and her parents are holdless thanks to Fax. They discovered that she could hear all the dragons when they close enough. Then one day she desperately needs their help when her father gets caught under their wagon. This brings her to the notice of Benden Wyer, which helps when the Lady Holdless Thalla tries to kidnap her for her own purpose. Wonderful story.

Runner of Pern shows a totally different aspect of Pern society that we don't normally get to see, the Runners who take messages all over Pern. How they train, run, and live. Tenna belongs to a family of Runners, generations of her family have run the traces of Pern and now she on her first CrossCountry run. Just before she reaches Fort Hold, almost the end of her crosscountry run, she runs off the traces by a man on a runnerbeast who is not supposed to be on the traces. delightful little story with a smattering of possible young romance.

Ever the Twain is the last story in this book. A set of twins are both searched for the eggs on the Istaba Wyer sands. Can the both impress on hatching day or will one be left while one takes to the skies?

This ebook is a delightful look at the younger people of Pern, and some different aspects not in the Wyers or Holds. A must have for anyone that loves Pern and her dragons. Five stars.

Kirsa says

Maybe I've been reading too many Pern books all in a row, but I found these short stories fairly boring.

Angel M. says

These stories are a wonderful look into the lives of, not only, potential dragon riders, but also the young adults coming of age in the holds. Very nicely done.

cristyn huggins says

Wonderful

Love Pen and the dragons. Great backstory for some characters from other books. Plus who doesn't love a dragon story

Douglas Milewski says

A Gift of Dragons (2002) collects together four Anne McCaffrey Pern short stories in a book aimed at the YA audience. The little hardback is well printed and bound nicely, making for a nice kit. One of the stories is new for the collection.

The stories pretty much unfold as you'd expect from a McCaffrey story. Bullies and egotists abound. So do dragons. The stories are all what they are, flowing well enough, twisting YA anxieties for all they are worth.

The new story in this volume centers around twins being searched, which triggers my anti-twin sentiments. (Since I'm a twin, I get to have anti-twin outrage and twin stereotypes.) The twins here, fraternal, look fairly alike and are inseparable. (Roll your eyes and sigh.)

Nothing here is fine literature, but they're perfectly good YA stories to keep a dragon lover occupied.
