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# Pagan In Exile: Book Two Of The Pagan Chronicles



## Synopsis

"The setting is medieval, but the issues addressed have twenty-first century parallels. . . . Jinks's writing is the tour de force of young adult prose." *VOICE OF YOUTH ADVOCATE*

The year is 1188, and Jerusalem is in the hands of the Infidel. Upstanding Crusaders and their squires like Lord Roland Roucy de Bram and Pagan Kidrouk are returning to Europe, hoping to rally more knights to their cause. The sardonic young Pagan expects Lord Roland's family to be the picture of fortitude and good manners, but he's in for a rude awakening. Brutish and unfeeling, the de Bram clan cares nothing for the Crusades, or indeed for anything outside their neighborhood in France. Meanwhile, local unrest is brewing. Church authorities are duking it out with the de Brams over a group of "heretics" living nearby. And now Pagan and Roland, sworn to defend Christianity, are left to decide for themselves who to stand by and whom to trust.

## Book Information

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Series: The Pagan Chronicles (Book 2)

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr. 9-12. In this follow-up to *Pagan's Crusade* (2003), it is 1188, Jerusalem has fallen, and Pagan Kidrouk, the Arab-Christian squire, and his lord, Knight Templar Sir Roland, have returned to France, where Roland plans to ask his father and brothers to take up arms against the infidels--a very bad idea, as it turns out. Pagan relates the story in a wry, often caustic voice that adds a bit of

sanity to the events that swirl around the returnees--events that are pitted by danger, cruelty, and quite literally blood and guts. Jinks dramatically evokes a historical time that was particularly dark and dirty. Roland is a knight of honor, but his relatives are louts who like nothing better than fighting, using creatively coarse language, and killing animals--and people--for sport. A subplot about Christian heresy and a homosexual proposition for Pagan extend the story even further. Along with the drama and darkness, readers will find intensity and, yes, humor. Series fans may find other books set in the Middle Ages pallid after this one. Ilene CooperCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Pagan's Crusade "...introduces a character as lovable, stubbornly loyal, and smart-mouthed as any Disney film sidekick... Rich, vivid storytelling, with a sturdy base in historical events, and undercurrents both comic and serious." Kirkus Review "Fast-paced, lively and very witty." Bookseller " Highly amusing... entertaining historical fiction." Publishing News What readers have said: '...a wonderful book, very easy to read, and full of emotion and angst and drama.' 'This fast-paced story will be sure to bring a smile to anyone's face...' 'A great book! Full of action and adventure.' 'Told with amazing wit, this book is thoroughly readable and a must for all!' --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is a child's book. I didn't realize that as I typed in the search box "Adult".....so I will not be reading it! Instead, I will give it to me 8 year old grandson.

I just started reading this book and so far I can't put it down...it is very interesting makes a good addition to a Pagan's or Wiccan's collection

What's everybody staring at? All right, so you've never seen an Arab before. Is that any reason to stare? My hair's not green. My skin's not blue. It might be darker than yours, but dark skin is quite normal in my country. So I'm short. So what? I'm not that short. I'm tall enough to see over my own knees. Anyone would think I had a giant candle-snuffer growing out of my forehead. Look at that fellow there, gawking away. Face like a gob of spittle, and he's staring at ME. Why don't you get yourself a mirror, Spitface, if you really want something to stare at. A one-armed child makes a rude gesture. Runs away as I poke out a viciously threatening tongue. No backbone, the little coward. "Pagan." Roland's voice is cold and stern. (Doesn't want his squire eroding the dignity of his arrival.) "Please behave yourself." The year is 1188 and the infidels have conquered Jerusalem. Pagan,

forced into exile, is accompanying his master, Lord Roland, to the castle of Bram, Roland's home. But the castle, cold, dark and filthy, is not Pagan's idea of how lords live and neither is Roland's family anything like the type of family Pagan imagines someone as noble and dignified as Roland should have. Pagan is soon caught up in violent clashes between both family members and the family and their neighbours. At the heart of the bloody feud stands Esclaramonde, a highly principled woman whose enigmatic character and heretical religious beliefs both disturb and attract Roland, while Pagan himself finds that he too has unpalatable truths to confront. I am absolutely bowled over by Catherine Jinks's writing style. She must have done a huge amount of research before writing the Pagan books to be able to create such a wonderful portrait of mediaeval life in so few words. The excerpt quoted above (which is the beginning of the book) is a good example of prose that literally cries to be read aloud. If you are a secondary-school teacher I urge you to try these books on your class.

Jerusalem has fallen to the soldiers of Saladin. Pagan Kidrouk and his master, Lord Roland Roucy de Bram, are in Lord Roland's homeland seeking knights for a new Crusade to free the holiest of cities from the hands of the infidel. It is hard to know what Lord Roland's squire expected in his master's home in the south of France, but it certainly was not what they find when they arrive. Lord Roland's father, brothers and their families and retainers live in such squalor and have such uncouth manners and ways that Pagan is appalled. How can his almost saintly master come from such a family? It is clearly a waste of time to think that this crowd of unbelieving savages will have any interest in freeing Jerusalem from the clutches of the infidel. Pagan is all for leaving as quickly as possible. He also begins to worry about the effect that Lord Roland's family is having on his master. They are like a disease, corrupting and evil, and Pagan wants to get his master away from their influence as soon as he can. Surely Roland cannot be continuing to hope to "civilize" his family and gain their support for his cause? The situation then becomes very complicated when a local dispute breaks out between Lord Roland's father and the nearby abbey. People are killed and Lord Roland cannot bring himself to leave until he has done his best to find a resolution to the problem. However, the stubbornness of the Abbot and of Lord Roland's father is such that the dispute only escalates. Pagan is the most honest of narrators. His voice is funny and vibrant, and it gives us a vivid picture of his world, which is often dreadfully realistic. His first hunt leaves him sick at heart and in the stomach, and there is no doubt that the living conditions in Lord Roland's childhood home disgust the boy from Jerusalem. The people who live in that home don't impress him either. They are cruel, crude, often barbaric, and have very little respect for anyone outside their family circle.

Pagan has such a wonderful sense of the ironic. He sees the things in life that make it pitiful on the one hand, and yet worth living on the other. He also sees the greatness in people, and his love for his master is complete. For Lord Roland, he will risk his life again and again and overcome his greatest fears. By the end of the book it is very hard not to feel great pride for this street boy from Palestine who has such a sharp tongue, quick wit, and big heart. Catherine Jinks has once again given us a book that is difficult to put down, is often deeply disturbing, and leaves one wondering what Pagan and his master will do next. The savagery and often barbarity of the times can be difficult to read about, as well as the hypocrisy of the so-called men of God. There certainly are parallels with our own times, where men kill in the name of religion, failing to see that in so doing, they defile the very faith they profess to follow. Thought-provoking, even tear-jerking, this second book in the Pagan Chronicles series is highly recommended. --- Reviewed by Marya Jansen-Gruber, editor of Through The Looking Glass Children's Book Review ([...]

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