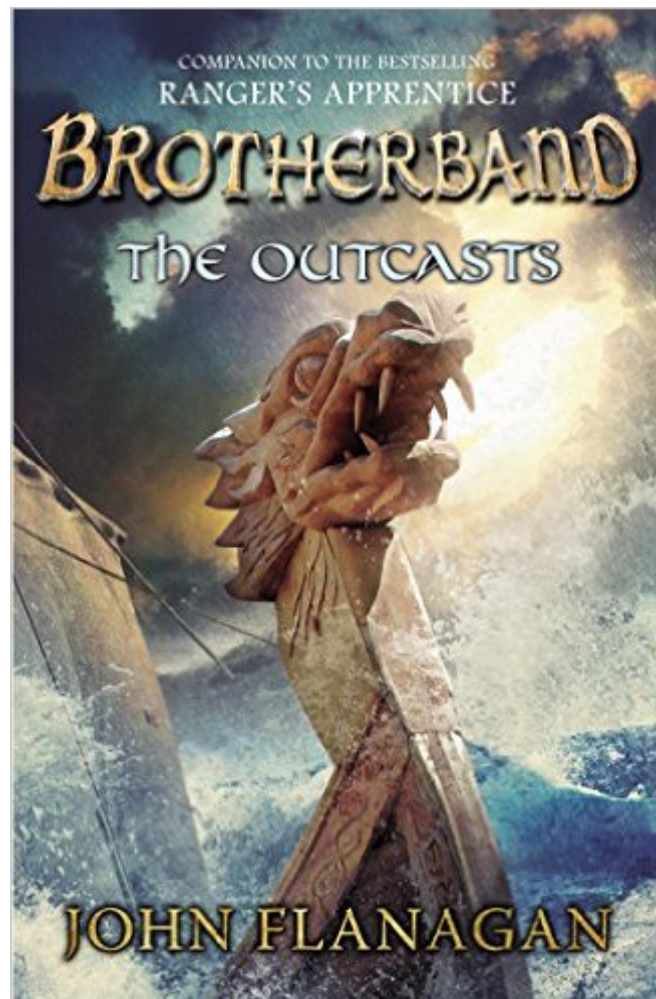


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The Outcasts: Brotherband Chronicles, Book 1 (The Brotherband Chronicles)



Synopsis

From the author of the global phenomenon *Ranger's Apprentice!* They are outcasts. Hal, Stig, and the others - they are the boys the others want no part of. Skandians, as any reader of *Ranger's Apprentice* could tell you, are known for their size and strength. Not these boys. Yet that doesn't mean they don't have skills. And courage - which they will need every ounce of to do battle at sea against the other bands, the Wolves and the Sharks, in the ultimate race. The icy waters make for a treacherous playing field . . . especially when not everyone thinks of it as playing. John Flanagan, author of the international phenomenon *Ranger's Apprentice*, creates a new cast of characters to populate his world of Skandians and Araluens, a world millions of young readers around the world have come to know and admire. Full of seafaring adventures and epic battles, Book 1 of *The Brotherband Chronicles* is sure to thrill readers of *Ranger's Apprentice* while enticing a whole new generation just now discovering the books. Perfect for fans of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, T.H. White's *The Sword in the Stone*, Christopher Paolini's *Eragon* series, and George R. R. Martin's *Game of Thrones/A Song of Ice and Fire* series.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0780 (What's this?)

Series: *The Brotherband Chronicles* (Book 1)

Paperback: 464 pages

Publisher: Puffin Books; Reprint edition (September 4, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0142421944

ISBN-13: 978-0142421949

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 1.2 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (340 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #25,724 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #19 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

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[Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy & Magic](#) #1543 in [Books > Children's Books > Action & Adventure](#)

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

John Flanagan ended his "Lost Stories" collection by hinting at a new hero we hadn't yet seen -- a

half-Skandian, half-Araluen boy. And he makes good on those hints with "The Brotherband Chronicles: The Outcasts," the first part of a new series about a "brotherband" of oddball teenagers whom nobody else wants. Flanagan really shows how he's grown as a writer in this book -- while it has lots of training sequences and competitions between the brotherbands, he weaves in a darker tale about very sneaky pirates. Hal has never fit in with the other boys in Hallashom, due to his mother being an ex-slave from Araluen. So he isn't happy to be starting out the brotherband training that all Skandian boys go through. He's especially concerned because the arrogant, cruel Tursgud -- who particularly hates Hal -- will be competing against him. Hal has gotten some training in fighting from the one-armed tramp Thorn, but it might not be enough to keep him safe. And on the day when the three brotherbands will be chosen, Hal finds himself the leader of one group -- a group of outcasts that nobody else wants. However, Hal has ingenuity, charisma and a lot of guts, and his buddies have their own unique qualities -- hot-tempered Stig, half-blind but strong Ingvar, pickpocket Jesper, quarrelsome twins Wulf and Ulf, sharp-tongued Stefan and the quiet Edvin. And as the boys struggle through the training, a mysterious ship filled with Magyar pirates is plotting to infiltrate Hallashom and steal its greatest treasure... "The Brotherband Chronicles - The Outcasts" is a thoroughly solid beginning to John Flanagan's new series, especially since it builds on the world he began with in the Ranger's Apprentice series. It also shows how much he's grown as a writer -- it sometimes reminds me of the training-heavy "The Ruins of Gorlan," but the main plot is more evenly dispersed throughout the book instead of being lumped at the end. And as with his Ranger's Apprentice books, Flanagan creates a solid adventure story with plenty of action (the Heron's wild maiden voyage) and some genuinely grueling training exercises, only SOME of which our heroes will be able to win. But he also leavens it with plenty of humor, such as the trip through Erak's delightfully tasteless storeroom -- which includes a giant chandelier, cherubs, and one of those horrible fountains shaped like a little peeing boy. Urgh. I was a little concerned that Hal would be too similar to Flanagan's last hero, Will Treaty. However, the only real similarities is that they're small but smart teenage boys -- Hal is a bit fiercer, as well as being a clever inventor who is always improving things (his crossbow, boat sails, etc). Each of the boys is given a distinct personality, with flaws and strengths. And Thorn is one of the most intriguing, engaging characters -- we first see him as a drunken, suicidal tramp who has lost one of his arms. But we slowly see Hal giving him something to live for, even as Flanagan slowly reveals how he lost his hand and what he used to be. "The Brotherband Chronicles - The Outcasts" is a delightful, fresh adventure that shows us new facets of John Flanagan's fantasy world, and introduces a new hero that I certainly want to see more of.

I'd loved John Flanagan's Ranger Apprentice series and had high hopes for the first book in his new series, *The Outcasts*. This time, Flanagan tells the story of Skanians, a race and culture similar to the Vikings, through the point of view of Hal. Hal's father, Mikkel, was a renowned warrior who had traveled with Erak and was killed in battle while Hal was a very young child. Mikkel's best friend Thorn promises to look after Mikkel's son and wife. Hal grew up with his Araluen mother, always a bit of a stranger in his home. Until he somehow saves the life of Stig, another outsider of sorts. Stig and Hal become fast friends. Stig is hotheaded, loyal, and natural athlete. Hal is innovative, meticulous, and a careful planner. Together, they make a strong team. They make friends with other boys. By the time that the boys are of age for the Brotherband training, they're excited and eager to prove themselves. For Skanians, Brotherband training is a rite of passage and a chance to make a name for themselves. The year that Hal and Stig participate, there is an unusual number of boys. Instead of two teams, Erak agrees to create three teams. The last team is made up of the boys that we're selected by the other leaders - much like those last chosen during gym class but with much higher stakes. Stig is Hal's loyal lieutenant and Hal agrees to lead the group. It becomes clear through his carefully thought out decisions that Hal has both the mind and personality to lead by example. Though their group, the Herons, face groups with greater strength and skill, the competition teaches the boys the power of teamwork and loyalty. In *The Outcasts*, John Flanagan gives us another set of heroes to root for and adventures to enjoy. I loved *The Outcasts* and am looking forward to the next in the series. It's a book I'd recommend for young readers and something I think even reluctant reader of a nephew would enjoy. Ages 10 and up. ISBN-10: 0399256199 Hardcover \$18.99 Publisher: Philomel (November 1, 2011), 432 pages.

Nothing. I loved this book. The characters, the plot, I can't wait for more. It is great for anyone 12 and older. I'm twenty and I have always loved these sort of books. Adventure, friendship, using your brains for something other than video games.

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