



The Minister's Daughter

By Julie Hearn

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"Powers of the air, be here now. So mote it be."

Nell is a wild child. Conceived on May Morning, she is claimed by the piskies and faeries as a merrybegot, one of their own. She is the village cunning woman's granddaughter: herb gatherer and healer, spell-weaver and midwife...and, some say, a witch.

Grace is a Puritan minister's daughter: beautiful and refined, innocent and sweet-natured...to those who think they know her. But she is hiding a secret -- a secret that will bring everlasting shame to her family should it ever come to light.

A merrybegot and minister's daughter -- two girls who could not have less in common. Yet their fates collide when Grace and her younger sister, Patience, are suddenly spitting pins, struck with fits, and speaking in fevered tongues. The minister is convinced his daughters are the victims of witchcraft. And all signs point to Nell as the source of the trouble....

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The Minister's Daughter By Julie Hearn Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 7 Up—In 1645, England is plunged into a Civil War pitting Puritans against Royalists, and is swept by a craze of witch-hunting, targeting women who practice healing arts drawn from ancient lore. Hearn intertwines the stories of three girls in one village. Two are daughters of the new minister, a man who fulminates against the old pagan ways, and Nell, who is the granddaughter of the local cunning woman. Because the elderly woman is failing in mind and body, Nell must quickly learn her skills and lore, including midwifery to humans and fairies. Meanwhile Grace, the minister's beautiful elder daughter, pregnant by a lad who runs away to be a soldier, draws her sister Patience into a conspiracy to blame her condition on witchcraft practiced by Nell and her grandmother. Caught up in Grace's hysteria, the villagers dunk the old woman in a pond and condemn Nell to hang. Chapters set in 1645 are written in third-person, present tense, and alternate with adult Patience's first-person, past tense, which readers later learn is her testimony during the Salem, MA, witch trials of 1692. These varied perspectives allow readers to penetrate lies and concealment. While piskies and fairies provide an element of fantasy that contributes to surprising plot twists, the novel is best described as entertaining historical fiction, paying tribute to wise, unconventional women whose skills come from an understanding of the natural world, not from supernatural powers. Engaging characters and a palpable sense of place combine with an accessible, clear style to make this a satisfying read.—*Margaret A. Chang, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams*
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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 7-10. British writer Hearn investigates "human life at risk and in the raw" in this skillfully constructed novel of seventeenth-century England. When a May Day tryst leaves the Puritan minister's daughter in a delicate condition, village healer Nell refuses to terminate the pregnancy because folk wisdom reveres such "merrybegot" babies. Thenceforth the pregnant girl and her younger sister, with the tacit support of their scandal-averse father, supplement sickroom theatrics with distortions that incriminate Nell and her senile grandmother as consorts of Satan. The theme of girlish grudges escalating to mass hysteria will be familiar to many readers of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, and, indeed, earn posits a surprising link between Nell's story and the Salem witch trials. A nick-of-time rescue from the gallows feels contrived, and, at times, switches from realistic scenes to episodes involving pixies and fairies are jarring. But many readers will be drawn into the backdrop of pagan traditions and benign charms ("How to Calm a Truculent Pig") and savor the indignation triggered by an earlier era's subversively powerful "mean girls." *Jennifer Mattson*
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Review

"A deliciously lyrical novel that is powerful, suspenseful, and taut, with danger on every page."
-- Libba Bray, author of *A Great and Terrible Beauty*

"With its thought-provoking perceptions about human nature, magic and persecution, this tale will surely cast a spell over readers."
-- *Publishers Weekly*, starred review

"Hearn creates a richly magical ambiance, straddling the line between the supernatural and the concrete realm of human passions and weaknesses."
-- *Horn Book*, starred review

"Dramatic and frothy...provocative."

-- *BCCB*

"A well-written historical novel that reads like a mystery."

-- *Wall Street Journal*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eric Chabot:

Have you spare time to get a day? What do you do when you have more or little spare time? That's why, you can choose the suitable activity to get spend your time. Any person spent all their spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to the actual Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book titled The Minister's Daughter? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You already know beside you can spend your time with the favorite's book, you can cleverer than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have other opinion?

Eleanor Sotomayor:

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Richard Perkins:

Spent a free a chance to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their sparettime with their family, or their friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, about to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your current free time/ holiday? Can be reading a book can be option to fill your cost-free time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of publication that you should read. If you want to attempt look for book, may be the e-book untitled The Minister's Daughter can be fine book to read. May be it is usually best activity to you.

Robert Baxter:

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