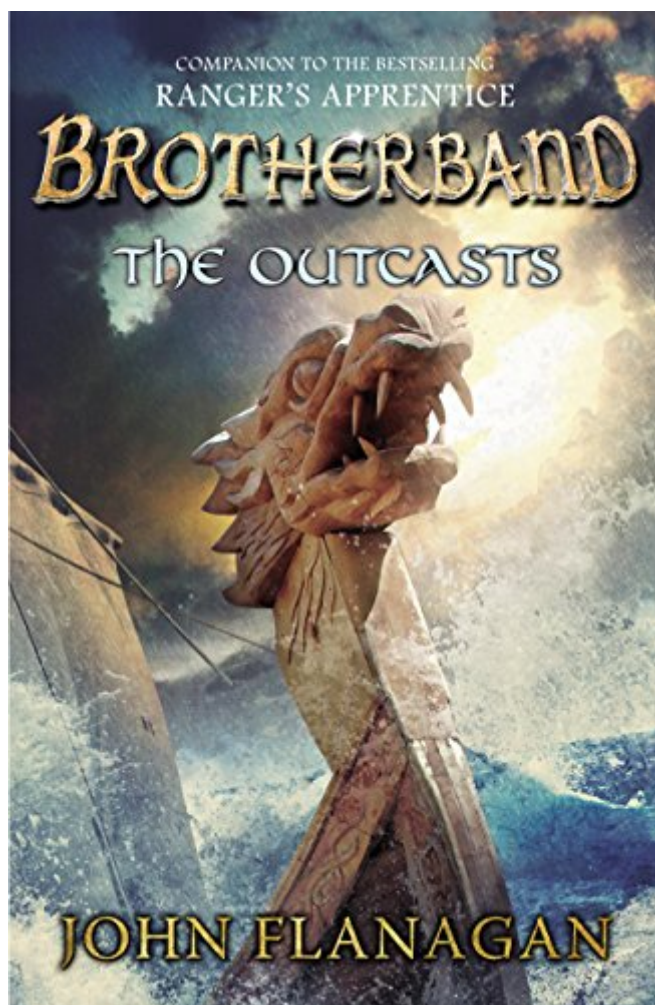


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The Outcasts: Brotherband Chronicles, Book 1



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.

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Customer Reviews

A good read for middle schoolers. A clear indication is the battle cry for an entire country is "Let's Get 'Em!" I wish there was something in the description of Fantasy/Sword and Sorcery novels to distinguish between juvenile and adult. This is the beginning of a redemption story in a faux Viking setting. It's okay with training to manhood, making friends, etc., but runs short on real-life hardship situations. Finished it, but not because I was enthralled.

For anyone familiar with John Flanagan you know that his Ranger's Apprentice series is a wonderful series for any age group. His new series Brotherband 1: The Outcasts has the same fantastic qualities that make Flanagan a top tier author. Usually I am not a fan of books that don't follow a more adult theme but John's writing is so good that he draws me in time and again. I dare an Fantasy Fiction fan to read this book and series. It will be time well spent.

John Flanagan's "The Outcasts" is a book that will pull the reader into a world unlike any they have experienced. He creates a strong storyline with characters that can be easily identified with. Though it may take the reader a few pages to get into the momentum of the main story plot it is a fast-paced read that will keep pulling the reader back until they turn the last page and then it will leave them hungry for more. Flanagan is a masterful storyteller with the ability to create complex situations and have his characters think through them in a way that is extremely intelligent, rather than creating almost "magical" situations to maneuver the characters out of their problems. Flanagan did a masterful job of creating a world centered around ships that even I could follow (and I've had next to no experiences with ships). It takes a skilled writer to immerse a reader in a world with which they have no experience with or concept of. Personally, I really enjoyed the growth that the characters experienced as they learned and grew and formed their brotherband. Many will be able to compare themselves to the main character, Hal, in his quest for acceptance and his use of imagination. It also tied in to the Ranger's Apprentice series well with Flanagan's continued use of many familiar characters such as Erak and Borsa. It's the right amount of familiarity mixed with enough new and interesting characters to make it a completely different series. It's the perfect beginning to another new, gripping series and I eagerly anticipate the completion of the series. The story is engaging, the characters are memorable, and all I can say is that John Flanagan has

earned another devoted follower! I would highly recommend this book to anyone who is looking for a fun, interesting read.

I'm a long time fan and reader of John Flanagan's "Ranger's Apprentice". I had high hopes for this new series and *The Outcasts* went well and beyond what I expected. From cover to cover, this book will keep you wanting more. When I reached the last page, I groaned out loud, sad that it had ended. In "The Outcasts", you'll find yourself viewing the life of a half-Araulen half-Skandian boy by the name of Hal Mikkleson. Being half-Araulen was not an easy obstacle to clear, however, it was a disgrace to him, causing the other full Skandian boy's to mock him, and isolate him from the group. Stig, another outcast with the temper of a bull, begins to bond with Hal after an incident in the ocean where Hal swoops in to save his life. Hal is an inventive boy, creating new inventions every day for his mother's tavern and for his own use. Skandia focuses on war and plunder, and being an outsider is not the best place to be. A grizzled, old, one handed man by the name of Thorn is thrust into Hal's life. Known as the town drunk, Hal doubts Thorn's ability to do anything, especially when his mother invites Thorn to live with them. There is a catch though, if Thorn is going to live with Hal and his mother, he must stop drinking. This is a hard decision, but Thorn decides to accept the consequence and move in. Hal and Stig had put together a crew, called a wolfcrew, for his ship the Heron. Hal's ship has a triangular sail, much different from the regular square sail's that Skandian's usually use. The crew is made up of the Jarl, Hal, the first-mate, Stig, and the rest of the crew. Ingvar, a shortsighted man-boy. Ingvar makes up for his smartness in brawn, the boy is huge, and is an excellent rower. The other's are twins by the name's Wulf and Ulf. Tricesters who look exactly alike and often change identities to mess with people. Shortly after Thorn moves in, Hal and his now best friend Stig have been called to Brotherband training. Brotherband training is when all Skandian boy's turn sixteen, they must attend the training to complete the transformation from boy to man. When the boy's arrive, they find themselves in the midst of their wolfcrew, waiting for the training to begin. But before it begins, the teams must be formed. This part is extremely important, whoever comes in last or even second is often mocked by the winning team. The team picking goes as expected, the first team being made up of the Jarl Tursgud, an ego-maniac who hates Hal. Tursgud is possibly the most popular boy in their town, and according to him Hal is the most unpopular. Of course, Tursgud believes it's his job to taunt and make fun of Hal, and that's what he plans to do. The second team consists of Roland, one of the best athletes in the town. Roland forms his band out of the friends surrounding him. Although only usually two teams, this year there are enough kids for three. At this point the remaining kid's are of course, Hal and Stig, Ingvar, Ulf and

Wulf, and a few new boy's. These new kid's are Jesper, a professional thief who can choose to be seen or unseen, the joking Stefan, who loves to make fun of Tursgud, and quiet but smart Edwin. Together these boy's have an amazing future together, and will soon find themselves in deep trouble.

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