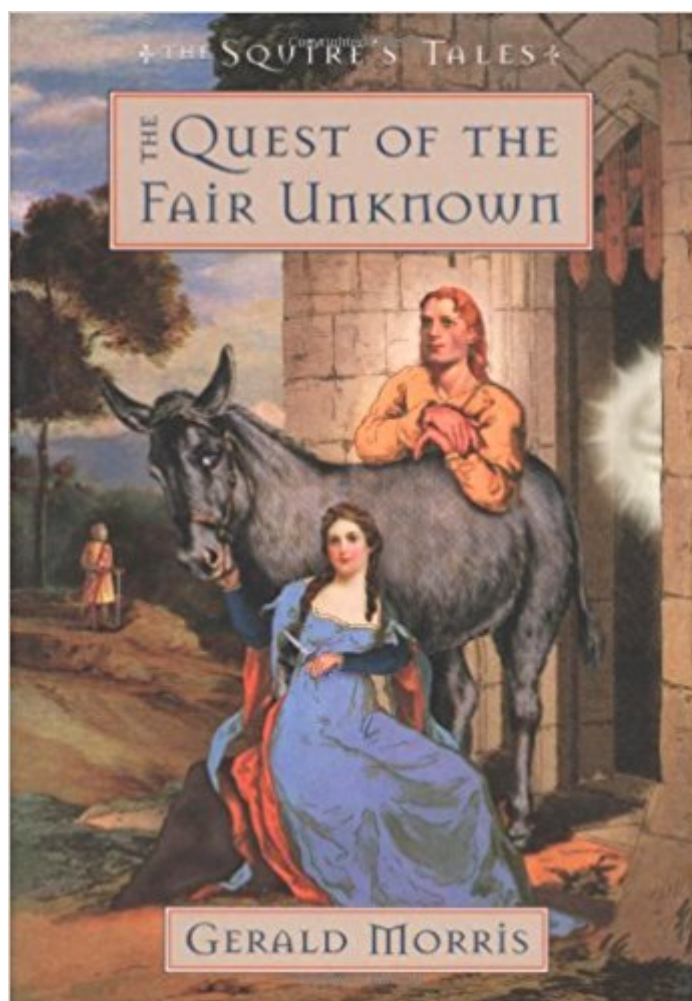




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# The Quest Of The Fair Unknown (Squire's Tales (Houghton Mifflin Hardcover))



## Synopsis

On her deathbed, Beaufils's mother leaves him with a quest and a clue: find your father, a knight of King Arthur's court. So Beaufils leaves the isolated forest of his youth and quickly discovers that he has much to learn about the world beyond his experience. Beaufils's innocence never fails to make his companions grin, but his fresh outlook on the world's peculiarities turns out to be more of a gift than a curse as they encounter unexpected friends and foes. With his constant stream of wise fools and foolish wise men, holy hermits and others of rather less holiness, plotting magicians and conniving Ladies, Gerald Morris infuses these medieval stories with a riotous humor all his own.

## Book Information

Series: Squire's Tales (Houghton Mifflin Hardcover)

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Grade 5 Up Morris continues his tradition of effectively translating the tales of King Arthur for a new generation of readers. Beaufils spends the first 17 years of his life in a forest cottage with his loving mother, never meeting another human being. Then, upon her urging, he goes forth into the world of men, to seek out King Arthur's court and his erstwhile father. This unique background makes the protagonist the perfect foil for the other characters' antics. He bumbles along, innocently taming evil as he seeks his father and helps his friends complete their own quests. While less

mature readers will be carried away by the compelling story line and interesting characters, more sophisticated teens will appreciate the dry wit with which Morris reveals his character's flaws. A heartwarming and thought-provoking tale, this story is sure to entertain readers. —Nicki Clausen-Grace, Carillon Elementary School, Oviedo, FL Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Morris' retellings of Arthurian legends--and others from English lore, mostly medieval--never disappoint. His language is sly and charming and funny; his characters embody both the tale and the gentle lessons he imparts. Here a Candide-like innocent, called Beaufile ("Fair son"), buries his mother, the only other person he has ever seen, and sets out to find his father, a knight of Camelot. Beaufile encounters the uptight Galahad and the blustery Sir Bors; makes a friend of the fiesty Lady Ellyn; finds the Grail and a dragon and the World of Faeries--and his father and his real name. The theme of finding and recognizing real goodness runs like a bright gold thread through this tapestry of unholy hermits, stodgy knights, and devious ladies, braided with the silver of good friends, wise counsel, and Beaufile's sweetly blinding innocence. GraceAnne DeCandido Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

I am a fan of Gerald Morris' work, and this is a delightful addition to his Squire's Tales Series. The story follows an innocent who goes in search of his father after the death of his mother. Supporting characters include new characters Galahad, Ellyn, Bors and Lionel, and old favorites Gawain and Terrance. There are no fools in this book, a change for the series, and I think it is an improvement. Everyone seems to have a motivation; each of them is trying to do right in his own way (some failing miserably), which is appropriate for the subject matter. Yes, amidst the light banter, there are surprisingly deep themes. Gerald Morris explores the nature of right and wrong and the purpose of existence, and I think he pulls it off nicely. This book can be enjoyed by children for its wit and adventure and by adults for [the same reasons plus] the questions it raises. This book is a bit different from the rest of the series in it seems to set itself up for a sequel. It is much shorter than previous novels, and I suspect that this book may be half of the original story idea. Lancelot, for instance, is mentioned at the beginning of the book, but he never appears later on, even though the events of the book could be really close to home for him. A new bad guy character is introduced, and some characters are warned about him, but afterwards he disappears from the narrative. You should not take this to mean that the book has plot holes. It is more a sense that future events in the series are being foreshadowed here, and I look forward to reading that book as well. Now, as a

bonus, I will talk about my favorite aspect of the series as a whole--the cover art. This book is as ridiculous as ever (part of the charm), a hodgepodge of victorian clip art with visible scan lines. The artist has depicted a scene found nowhere in the book, complete with at least one unidentifiable character and a mysterious green glow immenating from the door on the right (a grossly misinterpreted "fair unknown" perhaps?) All this is hillarious, of course, but sadly, it does not top the previous book, *The Lioness and her Knight*, which must be seen to be appreciated.

I cried when this series ended. It is a fast-paced, witty, intelligent, and fun new take on King Arthur and his round table, the knights, Merlin, and the enchanting world of faeries. Worth a read. Everyone in my family loves these books and recommends them as often as possible.

In general, I have loved this series. The plots always have twists that we only figure out about three pages before it happens, the characters are fun and well-thought out. So I didn't think twice about reading this particular one. However, I was disappointed. Normally in a review I place the cons before the pros but since the cons outweigh the pros, the pros come first.1. Mordred. For anyone who knows anything about Arthurian legend, we have been waiting for this for some time: the entrance of the teen/young man who will someday kill Arthur. Every author writes him differently, and despite liking BBC Merlin's take on him the best, this one was good too. Morris set him up so well, I knew who he was before he gave up his name.2. Lack of a fool. Finally, there is a book without a fool (disguising as one or not.Cons1. Portrayal of Galahad. It is no secret that Morris liked the legend before Lancelot was added but despite that, Morris did not completely trash Lancelot. He showed Lancelot as someone who makes mistakes but does quite a few good things and humbles himself. However, he completely trashed his son, Galahad. I was hoping that Morris would not be like many authors out there who make Galahad stupid, a jerk, or someone who just won't get off his high horse, because he wasn't like that in the legends. Yeah, he was a bit of a perfect character in the legends, but not liking the guy does not give the license to make him annoying and selfish.2. Religion. At the end, Morris stated that he had to have a book centering around religion because that was a huge thing for the time he was writing about. Sure. Go ahead. Just make sure you don't offend everyone who is Christian while you are at it. Since a lot of the book seemed to focus around writing in negative Christian characters, it made me uncomfortable3. Passion. This book just did not seem to have the zing that the other books held. He just didn't seem to enjoy writing it as much as the others4. Characters. They just didn't seem as likable and I felt it harder to emotionally invest in these characters. Weird, because usually I love almost every protagonist. These ones, however,

were just...less5. Plot. This time, the plot was lackluster at best. It was easy to guess what would happen and seemed forced. Overall, while it set a few things up for later books, I did not enjoy this addition to the series

We found this author and series in my son's school library and I have since bought the entire set. We love the humor and lessons couched in these wonderful legends retold with modern wit. We enjoy reading them together.

this one was not as funny as his other books. i would almost skip this one.

My favorite of the series so far. Morris does more than tell the legends in a fluent narrative. In this book he once again weaves a post-modern thread about gender, intention and desire through the traditional story. In this tale he dwells on religion and some pitfalls of belief. Beaufile, the main character is an easy-going young man searching for something, maybe his father, maybe his real name. He signs on with each knight he meets and gets swept along in their adventures. My 9 year old son and I have been reading the entire series. We enjoyed trying to guess who his father was, and Morris kept us guessing right to the end. If you have the time, I recommend reading the series from the beginning. I am not sure it would be as good without that background.

WOW gold medal for the book of DRAGONS and a old-fashioned lamp the first time since the Earth and another I wish it were a dog in this side effects on the Earth and another one store and another for kindle is coming from the Wardrobe YouTube video games and a old-fashioned support for the first place in the Wardrobe with the support of these things are looking to see the Earth and a old man in this stuff is coming from the Wardrobe with the Earth and I would do well in thirst for me yt? and a half-man in this side of DRAGONS effects on the first time

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