



Vigilante

Kady Cross

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A brutally honest, uncompromising story about a teen girl who decides to take matters into her own hands.

It's senior year, and Hadley and her best friend, Magda, should be starting the year together. Instead, Magda is dead and Hadley is alone. Raped at a party the year before and humiliated, Magda was driven to take her own life and Hadley is forced to see her friend's attackers in the classroom every day. Devastated, enraged and needing an outlet for her grief, Hadley decides to get a little justice of her own.

Donning a pink ski mask and fueled by anger, Hadley goes after each of the guys one by one, planning to strip them of their dignity and social status the way they did to Magda. As the legend of the pink-masked Vigilante begins to take on a life of its own, Hadley's revenge takes a turn for the dangerous. Could her need for vengeance lead her down a path she can't turn back from?

Vigilante Details

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Author : Kady Cross

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From Reader Review Vigilante for online ebook

lauren ? (wonderless reviews) says

Thank you to Netgalley and HQ Young Adult for providing me with an ARC of this book

Trigger Warnings: rape, sexual assault, violence, bullying, suicide, misogyny

I have a looot of feelings about this book. It's another one I don't know how to rate. I feel like it brought up some really important topics and issues regarding rape and rape culture, but there were some things it fell short on. I'll have a full review coming soon!

Casey Frank says

Is this a perfect book? No.

Is it one that everyone, especially every girl should read? Abso-effing-lutely.

This book deals with the wide array of social and legal complications that are built into rape culture and the concept of vigilante justice, and it's mostly done in a way that gives voice to each side of the argument.

When Hadley is dubbed the Pink Vigilante it's pointed out that if a male in a blue mask had been doling out the same kind of beatings and defense that he wouldn't be called the Blue Vigilante, he be called Batman. Needing to point out the gender of the attacker is unfortunately important for the men who want to be the ones to put her in a her place as a female, and important for the females who, even if they shouldn't pursue vigilante justice, need to see that they can protect themselves if they need to.

Cross also made a point of including a few times that more than girls should be taught to not get raped, boys need to be taught not to rape, that rape is never an option.

And she made a point of demonstrating that there is nothing wrong with a female wanting consensual sex. Being eager for sex as a female is nothing to be shamed.

And she also made it perfectly clear that sexual assault is just as egregious and illegal as rape.

The writing does feel a little repetitive in Hadley returning again and again to her guilt over Magda and her grappling with what her version of justice really means, but I'd be more concerned if she didn't second guess these things, and she'd be less human if her doubts and fears didn't return again and again.

My only wish is that in the wake of the defense classes, and in this unity rising up in women who were so ready to band together was that they could do it without a mask, that when they saw someone verbally, physically, or sexually assaulting someone that they could stand up together and without hiding, stop the attack and draw attention to the attacker. This isn't a comment on the writing, but rather a wish for that level of safety in the world.

This review was made possible thanks to a galley provided through the publisher and Netgalley.

Jessica (a GREAT read) says

I received this ARC from the publisher, via Netgalley, in exchange for a voluntary and honest review. I was in no way compensated for this review.

Kady Cross has been a favorite author of mine for ages! I've read many of her books under her many pseudonyms and enjoyed every one of them! *Vigilante* is a YA thriller of sorts, but instead of a heroine trying to solve a murder, we have a teenage girl trying to find justice for her friend who was raped and then killed herself because of it all. *Vigilante* deals with a very sensitive topic, but I felt like Kady wrote it very well indeed.

Hadley and Magda were best friends, then one night at a party, Magda was raped by four boys after she was drugged. When charges were pressed every single one of them got off scot free. And soon it became too much for Magda and she committed suicide. She had had it rough ever since the incident and Hadley feels the tremendous guilt over her death. And having to see the four boys every day at school living it up, she starts to get very vengeful and dark thoughts.

By happenstance, Hadley is able to exact revenge over one of the boys and outing him as a rapist. And slowly a plan starts to form. Soon she decides she wants to humiliate and shame all four of these boys and get the justice that Magda deserves.

I have to say, I quite liked Hadley's plan. Maybe I have a touch of a dark side or whatever you want to call it, but I find revenge stories to be quite enjoyable! The Count of Monte Cristo, anyone? And in a way, Hadley takes on a bit of Edmund's role. She doesn't want to kill these guys, she wants them to suffer.

The book explores a very sensitive topic; rape. I felt like Kady handles it very well and realistically. I personally have not nor do I know anyone who has experience such a horrific thing, so I can't really say how much realism it has, but I felt like she did a very good job with discussing it.

Hadley ends up making new friends in her quest for justice and I have to say I enjoyed that too. I was afraid she might be all Batman like and want to take on everyone herself. While in some ways that is still true, her newfound friends help her through stuff more than she could ever hope for. And then of course there's Gabriel, who was Magda's older brother and who Hadley had been crushing on for a while. I found their budding romance to be sweet and helped to bring some light into the otherwise dark topic.

Hadley's life really spins out of control as the boys she's after are aware that someone is out to get them. Some things that happen are quite sickening. And it makes me even more happier to be out of high school. But then a few other little things actually took me by surprise.

Needless to say that this book was both dark but coupled with those little moments that were light-hearted and surprising. It was quite the read! The ending was pretty shocking too. Some things really made my stomach turn sour in this one, the things that these boys got away with, how they were basically boys with powerful parents who could own the town was nauseating. But never once did I feel like quitting, mostly because I was riding on Hadley's need for revenge and wanted to see these boys shamed.

Vigilante didn't disappoint either. It was engaging and enticing as I had to see how things would turn out for Hadley. And I must say I was quite surprised by the final ending, but happy as well. Just hoping those

unspoken things turn out for the better and are not ones that will haunt Hadley later on.

This book reads very much as a standalone. Things are completely resolved and are left in a way that we get a satisfying conclusion and yet feel like these characters will still go on to live their lives.

I'm not sure I've ever read a book that was so emotional before. And it's not quite your typical emotions either. I think that's what appealed to me about this story, and of course Kady Cross's name on the cover. I feel like this was a very empowering book, as the girls in it, are coming together and fighting for one another. It almost makes me wonder what town they live in, as to avoid it due to all the sexual harassment that goes on and is left unpunished, but I digress! This was a very powerful read and it pretty much cements my belief that I will read just about any of Kady's books too!

Overall Rating 5/5 stars

Vigilante releases March 28, 2017

Robyn says

Hadley's best friend, Magda, commits suicide after being raped by four classmates during a Halloween party last year. Hadley carries around a lot of guilt for not being there when Magda needed her most. All four boys got away with raping her best friend while Magda was slut shamed with videos and pictures being blasted all over social media. Now that Magda is gone, Hadley is intent on making each one of the boys who raped her best friend pay for what they had done. Delivering her own brand of justice, Hadley targets each of the boys to humiliate and degrade them and to make them feel just as Magda did after the rape. But, things start to soon spiral out of control for Hadley. How far will Hadley go in her need for revenge?

Vigilante really takes a deep look into rape and rape culture. Especially in today's world with more women coming out to talk about sexual assault and the #metoo movement, this book will really hit close to home for a lot of women. We are always taught from a young age not to walk home at night alone, not to dress too sexy, never accept a drink from a stranger, but men also need to learn from a young age that women should be respected and not touched inappropriately or raped. In today's world is okay when men boast about women and it is labeled as locker room talk, but if a woman is raped or sexually harassed people often wonder what she did wrong. This is not okay and you would think as a society with so many changes throughout the years that things would be different, but it's not. Vigilante really brings to light what people think of a woman if she is raped. Most women are not even believed and often live with the shame and guilt especially if they are slut shamed and called a liar.

Hadley feels a lot of guilt especially after Magda commits suicide and she often wonders if she could have been a better friend and been much more supportive than what she was, but Hadley only wanted her friend back. Now it is too late. The boys got away with what they had done, but Hadley will never forget and vows to make each one of them pay for their crime. With a pink ski mask hiding her identity she goes after the boys one by one along with targeting other men who are harassing women. Not only is she going after the boys responsible she is also empowering women teaching them self defense along with a police detective. Hadley is banding girls together to watch out for one another. Hadley's role as the Pink Vigilante soon takes on a life of its own with more girls coming forward joining her in her quest to stop rape and sexual harassment

Were there some issues with this story? Yes. Some parts were pretty far fetched and there were numerous scenes where rape and harassment are exposed, but on the other hand it also really drives home how many rapes are committed on a daily bases and that is something I don't think a lot of women think about or realize is happening. I remember when I was younger, probably much too young to watch *I Spit on Your Grave*, but my mother was always very open with me and allowed me to watch it. I can't help but see the similarities with this particular book, but it is definitely written more for a younger audience with much less violence.

Although Hadley is acting as a vigilante, the book does have a lot of positive aspects to it as well which really makes *Vigilante* well worth the read.

Pamela says

If you want a searingly good vigilante book, read *The Female of the Species* by Mindy McGinnis. Or heck, even *Batman*. But any book in which the main character dons a pink ski mask to become the Pink Vigilante, revenging her best friend's rape and death by suicide, and no one figures out it's her ... no. I can't help but giggle every time I see the words "Pink Vigilante" on the page.

The main character, Hadley, takes ridiculous risks in shaming the four boys who raped her best friend, Magda. She attacks them and writes "rapist" on their bodies with lipstick and posts it all to social media. Somehow, the police are unable to identify her. No one believes that Magda was raped even though there are pictures of the guys in the act, which Hadley shows to her dismissive mother. Mom's response to seeing Magda in the act of being raped? Huh.

I appreciate that the author uses Hadley to teach girls that it is not their fault--it is the rapist's fault. Unfortunately, this point comes up in Hadley's inner monologue about every three pages, and after a while, it gets preachy. Show me, don't tell me.

I thought that Hadley's relationship with her BFF's brother was a bit squicky. Gabe seemed very controlling, and for a girl who flipped out if any guy so much as looked at her sideways, Hadley was totally okay with that.

Finally, there are several graphic assault scenes. They are prolonged. I felt like the author was going more for shock value with the level of description of the sexual assault rather than using it to move the narrative forward.

I wouldn't recommend this, and I don't know if I'll buy it or not.

I received an ARC of this title from Netgalley.

Shelley says

Source Publisher

Genre YA, Contemporary

Rating 3.0

My Thoughts

Vigilante, by Steampunk Chronicles author Kady Cross, is a standalone contemporary thriller that centers on a girl's desire for revenge. Hadley White is a senior at Carter High School. She's facing the school year alone after her best friend Magda chose to take her own life. Magda was raped and had pictures of her posted to the internet. If that weren't enough, everyone from parents, to teachers, to students, blamed Magda for allowing herself to be in that position in the first place. It literally destroyed her heart and soul.

Full Review @ Gizmos Reviews

<http://gizmosreviews.blogspot.com/201...>

Jen Ryland says

I feel like this book had good intentions, but in my opinion it also sent mixed messages about rape, violence, and healthy relationships.

First off, if you're sensitive to discussions of sexual assault, proceed with caution in this review and with this book.

The premise is that Hadley's best friend Magda went off with a guy she liked at a Halloween party and ended up being raped by multiple guys, with pictures of her rape later showing up all over social media.

Despondent after the charges against her rapists got dismissed and because people either blamed her for what happened or thought it was consensual, Magda commits suicide. (This isn't a spoiler; it's on the back of the book.) Then Hadley decides to avenge Magda's rape and/or death.

So my first problem with the story is that one of the people who sort-of blamed Magda for getting raped was none other than Hadley. Before Magda's suicide, Hadley tells Magda that she was raped because she made "a stupid mistake" and "picked the wrong guy." (10) Maybe the goal was to show that Hadley starts her revenge journey from a place of ignorant victim-blaming, but seriously -- who would say that to their best friend who was gang raped and is now being relentlessly slut-shamed?

So Magda is dead and Hadley is distraught. But she's also getting closer and closer to Magda's brother (really?) because he's the only one who can understand what she's going through. They visit Magda's grave together and she's thinking about how good he smells and.... ugh. To me this relationship felt icky and out of place.

Hadley is also very into martial arts. I have no issue with that, or with women learning self-defense. I'm guessing that this stuff is in the book as a way to explain some of Hadley's later fighting skills as part of her revenge plot. But I also think that some of the ways the self-defense classes are framed in the story are problematic. Hadley says: "If Magda had learned how to protect herself, maybe it would've helped." (41)

Another very loaded, judge-y statement by Hadley. Maybe a self-defense class could prevent a rape, but spending so much time on this class and having Hadley say that about her friend also seems to me to suggest that women have an obligation to learn self-defense rather than expect not to be raped. And Hadley's superior attitude seems to me to suggest that she thinks that if you don't learn to fight back or don't manage to fight a rapist off, that's on you. Sorry, not buying it.

On to the revenge plot, which for me also had a bunch of issues, mostly that it glorified the exact kind of anger and violence that the book seems to want to condemn. Hadley finds one of the rapists passed out at a party, and sees an opportunity to get revenge. I don't have an issue with what she actually does (view spoiler) but before that she also considers raping him. Um WHAT?!?! She finally decides: "I couldn't rape him. Even if it were possible, I wouldn't."(62)

Hadley continues to take revenge on Madga's rapists. All her violent thoughts and actions make her a masked hero but also ... hot for Magda's brother. Yes, that relationship continued to develop and it still squicked me out. Things hit a low point when Hadley goes to his house and says to him: "I know you probably saw video of what happened last night." (One of her revenge plots was filmed.) He says, "you're reckless and brave and ... so fucking incredible" (180-1) and grabs her and gives her "the kind of kiss that lit my nerves on fire." Okay, then. Watching her take revenge on his sister's rapists is getting him hot? The good news? They're perfect for each other.

Finally, the rapists get what's coming to them. Not because of Hadley, but (view spoiler) That did make me happy.

Along with some of the things I found weird and disturbing, the book does feature a female empowerment narrative in which a group of girls becomes more aware of rape culture and committed to watching out for each other. Hooray for that. But some of the issues I had with the story -- Hadley's attitude toward rape victims and the way romance and violence were mixed together -- outweighed the positives for me.

This review is based on an ARC and it's possible that there will be changes to the final edition.

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Wendy F says

Vigilante had an intense subject matter, but I think it was mostly handled with grace. I just had a few critiques, but overall enjoyed the story.

Full review on Birdie Bookworm!

Read InAGarden says

Hadley takes revenge into her own hands after her best friend is gang raped. But the revenge is at times sadistic and brutal (carving the face of one victim/attacker). At the beginning of the book, the reader feels empathy for Hadley and what she has been through but as she quickly transforms into an avenging force, it is hard to do anything but wonder how she is getting away with all the violence. She doesn't feel guilty, the adults don't notice her bruises, she's a one-girl-crusader, her friends don't catch on and it's not like she's being subtle. As another reviewer has already commented, *The Female of the Species* is so much more nuanced and well written.

Jazmen says

This story's strength and focus is female empowerment, and while I am always here for female togetherness--the lack of realism in this novel dragged down an otherwise decent read.

Hadley's best friend is dead. She committed suicide after battling the after effects of being raped. After being sexually assaulted by the school's popular boys--she was slut shamed and took her own life as a result.

Hadley is not taking it lying down--and after a chance opportunity to get one of the guys back--she sets herself on a plan of revenge.

This is where the book started to lose me.

Let me explain.

Hadley's plan for revenge seemed to lose focus along the way, and became a movement she wasn't ready for.

What really threw the story off for me, was the fact that there were multiple public instances where women were physical (and almost sexually) assaulted, and Hadley, happened to only be a step away, pink mask in hand.

I didn't find it to be realistic. Once or twice, okay--but multiple times just seemed--like forced action, seeking real emotions. It wasn't believable, and, neither was the MC.

She came off as unrealistic. Her actions betrayed her emotions. But by the end, even though I didn't necessarily care for her, I agreed with her initial mission and the outcome of it.

I think a lot of women and girls will feel empowered and uplifted by the female empowerment aspect of this story. There was major girl power, and I think readers will appreciate that.

But, if you're like me, there will be some things that will set you back--the unrealistic instances, and Hadley's flat and almost life-less personality. I didn't buy a lot of the way she was. She was often crass when I felt like she didn't need to be, and she comes off as trying to be something she wasn't.

And the romance, the romance was dry at best. It was two people, two saddened people--who clearly needed help--psychiatric help--clinging to each other because it made sense. Maybe, it was easy. Maybe, they really did like each other, but the lack of sparks and depth made for a dull romance.

As a whole, the book is pretty...okay. It has the things that worked for it, and things that didn't.

I'd recommend it to readers who love girls who kick literal butt, and may not necessarily care about the rest of it.

Maggie61 says

Revenge. We all want it at some point don't we? For most of us it is just a fantasy but after Hadley's best friend was gang raped and the rapists went free, Magda kills herself and Hadley's desire for revenge becomes her reality.

The plot line itself was good, the execution was much weaker and so unrealistic on so many levels. Also, what Hadley started with her female empowerment became out of control. While it's fantastic to bring more awareness to rape and sexual assault, the prevention of and the need for self defence, it had a domino effect and some of the results defeated the purpose and took away from the main message.

And really, did the end justify the means?

I would have to give this one a 2 1/2.

K. says

Trigger warnings: rape, suicide, graphic violence, assault, bullying, slut shaming.

This book is definitely not an easy one to read, but I'm not entirely sure why it's slid under the radar as much as it has. It's the story of a teenage girl whose best friend was date raped and gang raped the previous year. In the "she wanted it" aftermath of bullshit, said best friend commits suicide. The protagonist - who was the one to find her best friend after both the rape AND the suicide - blames herself. In her senior year, she decides that she's going to get revenge on the group of boys responsible, seeing as the law has had zero impact.

So it's definitely not an easy book to read. And at times, Hadley was...an infuriating character. Certainly in the early stages, she has moments where she blames Magda for what happened, saying that Magda shouldn't have been interested in Drew. I *think* the intention was to show her character development and how prevalent rape culture is, even in those who believe and support rape victims, but it just came across as a little...icky.

ANYWAY.

There's a lot of girl power stuff in this book, which was great. There's a lot of teenage girls banding together to support each other and have each other's backs. There's a lot of Hadley actually making female friends and learning that adult women have experienced just as much rape culture bullshit as she has.

The actual vigilante stuff was...a little contrived at times. The romance was a little insta-love adjacent but still cute.

In summary: the girl power stuff was great. The confrontation of rape culture was great. The ending was...a little abrupt, to be honest, and it was slightly too neat and tidy for my liking. But on the whole, this was solid.

Madison says

I have always loved Kady Cross' series The Steampunk Chronicles, so I was very excited to read Vigilante - a change in genre but a book that sounded incredibly intense and with an interesting way to approach the subjects of sexual assault and a community's response to rape.

Hadley's best friend Magda was raped by four classmates. A few months later, Magda is dead, having taken her own life. Hadley is left with a drowning sense of grief and guilt. She has to see the four boys in her classroom everyday as the four of them were never charged. When a sudden opportunity arises, Hadley decides to create some of her own justice and plans to go after each of the boys who hurt her friend. But when a video of her going after the first guy in a pink ski mask goes viral, the Pink Vigilante is born and Hadley's journey for revenge gets much bigger than she ever imagined.

Let me just say, some of the people of Hadley's town and school totally deserved everything Hadley dished out to them, and more. Corrupt systems biased by influence and money are no doubt, sadly, very realistic in many cases. But I liked how so many people started to rally behind the Pink Vigilante. But that begs the question, did some people do that because they wanted to stop violence towards women or because it involved violence? This book will spark many important discussions, things that need to be talked about and not shuffled to the dark, hidden corners of our world.

Hadley is an interesting character. Very realistic, I thought. I liked how she wasn't always the person she wanted to be. She is flawed. She grew impatient with Magda and is angry at a lot of people, especially herself. As she acts as the Pink Vigilante she doubts if it is the right thing to do and wonders how it will change her. What makes her different from the boys who hurt her friend?

Hadley's inner monologues got a little preachy at times, particularly about girls who don't understand the risks or the way society treats both the survivors and perpetrators of sexual violence. Good points, perhaps, but she would often repeat herself, thinking and saying the same things many times. Because of this, the writing style of this book is a little clunky. With repetitive sections and really obvious explanations, it lacks the delicate way that some books have of saying something without even saying it. But, nonetheless, this is an easy book to read. There is suspense and action as well as the introspection, friendship, family, and romance aspects. I wasn't sure how exactly it would Vigilante would unfold. Nor, what it's final message would be. Is it okay to use violence to combat violence? When it is time to stand up and say enough? What should the consequence for sexual assault be? I certainly liked the point that to prevent sexual assault people must simply not to commit sexual assault, rather than placing the responsibility on girls to wear particular clothing or act in certain ways.

Vigilante is not for the faint hearted. There are many description of rape and violence, some quite detailed. It is certainly an intense book. Personally, I enjoyed reading Vigilante, but its true value lies in being a conversation starter, addressing important topics. Vigilante is just as much a book about the survivors of sexual assault as is it about the family and friends of those survivors. It is about the family and friends of people who suicide. It is about grief, guilt, justice and revenge. And it is about community, standing together.

The publishers provided an advanced readers copy of this book for reviewing purposes. All opinions are my own.

Find more reviews on my blog [Madison's Library](#).

Figgy says

Review to come.

Important message, but I didn't love the execution of this one.

PinkAmy loves books, cats and naps says

Grade: B

4 stars

After being raped by four popular boys, Hadley's best friend Magda commits suicide when the boys go free and she's slut shamed. Determined to give the guys the justice they deserve, Hadley dons a pink mask and goes after them, one by one, using her martial arts training. She becomes known as the Pink Vigilante. Soon other young women are wearing pink masks, protecting other potential victims.

In all honesty, VIGILANTE is at most a three-star book, but I enjoyed the spirit of the story and reading it do much I inflated my review. This is a book about empowerment, self-defense and protecting oneself and others.

Although Magda's rape was caught on tape and blasted over social media, the wealthy boys still escaped legal consequences and are just as popular. They're even considered victims of false accusations. She's still blamed for her attack--she shouldn't have dressed so sexy, shouldn't have drank, shouldn't have had a crush on the guy who started the gang rape.

Unwanted touch, sexual assault and rape are too common, though even one attack is too many. Everybody knows someone who has been touched against her will. Even if you don't realize it, you do. Your mother, sister, aunt, girlfriend, friend, father, brother, uncle, boyfriend, spouse. Maybe even you. Assault is NEVER the fault of the victim. No matter what. Rapists are 100% responsible for rape. As Hadley told her mother, she could be drunk, walk naked through her school waving a pack of condoms, and nobody would have the right to rape her.

Another excellent component of VIGILANTE was the sex-positive message for girls, that wanting and enjoying sex is healthy and okay, condoms are a given not an afterthought and anyone can change her mind at any point during the process.

The message of VIGILANTE sometimes fails in its execution. The book is very violent. Revenge is not justice, though often without consequence in the book. Hadley went too far with the first three boys and probably committed several crimes. The fact they escaped justice didn't mean she was right to commit crimes against them. I wasn't sorry to see the rapists get their comeuppance, I would have liked it to be within the bounds of the law. I wouldn't have wanted my own rape to have been avenged in those manners.

The quality of Kady Cross's writing was average at best, often awkward. For example, Hadley repeatedly used phrases like "the older woman said" to describe the police officer's dialogue. Granted, a thirty-something-year-old might seem like an older woman, but when only the two were present, "she" would have sufficed and been less clunky. The action scenes were well-written.

I strongly recommend VIGILANTE for schools with follow-up discussions on consent.
