



## Good Masters! Sweet Ladies!

By Laura Amy Schlitz

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Maidens, monks, and millers' sons — in these pages, readers will meet them all. There's Hugo, the lord's nephew, forced to prove his manhood by hunting a wild boar; sharp-tongued Nelly, who supports her family by selling live eels; and the peasant's daughter, Mogg, who gets a clever lesson in how to save a cow from a greedy landlord. There's also mud-slinging Barbary (and her noble victim); Jack, the compassionate half-wit; Alice, the singing shepherdess; and many more. With a deep appreciation for the period and a grand affection for both characters and audience, Laura Amy Schlitz creates twenty-two riveting portraits and linguistic gems equally suited to silent reading or performance. Illustrated with pen-and-ink drawings by Robert Byrd — inspired by the Munich-Nuremberg manuscript, an illuminated poem from thirteenth-century Germany — this witty, historically accurate, and utterly human collection forms an exquisite bridge to the people and places of medieval England.

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

*Starred Review.* Schlitz (The Hero Schliemann ) wrote these 22 brief monologues to be performed by students at the school where she is a librarian; here, bolstered by lively asides and unobtrusive notes, and illuminated by Byrd's (Leonardo, Beautiful Dreamer) stunningly atmospheric watercolors, they bring to life a prototypical English village in 1255. Adopting both prose and verse, the speakers, all young, range from the half-wit to the lord's daughter, who explains her privileged status as the will of God. The doctor's son shows off his skills ("Ordinary sores/ Will heal with comfrey, or the white of an egg./ An eel skin takes the cramping from a leg"); a runaway villein (whose life belongs to the lord of his manor) hopes for freedom after a year and a day in the village, if only he can calculate the passage of time; an eel-catcher describes her rough infancy: her "starving poor [father] took me up to drown in a bucket of water." (He relents at the sight of her "wee fingers" grasping at the sides of the bucket.) Byrd, basing his work on a 13th-century German manuscript, supplies the first page of each speaker's text with a tone-on-tone patterned border overset with a square miniature. Larger watercolors, some with more intricate borders, accompany explanatory text for added verve. The artist does not channel a medieval style; rather, he mutes his palette and angles some lines to hint at the period, but his use of cross-hatching and his mostly realistic renderings specifically welcome a contemporary readership. Ages 10-up.

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From [Booklist](#)

*\*Starred Review\** The author of *A Drowned Maiden's Hair: A Melodrama* (2006), Schlitz turns to a completely different kind of storytelling here. Using a series of interconnected monologues and dialogues featuring young people living in and around an English manor in 1255, she offers first-person character sketches that build upon each other to create a finer understanding of medieval life. The book was inspired by the necessity of creating a play suitable for a classroom where "no one wanted a small part." Each of the 23 characters (between 10 and 15 years old) has a distinct personality and a societal role revealed not by recitation of facts but by revelation of memories, intentions, and attitudes. Sometimes in prose and more often in one of several verse forms, the writing varies nicely from one entry to the next. Historical notes appear in the vertical margins, and some double-page spreads carry short essays on topics related to individual narratives, such as falconry, the Crusades, and Jews in medieval society. Although often the characters' specific concerns are very much of their time, their outlooks and emotional states will be familiar to young people today. Reminiscent of medieval art, Byrd's lively ink drawings, tinted with watercolors, are a handsome addition to this well-designed book. This unusually fine collection of related monologues and dialogues promises to be a rewarding choice for performance or for reading aloud in the classroom. Phelan, Carolyn

Review

### NELLY THE SNIGGLER

I was born lucky. Nay, not born lucky, as you shall hear - but lucky soon after and ever after. My father and mother were starving poor, and dreaded another mouth to feed. When my father saw I was a girl-child, he took me up to drown in a bucket of water.

But here's the lucky part - and 'tis pure sooth. I didn't drown, babe though I was. I took hold with my wee fingers and held to the side of the bucket (1). And my mother wept, and my father's heart went soft, and he could no more drown me than himself-and they named me Nelly, for Queen Eleanor (2).

And their luck changed. First my uncle died of the scurvy and we got his pigs. Then the nuns at the abbey hired us to catch eels - and we've been sniggling ever since (3).

Do you see these eels? Fresher than the day they were born - and fat as priests. I know where their burrows are, and I know what they like for bait. And as for frogs - I've been catching frogs since I was two years old; there

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Mildred Patton:**

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#### **Elmer Dooley:**

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#### **Christopher Palmer:**

The book untitled Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! contains a lot of information on that. The writer explains the girl idea with an easy approach. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do not worry, you can easily read it. The book was compiled by a famous author. The author will take you in the new time of literary works. You can read this book because you can continue reading your smart phone, or device, so you can read the book in anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can open up their official website and also order it. Have a nice study.

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