



2010

### The Youngest Templar: Keeper of the Grail

Tessa McMillan

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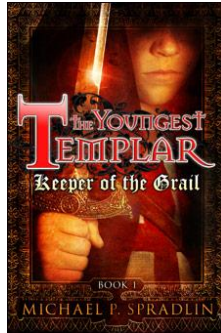
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Spradlin, Michael. *The Youngest Templar: Keeper of the Grail*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2008. ISBN 9780399247637. \$17.99. 248 p.

Reviewer: Tessa McMillan

Reading level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Fiction; Historical Fiction;

Subject: Knights and Knighthood --Juvenile Fiction; Grail --Juvenile Fiction; Crusades --Third, 1189-1192 --Juvenile Fiction; Books--Reviews;

Tristan has been living at St. Alban's monastery his whole life. When Tristan is fifteen, a Templar knight named Sir Thomas, asks Tristan to become his squire. While preparing for the Crusades, Tristan is introduced to King Richard. Tristan and the Templar knights are sent to the Holy Land to defend the Christian settlements from Saladin. During a losing battle, Sir Thomas reveals to Tristan that he has the Holy Grail and entrusts the grail to Tristan to take it to a Scottish monastery. Tristan escapes the battle and heads to the last Christian harbor to secure a passage back to England. A King's Archer, Robard Hode, joins Tristan on his quest. While protecting themselves from bandits, they wound a Saladin assassin, Maryam. Tristan and Robard help heal Maryam. She feels indebted to them and joins the group. When the group arrives at the Christian port city, Tyre, Tristan hides the grail and seeks the Templar headquarters. However, Tristan and Robard are betrayed and imprisoned. Maryam helps Tristan and Robard escape, and Tristan retrieves the grail with the help of a dog. Tristan secures a boat to take them all back to England. The boat heads into a dangerous storm that causes Tristan to fall overboard.

Spradlin's story is well paced and expertly written. Readers can see how much research was involved in creating the story. *Keeper of the Grail* is part one of a trilogy. The second book is entitled *Trail of Fate*.

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