The Brides of Rollrock Island

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**Title:** The Brides of Rollrock Island  
**Author:** Margo Lanagan  
**Reviewer:** Tessara Garrett  
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**Review**

Lanagan combines many characters’ short stories into one extended and connected tale. Her writing is lovely and engaging, and she paints beautiful pictures of the island of Rollrock. She retells the legend of selkies, seals that turn into women, and the men that steal their magical selkie skins to keep them in human form. The witch Misskaela seeks revenge for society’s mistreatment of her, and she uses her magic to show the men of Rollrock their own shallow folly. The women she drives away as their men are all enchanted with the magical selkie wives Misskaela draws from the sea. It is a tragic tale for all as, in the end, no one really gets to be with the ones they love.

The story carries themes of revenge, ugliness vs. beauty, and love vs. lust. The book raises questions of morality on these points. Are the men at fault for being tempted by the selkies or is it Misskaela’s fault for enchanting them? Is Misskaela’s revenge on the men of the island founded? The story has some heavy morals and adult themes that demand deep thought, but the basic tale is intriguing and entertaining.

*Contains infidelity, premarital sex, and other sexual content, infrequent language, and minor violence*