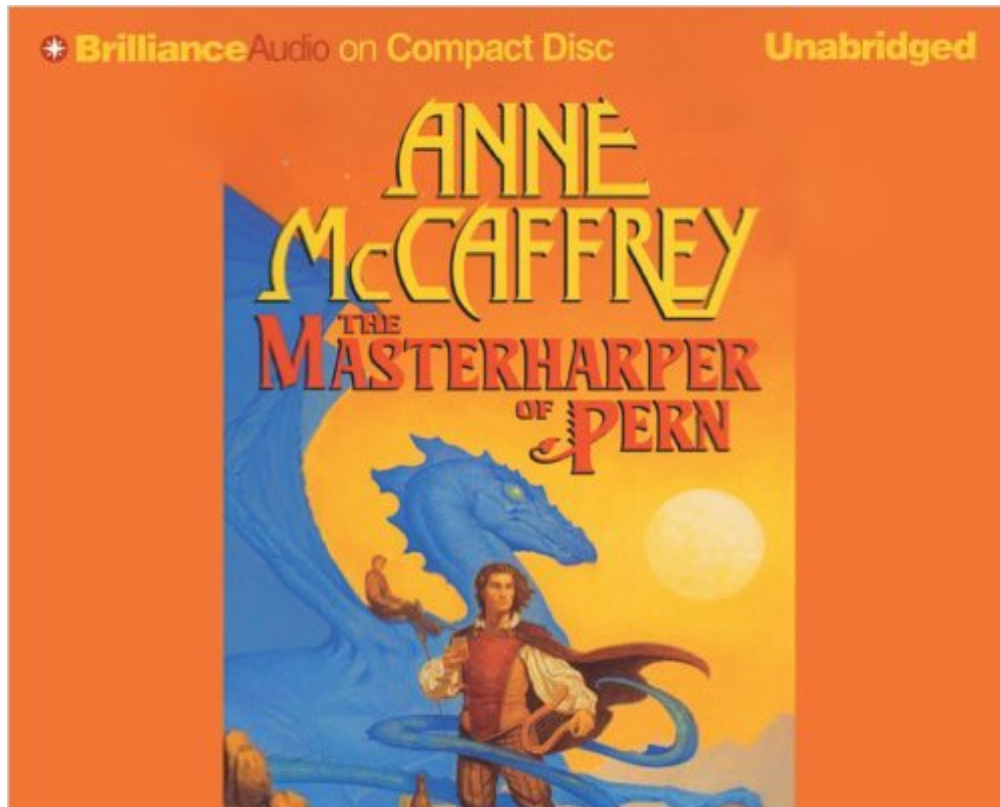


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# The Masterharper Of Pern (Dragonriders Of Pern Series)



## Synopsis

In a time when no Thread has fallen for centuries - when, indeed, many are beginning to dare to hope that Thread will never fall again - a boy is born to Harper Hall. His name is Robinton, and he is destined to be one of the most famous and beloved leaders Pern has ever known. It is a perilous time for harpers. They sing of Thread, yet more and more people are beginning to doubt the return of that deadly scourge. They teach reading, writing, history, but Fax - who hates the harpers in general - is determined to keep his growing area of influence free of the learning that might sow unrest. And they extol the dragonriders, whom many view increasingly as a drain on the resources of the Holds. Now harpers are being turned away from the holds; and, worse yet, they are being derided, attacked, even beaten. It is the climate of unrest that Robinton will come into his own. For despite the tragedies that beset his own life, he continues to believe in music and in the dragons, and is determined to save his beloved Pern from itself . . . so that the dragonriders can be ready to fly against the dreaded Thread when it at last returns!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

At the time \_Masterharper of Pern\_ came out, I was rueing the decline of the Dragonriders of Pern series. After \_Dragonsdawn\_, the books seemed to lose a lot of their original magic and appeal; even \_Dragonseye\_, while certainly better than \_Dolphins of Pern\_, didn't quite live up to standard. The good news is that \_Masterharper of Pern\_ *\*does\**. This is a wonderful, vivid,

emotional book, clear in detail, strong in character, and with settings one can easily get into. It's a delight to get to meet the father of F'lar and F'nor; likewise, the insight on Fax and his ambitions is welcome. Pern fans and non-Pern fans alike should be able to enjoy this one--it's not just another installment in the series, but a welcome and well-written tale in its own right. That brings me to the bad news. While Masterharper has all of the virtues I've named above, it has two major faults: consistency and suspension of disbelief. This book just doesn't match up with the earlier ones in some respects. The character of Petiron here doesn't seem like the Petiron Menolly knew in Dragonsinger (granted, age changes a man, but still...). F'lon, while a fine man, does not seem to inspire the sense of respect and even awe that one can pick up about him in Dragonflight. Robinton can hear dragons; why, then, was he so surprised to hear them again in Dragonquest? Which leads right into the suspension of disbelief: Robinton, much as I admire his character, is *\*too good\** here. Not only is he a musical genius, not only is he polite and courteous and perfect in every way, but he hears dragons too? Goodness, can't the poor man be allowed any flaws/lackings?

I was intrigued, but disappointed. I have been a fan of Anne McCaffrey's for several years now and have read, re-read, and analysed her books while trying to write my own Pern adventures. And while I applaud her imagination and keen grasp of human relationships and politics, I found that this book just didn't fit in with what I'd led myself to expect by reading her other books. Why, for instance, is Masterharper Robinton so surprised when Mnementh speaks to him for the first time in Dragonquest, if he's practically grown up speaking to dragons? Why does Petiron not disabuse Menolly of her notion that women can't be harpers and what is the problem about sending her to the Harper Hall in Dragonsong, if Petiron's own wife Merelan is called MasterSinger, and girls such as Halanna or Maizella are welcomed at the Hall in Masterharper of Pern? Why does R'gul repeatedly tell Lessa that queens don't fly in Dragonflight, when he's obviously old enough to remember Carola and Feyrith flying around Benden Weyr? Also, I found the idea of Robinton disguised as a drudge at Ruatha Hold just a little far-fetched. And by the way, whatever happened to Lessa's power, the power that kept Ruatha from prospering under Fax, the power to manipulate men's minds for her own ends? This particular aspect of the Ruathan Bloodline wasn't even mentioned in Masterharper. It also seemed to me that the estrangement between Weyr and Hold had been gradual, over the course of generations, not happening in a mere thirty-forty years. Of course Anne McCaffrey has the right to change and improve her writings in any way that pleases her, and perhaps I'm too much of a purist, but I found this particular rendering of Pern too different from her original books. It just didn't

ring true in my ears.

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