



Lords and Ladies

Terry Pratchett

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A Discworld Novel. It's a hot Midsummer Night. The crop circles are turning up everywhere—even on the mustard-and-cress of Pewsey Ogg, aged four. And Magrat Garlick, witch, is going to be married in the morning...Everything ought to be going like a dream. But the Lancre All-Comers Morris Team have got drunk on a fairy mound and the elves have come back, bringing all those things traditionally associated with the magical, glittering realm of Faerie: cruelty, kidnapping, malice and evil, evil murder.* Granny Weatherwax and her tiny argumentative coven have really got their work cut out this time...With full supporting cast of dwarfs, wizards, trolls, Morris Dancers and one orang-utan. And lots. of hey-nonny-nonny and blood all over the place.

*But with tons of style.

Lords and Ladies Details

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Author : Terry Pratchett

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From Reader Review Lords and Ladies for online ebook

Bradley says

The great Re-Read of Discworld continues... with the witches. :) This is a pretty direct followup from Mag's romantic adventure with the king-to-be and culminating in the grand wedding between the two.

As weddings go, every grand personage of the Discworld (or so it seems) has been invited to the wedding, but of course, things don't go all that well with all those crop circles and the E***S who must not be named.

Pretty funny, all told, but it's Og and her suiter who steals the show. And Old Weatherwax. Again. Mags... well... I've never cared much for her. I just want my darling Tiff. Where oh where is she? Why can't I care all that much that Mag is NO LONGER A WITCH?

I complain, sure, but it's not a complaint because I think the novel is bad. Far from it. I just think it's slightly uneven in my enjoyment of certain characters. Nothing more. But is it a fine story?

You bet. :) I'll even a throw in a horseshoe for you.

Tfitoby says

The witches are returning to Lancre after the events of Witches Abroad to find that nothing much has changed in their absence, except that some young girls have been meddling with witchcraft and allowed the elves to cross from their dimension in to the Lancre hills and are once more attempting to enslave the Disc. Granny is getting forgetful, Nanny is getting amorous and Magrat is going to be Queen on Midsummer's Night. What chance does the Disc have when it's in the hands of comic artisans, bumbling wizards, the Disc's second greatest lover and palace everyman Shaun Ogg?

I've tended to get a bit repetitive with my reviews of the Discworld, but that's because they are almost all of a universally high standard, all focussing on the power of the story and the ability to cloud a collective mind with the glamour of Belief, and almost all terrifically funny. Lords and Ladies excels in all of those regular Pratchett fields, being the more complete of all of the Witches books to date and not relying too heavily on the classic tale that forms the basis for Pratchett's leap of imagination it would be positioned ahead of the more widely acclaimed Wyrd Sisters on all counts barring just how perfect the earlier book is in terms of pastiche and entertainment value. This is top quality early Discworld, another sign of the growth of the author and his understanding of just what he had in his hands with this series.

Holly says

I like this one: about how folklore isn't as benign as we often believe, about all the different lives we might have led...and about how, especially on your wedding day, "it's not about what you've got but how you got it." I'd have preferred mud-encrusted chain mail and scraps of silk to the dress I had, but the truth of this still applies to me as much.

Melki says

The gals have been gone a while, and lots of things can happen in eight month's time.

Magrat is still planning to marry the new king (and former fool) of Lancre, and anyone who's everyone will be attending the Royal Wedding, including our favorite Librarian. (If only they can get him to put on some clothes...)

But wait...strange things are happening. (Well, stranger things than the strange things that normally happen in Discworld.)

Even the bees are worried.

Granny Weatherwax is reunited with an old love. Nanny Ogg is being wooed by a dwarf who's also the world's *second* greatest lover. Magrat is discovering that being Queen is really...boring.

And the "lords and ladies" have somehow found a way through, and here's a hint...they're NOT here for the Morris Dancing!

Now, it's up to the witches to stop Magrat's fairy tale ending from being ruined by...fairies.

Chris says

I love Pratchett's spin on fantasy. He takes a well-known faerie tale (elves) and shines a totally different light on them:

"Elves are wonderful. They provoke wonder.

Elves are marvellous. They cause marvels.

Elves are fantastic. They create fantasies.

Elves are glamorous. They project glamour.

Elves are enchanting. They weave enchantment.

Elves are terrific. They beget terror.

The thing about words is that meanings can twist just like a snake, and if you want to find snakes look for them behind words that have changed their meaning.

No one ever said elves are nice.

Elves are bad."

As the Elves attempt to cross over into our world through contact with a young, naive wanna-be witch Magrat struggles with her transition from Witch to Queen. Pratchett does such a wonderful job of developing all these characters that by the end of the book I feel like I know them personally.

I was sad to see the book end. It means another long wait at the Library for Maskerade to become available so I can see where the story leads.

??? ??? says

Nataliya says

“Witches can generally come to terms with what actually is, instead of insisting on what ought to be.”

As anyone who knows me can attest to, I tend to gush over Pratchett's books, with all his wit and wisdom and the ability to create **incredibly clever and very serious humor rooted in uncomfortably deep understanding of human mind.**

“Personal’s not the same as important. People just think it is.”

Lords and Ladies of the Lancre Witches subcycle of the Discworld books was the first Pratchett Witches book I've read a few years ago (I tended to read them out of order, whichever one the library happened to have in stock) and the book that immediately sealed my love for Granny Weatherwax and Co.

These books are about a small coven of witches in a tiny mountainous country of Lancre, usually with a dab of William Shakespeare somewhere in the plot. As anything by Sir Terry, they of course have more layers than a Chernobyl-sized onion: the wisdom, the traditions, the heart of the land, the nooks and crannies of hearts and minds, and of course the people with all their quirks and oddities - and maybe even a bag of boiled sweets. But at the heart of every one of these is a **formidable figure of Esmerelda "Granny" Weatherwax, an old skinny prickly witch with personality of steel, will of iron, wisdom of the land, and a sure knowledge of when NOT to use her immense scary power**. She always knows who she is and why she is, and that's not something to take lightly.

"Other people would probably say: I wasn't myself. But Granny Weatherwax didn't have anyone else to be."

Esme Weatherwax is a capital-W witch who knows that witching is far more than magic and power. She knows that the place where she lives is HERs, with all the responsibilities that stem from it. She knows that you don't need to be nice or loved or admired to be good at what you do. And she knows very well, with self-assurance that is prone to sometimes slide into a bit of arrogance, that crossing her is not something to be taken lightly. Does she have regrets about her life? Perhaps, to a point. But her core of steel, the Iron-in-her-Heart goes deep, even when she was just a young woman always a step ahead of a pursuing young man. **Esme Weatherwax was always her own self, always knowing who she is.**

"But what we have here is not a nice girl, as generally understood [...] Also, there's a certain glint in her eye generally possessed by those people who have found that they are more intelligent than most people around them but who haven't yet learned that one of the most intelligent things they can do is prevent said people ever finding this out."

The focus of *Lords and Ladies*, insomuch as you can ever find a single overarching theme in a Pratchett book, is knowing the difference between what you wish things were and what they really are. Be it quiet regrets about what could have been if perhaps you let the young man from your past catch up with you - even if it means letting go of something your core is made of, or a timid wish to steer your own life yourself even if it's already headed where you were hoping it would and not find yourself just another useless adornment in life, or being able to look past the alluring glamour and see that the easy way can indeed be much harder than the seemingly hard way.

"You mean you weren't Chosen?"

"Me? No. I chose," said Granny [...] "I chose, Gytha Ogg. And I want that you should know this right now. Whatever happens. I ain't never regretted anything. Never regretted one single thing. Right?"

And assure that in the midst of all of it that you know exactly who and why you are.

Even in the times like this, where things are not going right.

“There was a mind moving around in the kingdom, and Granny Weatherwax didn’t understand it.”

It's that time again where boundaries between universes - both parallel and parasite - are becoming thin and crop circles are forming everywhere, and a ring of ancient iron-loving stones is not enough to contain the titular Lords and Ladies (the Elves, decidedly not glamorously-Tolkienesque).

*“Elves are wonderful. They provoke wonder.
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No one ever said elves are nice.”*

There is a royal wedding on a midsummer night's eve, and elves are loose in the world once again, and a unicorn is on a prowl while an ancient king is waiting for the iron in the hearts to be gone while a present-day king because of poor spelling gets a book on martial and very much not marital arts, and the Archancellor of the a Unseen University may have had a past with the most formidable witch in perhaps the entire Discworld, and Magrat Garlick tries to come to terms with no longer being a witch but instead hopes to not fall into the useless queenly obscurity, and Nanny Ogg has caught an eye of the second-best lover in the universe. And it will take a village - spearheaded by the witches - to teach the invaders a lesson.

*“When he’d gone, Nanny climbed up on the same table.
“Well,” she said, “it’s like this. If you go out there you may have to face elves. But if you stops here, you definitely have to face me. Now, elves is worse than me, I’ll admit. But I’m persistent.”*

I love this book. I love how Pratchett's writing never ceases to amaze me. **I love how no matter how tired, exhausted or deeply stressed I am all I need to feel better is to curl up with a book like this and have Granny Weatherwax sort the world out into what she knows it's supposed to be.**

*“Granny, her voice still quite calm and level. “But this is a real world, madam. That’s what I had to learn. And real people in it. You got no right to ‘em. People’ve got enough to cope with just being people. They don’t need you swanning around with your shiny hair and shiny eyes and shiny gold, going sideways through life, always young, always singing, never learning.”
“You didn’t always think like this.”*

*“That was a long time ago. And, my lady, old I may be, and hag I may be, but stupid I ain’t. You’re no kind of goddess. I ain’t against gods and goddesses, in their place. But they’ve got to be the ones we make ourselves. Then we can take ‘em to bits for the parts when we don’t need ‘em anymore, see? And elves far away in fairyland, well, maybe that’s something people need to get ‘emselves through the iron times. But I ain’t having elves here. You make us want what we can’t have and what you give us is worth nothing and what you take is everything and all there is left for us is the cold hillside, and emptiness, and the laughter of the elves.”
She took a deep breath. “So bugger off.”*

Lucian Bogdan says

Sunt sigur că Lumea Disc există pe undeava, prin multivers. Iar genialul ei creator, Terry Pratchett, o veghează? și acum îndeaproape. Am avut ocazia să vizitez din nou minunatul și minusculul regat Lancre, unde Buna Batevreme și ?a?a Ogg au avut de-a face cu... cu... of, nu le pot spune numele, n-am destul fier prin preajmă. Dar cartea a fost excep?ională.

Lindsay says

Part of the Pratchett reread with the SpecFic Buddy Reads group.

This book has Granny Weatherwax, Nanny Ogg and Magrat Garlick returning home to Lancre from their time away (see *Witches Abroad*). Magrat gets to finally resolve her situation with King Verence and begin dealing with her post-Witch situation. Granny and Nanny both have a lot going on as well, with the faculty of the Unseen University and Casanunda paying visits. Oh, and an incursion into our reality by murderous Elves and their Queen.

There's a lot of foundation being laid for the future of the Witches in this book. I think that was part of the genius of Terry: fourteen books in and he's still writing foundational stories for his universe. While I did love this, it's kind of a mess compared to other books in this sub-series. Really only let down by what precedes and follows it, and still would be brilliant if it had come from anybody else. But I know he can do better (because he *does* later on).

Cabezabajo says

Definitivamente Pratchett se luce en la saga de las brujas, cada nueva historia es mejor que la anterior.

Los personajes principales crecen mucho en esta entrega. Conocemos mucho mejor a Magrat y a Yaya, y las conversaciones entre ésta y Tata son tronchantes. Introducir a los magos en el universo particular de Lancre es todo un acierto, pero para mí el gran punto fuerte es la teoría de los universos alternativos, muy bien llevada a lo largo de la novela.

Ha sido muy curioso conocer a los lores y las damas habiendo leído '*El señor de los anillos*' hace poco más de un mes. Existe una influencia de Tolkien en Pratchett y aquí se hace patente con unos puntos de humor magníficos.

YouKneeK says

Lords and Ladies is the fourth book in the *Witches* subseries of *Discworld*. I enjoyed it, but not as much as the previous two *Witches* books. I thought the humor, while present, wasn't nearly as strong as it was in the last two.

I think the humor seemed weaker because our main characters (Granny Weatherwax, Nanny Ogg, and Magrat, of course!) were often off doing separate things, and a big part of what makes me laugh in these books comes from dialogue between Granny Weatherwax and Nanny Ogg. On the other hand, Magrat actually had some decent moments in this book, although I expect she'll continue to annoy me more often than not in future books.

The story was pretty interesting, though, and I thought it was one of the stronger stories I've read so far in the *Discworld* series. To clarify, I don't really consider any of the *Discworld* stories to be that strong so I'm not saying this is a story that will keep people on the edge of their seats, but it did hold my interest. I'm not sure how to describe what this one is about without spoiling the not-entirely-unexpected-but-still-interesting reveal about who the antagonists are, so I'll just be vague and say that some wannabe young witches meddle with things they don't understand and help certain unexpectedly evil and malicious beings gain a foothold into the world.

I'm giving this book 3.5 stars on BookLikes, but I didn't enjoy it enough to round up to 4 stars here.

Wiebke (1book1review) says

Rereading this was a revelation of sorts. I had forgotten that this book was about elves and also how much I had learned from Granny Weatherwax in this novel.

Needless to say I enjoyed the read immensely and can't wait to continue traveling in Discworld.

Gavin says

In my last review I admitted that I was a big fan of re-contextualised mythology, and I think anyone who has any interest in fantasy will find that they are too.

In *Lords and Ladies*, Pratchett re-draws the boundaries where elves are concerned. Trying to push the fae folk back from Tolkien's ("pretty = lovely") vision towards their German/Scandinavian folkloric roots ("pretty = dangerous") is -to this day- an almost entirely unique direction to head in, and an interesting one. After all, people are statistically more liable to forgive an attractive person than an ugly one.

This book also represents the point at which the limitations Pratchett had placed on himself -in particular "one story, one book"- started to chafe. *Lords and Ladies* is the fourth book in the Weatherwax Canon (though *Equal Rites*' Granny was clearly an entirely different character) and Pterry himself admits that it had indeed become a canon in the foreword.

On my first read I was really surprised by the inclusion of a few choice Faculty members in the narrative, and while it was absolutely necessary for Ridcully to be there, it did feel as though the Librarian/Bursar/Stibbons were along to ensure more plot-important characters were able to go where they needed to. These (and other, similar) bits of word-flab were what kept the book from being as good as his best (*Witches Abroad/Reaper Man*). He seemed to spend so much work establishing the elves as a threat and writing everyone to where they needed to be that when the final confrontation started happening it was over

again before any credible danger was presented.

However; even when he's writing sections that would be dull in the hands of other authors it's incredibly difficult to complain and pick fault because it's still Terry Pratchett at the top of his game writing the words. Hodgesaargh and his hawks, Mr Brooks and his bees, Jason Ogg and the Morris Men, Magrat and Queen Ynci, Iron and elves. The sheer volume of quality ideas and the subtlety of their presentation is indicative of someone who knows exactly what they are doing, and even when you're wandering the woods with bit-parters it is presented in such an entertaining way that you neither realise nor mind.

The action is tight and efficient, the characters are (by this point) superbly drawn and understandably motivated and the idea of the King waiting in his barrow for the Iron In The Head to rust is absolutely *fantastic*. *Lords and Ladies* was the start of a run of books that changed the way I read. I have rustled through it more times than I dare think about and I still did not have to force myself to turn a single page.

? Irena ? says

It started slow and I was beginning to wonder how is it possible that a story with Granny Weatherwax could be like *this*. Then it picked up a bit and almost until one heart-stopping moment near the end it was just an ok story with occasional brilliant flashes that I have come to expect from a Discworld book.

As usual, Nanny Ogg was hilarious. Granny's out of the character behaviour got a satisfactory explanation.

The lords and ladies are elves and they want to come back. Since they are murdering monsters, it's no wonder there are those who don't agree with the idea. The whole issue is best described in the following:

*'Elves are wonderful. They provoke wonder.
Elves are marvelous. They cause marvels.
Elves are fantastic. They create fantasies.
Elves are glamorous. They project glamour.
Elves are enchanting. They weave enchantment.
Elves are terrific. They beget terror.
The thing about words is that meanings can twist just like a snake, and if you want to find snakes look for them behind words that have changed their meaning.
No one ever said elves are nice.
Elves are bad.'*

The jolt I got from that heart-stopping moment near the end was enough to save this story. (view spoiler)

Claudiu says

Books like 'Lords and ladies' are the reason why I seem to return to Pratchett's universe time and time again. You can always count on this author to produce something new with his already established character sets and settings...and that's a fantastic draw.

I won't go into summary for the plot or story. There are tens of reviews written already that have that covered...so I'll just justify those 5 marks up there. And since I feel I'll be adding this to any review I write, the stars do not represent an objective opinion (as they really shouldn't) but rather a way of turning the level

of enjoyment into a numeric value. Kind of crude if you think about it, but that's just the most direct way of saying "I don't/like this".

Anyway. I've been reading Pratchett in order for quite some time now and I find my preferences to waver quite a bit from book to book. It's a massive universe he's built so that's bound to happen. I never found myself terribly impressed with the Witches but this one may have been the one that completely rewrote it for me.

While exploring some very genre changing themes for the race of Elves, Pratchett manages to squeeze in a fair share of character development that's quite unlike him. Sure, his books do offer fantastic characters, but you could usually count on them to be the same ponies at the end, which I'm happy to say has changed now. Granny Weatherwas, Magrat, even Nanny and Ridcully get a fair share of development, and a deep look into who they really are and what they can achieve in life.

Of course, visits from favorites like Ponder Stibbons, Death and the Librarian are a huge plus as well, but those first four really stole it this time.

Pratchett worked myth like I have yet to see him do it. It's a refreshing take that got a well deserve spotlight in this story of growth and change. Although generally things stay the same, it feels as if the Discworld is truly alive through this story, and through its characters that are heartwarming to watch struggle and explore what makes them tick.

Of course, the humor's still there and it's better than ever. The last couple of books I've read from Terry Pratchett have been on an ascending slope regarding both humor and the quality of the story so I'm hoping that this will continue in the future.

As usual, there's always very little to say about a good book...or an enjoyable one, if you prefer this phrasing. I could talk about how fascinating Lancre is (for such a small and gray kingdom), about how interesting Granny Weatherwax is as a powerful character (aside from the Patrician, there are few powerful characters on the Discworld, that aren't so just for the sake of the story), about how much you can grow attached to the Librarian even with his short presence or some rather interesting themes like what it really means to be the best.

But I won't go into those details. As you can see, I am a fan. If you are one as well, you'll read this with the same pleasure you would otherwise; if you're not a fan, there's no point in spoiling things for you, now is there?

As such, I enjoyed this book, I count it among Pratchett's best and I wish the next ones will be even half as interesting and good as this.

Jono says

i agree wholeheartedly, this is my FAVORITE of the Witch series. I love Granny v Lily in "Witches Abroad," but if you delighted in Mrs. Weasley gettin all Sigourney Weaver on Bellatrix L in the last Harry Potter, YOU'LL LOVE the whole last third of the book. i squirmed with glee as soon as Magrat put on that armor. the principle of a cat in a box being any of 3 various states till you open the box: alive, dead, bloody pissed off is all i know about physics, or need to know.

Lyn says

Elves on the Discworld.

In Guillermo del Toro's 2008 film Hellboy 2, the Elvin character Prince Nuada makes a point about humans remembering why they fear the dark. These elves are dark creatures, thoroughly unfaeirie like and even un-Tolkien like.

Terry Pratchett's 1992 Discworld novel (the 14th) *Lords and Ladies* describes a similarly negative vision of elves. I could not help wondering if del Toro gained some inspiration from Pratchett's dark elves.

Granny Weatherwax, Nanny Og and Magrat are just getting back to Lancre from their travels in Pratchett's 1991 *Witches Abroad* and Magrat is getting married to King Verence and some precocious and misguided local girls are tempting fate by messing around with some local Druidic circles of vast power. Turns out this is a portal to the elves dimension.

What was especially attractive about this concept to me was Pratchett's use of the elves as an alternate to a more heroic model. These elves are malevolent, arrogant and cruel – and also largely forgotten in the annals of time; so much so that ancient legends of them have focused more on the glamorous and magical than the more accurate description as evil aristocrats.

This kind of ironic twist is a ubiquitous element in much of Pratchett's work and his fans will be pleasantly amused with his droll wordplay and inventive storylines.

All this and a subtle retelling of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* makes this one of Pratchett's best. Highly recommended.

Trish says

Lancre, Granny's "turf". Very bad idea to invade here and challenge a certain witch.
BWAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA.

In this 14th volume of the *Discworld* series our three witches Granny Esme Weatherwax, Nanny Githa Ogg and Magrat return after their adventure in Genua to find all preparations made for a certain royal wedding. Since I never much cared for Magrat, I also didn't really mourn her no longer being a witch but a queen-to-be(e).

However, the festivities are first hindered by a pair of cold feet and then also slightly ... shall we say "amended" ... by crop circles showing up everywhere. On the Disc, crop circles mean that the barriers between worlds weaken and what is trying to get to Lancre has not only been there before, but has also not been very nice the last time, no matter what folklore says nowadays. Theywhomustnotbenamed indeed! So it is up to Granny and Nanny to save the day again - though others are helping them, too, if they want them to or not.

This wonderful installment not only has a nice ending to Magrat's participation in the coven but also elements from Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which is my favourite of his. And we get a larger cast thanks to a few wedding guests being there as well, making for a very nice and funny mix (not to mention some juicy information about Granny's younger years). Like I said, I was never a fan of Magrat's but she was definitely at her best in this one (especially the scene (view spoiler) so it was a worthy goodbye in my opinion.

Granny is cunning and grumpy as ever; Nanny is frivolous but caring (and, yes, talented) as ever; Greebo is eternally looking for something small and squeaky (and making the most accurate observation about Magrat). All while a certain archchancellor is trying to reconnect with a certain witch, a certain dwarf is as persistent in his wooing of a certain other witch, the Librarian is in a foul mood due to how he's being treated, a troll refuses to comment about the matter, a wonderfully bloodthirsty falcon is finally getting the food it craves, we learn almost all about bee-keeping, and ... mayhem ensues. But not without a proper unicorn, of course (and no, they aren't as fluffy as you think either).

(These are from the *Discworld Imaginarium* and the attention to detail is even more staggering than I had hoped (but you have to have read the books to realize it)!)

Anyway, I've been a fan of the witches ever since the first book Granny made an appearance in and that hasn't changed. Therefore, I knew this would be a winner but the fact that Pratchett managed to either keep the incredibly high level of quality or even improve on it, is fantastic.

Bees for the win!

Chris says

Elves.

When you think of elves, what do you think of? The tall, fair-skinned beings of Tolkien's Middle Earth? The ebony warriors from Dungeons & Dragons? Delicious cookies?

Not on Discworld. On Discworld, the Elves are folk of legend, and dark legend at that. People there remember the elves, although not very well. They remember through old wives' tales, about leaving milk for the fairies and not going near the standing stones. Ask someone in the kingdom of Lancre, and they'll think of elves as you and I think of elves - pretty, wonderful, magical...

Ask Granny Weatherwax and she'll tell you the truth - that the Elves are not of this world, and don't belong here either. She'll tell you that when the barriers of the worlds grow thin, when the crop circles start to show up, the elves will be waiting, readying themselves to come back. For theirs is a parasite universe, a land of ice, and they desire ours for their... entertainment.

Such is the setup for *Lords and Ladies*, another one of Pratchett's darker Discworld books. There is still his customary humor, of course, which would be sorely missed were it absent. But it's also got a philosophical edge to it, as many of his books of this period do. It's about faith in stories, and knowing the difference between what is true and what you wish were true.

It's circle time again, where crop circles are appearing everywhere, and the parallel and parasite universes are coming into closer contact, and Granny Weatherwax knows that she is going to die.

Or is she? She can't be sure....

Esme Weatherwax is the consummate witch. Tall, thin and bony, she's the kind of woman who can wear the pointy black hat of a witch and dare you to think she's anything else. She's strong of mind, never afraid to speak the truth, the best witch in Lancre and not slow in admitting it. But many years ago, she was a headstrong young girl who was offered power by a mysterious woman in red who stood in the center of a stone circle. The woman promised power and freedom, but could not leave the circle. Rather than take the easy way to witchcraft, Granny worked, learned, and grew old. Which is always for the best.

As is the case with many Pratchett books, there are multiple plots that all center around the Elves and their newest attempt to gain the Discworld as their own world. Magrat Garlick, the third witch (because there must always be three) is going to marry Verence, the king of Lancre and a former Fool. Mustrum Ridcully, the Archchancellor of the Unseen University in Ankh-Morpork, is attending the wedding and at the same time remembering his days in Lancre chasing after the headstrong young girl who grew up to become Esme Weatherwax. And Granny herself is remembering things that happened to all possible Esme Weatherwaxes, and for someone as sure of herself as she is, is having a serious identity problem.

Something needs to be said here about the three witches of Lancre, recurring characters as they are in all of the Witches books of the series. Normally this would be done chronologically, upon reviewing the first book in which they appeared, but I want to do it now. Besides, I haven't read *Equal Rites* in a long time, but it's on my list.

Granny is as I have said - the unofficial chief witch of the region, who has attained the status of being almost mythical in the village of Bad Ass. She is feared and revered, but only because she is always who she is.

Nanny (Gytha) Ogg is Esme's polar opposite. She has a face like an apple left in the sun too long, her youth is filled with enough tawdry encounters to make a fraternity lose its breath, and her fondness for bawdy tunes (such as the ever-immortal Hedgehog song) has made her a figure of legend. But like any witch, Gytha is not to be underestimated. She can think faster than most anyone, and do so around corners. She's the grounding influence for Esme when Esme gets too high on herself, and while being fearsome in her own right, she is one of the more approachable witches Lancre has to offer.

And then there is Magrat Garlick, the third witch. She is the soppy one, the romantic one, the one with the collection of occult jewelry and a library in her cottage. She's the youngest, the least experienced, but not without potential. And while the other two witches may treat her like an ignorant stripling, they only do so because that's how you become a witch - by learning things, not by being told things.

But now Magrat is going to be Queen, and there are only the two witches. And the elves are coming....

This is, as I have said, a darker book. We get an interesting look into Granny Weatherwax's psyche - who she is, what she fears - and it's a little chilling. The reader is used to the utterly unflappable Granny Weatherwax, so to see her, well, *flapped* is kind of disturbing. At the same time, though, it makes her more human than before, which she needs to be if she is to defeat the elves.

This book also offers a good look into the human need for fantasy. The elves anchor themselves to the Discworld by belief - if enough people want the elves to come, then they will. But the longer they stay away,

the more time we get without them, the more they become what *we* think they are. Stories. Myths. Cute magical critters who are to be watched, but not necessarily feared.

We need our stories to get us through the "iron times." Yes, we need elves, to help us escape from our lives from time to time, just as we need witches and wizards and gods. But we don't need them here. Here, in the real world, we have only ourselves to count on, and we need to be strong enough to do that. Stories are good, in their place. But never mistake a story for the real thing.

Carol Rodríguez says

¡Qué bueno! De nuevo encantada con un libro de Mundodisco. Siempre he dicho que mi subsaga favorita era la de la Muerte, pero hace algún tiempo que creo que las brujas la han superado. No se me ocurre qué decir sin repetirme: me encanta el humor de Terry Pratchett, el universo de Mundodisco... Nada que no haya dicho ya o que no se sepa. Pero es que este libro, que es en parte una parodia de "El sueño de una noche de verano", me ha enganchado mucho y me ha hecho disfrutar hasta el punto de que se me ha hecho corto y no quería que acabase. Una maravilla de principio a fin. ¡Qué gran talento tenía Pratchett!

Un saludo,
Carol Rodríguez
