



Bookworm

Christopher G. Nuttall

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Elaine is an orphan girl who has grown up in a world where magical ability brings power. Her limited talent was enough to ensure a magical training but she's very inexperienced and was lucky to get a position working in the Great Library. Now, the Grand Sorcerer – the most powerful magician of them all – is dying, although initially that makes little difference to Elaine; she certainly doesn't have the power to compete for higher status in the Golden City. But all that changes when she triggers a magical trap and ends up with all the knowledge from the Great Library – including forbidden magic that no one is supposed to know – stuffed inside her head. This unwanted gift doesn't give her greater power, but it does give her a better understanding of magic, allowing her to accomplish far more than ever before.

It's also terribly dangerous. If the senior wizards find out what has happened to her, they will almost certainly have her killed. The knowledge locked away in the Great Library was meant to remain permanently sealed and letting it out could mean a repeat of the catastrophic Necromantic Wars of five hundred years earlier. Elaine is forced to struggle with the terrors and temptations represented by her newfound knowledge, all the while trying to stay out of sight of those she fears, embodied by the sinister Inquisitor Dread.

But a darkly powerful figure has been drawing up a plan to take the power of the Grand Sorcerer for himself; and Elaine, unknowingly, is vital to his scheme. Unless she can unlock the mysteries behind her new knowledge, divine the unfolding plan, and discover the truth about her own origins, there is no hope for those she loves, the Golden City or her entire world.

Bookworm Details

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From Reader Review Bookworm for online ebook

Billy Buttons says

This book recently entered the Wishing Shelf Awards. It was awarded the GOLD MEDAL. This is what our readers thought:

FEEDBACK

Author: Christopher Nuttall

Title: Bookworm

COVER: 9/10

The readers thought that the cover was very good, even 'spectacular'. They liked the title very much and they thought that the blurb was well-written and persuasive. One reader did feel the blurb was overly-long and 'gave too much of the plot away'.

CONTENT 9/10

All of the readers thought Bookworm was a very exciting book. They loved the mix of magic, adventure and history and they thought the initial idea 'A girl with a library of magic books in her mind' was superb and very original.

The characters were also interesting and the readers quickly sympathised with them and their plight in the story. Many of the readers thought this book would make an excellent 'first book' in a set. (Note from Ed – I see book two is out. Congrats to the author). Two of the readers felt that the hero of the book did not develop too much as the story went along but they hoped that she would in later installments.

Regarding the sex in the book, most of the readers had no problem with it although three of them did suggest it might limit the market to adult-only, when, apart from the sex, this book would be ideal for the very lucrative YA market.

EDITING 10/10

The readers thought the book was well edited and discovered no glaring problems with grammar, punctuation or spelling. The readers thought the book had excellent pacing and was well-structured.

STYLE 10/10

The style of the author's writing was very much enjoyed. Not only was it easy to follow and well-structured, there was also a nice undercurrent of humour. The plot was very well crafted, the beginning strong, pulling the reader in; the ending enjoyable and fulfilling making the readers want to read a sequel.

STATS

Of the 33 readers:

32 thought the cover was excellent; 1 thought the blurb was too long.

16 thought that 'description' was the author's strongest writing skill.

10 thought that 'pacing' was the author's strongest writing skill.

6 thought 'the structuring of the story' was the author's strongest writing skill..

33 would like to read a sequel.

'A thrilling adventure packed full of magic and memorable characters. Highly recommended.' The Wishing

Robin says

I enjoyed this well-imagined fantasy from an independent press. Detailed world building and great pacing kept me reading. A teensy bit predictable and certain core elements were glossed over, but none of that got in the way of some nifty ideas about class, society, and privilege. And magic.

Sally_skellington says

Das Cover:

In das Cover hab ich mich sofort verliebt. Es ist so schön Düster und verspricht einen tollen Fantasy-Roman. Der Titel des Buches ist übrigens nicht flach sondern steht raus und schimmert in gold.

Die Protagonistin:

Elaine fällt Anfangs eig. kaum auf, obwohl sie die Protagonistin ist. Aber während der Geschichte habe ich mich richtig mit ihr angefreundet. Man hat mitgelitten und mitgehofft das alles für sie gut werden würde.

Der Schreibstil:

Nicht nur die Story, sondern auch der Schreibstil ist magisch. Es hat klein angefangen und dann reißt es einen förmlich wie mit einem Hurrikan (der Magie?) mit. Ich war so sehr in der Geschichte drin, das ich einmal sogar die Türklingel überhört hatte und sowas schaffen echt wenige Autoren.

Ich bin begeistert.

Autor:

Christopher Nuttall wuchs in Edinburgh auf, wo er auch Geschichte studierte. Bereits während er noch an der Universität war, verdiente er sein Geld mit Schreiben. Chris lebt derzeit in Borneo mit seiner Frau, Muse und Kritikerin Aisha.

Mein Fazit:

Ich habe dieses Buch geliebt und bin schon sehr gespannt wie es weitergehen wird. Leider ist noch nicht bekannt wann der zweite Band erscheinen wird.

Ich bin jedenfalls überzeugt das dieses Buch auch bei anderen Fantasy-Fans super ankommen wird und von mir gibts eine absolute Kaufempfehlung

Per Gunnar says

his is the third book from Christopher Nuttall that I have read and I have enjoyed them all. Unlike the first two books from Mr. Nuttall that I have read this one is a pure fantasy book without any science fiction component. The book is well written in the same general way as the previous books.

The book follows Elaine who, as the book blurb states, is a magician with limited talent. Elaine's world is one where magic is abundant and he who has or controls magic is he who rules. The world is very much

governed by tradition and old aristocratic rules. The world-building is adequately detailed and provides a nice backdrop for the story.

It was very enjoyable to read this book. After Elaine's little incident at the start of the book she goes on an adventure to discover the truth about the event and discovers a carefully planned plot to free an ancient enemy and literally take over the world. She also discovers a lot about herself and her friends. Sometimes the book felt like a mixture of Sherlock Holmes and Harry Potter (although with a more adult view). Although somewhat naive at times I quite liked Elaine and I definitely liked Inquisitor Dread.

I was a bit disappointed that, although Elaine did save the day (should not be much of a surprise, there is a second book after all), she did not develop as much as I hoped in terms of her powers. The book also had a fair amount of rather explicit sexual content which I felt was not really adding much. I do not really mind and I am certainly not against sexual content out of some hypocritical principle but it really did not add much of interest to the book.

These are minor flaws though and in general this is a very good book which I much enjoyed reading. I will definitely pick up Bookworm II as well.

Wende says

This is a great book. I am glad that I found it.

Deoro says

Interesting fantasy adventure which moves at a good pace. The book is a complete story in itself but clearly will lead to future volumes as the larger plot is unfinished. The main character is a strong woman who is believable and likable. Refreshingly she is not all powerful. The world building for is particularly interesting and magic based.

Siobhan Henn says

I listened to this on audiobook. It was interesting and I kept going back to it which is something I rarely do to finish the series. Elaine is interesting, as is Dread and I'm tempted to get the next one. I enjoyed the series twists and turns.

Mike says

The main problem with this book is the spoiled protagonist.

I'm using "spoiled protagonist" as a kind of technical term (I wrote a blog post on it, partly prompted by this book: <http://csidemedias.com/gryphonclerks/2...>). In summary, a spoiled protagonist is a main character who

is treated by everyone else in the book as if they were the Chosen One of prophecy, even though, in the book, they're not. The sternest authorities forgive their transgressions, people sacrifice their lives to save them, and they need only whine a little to be given whatever they want, however little they deserve it and however little sense it makes.

Such is Elaine. The logical thing for the authorities to do with her would have been to lock her up for the duration of the emergency, or kill her. That would have left no story, though, so she's allowed to run around loose, even though that risks dangerous knowledge getting into the hands of lunatics who would destroy the world with it.

The language is competent, with few editing errors, but doesn't rise above the ordinary. There are no cleverly-turned phrases or well-chosen metaphors. It's a solid three stars for language.

The plot depends in part on people not acting intelligently, which puts me off a book, but is otherwise competent enough. Two and a half stars.

Character I've already mentioned. Two stars.

The setting swoops in and barely saves the book at four stars. It's detailed, and it feels like there's a whole world with history and geography. There are some issues, though. The Asterix the Gaul reference struck me as silly, and the suspenseful denouement is not the place for infodumps. There's a mismatch between the barely contained anarchy that's described and the just and reasonable authorities that we actually see.

The book has definite strengths, but it also has significant problems. On average, I found it average.

Wilson E. Stevens Sr. says

I rated this book as a 1* because of the unnecessary sex written into the book. If it is for young adults, and my grandchildren age 8 read books in this category, the sex in this book is not needed, does not add any thing to the book, and is completely fictional as well as unrealistic from the view of a 73 year old man. In the book the author makes fun of books written by teen age boys fantasy of sex, and then does the very thing he makes fun of in his books. I have no idea why Christopher G. Nuttall would want to destroy a good plot and all the work he put into this book by adding sex to a story that could have stood alone and done very well with out it.

Amy says

A few issues with this book -

a) It's slow moving, with way too much telling, not showing.

b) Too much of the book is the main character's narration. She has the same internal monologue over and over, just to really hammer in the point that she's terribly shy, jealous of her pretty roommate, bullied by other people, and now has all of these tempting spells in her mind. Over. And. Over.

c) I'm not sure how old she's supposed to be, but apparently old enough to have graduated from school, and yet her personality is bland and childlike, about on par with what I'd expect from a middle schooler. No coping mechanisms for the daily problems the author *says* she experiences repeatedly.

Penny Wyatt says

This review is also posted on my blog [So Many eBooks, So Little Time](#)

I picked up *Bookworm* by Christopher Nuttall for two reasons. The first was that it was, as the title suggests, about books and the second was that it involved magic. It is also largely set around a huge library filled with these books on magic, my interest was piqued.

Elaine No-Kin was brought up in an orphanage in the Golden City, never knowing her parents or where she came from. Although her magic is limited she attends and graduates from the Peerless School and then takes a job at the Great Library. The Great Library holds the largest collection of books on magic there is, including those books which are banned as they contain information on the dark magic which nearly destroyed them in the necromantic war many years ago.

While sorting through a box of books left to the Great Library by a recently deceased duke Elaine accidentally sets off a magical trap which almost kills her. When she finally comes round she realises that she now has the the knowledge from every book in the library stored inside her own head, including the banned books kept locked in the Black Vault.

I am very conflicted on this book, so lets start with the good points. If there is one thing I love it's imagination put into books about magic. This book definitely has that. The magic system is well thought out and it works well, throughout the book we see hints of magics capabilities and its limits. We are shown the different and complex ways it can be used, and its shortcomings. The main character is very relatable, and the other characters are really brought to life and hold their own. The plot moves at a good pace and definitely kept me interested, the world it itself is fascinating and beautifully described.

With all the praise I have given, why then am I conflicted and whats stopping me from giving this book a five star rating? This book is listed in more than one place as being Young Adult fiction, so why then is it filled with so much sex? It adds nothing to the story and certainly makes it inappropriate for the young adult category. Elaine and her roommate have a fairly detailed conversation about oral sex after Elaine's first date, she later walks in on a man receiving oral sex, after being kidnapped she is tortured, mostly psychically but there is also some sexual abuse from her captors. This is all rounded off with a graphic sex scene between Elaine and Bee, her new boyfriend. I have no issue with erotica, but if I want to read that then I will buy it. I don't expect to find in when reading a young adult book.

Although the book is part of a series, the plot comes together nicely at the end. It makes it clear that there is a next one but wraps most things up satisfyingly. If it had not been for a repeated sexual content this book would have had five stars. However it just felt out of place and inappropriate, therefore I have given it 3 stars.

Wortmagie says

Als mir „*Die Wissende*“ das erste Mal in einer Buchhandlung ins Auge sprang, hätte ich niemals vermutet, dass Christopher Nuttall ein Indie-Autor ist. Obwohl er in Deutschland einen traditionellen Vertrag erhielt, arbeitet er in Großbritannien ausschließlich mit kleinen, unabhängigen Verlagen zusammen und konzentriert sich auf das E-Book-Format. Er hält klassische Verlagshäuser für rückständig und misst den Rezensionen normaler Leser_innen auf Amazon höhere Bedeutung zu als der Meinung professioneller Kritiker_innen. Auf seiner Website veröffentlichte er ein paar seiner Werke zum kostenlosen Download. Er wirkt wie ein Autor, dem sein Bekanntheitsgrad weit wichtiger ist als finanzieller Erfolg. Dadurch ist er mir unleugbar sympathisch. Ich freute mich darauf, seine vierteilige Reihe „*Bookworm*“ zu beginnen.

Elaine ist eine graue Maus. Im Waisenhaus aufgewachsen und mit geringem magischen Talent gesegnet, wurde sie ihr Leben lang herumgeschubst. Sie hatte sich damit abgefunden, ihr Dasein als unbedeutende Bibliothekarin der Großen Bibliothek in der Goldenen Stadt zu fristen. Doch als sie eines Tages den Nachlass eines verstorbenen Aristokraten untersucht, löst sie einen mächtigen Zauber aus, der das gesamte Wissen der Großen Bibliothek in ihren Kopf transferiert. Auf einmal verfügt Elaine über Fähigkeiten, die sich mit denen des Erzhexers messen können. Sie wird in das Gerangel um Macht und Einfluss hineingezogen, mit dem sie nie etwas zu tun haben wollte und muss einsehen, dass der Zauber kein Unfall war. Elaine erkennt, dass sie eine Spielfigur in einer uralten Verschwörung ist, die die Ordnung des gesamten Reiches bedroht. Wird sie über sich selbst hinauswachsen und Pläne vereiteln, die weit vor ihrer Geburt begannen?

„*Die Wissende*“ atmet Magie. Magie durchdringt jede Seite und ist das unbestreitbare Zentrum der Handlung. Dadurch umgibt diesen Roman ein traditioneller, nahezu altmodischer Charme, der mir gut gefiel. Kaum zu glauben, dass das Buch 2013 erstveröffentlicht wurde. Es fühlte sich beim Lesen älter an, weil mich die Herangehensweise an die Fantasy der 70er und 80er erinnerte. Christopher Nuttall konstruiert sein Universum um die Magie herum. Magisch Begabte bestimmen, lenken und leiten seine Welt, prägen ihre Vergangenheit und formen ihre Zukunft. Die Goldene Stadt dient als vielfältige, lebendige Metropole der Zauberei, als Herz der Macht und Residenz des Erzhexers, der wiederum die oberste Institution darstellt. Ich fand es interessant, dass Nuttall ein schlichtes Magiesystem mit einer ausgeklügelten, um die Ecke denkenden politischen Ordnung kombiniert, die sich überraschend realitätsnah in Legislative, Judikative und Exekutive unterteilen lässt. Obwohl diese Regierungsform zuverlässig funktioniert, hat sie eine kritische Schwachstelle: die Legislative, der Erzhexer, kann nicht ohne Weiteres ersetzt werden. Da diese Position ungeheure magische Macht voraussetzt, entsteht ein Vakuum, sobald der aktuelle Erzhexer das Zeitliche segnet. Bis der neue Erzhexer bzw. die neue Erzhexe feststeht, ist das Reich quasi führungslos, was in „*Die Wissende*“ unglücklicherweise der Fall ist. In dieser schwierigen, heiklen Phase des Umbruchs treffen die Leser_innen die Protagonistin Elaine, die unfreiwillig in eine spannende Verschwörung involviert wird, welche darauf abzielt, die vorübergehende Autoritätslosigkeit des Reiches auszunutzen. Ich konnte mich nur zu einem gewissen Grad mit Elaine identifizieren, da wir außer der Liebe zu Büchern kaum etwas gemeinsam haben. Ihr Charakter zeichnet sich vor allem durch ihren Mangel an Lebenserfahrung aus; sie ist naiv, unsicher und nahezu mittelalterlich prüde. Frauen, die Haut zeigen und aussprechen, was sie wollen? Skandalös! Sie zeigt wenig Tiefgang und wirkte auf mich hin und wieder arg hormongesteuert, weil sie sich insgeheim wünscht, selbstbewusst wilde Abenteuer mit dem männlichen Geschlecht zu erleben. Diese sexuelle Komponente des Buches erschien mir irritierend und unnötig. Aufgrund des Bücherwissens in ihrem Kopf erfährt Elaine eine grundsätzlich erfreuliche Entwicklung, die weit überzeugender gewesen wäre, hätte sie sich nicht durch ein plötzliches Bedürfnis, fremde Betten kennenzulernen, manifestiert. Auch fand ich es erstaunlich, wie gut Elaine mit der Informationsflut in ihrem Hirn zurechtkommt. Ich empfände all das Wissen als sehr belastend, weil es in jeder (wirklich **jeder**) Lebenslage auf sie einprasselt. Sie kann es nicht abschalten. Stellt euch vor, jede Situation eures Lebens hätte zahllose Fußnoten, die sich in eurem

Bewusstsein ungefragt abspulen. Brr. Nein, danke.

Ich mochte „*Die Wissende*“, weil es ein sympathisch klassischer High Fantasy – Roman ist. Magie in Hülle und Fülle übt noch immer einen starken Reiz auf mich aus. Gewiss hätte Christopher Nuttall seine Protagonistin Elaine glaubwürdiger charakterisieren können, doch da mich die Andeutung eines gewaltigen Intrigennetzes, das jahrhundertlang geplant und vorbereitet wurde, einfach neugierig macht, kann ich über meine lasche Bindung an sie hinwegsehen und möchte „*Bookworm*“ trotzdem weiterlesen. Der Puppenspieler im Hintergrund wird sicher an weiteren Fäden zupfen, um dem Reich zu schaden und das möchte ich keinesfalls verpassen. Ich hoffe, dass die Große Bibliothek in Zukunft eine bedeutendere Rolle einnimmt – schließlich ist sie eindeutig mehr als nur ein Gebäude und deshalb mein liebstes Detail in Nuttalls faszinierender Welt. Wer weiß, vielleicht schlägt Elaine in den Folgebänden aufgrund ihrer Verbundenheit mit der Bibliothek sogar eine Richtung ein, mit der ich mich besser identifizieren kann. Wer das Wissen von Millionen Büchern mit sich herumträgt, kann wohl kaum eine graue Maus bleiben, oder?

Haydn says

Unimaginative main character, depressingly male understanding of romance, and a magic system that is completely unexplained. The concept holds merit, but is lacking in follow through.

Morandia says

I really enjoyed this. Must be the librarian in me

Patrick says

Not quite sure where to put this series,

Another parallel universe that is just really really close to schooled in magic where the empire never disbanded, or another timeline?

There are way too many similarities to schooled in magic to be a mere coincidence. Also the author is a fan of sanderson afaik so I just assume it's some form of connected prequel until somebody tells me differently.

Although there are several inventions that shouldn't be there, I guess you could make a point for roman empire, they also had several inventions that were lost later and took another 1000 years or so to rediscover.

Anywho, besides that confusing point it's a really really good book, and anybody who enjoyed schooled in magic should definitely give it a try.

It's really an interesting approach, on the one hand our heroine has all that knowledge to be technically invincible, on the other hand not nearly enough power to really do anything with it. If nobody else would know, she would be in an average spot I guess powerwise, but since the secret is out it's more trouble than worth it.

Also, there is sex and brutal murder in it, so I wouldn't recommend it to children (I think I saw 1 or 2 bad reviews earlier because of that) - Fantasy does not equal childrensbook, people should know that, at least since Game of thrones :P
