



Lirael

Garth Nix

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WHO IS LIRael?

Lirael has never felt like a true daughter of the Clayr. Now, two years past the time when she should have received the Sight that is the Clayr's birthright, she feels alone, abandoned, unsure of who she is. Nevertheless, the fate of the Old Kingdom lies in her hands. With only her faithful companion, the Disreputable Dog, Lirael must undertake a desperate mission under the growing shadow of an ancient evil.

In this sequel to SABRIEL, winner of the Aurealis Award for Excellence in Australian Science Fiction, Garth Nix weaves a spellbinding tale of discovery, destiny, and danger.

Lirael Details

Date : Published 2003 by Eos (first published April 21st 2001)

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Author : Garth Nix

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From Reader Review Lirael for online ebook

? Sh3lly - Grumpy Name-Changing Wanderer ? says

When I started this, I was way excited... another epic story in this cool magical world with TIM CURRY narrating, again. The first section was great. We meet Lirael, who is a loner and has trouble being around other people and communicating. She is a Daughter of the Clayr, but doesn't have the power of sight, she is an outcast.

She finds a place to work where she might belong - the library! - and comes across a new, wonderful friend: The Disreputable Dog. I love TDD. So fun, so funny, stole the show! (Similar to what Mogget did in the first book.)

But then, Part Two happens. Sam.

Let me see... how can I describe Sam... Spoiled Prince. Weak. Spineless. Full of fear. Cowardly. His one good trait is loyalty and wanting to help his friend. I give him credit for that.

He is the Abhorsen-in-training, but doesn't want to be. He is scared shirtless of his magic and ability and wants NOTHING to do with it.

I just couldn't stand him. And most of the entire middle section was ALL.ABOUT.HIM.

Maybe this is a reflection of the difference in my age and the target audience. It is difficult for me to handle immature behavior. But, he is/was like 19 or so, and raised to high standards as an heir. You kind of expect more. I did, at least. I wanted a more heroic character instead of a whiner.

We get flashes of Lirael POVs and those were all good. It just lost momentum for me and the pacing never picked up. I felt like the book was way too long.

I am glad that Sam got out of becoming the Abhorsen. Please, just put him in the back somewhere and let him play sports or something. Make more of his tennis rackets! Write him off, no more please!

This may sound harsh, but Sam just really made the book sluggish and B-O-R-I-N-G to me. :/ Lirael = A+.

The Disreputable Dog and Mogget = A+.

Getting to see more of Sabriel and Touchstone = A+ (This takes place many years after book one after they are married and have two children - Sam is one of them.)

Overall, I didn't hate it. I just didn't love it. Hopefully, the next one will be better. It sort of ended right in the middle of a scene. There was no resolution. For such a long book, it made it seem a bit like filler. But again,

it's not bad at all. I guess I just didn't click with this one as much as Sabriel.

Charlotte May says

*"When the Dead do walk, seek water's run,
for this the Dead will always shun.
Swift river's best or broadest lake
to ward the Dead and haven make.
If water fails thee, fire's thy friend;
if neither guards, it will be thy end."*

Well this was freaking awesome!

As a sequel where the main character from Book 1 isn't the main focus - I was a bit worried; but there was no need because Lirael continued the story of the Old Kingdom and the dead fantastically!

"The blue hats shaded silver sightless eye sockets, the blue scarves held together rotting heads."

Lirael is part of the Clayr - those who can see into the future. But Lirael has never received the Sight. As she gets older and the Sight still doesn't appear, her self worth becomes non existent and she retreats into herself.

*"lunging forward and nipping her quite sharply on the leg..." "what did you do that for?"
"You were being pathetic," said the Dog."*

Lirael is so relatable! Hiding out in the library to avoid speaking to anyone, her isolation from the Clayr is palpable and you really feel for her.

"I'm not sure I can believe what I'm seeing." "You'd better believe it...because they'll kill you whether you believe in them or not."

Meanwhile, Prince Sameth - the son of Sabriel and King Touchstone is due to take on his role as the Abhorsen in Waiting to eventually take over from his mother. But he is terrified - after a hairy situation facing a Necromancer in Death, Sam can think of nothing worse than a life fighting the creatures of the dead.

"You may not See, but you will Remember. And in the Remembering, you will see the hidden past that holds the secrets of the future,"

Lirael is eventually sent on a mission by the Clayr and meets Sam while he is on the run. This leads to many adventures and some serious twists at the end! The writing is witty, action packed and magical!

Overall a non stop thrill ride and I can't wait to read the next one!

"I suppose we'll end up having to swim for our miserable lives."

Lady says

I liked this book. The writing wasn't as beautiful as I hope for in fantasy novels. But his world building was thorough and very interesting. I went back and forth between liking the characters and not, which I think reveals how fully formed they are.

I really liked the whole Charter marks and Free Magic stuff. I think it made a fascinating world and sense of magic. I liked that, just because Lirael was good with Charter marks, didn't make her all powerful; that there were weaknesses to how it can be used.

I mostly liked the pace. In the beginning it took a bit to get going, especially once I could see where the story was going. But once the plot became focused for the characters it moved along very well.

As far as the characters went, I didn't like Lirael in the beginning. I felt she was a very bland rather petulant character, but then she was obviously surrounded by a great deal of power so I was kind of fascinated. As the story continued, however, I liked her. In the reverse, I liked Sam pretty much right away then he devolved a little for me in the middle and was a little bit pathetic in moments. But then he got stronger and a little bit smarter and braver and I liked him again. In some ways - and this doesn't happen often - I was ok with the moments when I didn't like the characters because a) they were still surrounded by a great deal of power and b) it made them more human. I accepted their flaws as very real and not as constructs or as the author just writing bad characters.

fyi - Abhorsen is more the completion of this book, rather than a sequel.

Echo says

It took me a while to get around to reading this book, even though I rushed out and bought it immediately after finishing Sabriel. The up side to that is in the meantime, I'd bought Abhorsen as well. That's important. Sabriel was a good stand-alone novel. Lirael and Abhorsen are not. In fact, I'd recommend that before you read Lirael 1) you read Sabriel first and 2) you have a copy of Abhorsen ready to pick up as soon as you finish Lirael. Lirael ends in the middle of something, and the two probably could have been combined into one very long novel.

Still, I recommend the whole series. The characters may not be quite as awesome as Sabriel, but they're still very well-done and the story is wonderful. I'll definitely seek out more of Garth Nix's books after I finish this series.

Samantha says

4.5 stars

I liked this even more than the first book! I really really love Lirael and the Disreputable Dog was a great addition. Some of my favorite scenes were between Dog and Moggot.

The book definitely ends on something of a cliff hanger so I cannot wait to pick up Abhorsen!

BAM The Bibliomaniac says

Audio # 33

2018 Reading Challenge: deals with a library or bookstore

Lirael is so depressed and has such low self esteem.

Note-Tim curry can feel free to narrate every book I own please

Katie.dorny says

The only thing that held this book back was the character of prince Sameth, the son of Sabriel and Touchstone. Apart from him, I fell in love with both Lirael and the Disreputable Dog and cannot wait to get my hands on the last book! I also personally think this book was better than the first. I have high expectations now for the last one!!

Mayim de Vries says

Sabriel was a pure pleasure to read. **Lirael was as appalling as Sabriel was awesome. It sported an insecure and impulsive heroine drowning in her angst and her companions: an idiot of a selfish prince and a dog (a dog!).**

Lirael is a Daughter of the Clayr, compensating her lack of Sight (i.e. the ability to see future) with other capabilities like **outstanding sociopathy and a penchant for magic**. Yes, Lirael is one of these special snowflakes we love reading about. She is so standing apart that she does not feel like talking to anyone, then she feels excluded, then she can go on through days of not talking to anyone, then she wants to commit a suicide because she feels excluded. In the course of drama, drama, drama, drama she becomes a librarian, visits places she's not supposed to venture to and creates a magic dog of considerable powers, possibly even bigger than her own (just like that). Finally, when it is confirmed just oh how special the girl is, she is sent out of the glacier to save the world.

In the meantime, the **idiot of a selfish prince, abandons his family and kingdom in the hour of need, gallivanting through the Dead infested country (in spite his overwhelming fear of Death) pursuing a quest of his own choosing**. Because why not?

Inevitably **these two aggravating figures meet and misery ensues** as they plunge from one trouble to another slowly piecing together the evil they must face.

Even the Mogget was not enough to balance this preposterous setting.

I was fuming throughout this novel, especially that it constitutes such stark contrast with Sabriel. I never expected to be let down by Mr Nix - and in such an underhanded manner! My wounds have already scarred, but still, the book does not deserve more than 2 stars and another half for the story potential. Lirael is the necessary prelude to Abhorsen, the third of the set.

If your love is for Sabriel and Touchstone only, leave Lirael alone. If you want to learn more about the wonderful world of the Old Kingdom - keep calm and endure it, as the final part of the trilogy will make it worth your while.

Also in the series:

1. Sabriel
3. Abhorsen

Sanaa says

[4 Stars] I'm conflicted about this rating because the first half of the book was probably more like a 5 star book, the last half of the book was more 4 stars, and all of Sameth's parts were around 3.5 or even 3 stars. Why did Sameth have to be just as annoying as Lirael was amazing? Lirael was seriously such a fantastic protagonist, and I wish the book had focused almost entirely on her as opposed to bringing Sameth into the picture. He just seems like a bit of a waste in all honesty: annoying, spoiled, stupid, and obnoxious. If Sameth hadn't bugged me so much, I would have given this book a 4.5 or even a 5 star rating, but as it stands now I can only really give it a 4. I also felt that things significantly slowed down towards the end, and I just wanted it all to be finished. I think part of the reason for this is that I'm not convinced Garth Nix can write villains I really love or love to hate or can just get behind, you know? They all seem a little meh to me. That being said, I do want to emphasize that Lirael and the Disreputable Dog are AMAZING, and their portions in the book, everything about the Clayr and the Library, and just gah all the portions with Lirael were 5 stars for sure. The rest of the book I just wasn't as convinced about. I think this is also due in part to this being more of a part one to the story and Abhorsen being part two of the story. Regardless, I really enjoyed this and can't wait to jump into Abhorsen!

Eddie Costello says

These books are awesome and should be mandatory reading by everyone.

I first read this trilogy(Lirael is a second book in the old kingdom trilogy; Sabriel is first while Abhorsen is the finale) when I was in middle school and I have to admit I'm just as obsessed with this series now as I was then.

With a cast of fantastic characters and a quick moving pace(mostly), you are truly sucked into the world of the old kingdom and it's pretty scary.

I'm truly surprised that this book can be considered YA cause it's a extremely dark tale that's leads up to a jaw dropping revelation(not really you can guess it almost immediately, I just wanted to entice you into reading it).

I listened to the audio version and Tim Curry makes everything so much better, he totally knows how to perfectly creep you out when he wants to. He is an absolutely perfect choice for the audio narration; word of advice listen to him read with all the lights off while your in bed alone and I guarantee you will get the wiggens.

Pros

Characters, prose, audio narration, character development, Death, the library of the Clayr, pace

Cons

Pace can be a little iffy sometimes

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

Omg!! I had 6,000 audio books come through the library today ?But I wanted to follow along in my book while Tim Curry reads to me ?

Nicole says

I'm not a huge fantasy person, but I'm always up for a kick-ass heroine such as Lirael. I thoroughly enjoyed the first 2 books in this trilogy, mostly because they appeal to my morbid streak. Death portrayed as a river with 7 gates? Sending the Dead back into Death using necromancer bells? What's not to like here?

Decent writing, excellent story, not-quite-typical (and therefore appealing) fantasy story. Not to mention book covers by the Millions. I will read almost anything that has a Millions cover, story be damned.

Laure says

Nice to see the stories and characters are getting more complexed - I am looking foward to the next instalment in the stories.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

Lirael, daughter of the Clayr (Abhorsen, #2), Garth Nix

Lirael (called Lirael: Daughter of the Clayr in some regions) is a fantasy novel by Garth Nix and illustrators Leo and Diane Dillon, first published in 2001. Named for its central female character, Lirael is the second in his Old Kingdom trilogy, preceded by Sabriel and continued in Abhorsen.

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Jessica says

There's a reviewer who I follow (Ceridwen) who mentioned in her review of *Sabriel* how refreshing it is that the magic in the story is "something other than a deus ex machina" (aka: when the protagonist defeats evil without any true skill, the magic just kind of does its thing through them because they are super special snowflakes). I completely agreed with that point...in book 1. Pretty much everything I loved about the protagonist in *Sabriel* is contradicted in the Mary-Sue that is Lirael, the main protagonist of book 2.

Doormat/whiny/woe-is-me/doesn't think she's special even though all signs point to the annoyingly obvious fact that she is. Not only is she mega-talented (*but thinks she's worthless*), she has the added convenience of that "dues ex machina" magic that shows up unexpectedly and makes her 10x more awesome.

It killed me that even *after* the Clayr explained that only *super awesome* Clayr develop "the Sight" late and only *incredibly important* people are sent on missions, Lirael is ready to kill herself all over again and actually thinks they're just kicking her out. Yeah, ok, Lirael. Ok.

And where *Sabriel*'s looks weren't really mentioned and her "romance" was pretty dang tame for YA, Lirael, on the other hand, is a silent, sensitive wallflower who hides behind her hair but catches the eye of alllll the boys because they all find her beautiful, even though...wait for it...she doesn't find herself beautiful!

Ugh, spare me.

Sameth, the male protagonist isn't much better although he's a little more sympathetic. He might be somewhat of a spoiled brat, but at least his whining is more believable (not living up to his parents or elder sister's expectations, because, honestly, what they want for him isn't what he wants or is even capable of). Lirael, though, is out slaying beasts and is still like, "Shucks, I'm no good at anything, why do I even bother living..." Gurl, write a sad poem in your journal and move on.

Also, this book had no real ending. I'm basically being forced to read the last book of the trilogy against my will. Basically.

THREE STARS because *Sabriel* and *Touchstone* make cameos, Lirael occasionally takes breaks from moping to kick some butt, there's some crazy/creepy action sequences, Nix's world-building is always fun, and the two talking animals (Mogget and Dog) save the reader from utter boredom (concerning the main characters) with their snarky comments and superior characterization.

Lindsey Rey says

[4.5 Stars]

Way better than the first one!

Chris says

When I glance at the reviews for this book, I'm actually surprised. Not that people would like this book, but that *everyone* would like it. I thought for sure there would be more of a split on it.

I mean, the writing is good. Nix can put together sentences and his plot is soundly articulated. His Old Kingdom is a vast and impressive construct, and his imagination is superb. There were even a couple really good scenes in here.

I just...I don't know. I couldn't wait for it to end. I hated the characters. As much as I love Tim Curry as a narrator, even he couldn't save this audiobook. Lirael was annoying, and her dog was worse. Sam started out alright, but I came to loathe him more than Lirael herself by the end. Mogget the cat was pretty good, nearly as enjoyable as he had been in the first book.

The first book, which I had liked. What happened here? Ahhh, don't know. Maybe it's suffering from middle book syndrome. Maybe the plot wasn't strong enough to keep my interest with a cast of such lame characters.

Let's talk about the characters.

I would not piss on Lirael, Sameth, or the Disreputable Dog if they were on fire.

I so much wanted to reach into that story and rip Mogget's collar off, and let him go totally batshit nuts on those three.

I didn't even like Hedge. I thought I would, but no. Fail. An Uninteresting Villain, that one. I found myself yawning nearly as much as Mogget (maybe that's why I like him).

And what's with that ending? (view spoiler)

Nothing was resolved, as of course I should expect from a middle book full of moronic characters.

Well, I did kinda like Nicholas Sayre. (view spoiler)

Maybe the Moronic Protagonists and the Disreputable Dumbass can get him out of the carbonite before Jabba the Hedge eats him.

And WTF, zombies? This thing dragged on for so long that I actually *forgot* there were zombies. So when they attacked, I was like !

Hell yeah!

But it didn't last long. Pretty soon we were back in the boat with our Disreputable Zeros.

I am curious to see where this series will go from here. Maybe it needs some Ewoks.

ETA: There was one thing in particular that soured me on this book. A scene about 65% into the book that really *kicked ass*. I mean, it was dark as hell, and a real surprise. A kick in the nuts for the reader, and a main character.

But then in the next chapter, slate wiped clean - nullified *all* consequences to what had happened. I mean, eh? A really badass gut wrenching type moment where shit got real, and they roll *that* kind of a saving throw?

The fucker didn't even feel remorse, since it was wiped out. I mean. This was Turn to the Dark Side Forever type shit, and slate clean. It didn't happen, so he can go back to whining like a bitch because he's afraid to read a damn book.

Ok, I'm seething again. I'll move on now.

Mike (the Paladin) says

Well.....okay. Not as good a book as Sabriel, I went with 3 stars on this one. It was close as the story is a pretty good one and we are still following the plot line thrown out in Sabriel, just not quite as well (in my opinion of course).

We pick up about 14 years after end of that volume and we sort of get an introduction like, 14 years have passed. there have been many battles as the King (Touchstone) who married Sabriel (the Abhorsen) overthrows evil, saves the Kingdom and aids the people. At the same time the Abhorsen has faced many terrible dangers, binding the dead and destroying awful necromancers.

Really. That might have made a good book. Why didn't you tell us that story???? No we get to start over with another uncertain (even more uncertain) young woman. She constantly bemoans her situation, considers killing herself (but decides that throwing herself off a glacier might not really be the way to go), makes constant bad decisions that seem to work out for her and so on and on and on. And of course a young man who's managed to get himself so scared of his "expected future" that he's paralyzed at the very thought of it...and he won't go to the very people/person who might be able to help him with it.

I'll be honest, I got sick of Lirael's constant woe is me I don't have the sight... Yes it would be awful to go through what she did, to face what she faced. But between her constant bemoaning of her fate and Sam's refusal to talk to his parent's when he had the chance (I'll wait till morning...oops they're already gone) about something that could threaten EVERYBODY... well, it got a bit tiring.

This book may be (and I hope is as I'm beginning the third book Abhorsen) suffering from the well known "second book in a trilogy" syndrome. It's a bit long winded, a bit drawn out and a bit (for me) tiresome. I like good YA fantasy and the first in this series was certainly that. This for me told a pretty good story but could have done it better in maybe two thirds the length...just me possibly.

Three stars, not bad, a fairly interesting story that tells us more of the world and it's people, hope the next

strikes me better.

***** Spoiler below line *****

(view spoiler)

TS Chan says

While the Abhorsen series continues to thrive on its magic and worldbuilding, the characterisation in Lirael is unfortunately not up to par with its predecessor, Sabriel.

It does appear that Sabriel is written almost like a stand-alone, as this sequel takes place almost one and a half decade after the events in the first book with two new main characters; Lirael, a daughter of the Clayr and Prince Sameth, the son of Sabriel and Touchstone.

Both characters demonstrate the typical angst and insecurity of teenagers; one who bemoans the absence of a power that is the birthright of her race and the other who decries the responsibility thrust upon him because of his birthright and powers. If I have to choose, I will say Lirael is definitely the more aggravating one. While the other Clayrs of ages younger than Lirael started gaining the power of Seeing, she remained an outcast as she continues to well into her teenage years without even a hint of it. However, it turns out that she is very adept at Charter magic and has the ability learn quickly and perform marvellous feats which most others cannot. BUT just because she cannot See, her anxiety that she will never fully be one of the Clayrs grates on her self-confidence and my patience. The appearance of the Disreputable Dog - a creature of magic - was a welcome change to Lirael's story. Not accepting her constant self-belittling, the Dog prods her into action that finally takes the direction of her tale towards an intriguing revelation of her potential heritage. Prince Sameth (or Sam) may be slightly less annoying but I do feel like giving him a good shake for both his actions and inaction in addressing his debilitating fear of his legacy.

The Disreputable Dog

The highlight of this series so far truly lies in the magic and worldbuilding. We learn more of the Clayr, a race who appeared briefly in Sabriel, and the birth of the Charter, created out of Free Magic. The seven bells used for necromancy and controlling both the living and the dead, which are tied to the creation of the Charter, are just simply fascinating. So is the portrayal of Death, which is a river, grey and cold, with currents pulling the dead through the Gates, nine in all before a soul goes beyond any necromancer's ability to be summoned back.

The story also started to become more interesting when Lirael and Sam eventually encountered each other under grave circumstances. This also meant that the Disreputable Dog met Mogget, the cat, who is now accompanying Sam after he stole away from the palace under the guise of an ordinary traveller. It was pretty obvious from the start that both these creatures of magic had a history together, and not an entirely pleasant one. A delightful turn of events, one might say.

The common thread that brought Lirael and Sam together is the potential re-emergence of an extremely dangerous and powerful entity engineered by a necromancer of considerable strength. As we find both our main characters getting to terms with each of their own true legacy, the enemy is moving ever closer to his goal. This volume concluded on an unresolved note, with Lirael and Sam both contending with the grim prospect of having to face this new adversary, setting up the stage for the next book, Abhorsen.

This review can also be found at Booknest

Catrina (LittleBookOwl) says

4.5 stars
