



## Ship of Destiny

*Robin Hobb*

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As Bingtown slides toward disaster, clan matriarch Ronica Vestrit, branded a traitor, searches for a way to bring the city's inhabitants together against a momentous threat. Meanwhile, Althea Vestrit, unaware of what has befallen Bingtown and her family, continues her perilous quest to track down and recover her liveship, the "Vivacia," from the ruthless pirate Kennit.

Bold though it is, Althea's scheme may be in vain. For her beloved "Vivacia" will face the most terrible confrontation of all as the secret of the liveships is revealed. It is a truth so shattering, it may destroy the "Vivacia" and all who love her, including Althea's nephew, whose life already hangs in the balance.

## Ship of Destiny Details

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# From Reader Review Ship of Destiny for online ebook

## Helene Jeppesen says

I did it! I finished it! My reading of these three 900-page-books has been quite a journey, but in the end I'm glad I stuck to the end and got a great reading experience out of it.

This is the last book in the trilogy, so obviously I can't tell you too much about the story. However, I can tell you that this last installment was quite breathtaking and intense. With this novel, I finally felt a deep connection to all of the characters, maybe because I've been following their journeys for so many pages.

I was a bit hesitant to pick up this third book because my reading of the second book was a disappointment. I felt like the story became too silly and too dull, and that was after a great start with the first book that I rated 4 stars. Nevertheless, I now know that I love this series because of its originality and its intenseness. Robin Hobb rarely leaves you bored in this fantastic world of dragons, ships and traders - I think I just read the second book at the wrong time. This is definitely a great series for everyone! Fantasy lovers as well as people like me who are not that much into fantasy, but who loves a fantastical read once in a while.

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## Nikki says

There are some beautiful ideas in there -- about dragons, and the life cycle of a dragon -- and there are references to the Farseers trilogy that complete that story, that explain things. Yet it's also, for quite a few people I've spoken to, quite tedious to read. This time as I was going through, I tried to put into words why it's broken for me. Comparisons to the Farseers trilogy abound, as well as spoilers for both trilogies and probably for the Tawny Man trilogy as well. Some of this, I've already written elsewhere.

Essentially, I have three main issues I'd point to -- all somewhat interwoven.

### Narrative

I think it suffers from being in third person rather than first. All the sense of someone setting down memoirs with all the relevant details put in the right places is lost, and it's less easy for Hobb to fit in the back story she needs to make the "front" story work. For example, Paragon's story -- it could come out through dialogue and interaction, for example, between Mingsley and a client, or Amber and a Trader, or Amber and Paragon himself... instead it comes out while Althea is sat down thinking about Vivacia. That might work, if it was written from Althea's point of view, but as it is you rather forget that you're even with her while you go on a five page foray into the woes of the Ludlucks.

Mind you, I can see why it would be impossible to write this story from first person and still have it be a "member of the cast", so to speak, doing it. In Farseers, sometimes Fitz's ignorance of other events helped the story, and sometimes the fact that Fitz could Skill out to Molly, Burrich and Nettle and see them prevented it from hindering the story. But in Liveships there's no one central character: in the first book alone there's Althea, Brashen, Ronica, Keffria, Malta, Vivacia, Wintrow, Kennit, Kyle, Paragon, Amber, Maulkin, Shreever... and a range of locations from all corners of their world. There's no way any one of them could know the whole story -- indeed, so much of the story, especially the romantic conflicts, is based on that fact.

Still, I think Hobb's writing shines best in first person. I also noticed that when I read the Tawny Man trilogy,

I enjoyed that much more than Liveships. I'm not sure whether that was just the return to the familiar characters, or whether it was in a large part due to the return to a single point of view.

### Characters

There are so many characters this trilogy follows. I couldn't even begin to list the main ones. They come in groups, in a way -- Bingtown Traders, Rain Wild Traders, pirates, serpents, Jamaillians -- yet those groups splinter and reform over and over again throughout the books. It isn't hard to follow exactly, but I do wonder if Hobb could have made readers care more about the characters had there been fewer, and had she kept the changes in viewpoint down. For example, you see from inside Malta in one section, and you see Malta from Ronica's eyes in the next -- it's jarring, to see so many sides to one character: not just implied, but "said" by the characters through third person (not actually very) limited.

One of the common mistakes in writers, one of my books says, is to make characters too passive. They aren't interesting to read about. And there are far too many passive characters in Liveships, people who can't or won't take control of their own lives. For example, Wintrow -- in the end, he realises it, but for most of the books he refuses to accept and grow with his experiences, but only look backwards. Keffria is shown as spiritless, completely taken in by her husband, believing he's good and right when he's actually quite cruel. She only wants things to go back to where they were, she wants Kyle to take over things and leave her untouched by cares. It's hard to care about characters who are so passive, who do nothing to better their circumstances. They bring their misfortunes on themselves.

On the other hand, there are the "strong" characters. They try to take their lives into their own hands, but without regard for others. Althea leaves her family when they need her, dividing it when they need to be strong, just to get what she wants. Malta doesn't care about the shame she might cause her family, or the hurt she might cause the men she flirts with and ensnares. She just wants to look beautiful and be adored. Tintaglia the dragon doesn't care about humans, even when they help her, but only about the fate of her own race.

It's true that there are a few intriguing characters: Ronica, in particular, strikes me as a strong female character who wants the best for her family, for her home. She, most of all, considers everyone in Bingtown and pushes for everyone to unite. There are other intriguing characters, too: Amber, and Jek, and Shreever, but... they're often more minor characters, or in Amber's case, have to be slightly separate from the plot so it isn't too obvious who they really are.

To me, there's a lack of a certain type of character we saw a lot of in the Farseer books: the Sacrifice. My favourite character in those was Verity, followed by Kettricken and then Fitz himself. They were still humans, with flaws, but in the end they pushed that aside to do what they had to do -- particularly Verity and Kettricken. In Liveships there is no single character who is willing to simply give him or herself up -- not through despair, but to bring hope to others. Nor do the characters have the sheer tenacity that Verity has. If they had to carve a dragon, I don't think they would continue as he did. Granted, perhaps the situation doesn't offer a chance for such a sacrifice, but it does seem as if in places, someone could simply do something instead of waiting, or trying to turn circumstances toward their own gain.

The people in Liveships are like real people, (literally) warts and all. I wonder, though, if it isn't too realistic.

### Portrayal of Women

To be a women in these books is to suffer. I don't think a single one of them escapes humiliation in some

way. In contrast, the men escape lightly: in the course of the books, Serilla, for example, loses everything, but the Satrap gains more than he ever had (although admittedly suffering in the process); Althea loses so much, while Brashen only gains -- and Althea's gain of Brashen is portrayed as filling all the places in her life where she's lost, which troubles me. There's a general attitude in the men that women should be kept in the home, kept safe, and not let to do anything, because they can't. While the women in the books do manage things capably, it's always at a loss to themselves: Althea could marry Grag, but she would lose by doing so, so she doesn't, but she loses in not doing so, too. Malta takes control, but to do so she has to accept humiliation. Keffria learns to manage things, but knows that in doing so she loses her husband.

In the end, they are all shown as strong in their ways, even Keffria. But things are heaped against them as they aren't against the men: it could be said that the society Hobb structures around them is what brings that upon them, but it still felt like a barrier to my reading than a natural part of the world.

I've discussed a lot of ways the books could be more intriguing, with various people. More interesting characters, more of the interesting characters there already are -- starting in the Rain Wilds instead of taking so long to get there... I can see why it's written as it is, but with some tweaking to the plot to allow it to be written differently, I think these books could have been marvellous. I don't recommend reading them casually, but to fill out the details of the whole world in the Realm of the Elderlings cycle, I do recommend trying to push one's way through them. There are some lovely things in these books, but they're rather obscured, for me, by the things I've already mentioned.

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## **Franco Santos says**

No intentes alcanzar las estrellas cuando estés rodeada del ancho mar.

### **Reseña general sin "spoilers":**

Con una trama que partía de una idea sencilla, esta autora me llevó por las corrientes de un mar agresivo y caprichoso hacia el surgimiento de un relato sinfónico. Un relato largo, que se toma su tiempo para golpear, pero que, cuando lo hace, el derramamiento de sangre es seguro. Y la sangre recuerda. La sangre es identidad, y una parte de mi identidad se fue a bordo de las naves que vuelan en su cielo, que es el vasto océano.

¿Con qué se van a encontrar en esta serie? Con piratas, traición, mujeres que luchan por sus derechos, codicia, gente tatuada que busca su libertad, magia, guerra, inseguridad; amor, filosofía, amistad, criaturas que resurgen de una historia ya olvidada, política, soledad, desconsuelo; secretos.

Estos libros dejan huella. Desaparecen de tus manos pero arden en el alma. Desde un inicio tan armónico como absorbente, yo, el lector, navegué hacia un final en el que todo converge, en el que el Destino demuestra que de sus redes nadie se escapa.

Con respecto a los personajes. Esta escritora logra hacerme ver con cada uno de sus trabajos que personas creadas por la imaginación también pueden ser reales. Reales a su manera. Pero reales. Carne de tinta y huesos de papel. Son así, y así deben ser. El desarrollo de los personajes es tan perfecto como sus diálogos.

Esta saga me atrapó como pocas lo han hecho y no me soltó hasta llegar a su última página, hasta llegar al

momento en que no me queda nada más que decir excepto que Hobb es de lo mejor que le ha pasado al género fantástico.

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## **Bookdragon Sean says**

I loved the ending of this because everything was resolved perfectly, and at the same time the events have far, far, reaching consequences. These will no doubt affect the Six Duchies. This made the ending so strong for me because I couldn't wait to read more. I couldn't wait to see how far Amber has (and will) shape the world in accordance with her prophecies.

### **It's all about the dragons!**

The magic behind all this slowly began to reveal itself across the trilogy and, finally, in this book it was released. The revelation of what drives the liveships was completely bizarre, but as the novel progressed it became clear how well established this outlandish idea was. It's all so strange and wonderfully accidental. The magic system is very well thought out to say the least. If someone would have told me when I began reading that this weirdness was behind it, I would have laughed. But Hobb is the master of her craft; she makes the impossible magical: she makes it real.

*"One does not need the size of a dragon to have the soul of a dragon."*

I found myself liking Paragon more and more as the series developed. He initially appears as a sullen brute who is about to explode with unbridled rage. But the ship has a massive backstory. He's a victim, a big one. He has been abandoned and defaced; he has been used and mistreated. However, Amber saw into the depths of him; she saw what lurked behind his wooden exterior, and she gives him the most ultimate gift. Unsurprisingly, during the process she pays great homage to her greatest friend and biggest love. Such a fool. (see what I did there)

### **It all came together in the end**

(^^ I love this pic!)

The climax was everything it needed to be. The characters all had one big clash at the high seas and in doing so Hobb expanded her fantasy universe tremendously. The importance of a group of serpents, which I initially perceived as insignificant, became abundantly clear. They're so central to Hobb's magic. I always wondered why they were so drawn to the boats. In retrospect it's all rather obvious. But when I was reading I was rather dumbfounded. I wonder how the rest of the world will feel when they find out, if they find out.

*"Do you not see how strange and wonderful that is? That all history balances on an affair of the human heart?"*

Malta is, perhaps, the character that will go furthest in this. (Excluding Amber of course.) Her path has been intertwined with that of the dragons. Her development was wonderful; she went from an annoying brat to

someone with real character: she grew up. Some of the other characters had semi-predictable endings. With her it was fairly surprising. Overall, this was a good ending to a good trilogy. I'm looking forward to seeing how Hobb uses elements of this in later books.

#### The Liveship Traders

1. Ship of Magic- A seafaing 3.5 stars
  2. The Mad Ship- A tumultuous four stars.
  3. SHip of Destiny- **A cresting fours stars**
- 

### **Jennifer says**

I'm just so grateful that this series exists. It is phenomenal. I enjoyed every hour of my life that I spent on these three books. That is all.

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### **Xime García says**

#### **4.5 en realidad.**

Creo que es hora de colocar esta imagen que hace años que conservo como uno de mis tantos fondos de pantalla en mi computadora (~~sí, tengo una serie de fondos que se van deslizando DÉJENME SER~~) y que resulta que, sin saberlo, es la portada de uno de los libros de esta saga cuya autora me cautivó desde el principio.

~~Oh, Hobb, te amaba desde antes sin saberlo~~

No me voy a extender mucho con este libro. Tiene medio punto menos que el anterior pero es solo una cuestión formal. No me abrumó tanto como *Las Naves de la Locura* pero tuvo sus muchos momentos en los que me quedé mirando la hoja con la boca abierta e incapaz de seguir leyendo. En más de una ocasión (y extrañamente todas relacionadas con la nao Paragon, ~~quién lo diría~~) casi se me escapa una lágrima. Pero también en muchas escenas rodé los ojos por los diálogos, algunas explicaciones que me parecieron muy tontas, y por la mala traducción y edición. Anhele leer a esta autora en inglés porque las traducciones me tienen mal.

Me pareció oportuno mencionar lo de los diálogos, porque es la primera vez que me sucede con Hobb, y no sé si la traducción tendrá que ver. Con los dos libros anteriores no me pasó y correspondían a una editorial distinta. Tal vez se deba a eso, o es que Hobb realmente la pifió feo con los diálogos en este último libro, sobretodo los capítulos alrededor de la última parte. Me molesta porque es inverosímil e irreal que los personajes se pongan a narrar los hechos como si fueran el narrador. Simplemente *don't*.

En fin, diré eso solo. Tardé en leerlo porque, ciertamente, no quería que se terminara.

Quizás más adelante haga otro comentario, por hoy es todo.

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**Edit 29/07/16**

Bueno, creo que me siento en mis cabales como para decir algo acerca de este tercer libro y de la saga en general.

Tengo malos recuerdos de los libros de piratas. A decir verdad, cuando tenía catorce años, en la escuela me obligaron a leer *La Isla del Tesoro*. Lo único que hizo que lograra terminar el libro fue imaginarlo como la película de Disney, porque no solo fue una lectura densa y aburrida, sino que no me interesaba para nada el tópico. Aprendí vocabulario de barcos, sí (y sorprendentemente "verga" es un término náutico, sí, sí, compañeros), pero más allá de eso, me dejó una marca terrible: la padecí, sufría cada vez que tenía que abrir el libro, y así no es cómo se debe realizar una lectura, tan forzada. Desde entonces, las historias de piratas (excepto *Pirates of the Caribbean*) tienen mi total prejuicio. Esto sucede cuando te obligan a leer un libro que no es para vos en ese momento.

Por eso cuando descubrí que la saga que le continuaba a la de Traspié era esta, no lo quería creer. ¿Piratas!? ¿Hobb? ¡Con lo que me gusta la autora! ¡No podía ser!

Pero Hobb demostró no solo quebrar con el esquema habitual de las novelas fantásticas, sino también romper con mis prejuicios.

Dicho esto, llegué a *The Liveship Traders* no con las mejores expectativas. Pero a medida que leía, todo iba mejorando: personajes, argumento, narración. Todo me interesó, todo me fascinó, y no me decepcionó en absoluto.

Sin embargo, en este último libro, detecté un declive. Como expuse antes, no sé si se deberá a la traducción o a la edición, pero tanto la narración de Hobb como varios de sus diálogos me fueron inverosímiles y sosos, algo que no suele suceder PARA NADA con esta mujer (~~quiero creer que fue la traducción, déjenme creer~~).

Hubo varias cosas que me molestaron de *Las Naves del Destino*:

- Lo cierto es que personajes adolescentes/niños hablan como si tuvieran treinta años (Selden es un caso especial, supongo, pero aun así, qué chocante ver a un niño de ¿cuántos años? ¿Cinco, seis?, hablar como si fuera Platón).

- Que el destino de todo el Mitonar haya descansado casi prácticamente sobre los hombros de una muchacha de 14 (Cof cof, Malta, cof cof).

- Que el final se haya desinflado en las últimas cien páginas.

- Que los últimos capítulos hayan servido solo para exponer lo sucedido a continuación del clímax, a través de las voces de los personajes (que queda ESPANTOSO). Me dio la sensación de que Hobb quiso dar un cierre a todos, TODOS sus personajes sin olvidarse ninguno, y esto le pasó porque en *Las Naves de la Locura* introdujo muchos nuevos puntos de vista y varios personajes que parecían tornarse importantes para el argumento, pero que en este tercer libro se fueron desvaneciendo (Grag Tenira, el Ralo y su hija, y el resto de los Tatuados), y para no crear un agujero argumental en el libro, puso en voz de sus personajes lo que le pasó a cada uno luego de que "todo terminara". Me parece bien que no haya querido crear un agujero argumental, pero no era la manera.

En fin. El resto, como siempre, sorprendente, fascinante y quedé boquiabierta más de una vez. Empaticé demasiado con ciertos personajes (Dechado/Paragon -dependiendo de la traducción- se convirtió en uno de mis favoritos) y sentí los descubrimientos como si estuviera presente allí mientras sucedían. Navegué con las naos, me cayeron sobre la cara las gotas que las olas liberaban y sufrí junto con los capitanes de estos barcos.



Llegados a este punto, puedo decir que Hobb es una autora que recomiendo a los cuatro vientos. Incluso si sus historias son sobre piratas.

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## Olivia says

Ship of Destiny is a great conclusion to a trilogy that brought me much joy. I loved watching the characters evolve. Mostly Malta, and yes, I did stop wanting to strangle her eventually and it was with great pleasure that I watched her evolve into one of my favourite characters in this book.

This trilogy has so many kick-ass women protagonists! I can't recommend it enough.

Now comes my big but...and it's more a general but and less about the Liveship Trilogy.

After six Robin Hobb books, I'm not sure if I should continue reading her work. I highly enjoy her world, her characters and even her writing. I just struggle so much with her pacing. I feel like all of her books have an excellent start, a brilliant finale and I slog more or less through the middle.

I'm definitely taking a break before I tackle the next trilogy.

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## Mili says

Another stunning trilogy by Robin Hobb. How I loved the characters! They are so vivid and real. Althea and Brashen are to fall in love with. Im no big fan of pirate tales, but Robin Hobb just enthralls me. I just had the best start of the morning by finishing this book. Woke up before 8 am ( on a day off .....) Decided to read the last few pages ( fell asleep last night on the couch ) and there were cookies next to me....healthy start of the day!

Im still convinced everyone should just read Robin Hobb. There isnt much to review it all speaks to its fantastic self.

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## Rob says

***I give this book 5 pirates... 5 dragons... no, wait... 5 stars! One of the most emotionally charged fantasy books I have read coming from the master at making fantasy feel real, The Magician, Robin Hobb!***

**Ship of Destiny** (2001) is the third book in the **Liveship Traders** series by **Robin Hobb**. An absolute amazing finale! This comes from someone who gave two stars for it's first book, Ship of Magic. This book/trilogy is perfect for anyone who likes the fantasy genre with less action, more deep emotions and peg-legged pirates, YARR! (and dragons, shh)

Ship of Destiny is not a light read. It's... very... heavy! Heavy feels, heavy twists, heavy quotes, **HEAVY!** Hobb is a master at constructing epic sentences while diving into the deepest depths of human nature. You want to take your time with this book to make sure you savor every single beautifully crafted sentence. I highlighted several quotes from this book. At one point I stopped because I would have run out of

highlighter. (Yes, I destroy my books with highlighter, so what!? They are MY BOOKS!) ^^

*"Now I sound like myself. The self I put aside and hid, the self I intended to be again someday, when I was ready. I have stopped intending. I am, now."*

Hey (name is a spoiler), I feel that way too after hearing your story!

If you enter into the Realm of the Elderlings - the setting for many other Robin Hobb books - you owe it to yourself to treat the separate series as individual books. I HATED the first book of Liveship Traders but I ended up **LOVING** the trilogy. All the threads just come together perfectly in the end... but the whole adventure is needed to experience this, and the start can be a bit difficult. But no adventure is worth taking if there is no challenge! It's all worth it and more in the end!

The character development is AMAZING! Across the board, the characters change gracefully into their new roles since book one and two. Characters you despise end up being the target of sympathy. SYMPATHY! Such a huge theme in the story. Characters you think are weak end up strong, loved end up hated, rich end up poor. It's amazing to see the transformations and I can't describe it well enough. You will have to just read! :D

In the end it's not about loving or hating the characters, it's about understanding them, and you will understand them. You will understand them more than you do your friends and family! It's like magic!

Fully recommend! 5 stars, high five!

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## Hanne says

This one is going down as one of my favourite fantasy trilogies.  
Without a doubt! (*This review contains some spoilers of book 1 and 2*)

Part of it is very typical Robin Hobb (after 6 books I'm allowed to say that right?) she makes characters so incredible real they become existing people. I've said it before, but it's just really true: they become people for you to love or loathe. But it's also remarkable how mean she is to them all: she sends them through hell, leaves them there without food or drinks, and then kindly asks them to walk back barefoot. Mean, mean!

There is however one thing she does in this trilogy she didn't do in the previous one; for this one she took a trick of the fantasy writers tool box: multiple point of view characters with storylines that are all coming together. Not one 'catalyst' but a whole family of them.

I thought the general world building was very well done. The serpents, dragons, elderlings, pirates... enough mystery to keep you on your toes until the very last chapter.

Safe to say that i loved this trilogy. It just has all the elements right: Well developed characters, check. Marvelous world building, check. Solid writing, check. Enough tension to keep you going, check. A few unpredictable twists, check! And so on.

I want to end this review with Paragon. While I'm typing this, I have Mumford and Sons playing in the background (a CD obviously, if they would be live in my living room I wouldn't be typing!), and this song reminds me of him.

*Now I'll be bold, as well as strong  
Use my head alongside my heart  
So take my flesh, and fix my eyes  
That tethered mind free from the lies memories*

In my mind, I see Paragon, waiting all those years on the beach for someone who will push him back into the winds. Someone to restore him to former glory. And at last, the waiting is over, Paragon is sailing again and I loved every second of it!

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### **Katie Ziegler (Life Between Words) says**

Guys and Gals. I'm finally going to write a quick review. This fantasy trilogy is SO GOOD. A perfect blend of intricate world building, a rich plot, and most importantly fleshed out characters.

One of the things I love about fantasy is that it is able to take true to life problems and injustices and put a fresh face to them. It allows the reader to step into these injustices and look at them more baldly because they are happening outside of our own world. It makes me think hard about my own preconceived notions and the real world I live in compared to the fantasy world I'm visiting. Sometimes the comparison is revealing and it's not always comfortable. Robin Hobb is a MASTER at this. Her Liveship trilogy deals with sexism, slavery, ownership, the powerful vs the powerless, valor and villainy and so much more. It's beautifully done.

I love these characters - they constantly surprised me, angered me, and stole my heart. I am so sad to let them go. I am going to give an element of the story away here. Something that bothered me to my core, but I think it's important to mention. Stop reading if you absolutely don't want to know...

There was a brutal rape (I'm telling you because you should know going in, in case it's something that you absolutely don't want to read about) that happens in the book that made me question whether to give the book 4 or 5 stars. It wasn't the event itself (I can't say I was particularly surprised, although I'd hoped to see the character involved have a redemption arc rather than just descend further into his psychopathy) - it was the aftermath. It was brushed under the rug by almost every other character and many didn't believe the victim that it actually happened. It infuriated me! BUT, the fact that it made me think so hard about what *\*should\** have happened (and what so rarely happens in our own world) was very telling for me. I think it was very intentional on Robin Hobb's part. So five stars it is!

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### **Petrik says**

**4.5/5 stars**

**A satisfying conclusion to the Liveship Traders trilogy and at the same time, it also made me super excited to start Tawny Man trilogy.**

Ship of Destiny marks the conclusion to the Liveship Traders trilogy, the second out of five subseries in Hobb's Realm of the Elderlings series, and this was overall a satisfying conclusion. I really have to give this praise to Robin Hobb. Having read six books and one novella so far, whether I love it or not (mostly love), I found all her stories to be unpredictable. The book is filled with—once again—amazing characters developments, political turmoil, dragons, and a few great nautical battle scenes. In addition to that, there are a lot of revelations to secrets that were hinted ever since the first book; everything was resolved with no loose ends and the book also shed light on what to come in the future series. I almost absolutely loved reading this one, there were a few things I disliked which I'll get into later but first let me dive talk a bit about the characters in this trilogy.

I've praised Hobb on her characterizations strength in all my review of her books so far and I envisioned you're going to see this as an occurring event. Hobb is seriously superb in developing her characters, especially in this trilogy. Almost every single character ended up playing a role that gave the story its own charm and none of the characters in this trilogy ended up the same way from their first appearance; I mean it, every single character has gone through their own battle and struggles that changed them, for better or worse. I had a problem with the serpents' POV in the first and second book, they felt completely unnecessary, but in here it all finally made sense why they were necessary. The only character that remains the same was Amber and there's a special reason for that.

There's this phrase that's used countless times in many novels, especially in YA fantasy, "she's unlike any other woman" which ironically, makes the female characters mentioned the exact copy of all the other woman that received that description. However, I can assure you that Malta seriously deserves the title of "unlike any other woman". This character's growth from the first book to the third book is a coming of age tale at its finest. She grew from a highly spoiled brat and one of the most despicable characters I've ever read into one of the most interesting characters in the trilogy. And then there's the liveship, Paragon, which I can't stress highly enough how happy I am reading his story line and background. One final thing on the characters, Hobb seriously isn't afraid to make her characters suffer.

"When you fear to fail, you fear something that has not happened yet. You predict your own failure, and by inaction, lock yourself into it."

Hobb has spent a lot of time building towards the last 250 pages and it was really worth it. The moment of convergence where all the characters that have been spread out across the continent throughout the trilogy finally meet each other were rewarding to read. This made the last 250 pages of this book incredibly compelling to read. Unfortunately, despite my praises, I still can't give this book a full 5 stars.

This book was in my opinion a bit too huge for its own good. Don't get me wrong, I don't mind reading a tome, I absolutely loved and finished Oathbringer (450k words) in five days and I still wanted more from it. But this one was simply unnecessary long. There were at least 100 pages that of practically Hobb repeating things that have been stated. This was more evident in the first 300 pages of this book during the Bingtown political discussions, which went on for way too long. Right now, I don't even remember half of the discussions that were discussed there because they were almost like fillers and it got super tedious after a while. I've mentioned this in my previous review and I still think that Serrila's POV was completely pointless in my opinion. It can be cut off completely and it won't affect this trilogy at all. Having read up to this point though, I guess I'll just have to accept that Robin Hobb has a trademark to ramble and being wordy than necessary, whether it's her own fault or the editors I have no idea. These are all just minor issues I had,

the second half and Hobb's prose made up for these cons and they were fantastic, otherwise, this would be a gigantic problem.

For those of you who are wondering if you can read this without reading Farseer or not, you absolutely can if you want. There's one major character from the Farseer trilogy that's here but if you haven't read Farseer, you probably won't know it's him, that's all you'll miss. However, if you're willing to read Farseer, I strongly recommend to finish the first two book and see how you feel about it first. If you don't like it, just read a summary of the third book, Assassin's Quest, on Wikipedia. It will save you a HUGE amount of time and believe me, that book deserves to be skip, finishing that one almost made me give up completely on Robin Hobb, and this is coming from someone who actually enjoyed the first and second book in the trilogy.

Overall, The Liveship Traders is still a marvelous and satisfying trilogy to read, it's so much better than the Farseer trilogy in my opinion. Also, I'm now super eager start Tawny Man, which from what I've heard is the most highly praised trilogy written by Robin Hobb and I will definitely do that after one or two book break. Although this trilogy fell a bit short to be included into my all time favorite trilogy list, I still highly recommend this trilogy for anyone who loves epic fantasy with a lot of characters POV and well-written characters' development.

**Picture: My copies of *Liveship Traders***

#### Series review:

Ship of Magic: 4.5/5 stars

The Mad Ship: 4/5 stars

Ship of Destiny: 4.5/5 stars

Liveship Traders: 13/15 stars

*You can find **this** and the rest of my Adult Epic/High Fantasy & Sci-Fi reviews at **BookNest***

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#### **David Sven says**

Robin Hobb delivers a highly satisfying finale to an enjoyable fantasy series. If you have read The Farseer Trilogy and are debating whether to read this trilogy next or skip ahead to the Tawny Man trilogy – I can't recommend The Liveships Trilogy enough. I think there are little tidbits throughout to reward those who choose to continue in publication order.

One thing Hobb does well, is produce interesting, well thought out, multidimensional characters. Many of the characters who are arguably "good" have their ugly side. I'm thinking here of Althea, Malta, Wintrow, Keffria and more. And Hobb forces us to look at the redeemable qualities of those characters who, if not totally evil, are pretty close. I'm thinking here in particular of Kennit, the pirate who would be king.

Up till about halfway through this book, I found Kennit for all his flaws and self centered ambition, to be a fairly likeable character. A lot of that stems from the kindness he extends to Wintrow and his relationship with the liveship Vivacia. However, come the second half of this book, Robin Hobb peels back the layers to

reveal who Kennit really is. What motivates him. What has made him the man he is. It was not a pretty picture. In the second half of this book there were some truly jaw dropping, gut wrenching, and even sickening revelations that turned a lot of my assumptions throughout the series on their head. Hobb takes us down some dark and ugly pathways relating to the past which we then see perpetuated in the present. Hobb has a reputation for putting her characters through the mill, but this book took it that step further again and led me as the reader into some pretty uncomfortable places.

Still, for all the dark and uncomfortable places we are forced to travel there are also some glorious moments,. Like the rise of the dragon Tintaglia, soaring and hunting and doing battle. Also the growth of the mad ship Paragon, arguably the character who develops the most through the series.

I think overall the series finishes positively, however, to say this story has a happy ending would be over simplistic. Victory comes at a very high cost to many of the characters. Alongside the triumph there is also tragedy. For those who overcome, the face of redemption is covered in scar tissue.

Loved it

4 stars

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### **Connor says**

Of course. This book is amazing.

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### **Kaitlin says**

This whole series has been perfection. It's not often that after reading a 2\* book by an author I will continue on with their work but with Hobb I am so thrilled that I did go on to the Liveship books after the Farseer ones because truly she's a miracle writer and her ability to craft convincing, beautiful and stunning characters, worlds and ideas is unparalleled.

This is book 3 in the Liveship books and so naturally I cannot give away the plot of the story but suffice to say we're once more following the characters we've grown to love, hate and be drawn in by. I became enraptured by this world that at some points of reading this I fell asleep only to find myself dreaming about the magic of the world and the characters within the book!!

I think Paragon, Malta and Selden were solidly my favourite of the characters developed in this book but there are so many who come a very very close second place to that. They each had their own plotlines which were seriously moved along within the pages of this book and each one became so vastly improved and different from the characters they began as.

On the whole I would say this is a series I'd recommend to anyone who loves fantasy and wonderful characters because truly it is character-focused. Whilst this book had more of a political emphasis than some of the previous ones it didn't lose my interest or irritate me with the amount of politics shown because it still focused in on those characters we know and love.

This book and this series will forever cement Hobb as a fabulous writer in my mind and has made me wish to pick up the rest of her Elderlings books as soon as I can. I cannot wait to uncover more of the mysteries which are hinted at in this book and unfurl the tapestry of time, prophecy and the destiny for this world because there's so many original and cool ideas woven in.

An amazing book once more and a great conclusion to the trilogy (unlike that of the Farseer books) and so I would say it's a solid 5\*s and a highly recommended read.

(p.s you can start Hobb with this series but you'll spoil elements of the Farseer books for yourself. Personally I enjoyed the first 2 Farseer books, but disliked the third. I'd recommend reading the first two but maybe skipping the third and just looking up spoilers for that one because it was so overly long. This series is miles better than the Farseer books in my opinion, but let me know your thoughts too below :)

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