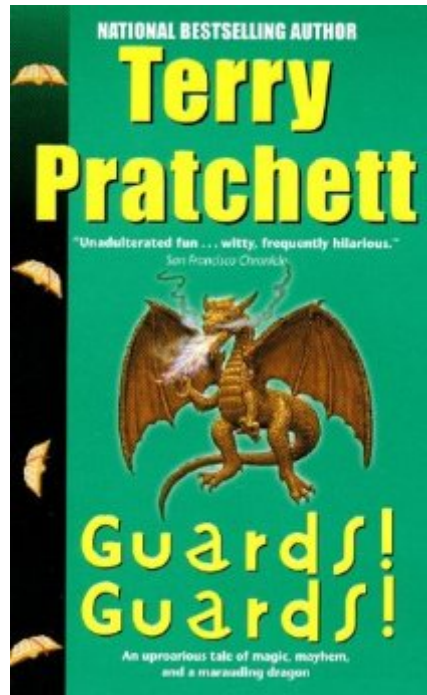


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Guards! Guards!: A Novel Of Discworld



Synopsis

Welcome to Guards! Guards!, the eighth book in Terry Pratchett's legendary Discworld series. Long believed extinct, a superb specimen of draco nobilis ("noble dragon" for those who don't understand italics) has appeared in Discworld's greatest city. Not only does this unwelcome visitor have a nasty habit of charbroiling everything in its path, in rather short order it is crowned King (it is a noble dragon, after all...). How did it get there? How is the Unique and Supreme Lodge of the Elucidated Brethren of the Ebon Night involved? Can the Ankh-Morpork City Watch restore order and the Patrician of Ankh-Morpork to power? Magic, mayhem, and a marauding dragon...who could ask for anything more?

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Customer Reviews

Discworld really doesn't get any better or funnier than this. For the first time in the series, we get an extended up-close view of life in the remarkable city of Ankh-Morpork. We are introduced to such wonderful characters as Captain Vimes of the City Watch and his singular subordinates Nobby, Colon, and the giant dwarf (adopted) Carrot; the formidable Lady Ramkin; and Cut-Me-Own-Throat Dibbler. The remarkable fashion in which the Patrician Lord Vetinari runs the city is explained in

some detail, we begin to really get to know the Librarian of Unseen University (who was of course turned into an orangutan some time back as a result of a magical accident), and Pratchett gives us a basic rundown on the theory of L-Space under which all libraries work and are magically connected. Everyone knows that dragons do not exist, not the type of giant mythical creatures who fly around breathing fire all over the place. Thus, it comes as something of a surprise to people when Ankh-Morpork begins experiencing incidents of the body-melting variety; such a perpetrator can only be dismissed for so long as a giant wading bird, however. It seems that a group of unimportant have-nots has been wooed into a secret society bent on teaching the haves a lesson or two by magically summoning a dragon to carry out their wishes. Naturally, things get out of hand, and the dragon finds a way to establish permanent residence in reality. Declaring himself king of the city, preparations are made to turn over treasure and begin sacrificing maidens.

"Guards ! Guards !" is the eighth book in Terry Pratchett's hugely popular Discworld series and is the first to focus on Sam Vimes and Ankh-Morpork's City Guard. Although the City Guard was once a fine and noble profession, it has fallen by the wayside in recent years. Once, there had been hundreds of members : as the book opens, the City's Night Watch is staffed only by Sam, Sergeant Fred Colon and Corporal Nobby Nobbs. Like the Night Watch itself, Sam has also fallen on hard times. Having started drinking to forget (it was possibly something to do with a woman), he now drinks to forget the drinking. Despite his faults, though, he's a likeable cynic who has a well-developed sense of fair play and identifies with the underdog. Things start turning around for Sam and the Watch in "Guards ! Guards !". The force sees a dramatic rise in numbers with the arrival of Carrot Ironfoundersson. Orphaned as a baby, Carrot had been taken in by the dwarfs and raised in a gold mine. Until shortly before he left home, he didn't realise he was human - he'd always thought he was just tall for his species. His adoptive father decides it's best for Carrot to spend some time with other humans and 'manages' to secure a position for him in the Ankh-Morpork City Guard. Carrot, on his arrival, is viewed with some amazement : an actual, honest volunteer. He takes things very literally (as dwarfs tend to do), is very innocent (he wouldn't know what to do with a seamstress if one fell into his lap) and a lot of the humour comes from his utter confusion. The problem for Sam and the Night Watch is presented by the Unique and Supreme Lodge of the Elucidated Brethren. Well, actually, the problem is its mysterious (and big-headed) Supreme Grand Master, an ambitious and manipulative individual.

Okay, so this is the best dragon book ever. For adults. Well, for those of us who think we are adults,

who hope we are adults, but are really little kids in adult suits. I thought all the previous Discworld novels were funny. I was so wrong. This book left me in fits of giggles. At times I laughed so hard that I couldn't laugh anymore and just whimpered, and almost peed my pants once. Okay, twice. Okay, I don't remember how many times. Anyway. People told me that one of their favorites in the Discworld series is Guards! Guards! I get why. I mean, I haven't read the rest of them, but here Terry outdid himself. Every sentence is a pun, a joke, a clever satire, a poke at everything under the sky, marriage, religion, stupidity, politics, love, cowardice, you name it, he's got it all. Of course the dedication to the book alone will leave you struggling for breath. Haven't we all seen those movies with those unnamed men rushing at the hero, only to be butchered to smithereens? Yeah. You know what I'm talking about. Enter secret societies, ruthless rulers, or, rather, loathsome men willing to become ruthless rulers, kings, dragons, heirs to the throne, did I mention dragons? Yes, dragons, swamp dragons, dwarfs, big ladies (I will leave it here, because in the big ladies lies the secret of this book). But I'm rambling. Mind you, my stomach still hurts from laughing, so I'm a little jerky writing this. As to the actual story, because every proper review should do this. Let's see here. We start with a secret brotherhood doing something strange and mysteriousâ | wait, no, before that we start with dragons dwelling in a mysterious place, and then a strange happening in the library, where, as you remember, an orangutan is a librarian.

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