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Glamour In Glass (Glamourist Histories)



Synopsis

Mary Robinette Kowal stunned readers with her charming first novel *Shades of Milk and Honey*, a loving tribute to the works of Jane Austen in a world where magic is an everyday occurrence. This magic comes in the form of glamour, which allows talented users to form practically any illusion they can imagine. *Shades* debuted to great acclaim and left readers eagerly awaiting its sequel. *Glamour in Glass* follows the lives of beloved main characters Jane and Vincent, with a much deeper vein of drama and intrigue. In the tumultuous months after Napoleon abdicates his throne, Jane and Vincent go to Belgium for their honeymoon. While there, the deposed emperor escapes his exile in Elba, throwing the continent into turmoil. With no easy way back to England, Jane and Vincent's concerns turn from enjoying their honeymoon to escaping it. Left with no outward salvation, Jane must persevere over her trying personal circumstances and use her glamour to rescue her husband from prison and hopefully prevent her newly built marriage from getting stranded on the shoals of another country's war.

Book Information

Series: Glamourist Histories (Book 2)

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Tor Books; Reprint edition (January 15, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0765325616

ISBN-13: 978-0765325617

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 65 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #802,145 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #68 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Gaslamp #1735 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Magical Realism #3894 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Historical > Fantasy

Customer Reviews

"The setting and the intricate techniques of glamour manipulation continue to intrigue, and the thoughtful portrayal of the difficulties of Jane and Vincent's affectionately nontraditional partnership is thoroughly engaging." Publishers Weekly "This is a wonderful book. Kowal has taken such care grounding her story in the time and place in which it's set that the addition of magic is truly seamless. Jane is a superb heroine."

Book Reviews

“Prepare to settle in and snuggle up in your comfiest chair; once you start reading, you won’t want to stop.”

Library Journal

“Will appeal to fans of Jane Austen, Jane Yolen, Patricia Wrede, Susanna Clarke, and even Jasper Fforde.”

Library Journal on *Shades of Milk and Honey*

“Kowal sets her own mark on this kind of comedy of manners and creates a low-key and witty debut novel, one that succeeds through understated humor and sprightly prose, rather than through absurd juxtapositions of the historical and the supernatural.”

San Francisco Chronicle on *Shades of Milk and Honey*

“*Shades of Milk and Honey* could easily fit into Austen’s canon, except of course for the inclusion of magic. Kowal has captured both the style and content of an Austen novel, adding her own speculative fiction twist...hits all the high points of Austen’s dialogue and plotting while still having its own identity.”

The Jane Austen Center on *Shades of Milk and Honey*

“If Jane Austen had written a fantasy novel, [this] would have been the result. Written with painstaking attention to detail, Kowal’s prose is serenely evocative of the time period, and the fantastic elements are a seamless fit. The characterization is extremely well done and Jane is a sympathetic, strong and intelligent heroine whose devotion to her family trumps nearly every other concern.”

RT Book Reviews, 4 stars, Top Pick!, Seal of Excellence winner on *Shades of Milk and Honey*

“A lovely, smart, strange novel with everything on earth (and elsewhere) to recommend it. Smoothly crafted with a flair for romance and mystery, this story is one part meticulous manners and one part wild magic--composing a whole that’s utterly irresistible.”

Cherie Priest on *Shades of Milk and Honey*

“A beautiful, lyrical, tightly woven meld of Jane Austen, Jane Eyre, and *Beauty and the Beast*--I couldn’t put it down!”

Lilith Saintcrow on *Shades of Milk and Honey*

“Simply enchanting, and another great advance in an already impressive literary career. You’re going to love this.”

John Scalzi on *Shades of Milk and Honey*

MARY ROBINETTE KOWAL was the 2008 recipient of the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer and a Hugo winner for her story "For Want of a Nail." Her short fiction has appeared in *Strange Horizons*, *Asimov's*, and several Year's Best anthologies. She also writes the *Glamourist History* series, which began with *Shades of Milk and Honey*. A professional puppeteer and voice actor, she spent five years touring nationally with puppet theaters. She lives in Chicago with her husband Rob and many manual typewriters.

By Chris Gerrib, author of *Pirates of Mars*

Mary Robinette Kowal has a problem. The first line of her

new novel *Glamour In Glass* somehow got cut out of the first edition. (For the record, the line is: There are few things in this world that can simultaneously delight and dismay in the same manner as a formal dinner party.) Despite that unfortunate glitch, I found *Glamour In Glass* simply spectacular. The story is a loose sequel to her first novel, *Shades of Milk and Honey*, and is set in Regency England. This is, however, Regency England with a twist - there is a form of magic called "glamour" which allows people to create wonderful illusions. Kowal wanted a magic system that would be primarily reserved to women, so she had to invent something with limited practical use. So, her "glamours" are persistent but not practical. For example, one could create an illusion of a candle, but the candle would not be able to illuminate something. At any rate, Mary's heroine, Jane Vincent, having been newly married to the noted "glamorist" David Vincent, starts the novel by being invited to a dinner party thrown by the Prince Regent. At this, she discovers that her husband plans to take her on a honeymoon to the Continent, now opened for travel due to Napoleon's defeat. So they end up staying in Binche, Belgium, a little town on the road to a place called Waterloo. In the spring and summer of 1815, as the reinstated Napoleon is marching his army north. This setup creates great suspense, while providing a perfect excuse for Ms. Kowal to leave her characters in the dark. While we await Napoleon's arrival, the newlywed glamorists work on their skills, including an attempt by Jane to trap illusions in glass. This would have the effect of allowing mass-production of glamour and use by unskilled people. In addition, if Mr. Vincent's *Sphere Obscurcie*, a form of invisibility, can be locked in glass, then glamour has a clear military use (pun intended). The novel is written in the style of Jane Austen, so we get such lines as, "They were occupied for some minutes, then, with duties marital. To disturb their privacy would be indecorous." Despite that, there's plenty of action, especially in the last third of the book. In short, Mary Robinette Kowal has produced another wonderful book.

I really loved the first book: *Shades of Milk & Honey* so I highly anticipated it's sequel. This was a fairly enjoyable read. I especially love the flavor of the words & how they are blended together to create an atmosphere. The choice & assemblage of words, as well as the imaginative concepts of glamour are beautifully rendered into a fully fleshed "alternate reality". It is no small thing to deftly layer these things together without a seam showing, but that is what Kowal has done. This story picks up shortly after the last book ends. As Jane & Vincent are now married there is a good bit about the benefits and challenges of married life. So even though it is more than "discrete" by modern standards, I would steer an unwed reader away from this. As the story unfolded, I found myself laboring to keep a hold of the trail of the story. History, politics and plots got jumbled up in my head &

I began to wonder why there was so much jumble in my path. I had not expected to have the characters intersect with anything remotely "real" in terms of history, so I was quite unprepared & chagrined at my ignorance, which turned out to be the real stumbling block. In as much as I loathe books with impossibly attractive people, I did find that the author did seem to mention Jane's plainness a bit too frequently. Juxtaposidly, the publisher has set a typical pretty looking girl on the cover ! Shadows would have been more appropriate !

I think this is not the place to start with this series. "Shades of Milk and Honey" is, I think, a necessary precursor, in which one meets the protags and the magical system. Since I had read #1, I very much enjoyed this one, and look forward to #3. This is a bit more adventurous than #1: think Heyer rather than Austen, or some of the more adventurous modern Regency writers. Jane is a force to be reckoned with, and I love that. She is maybe not as skilled at glamour as her husband, but she has better instincts for theory- one of which is vital to the plot. The world was very well-thought-out and depicted, as is the magical system. The characters were less well-drawn; whether Jane and David were at odds or in harmony seemed to be more relevant to the plot than to their personal relationship; it was sort of random off-again, on-again, with explanations made but for me they didn't work all that well, especially since Jane is prickly about David lying/omitting info other than that she needs to know... and he does it anyway. On a more practical note: I am getting really tired of authors misusing prepositional phrases. "Between he and I" is NOT correct, nor is any prepositional variant. This happened in #1, too, and tended to throw me out of the story. It's really not that hard! "Me" is not a Forbidden Word! and in a prepositional phrase, it IS the correct one. That being said, the language in this was amazingly non-anachronistic, and I applaud the work she did to make that so. The plot was engaging, too. I'm glad I read this, and look forward to reading #3.

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