



Greyfax Grimwald

Niel Hancock

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Welcome to Atlanton Earth! Drawn together by an enchanted summons, three loyal friends-Bear, Dwarf, and Otter, bid farewell to their fair home in the kingdom of Lorini and embark on a magical journey to the fabled World Beyond Time, a place where glows the ageless Circle of Light. Along the way they meet many marvelous friends, including the mighty wizard Greyfax Grimwald. But little does the trio realize the dangers that await them: the gloomy border of the Northerland....the green fires of the Palace of Darkness....evil spells and dark enchantments the dread city of Humans and-most fearsome of all-the evil Dark Queen.

Greyfax Grimwald Details

Date : Published December 1st 1982 by Warner Books (first published 1977)

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Author : Niel Hancock

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From Reader Review Greyfax Grimwald for online ebook

Patricia Hamill says

Always enjoy this one. First read in third grade.

It's the only one of the four I can recall clearly between readings. :-)

Fans of fantasy will probably like it, though it isn't the next LOTR as the publisher states all over the cover.

Drew Astolfi says

So I loved these as a kid - partly for the animals, but also for the quests and the magic and the battles. I only learned much latter that there is a distinct Buddhist theme running through the whole thing. Its deeper than it appears to be on the surface.

Anyway the ending of the series was particularly satisfying. For me anyway. I have not re-read these as an adult though.

Lyman Flenner says

Interesting premise and series

BookishCrab says

4 stars

Aelvana says

Bear, Otter, and the dwarf Broco were happy living their own lives beyond the great river Calix Stay, but some mysterious unrest has overtaken them all. Drawn together, they cross the river once more, heading back into the lands that know time. They are searching for their quest. But it doesn't take long for them to come to the attention of both the good and the evil who are warring for supremacy in this conflicted realm. . .

By and large, this is a novel that shines with its language and characters. Grumpy, hungry Bear, playful Otter, and the serious Dwarf form the heart of the story. The interaction between the three is frequently amusing, especially since all of them have been alive so long that things like hurry and short-term-memory often fall to the wayside.

The plot, however, suffers a bit. While Greyfax knows who Dwarf is, and the reader figures out through him fairly early what the fuss is all about, Dwarf spends most of the book sitting around waiting for plot to happen to him. Greyfax, despite being the title character, isn't much better---he's always rushing someplace only to find his bit of information came too late, or is meant to push other people into acting.

The plot also has several echos of Lord of the Rings (which doesn't have to be a bad thing; it just makes certain twists seem far too familiar). For instance, when Dwarf suggests they go to the hall of his cousin, which is sure to be full of feasting, it tends to be rather too obvious what they'll find when they arrive.

The characters are solid, and the overarching world (or rather, multi-verse) appealed to me, so I'll track down the second book. It's an easy read. I rate this book Recommended.

MisterFweem says

Fantasy is a difficult genre because so many readers come into it with preconceived notions, baggage from favorite and despised authors and other such stuff that generally keeps them from enjoying a good book if it doesn't really meet their expectations.

Greyfax Grimwald is probably one of the books that gets abused by the fantasy snobs. I admit Niel Hancock is no Tolkein, but then only Tolkein is Tolkein. It's a fairer thing to say that Hancock is no Terry Brooks; he's a few notches above Brooks in quality and narrative.

Where Hancock may fall short lies in differentiating his characters one from another. The wizards Greyfax Grimwald, Froghorn Feringay and the wizard in disguise, General Greymouse, may as well be the same person, they're so alike.

Then there's the treatment of magic. There are these things, see, that are meant to keep whatever world we're in -- that's also hard to follow -- safe, or at least help people get out of fixes. Or something. They are to reside in a chest of sorts, but they've been scattered to protect them. I spent too much time trying to figure this out, trying to figure out the lay of the land (Hancock provides maps, but there's little resemblance and few landmarks in common between the maps and these stories) that I kept losing the story.

If you want to read Hancock, I recommend "Dragon Winter" Much more coherent in narrative and geography.

Rick says

Read the series a long time ago and liked it. Tried reading it again a few years back but didn't even make it through the first book. It still rates a 3-star out of sentimentality...

Hannah says

This book was great! This is the first in the Circle of Light series, and it has a world reminiscent of Lord of the Rings, but not so...two-legged, for lack of a more fun word. Animals play a bit more of a role from what I

can tell. The main characters are a dwarf (short, skinny, and magical--a bit different from other dwarves), a bear (an ancient, powerful being who is always hungry), an otter (he's mostly fun and playful), and a couple of wizards who help them understand what's going on when they come back to the World Before Time. It's really enjoyable, and I would suggest it for any fan of fantasy.

Bradley says

Average fare. Meh.

Kailey (BooksforMKs) says

I don't know what kind of crap this is, but it is absolutely unreadable! The sentence structure is appalling, and every decent rule of good writing is broken on every page. Apparently, this writer has never even heard of stuff that every writer learns (or should have learned) in 5th grade, like that you shouldn't use too many adjectives, and you shouldn't use the same adjective over and over.

"The delightful, soft, glowing movements of the sun..."

Three adjectives were necessary here?

"Leaving all that world frozen by the cold ice night..."

Argh! The redundancy!

"The cold snow"

Do you really need to say that snow is cold? Really?

The characters are inconsistent in their behaviour and their dialogue is boring in the extreme.

The styles are mixed in too. It's supposed to be set in olden times, but the expressions used are decidedly modern day.

The plot falters along with lots of pompous talk about things being "important" but nothing ever happens.

Another rule of writing: Don't TELL me it's "important." Show me. Make me FEEL that it is important without telling me so.

The awfulness of this book is beyond words. It amazes me that this worthless stuff was ever published for actual human beings to read.

I couldn't even finish it. I made it a little past halfway through, and just couldn't stomach it anymore. My brain feels violated.

This author obviously has no education and no training in writing.

I need to read some Dickens or something to wash out my mind and remind me what real English and good grammar looks like.

Whoever this author's editor was, he's an idiot, and has inflicted a monstrosity on the world.

John says

I would give it a 3.5 good beginning to a fantasy/fairy tale series. An easy read and a young adult, chapter book. The first time I have read this author.

Conor Lade says

WOW. A let down. I guess the danger of being a pioneer (the book was written ages ago) is that you may be judged by more current standards. For its time, Greyfax Grinwald's characters and plot may have been just fine. It is not a bad book. It is just not up to par with today's standards... Like trying to review a telegraph system in the age of phones.

Jacinda Phillips says

Bought this paperback book at a book sale, with it's 3 others in it's set for a full \$1.00. Where has this been all my life and I've never heard of this series or author? Great high-fantasy story that I plowed through in one very lazy day. It's written for adults due to the complex concepts, but it made me feel like a little kid reading LOTR for the first time again. Wow. Can't wait to read the others.

David Cain says

I first read this in the mid-1980s but didn't remember much about it. Decided to re-read it as an adult and my

conclusion is that this book (the first in a series of four) will likely be most enjoyed primarily by younger readers. It's not terrible but it does leave much to be desired. It is unoriginal within the fantasy genre and quite derivative of Tolkein in particular. Not so much an homage as a blatant rip-off, as there are numerous characters, events, and items that directly correspond to Tolkein's creations. The writing style is uneven and distracting at times. Characters were often weakly developed, unmemorable, and interchangeable with one another. Also, I'm not quite sure why Hancock chose Greyfax Grimwald as the title, because there are at least three (and arguably four or five) characters featured more prominently in the narrative than Grimwald. Despite these complaints (and due in no small part to nostalgia for my youth), I did enjoy parts of it and will eventually be moving on to book two in the series.

Terence says

I remember reading this series in those halcyon days of youth 20 or 30 years ago (give or take 5 years) and being quite enchanted with it.

I tried rereading it about 10 years ago, I suppose, and somewhere the "magic" had disappeared. It just wasn't nearly as good as I remembered it, sadly.

But I'm still giving it three stars (I liked it) in memory of that 12-year-old kid who *was* ensorcelled.
