



M'Lady Witch

Christopher Stasheff

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Witch Cordelia Gallowglass refuses dutiful proposal of childhood sweetheart, Prince Alain. Her rakish wizard brother Geoffrey aids his quest to prove his love, suggests he send her conquests like Don Quixote. Guardians follow, as do enemies bent on ending Gramarye. Cordelia must duel like Merlyn against Madam Mim.

M'Lady Witch Details

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Author : Christopher Stasheff

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From Reader Review M'Lady Witch for online ebook

Jamie says

Cordelia had always known she would marry Prince Alain, mostly because they'd been friends since childhood and it just made sense they'd end up together. But when Prince Alain all but orders her for her hand she realizes that love doesn't seem to have much to do with their relationship, and refuses him. Angry words are exchanged and Cordelia's brother takes the Prince off to win Cordelia's love the old fashioned way. Questing! Followed by a 'secret' tail of the King, Cordelia's parents, a battalion of royal bodyguards, every Wee Folk that could be spared, and of course, Cordelia herself.

Contrary to the idea the summary might have given you, Cordelia's pretty useless for the first half of the book. The two boys defeat some bandits and send them back to Cordelia's home a la Don Quixote, so she turns around and goes home so she'd be there to meet them. Eventually she does go back after the two idiots and finds them being seduced by a comely young thing, and there's a magic battle (Cordelia's family are all-powerful witches and warlocks), but in the end the whole plot of the book is Cordelia and Alain's high school-style lover's spat and they get jealous and masked ball and yada yada happily ever after.

Cordelia is all powerful and super beautiful but doesn't know it and every boy and man she meets falls in love with her and her only flaw is a quick temper and some mood swings. But she does have some lovely scenes, my favorite of which is her arrival at the masked ball where the men are all going gaga over her and it's the first time she ever dressed up and went out so she never got this kind of reaction before. She seems genuinely appreciative of the attention, and satisfied that she managed to outdo her romantic rival. The fact that the party-goers were all agents of her rival was icing on the cake. And her talk with her mother afterword was heartfelt and lovely. But if she has any other cute scenes they were lost on me. She wasn't memorable or likable.

Her brother Geoffrey is the standard historical romance leading man. He's a scandalous rogue who sleeps around no qualms about it. But he's chivalrous about it and polite, getting the lady to set the limits and respecting them even if she was only trying to goad him on. He's a good friend to Alain and is a well-written brother character to Cordelia. You don't read their conversations and think 'cousins maybe, but not siblings'. There's a great scene at the ball where he's talking to Alain but watching Cordelia, and he's calm and rational to the one but mentally he's skipping synapses at seeing her let go and flirt. He's got the best lines, too.

"Am I not knight enough for you?" he countered. "Or enough for a night?"
(Christopher Stasheff, M'Lady Witch, p.125)

But Alain was by far the best of the three characters. He's the only one who learned something, going from a stiff, polite courtier to a... Okay so he didn't learn much. But he got to go adventuring and he learned about himself and his feelings for Cordelia and how women should be and want to be treated. He's a sweetheart who has an unfortunate habit of throwing himself into the fray to rescue those in trouble when he would be better off hanging back to plan something better, but even that impulse he conquers at the end when Cordelia needs rescuing.

There are at least 18 books before this one, excluding the 10 in the *Rogue Wizard* series because Cordelia's brother is in it but he's off-planet so there's probably not much development relevant to the other books. Yeah, other books, something I was unaware of since Goodreads said this was the first in the series. And it is in the sense that it's the first in the *Warlock's Heirs* series about the second generation. 10 more are in the

Warlock series about Cordelia's parents. So you'll find right off that there's a lot of backstory and character introductions to get through. Because heaven forbid she earn her own friendships and relationships and not just rely on all the people her parents knew.

That might be unfair. The bandit Forrest seems to have stuck around at the end of it, but I don't care to read the next book to find out for sure.

For it was cruel to me, as I shall not be to you, dear readers. Beware: this is no high fantasy I speak of, but high sci-fi. Yup, despite no mention of the science fiction side to this world it is, in fact, mired in it. Robot horses, AI, time travel, intergalactic anarchist groups, explosives, interplanetary humanitarian missions, this is a science fiction book set on a planet whose first settlers wanted to recreate the Medieval era, with plenty of anachronisms from up to the 15th century thrown in to make it, if not accurate, then comfortable.

I had no warning of this, it just started coming out of nowhere during one of those backstory bog-downs I mentioned earlier.

The verdict? That said, maybe the series is a good read if you start from the beginning and have a little warning about the sci-fi, but the Goodreads, Amazon.ca, and back-of-book summaries gave no indication this was anything other than high fantasy. Look at that cover! Is there *anything* sci-fi about that cover?! I'll recommend it for a cute, light-headed teenage romance that goes nowhere important but only if sci-fi fantasy is your kind of thing.

C.G. says

Now we start on the *Warlock Heirs*, beginning with Cordelia and one of the worst proposals in history! In spite of Finister, a powerful witch who has already messed with Magnus and whose assignment from SPITE is to render the Gallowglass grownup children unable to bear children of their own by whatever means it takes, Cordelia and Alain's love wins out.

Helene Falkinburg says

This was and is a great spin-off series!!

Alexis Sanders says

This is the first book by Christopher Stasheff I ever read and I loved it. I have read it many times since i first read it about 15 years ago, my copy of the book is almost worn out. I loved that the lead charicters have flaws, poor jugement and bad tempers. Cordilia and Alain both make some pretty bad choices but they are two good people who you hope beyond hope will end up together. And I have to say that as far as bad "guys" go, Delila is a favorite of mine to see put in her place. Anyway read this book! Its very well writen the love story is exceptional and the world Christopher created is vivid and rich with history and myth. This book is one of my favorite escapes.

Peggi Warner-lalonde says

A fun romp.

Samantha says

Wow...I read this book probably almost 10 years ago...

I remember liking it a lot at that age, but if I were to read it again now I don't know if it would hold up to the test of time. At least with rose-tinted glasses I would say it was good. Maybe I need to go fish it out of my boxes of old books...

Frank Taranto says

Just a good fun short read.

Heather says

This was the first one of his books I read and I positively fell in love! Well written, believable characters that are SO much fun to read about and cheer for and/or hate on make the book a great read. After a couple of these books I am attached to the whole family!

An Odd1 says

Best bits are banter, battle, thee, thou. Heroine and hero are stubborn and quick to anger. Her duel is fiercer than Merlyn against Madam Mim *Sword in the Stone* <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show....> Leads me onward in series, Arthurian epics, and backward to Disney film.

Witch Cordelia Gallowglass refuses dutiful proposal of childhood sweetheart, Prince Alain. Her brother Geoffrey forcefully offers to aid in a quest to prove the calm reliable suitor really is in love. Geoffrey, famed for drinking, wenching, and wizardry, advises Alain send conquests to Cordelia, like Don Quixote "mired in delusion" p 49 to his Dulcinea, copied by Lancelot in T.H. White's *Once and Future King* <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show....>

A train of followers and faked trials ensure Alain's safety. Her parents, Lord High Warlock Rod and powerful witch Gwen, strong in telepathy and telekinesis, ask her grandad Brom, King of the Elves, for little folk to protect. Gleeful Puck plans mischief "six schemes for sabotaging" p 39. Both fathers trail with a retinue of knights. Cordelia starts to pursue, but needs return to accept Alain's conquests.

Seneschal Sir Maris frees Forrest and band to stage attack on peasant carter and wife p 57. Forrest has warlock powers "lot of him to admire, more than six feet, and most of it muscles. His legs were exceedingly well formed .. bulging muscles in his shoulders and arms .. face was open, his black eyes large and long-lashed .. lips full and red .. wealth of black curls .. teeth flashed white as he smiled, and the dangerous gleam in his eye .. struck like a crossbow bolt, arousing sensations inside her that she had never been aware of before, and wasn't at all sure she liked. Of course, she wasn't at all sure that she didn't like them, either" p 78. Cordelia feels attraction "most handsome man she had ever seen .. hint of wildness" p 77, "did she truly wish to be safe?" p 146. He hides noble birth, secretly grateful to be freed as leader of outlaws. Worth another book?

Lady Delilah de Fevre tosses blonde tresses, looks "down with frequent blushes -- very coy, very demure, very calculating" p 105 toward Alain. Sparks fly, barbs and flirts "the lady who fends for herself, and has no true need of a husband, will not have one" p 109. "Am I not knight enough for you, or enough for a night?" p 125. Identical vision leads Gallowglass siblings to suspect telepath "not nobly born" p 131 leaked truth into shared 'dream'. Delilah commanded men, "bade them dress as servants, and named one to impersonate her father" p 129.

Fess, metal horse with AI senses "lycopodite .. modern explosive" p 136. Manor land was "cleared .. in a day .. builded the whole of the house in a month .. Her face doth seem to change from time to time, as does the color of her hair .. maliciousness" p 168.

(view spoiler)

Gwen advises daughter. "Marriage will change him .. gradually, little by little .. as thou wilt thyself" p 207. "If thou dost find thyself even asking the question, 'Am I in love?' then thou art not." p 211. Truly?

Steph says

I used to love this book when I was in high school. I read it over and over. Now? meh. the first half was worth 2 stars, the second half finally got interesting and was worth 4. So average of 3. if I could, I'd give half a star extra just because I used to really enjoy it.

MarsianMan says

Prince Alain proposes in a terrible and presumptuous manner to Cordelia who is offended and berates him. Angry Alain leaves and is persuaded by her (initially) angry brother, Geoffrey, to take a journey and become worthy of her love. Unlike the Warlock series, this series is lighter on the political teachings and more fun.
