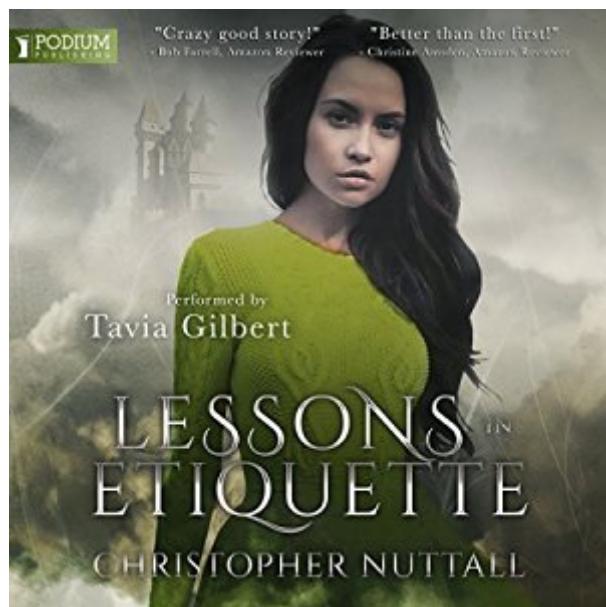


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Lessons In Etiquette: Schooled In Magic, Book 2



Synopsis

After completing her first year of learning magic at Whitehall School, Emily accepts an invitation from Princess Alassa to accompany her on her progress back to her home country of Zangaria, where the princess may meet her future husband. Alassa, who was a spoiled brat before she met Emily, wants to show off her friend - and impress potential suitors. For Emily, it is a chance to relax and explore a world very different to Earth, meet new people and come to terms with her reputation in the Nameless World. After her defeat of Shadye, everyone wants to know her, to talk with her, to kill her or to marry her. For Emily, hardly a social butterfly, the experience is disconcerting. She was never seriously courted before, not on Earth. And yet, as she sees more of the countries surrounding Whitehall, she feels more and more out of place. The locals come from a very different culture, one that is often strange and horrifying to her eyes. Even her friends seem different people in their homes. But dark forces are at work, plotting to capture the princess, take power in Zangaria, and undo all of Emily's work. As all hell breaks loose, Emily may be all that stands between Zangaria and a return to the dark ages of brute force that threatened to lay the kingdom low once before. And if she fails, her friends will be just the first victims of a war that will rip the Allied Lands apart.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I liked book 1 in this series. It had heart and humor along with a good plot. Sadly, while book 1 was a very good tale book 2 suffers from some flaws that became more obvious as the story got closer

to the end. There really were 2 big points that caused trouble. The first was the fact that Emily is supposedly introducing new ideas that are completely destabilizing a kingdom. I can imagine that any idea might cause trouble, but one of the "ideas" is a steam engine. This isn't a simple idea. Steam Engines were complex machines and Emily is revealed to have been a 16 year old schoolgirl with no previous interest in engineering. It's possible she could explain that a steam engine exists, but it's implied she had made a strong contribution to the building of the prototype, which strikes me as extremely unlikely. And the speed that her ideas are developed by others is rather swift in a world where they are still using medieval farming techniques. It just didn't feel right. The second was the fact that the magic system is so undefined and unlimited that during the story it became possible to do just about anything. The magic fights are so briefly described, but detail multitudes of undefined hexes and curses being thrown that I had to shake my head. It was almost as if you had two sci-fi gunfighters going at each other with six or seven different blasters each with how the fights spun out. It was disappointing to read. But the characters remained compelling and fun. I'm interested to see where the story goes from here, and the climax did reward the reader for getting past the scenes that rang a bit false. Fun, but it's a bit of a puff pastry where the creamy filling slipped out.

Lessons in Etiquette follows Emily from Schooled in Magic as she begins to explore new aspects of the alternate universe she was thrust into. The first book took her to a new land and she began her first year at a school for magic. It was a pleasant surprise to discover that this book didn't take us back to school for year two, but instead took Emily (and the reader) into the bigger world as she accompanied her friend, Princess Alassa, home for the summer. Alassa needs to find a husband who will make a good political ally (and hopefully not kill her in her sleep!). Emily, meanwhile, is dealing with the fallout from events in the first book. Most notably, she is the Necromancer's Bane, after killing a necromancer. But almost as notable is the fact that she introduced so many new ideas and inventions from our world -- the phonetic alphabet, Arabic numerals, double-entry bookkeeping, stirrups, and the printing press (just to name a few). The world is changing, and she's at the center of it. This book has a slow buildup followed by a far more action-packed second half. But this story is at least as much about the world and about making the reader think as it is about the underlying political upheaval that consumes the second part of this book. Emily is growing, changing, and learning, and she becomes a far more sympathetic and dynamic character in this volume than she was in the first. (Which I did enjoy.) If you enjoyed Schooled in Magic, you should read this book. If you haven't read Schooled in Magic, you're probably better off starting there. I don't think you'll be

too confused because the author provides plenty of reminders of what happened, but you will probably be more invested. And really, why not start a series at the beginning? :)

Before reading this 2nd book in the series, I went back and re-read the first, "Schooled in Magic". Our teenage protagonist is very likable, and even though the author is a guy, he does a pretty good job developing her character. In the first book, Emily, is torn from her world by an evil necromancer, and then rescued by an enigmatic sorcerer. Since she has magic in this dimension, she is sent to a school that resembles Hogwarts's. This 2nd book takes place away from the school, and has more political implications. The story continues with Emily going home with her friend Princess Alassa, who is to be confirmed as the crowned princess to the throne, as well as, start the process of finding a prince to marry. If you like world history, which I do, the author compares earth history to the cultural development of her new world, and the potential changes that her "inventions" will cause. There is still a lot of action and adventure, with a very, very satisfying ending. Mr. Nuttall could write more in this series, or leave it as complete, as he did with just 2 books in the series of "Book Worm". I really enjoyed these books, and will watch for new books from this author.

I would recommend reading the first book in this series (Schooled in Magic) first. While many of the important parts of Emily's story is touched upon in this book, I think you'd be lost as to what really happened. I mean, everyone wants to know how Emily defeated Shadye. But the only way YOU are going to find out is if you go and read the first book. This book goes into much more detail about what the aristocracy of this world is like. It's like going back into time. Time and again you'll shake your head at the ridiculousness of the rules, especially when you realize that dark ages aristocracy had the same rules. While this is a world I would LOVE to visit, I certainly would NOT like to live there, nor would I like to have to live under it's rules - I think I would prefer just to view it from afar. But Emily's world goes on and there's much more "tricks" up her sleeve so I'm interested in seeing what she's up to next. Maybe she'll find romance (which would be interesting as she has become one of the most feared and powerful sorcerers in this world now).

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