



Closer to Home

Mercedes Lackey

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Closer to Home

Mercedes Lackey

Closer to Home Mercedes Lackey

Mags was once an enslaved orphan living a harsh life in the mines, until the King's Own Herald discovered his talent and trained him as a spy. Now a Herald in his own right, at the newly established Heralds' Collegium, Mags has found a supportive family, including his Companion Dallen.

Although normally a Herald in his first year of Whites would be sent off on circuit, Mags is needed close to home for his abilities as a spy and his powerful Mindspeech gift. There is a secret, treacherous plot within the royal court to destroy the Heralds. The situation becomes dire after the life of Mags' mentor, King's Own Nikolas, is imperiled. His daughter Amily is chosen as the new King's Own, a complicated and dangerous job that is made more so by this perilous time. Can Mags and Amily save the court, the Heralds, and the Collegium itself?

Closer to Home Details

Date : Published October 7th 2014 by DAW (first published October 1st 2014)

ISBN :

Author : Mercedes Lackey

Format : Kindle Edition 400 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Fiction, Magic

 [Download Closer to Home ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Closer to Home ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Closer to Home Mercedes Lackey

From Reader Review Closer to Home for online ebook

Morgan Dhu says

Fluffy and lightweight as it has been compared even to other of her novels and series, I have been enjoying Mercedes Lackey's latest Valdemar-based Collegium series about abused child labourer Mags saved from a nasty, brutish and short life through the miraculous appearance of one of those blue-eyed guardian spirits in horse form that serve as Companions to the Heralds of Valdemar. After several books exploring the personal growth of Mags and his friends and the development of the Collegium itself as the new way of training Heralds, Lackey has started a new series, still focused on Mags, called The Herald Spy. Closer to Home is the first book of this new series, and it's fun. Yes, the content is pretty light after some of Lackey's earlier world-saving plots, but I rather enjoy seeing the day-to-day life of a young Herald preparing to take over the role of Spymaster to the King. To say nothing of his partner in all things, Emily the old Spymaster's daughter, who has some massive new responsibilities of her own to shoulder. And the decidedly anti-romantic variation on the star-crossed lovers themes that forms the plot, such as it is, pleases me. I always thought Romeo and Juliet were hormonally challenged idiots.

Dawn Livingston says

It's a stand alone book so if you don't read the series before this one starting with Foundation (the Collegium Chronicles) then you can still tell what's going on. But of course you'd be best off to read them first.

This book is not groundbreaking, riveting, fast paced, complex.

This book is a good book to curl up with. It's an engaging book with decent characters and a decent though simple plot. I read it in about four days. And it was refreshingly comfortable, comforting, relaxing, enjoyable. A good book to read when life seems a little too hectic, harsh, overwhelming and you just need a break.

While I don't feel this book is among the best of those set in the Valdemar world I do think it is worth reading and I eagerly intend to read the 2nd in the trilogy next .

Courtney says

[Adaptation of Romeo & Juliet... With a definite twist. I think I prefer Lackey's plot, out of the two, honestly. And no, not because of any 'happily ever afters', I assure you. (hide spoiler)]

Elsbeth says

There are parts I really like about this book, like the doing away of Lena and Bear. I am sorry I didn't care for them, they were asshats to Mags in the first series and never apologized for their behavior even when he apologized to them! I also like Mag's new rag tag bunch, I can't wait to see how they grow.

The biggest issue I have with this is the character Violetta. She pisses me off so much. I am sure that is what Lackey was going for...a kind of antithesis of her female main characters. Maybe this means I should have rated the book higher cause the feels it caused, but being in Violetta's head just plain made me rage-y!

Dorian says

This is the first book in a new series, following on immediately after "The Collegium Chronicles" left off. And I liked it much better than any of the preceding series which, though pleasant, was two books too long. This is an extremely promising start to the new series.

Following the events of "Bastion", Mags is now a full Herald, settled in his relationship with Amily, and home in Haven to take up his work as the King's...information gatherer. Midwinter is coming and the Kingdom's aristocracy is arriving in the capital to hunt spouses for their offspring...among them, two minor but feuding families. Mags finds himself told off to ride herd on the son of one of these families, while Amily is assigned to keep an eye on the daughters of the other. But soon a nice little Romeo-and-Juliet scenario seems to be shaping up...

This book has lots of nice setting detail amongst Valdemar's minor aristocracy, which we haven't seen much of previously. I liked the Court functions and the parties, and Mags' herding of the young men off to find some relatively safe trouble to get into.

Amily still seems a little too good to be true, but her life becomes very interesting in this book, and in very unexpected ways. Mags' various personae are fun, and though I was a bit sorry not to have Bear in this book, I didn't miss Lena at all.

The plot has several twists that I didn't at all expect, and the dénouement was a definite shock.

Overall, I feel the author has definitely hit her stride again, after a period of several rather mediocre books. Long may it continue!

Becky says

Meh. I don't expect much from Ms. Lackey anymore since she's become so preachy. And what's the point of reading about characters that already know what to do and how to be? Where are the mistakes and the growth? Maybe that's why it took me 5 days to read a book that in the past would have taken me 1 or 2, because it was so dull.

And lastly why does Mags get 6 (and I'm assuming more) books about him? What about Talia or Kerowyn? They were much more interesting characters and I could understand what they were saying! Mags' dialect is so awful to read at times I get disgusted.

That being said, I do keep reading Misty's books. Is it nostalgia? Trying to recapture a bit of my childhood? I don't know and I'm so happy with my local library where I can check out her books instead of purchasing the expensive hardcovers!

Kelcey says

I doubt I have ever been unclear about this, but let me just say it: I adore Mercedes Lackey. There is nothing she has written that I will not try and I think I have made it through a vast majority. My usual gripe is that characters I adore show up for a book or two, a trilogy if I'm lucky, but everything is good as long as it's in Valdemar. I picked up Foundation (Mags' first book) by chance when Borders was going out of business and I grabbed every Lackey book left on the shelf that I didn't already own. I fell in love with Mags and Dallen and Bear and Lena and Amily and the Valdemar that was in the middle of building the Collegia. My happiness was through the roof as not only one, two, three but four more books came out featuring my favorite characters (even if book 4 was preferably forgettable). By some chance I find out there is to be more and I am skeptical now, what did I do to deserve such good fortune? I snagged Closer to Home first thing when it arrived at the library. I started reading and at first I was confused by Amily becoming one of the main focal points, but no big deal, I adore Amily. However, who is this random daughter of a random family feud in Haven? I was a little disappointed, Mags and Amily could have had way better plots happening than Romeo and Juliet in the middle of Haven. It's seriously what was happening (the annoying cousin was even named Talbot/Tybalt, come on). At times I was amused and I did love reading about the lives of full Herald Mags and Kings' Own Amily and whoah, was the thing with Nicholas super weird or was that just me? (It actually kind of felt like when Buffy died and so there were two slayers running around). What was really missing out of this novel was the Companion/Herald relationships that I love so much. Sorry Rolan, but you are just not as much as fun as Dallen who barely got any page time in this book. I am still a Mags and Lackey devotee and will dutifully pick up the next book in this series and those set in Valdemar, but next time I am hoping for more of the characters such as Mags and Amily and less of random characters who I don't really care about. (Also I am hoping that Lackey is not setting up Violetta and Coot as important characters, I want more Mags, Dallen and Amily page time. And bring Bear and Lena and Jakyr and Lita back while we are at it!)

Caroline says

It happens to every author of a large amount of books. How to put this gently? ML, Mags was an okay character. He never needed this many books devoted to his story. Put down the Harry Potter books. **Instead look to the world you created and look for places and times that have not been explored.** You are selling your land short. Remember how wonderful Heralds of Valdemar, Last Herald-Mage and Vows and Honor are? Do you know how many times I've repurchased By The Sword? Five times. Five times because I've read it so much that the book falls apart. That is not counting the nook copy. I've repurchased so many of the earlier books in digital copies because I love them but then came Mags. First book was good by non-ML standards but not great. So I waited and thought to buy the second one in paperback or digital. Then I saw it at the library. I was glad I did because I would have been annoyed to waste the money. Now, your books have been demoted to library book worthy. I have a full shelf worth of the earlier books at home and still have room for more. Will you write a story worthy to be back on the purchase list, I wonder.

Carmen says

I don't understand why this story needed continuing and haven't really understood why Mags' story needed continued past book 1. It picks up almost immediately after the end of the last book despite being a new series. The book basically seems to be a story of how can we make Aimly more interesting without actually killing anyone of import off and devolves into Romeo and Juliet with a twist (a big obvious twist). And the

story has to take that devolution because there is nothing of note with the main characters to left to explore. Everyone is paired off, everyone is prospering, and there is no strife.

I miss the glory of past Valdemar books. This series started off interesting but Mags is so Marty Stu isn't even funny (i know a protagonist can't really be a mary sue but this one sure as hell tries). He never misunderstands anything. If he has a question, someone will invariable say one or two sentences then Mags go Oh! and then describes everything in detail because you know he just gets it. And omg is there so much unnecessary detail. If there is some question of what needs to be done, he see exactly what that needs to be almost immediately and does it. Any issue is solved in less than a chapter so no tension builds.

I don't really understand why Lackey has chosen some past boring reread Valdemar (no magic, no consequences, same random polo like game that never gets mentioned again) to continue exploring but I really wish she'd go back to exploring the post-storm aftermath.

Also can we talk about how many comparisons to whoring and arranged marriage there was in this book? Why is that needed or necessary? Seems like the whoring was only brought in to telegraph what a bad dude this one fellow is. I mean he visits prostitutes! and wants to keep one after marriage!

I want so much to like these books since I love this world so much. I reread early Valdemar books once a year usually and while they can be bit naive, those books actually had consequences, emotion, and character development of protagonists and antagonists with actual personality traits. These not so much.

Dakin says

Disappointing.

This is not close to the writing that pulled me into the Valdemar world. I've looked all through the descriptions on several websites and I did not see anything describing this book as YA but that is the emotional and plot level of this book.

I won't cite specific examples to avoid spoilers but there is constant explaining and re-explaining of characters emotional reasonings and reactions. At times its like being hit with a hammer while someone yells " This is supposed to be emotional !!! Look !! LOOK!! FEEL SOMETHING!!" Unfortunately, it is levels away from the skill and subtlety employed in earlier works to convey character's emotional states and reasonings.

I don't think that I will finish this particular trilogy(?). Instead I will stick with the Revolution series and, when I miss Valdemar, I will happily reread the earlier books. For that prolific collection I am very grateful. Thank you Ms. Lackey.

Dami (Damiellar) says

It's been many years since I read my first Mercedes Lackey story and for many years I was pretty much obsessive about grabbing each new release at the earliest opportunity (and let's not consider my reaction when one of her books 'disappeared' in a move). There's even several books held together with multiple applications of sticky tape that I can't bear to upgrade due to the associated memories.

I must confess though that lately I've been choosing other authors to spend my immediate dollars on and only purchasing when opportunity arose due to them just not grabbing me as firmly as previously. I picked this particular volume up with a spare audiobook credit and... this wasn't one of my favourites in this universe.

Truthfully I just felt it was too predictable and (view spoiler)

It just didn't engage me. I think the fact that last night I picked up my Kindle to read an ebook **at the same**

time I was listening to this says it all.

Alexandra says

For those unfamiliar with Valdemar I would not advise starting with this one. For those that are I think you'd enjoy this story more after reading Foundation, Intrigues, Changes, Redoubt.

This story isn't as exciting as some others in the Valdemar universe since there isn't a war going on, but I like the characters and enjoyed it well enough.

Kylara Jensen says

I can't not read a new Mercedes Lackey book. It's like something hardwired into my brain from back when I actually enjoyed her books, because they were good. But yeah, it's been forever since I actually enjoyed a new book she's written.

Allow me to present this scathing review in two parts.

1- STOP WRITING BOOKS ABOUT MAGS.

Just stop it! No one cares about him any more. You stretched out his story which could have been told in 2-3 books into FIVE books and then, AND THEN, wrote another one. And for the love of all that is dear. STOP WRITING HIM SPEAKING IN THAT RIDICULOUS DIALECT.

Writers! It is annoying to read dialect, especially when it's not necessary.

Let me quote you from your website:

Hey, everybody needs a vacation, even from the best job. So, until I come up with a story set in Velgarth that is as compelling as the ones you've enjoyed in the past, I'm taking a break. The last thing I want is for my own favorite series to start limping along and go out with a whimper.

Misty - Tulsa, Oklahoma

I enjoyed the first few books about the founding of the collegium, but we're done with that now. None of these characters are compelling and THEIR STORIES ARE DONE. Stretching this out totally counts as going out with a whimper. Please, please. If you are going to write about Valdemar again choose a new story.

The plot was just so meh and not even noteworthy. There is no story to tell here anymore. And of course I kind of enjoyed it, because I like this world, but at some point ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

MOVE ON!

2, and more importantly.

RAPE IS NOT A VALID PLOT DEVICE. RAPE IS NOT A VALID PLOT DEVICE.
DO NOT USE RAPE AS A TOOL IN YOUR STORY.

AUTHORS, PLEASE STOP WRITING ABOUT RAPE SO CAVALIERLY.

So this book goes on and on (AND ON) about how few choices women have and how noblewomen and even poor women have little to do besides marriage. Which was kind of interesting to think about because the Valdemar books have always been very equal, with men and women as Heralds. So where is all this coming from? But I think this book is trying to make some kind of feminist point.

And then it does two things. It marriage shames. (It's like sex shaming, only instead bashing women who choose to stay at home and be moms.) It's like why would a woman choose marriage/love. She has so many other/better choices. So that was kind of annoying.

AND THEN- there is pretty much straight up statutory rape. Like she consents, but she is too young and naive to know what she's doing and he manipulates and coerces her. So yeah. Rape.

WHICH IS NOT A VALID PLOT DEVICE!

There were less than 50 pages after that point, so I finished the book and it wasn't even addressed.

At some point, when you write a FANTASY world, you have to stop blaming what you're writing on historical context. And there was a whole weird 'Oh that poor lovesick silly little girl, she should have known better. She wrote him a love letter, so it's all her fault.'

Just No! Ugh. I'm getting so sick of unhealthy relationships etc. in fiction.

Just go ahead and skip this one.

Alexis says

Okay, so here's my opinion on Mercedes Lackey straight up. I LOVE her writing. Love it. But some of her more recent books have lost me. Then, in about 2000 or so, I found the Valdemar series was maybe getting a little worn out, and even had spelling and/or pretty obvious editing problems in some books. This horrified and saddened me, since the Valdemar books are my absolute favorite books and have been since high school.

Now here's the good news about this book in particular. It TOTALLY reverses this trend. In "Closer to Home", Lackey is both writing a book different than most of the previous Valdemar books in my opinion and one that continues the intent of the first books. It follows Mags and Amily- Mags being a spy and Amily being the daughter of the King's Own (sort of a highly respected advisor to the King who is expected to act as a counterbalance for the King and speak his mind, diplomatically of course, for those unfamiliar with the series). I haven't read the Collegium Chronicles as of yet- this isn't intentional but rather caused by the fact that the library I work at doesn't currently have the books. So I appreciate the fact that this book can easily be read by someone with no previous knowledge of Mags and Amily's relationship. And the book does start out with Mags and Amily being In A Relationship. There will be no wish-washing about this fact in this book, and Thank GOD for that I say. I appreciate that Lackey can write a book in a series that is THIS well-established and that can still be pretty much read with no previous knowledge of the series.

Yes, the explanations of how the Companions are "more than mere horses" do get old after you've read over 25 books in the series as I have, but if you're a newcomer to the series, you definitely appreciate the time Lackey takes to hit the basics in every new series in the Valdemar universe.

Reasons for my rating:

Honestly the ratings I give the Valdemar series are categorized a little differently than the rest of my reviews.

I adore the Valdemar books, and honestly they're almost all 5 stars in my book. But I can't just give an entire 30+ book range 5 stars. So the only series in Valdemar that gets a 5/5 from me so far is Magic's Pawn/Promise/Price and maybe the Oathbreakers series. I rate all the Valdemar books according to whether I find them as good as the three Magic's books honestly. She's set my standard with those. :)

Actual Rating: 4.5

Catherine Ford says

I love all of the books in the Valdemar series! Mercedes Lackey is definitely one of my favourite authors. This book was a bit slow at times. It was a real twist on a Romeo and Juliet type plot.
