



A Touch of Magic

Gregory L. Mahan

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What's a young mage to do in a land where magic is illegal, and the penalty is death?

At the age of fourteen, Randall Miller is surprised to learn that he has the talent--for magic! Tricked into apprenticeship by a powerful Mage, Randall is forced to leave everything he knows behind.

When his mentor is killed by Aiden, head of the secret police, he flees for his life, stumbling from one misadventure into another. Teaming up with a trio of greedy traders and a capricious imp along the way, Randall must learn to master his budding power, or die at the hands of the Rooks!

A Touch of Magic Details

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From Reader Review A Touch of Magic for online ebook

?❁❁ Maki ❁❁? says

This book ended up being much better than I'd expected it to be. Going into it, I imagined it would be another typical young adult fantasy novel. You know the type. The author tries just a bit too hard to make the main character relate-able to teenage boys, every female character throws herself at the main character, etc. None of that was the case in this book.

The story follows one plot line the entire way through. The entire book is focused on one character, Randall Miller. It doesn't jump between characters, or try to introduce fifty main characters into the mix. There's a main group of people who are essential to the plot, sure, but those who aren't essential only get a quick mention before the story moves on.

The magic system was interesting, and Randall's particular skill was fun, though a bit on the convenient side.

I loved that there wasn't any romance tacked on just to make the story appeal to a larger audience. This wasn't a story about Randall's love life, and the book reflects that every step of the way. There's the occasional joke about how bad Randall is with girls, but it never really goes beyond that.

For the final fight, Randall doesn't suddenly become a super-powerful god to destroy the villain. He wins because the villain knows that he's much stronger than Randall. Also, Randall doesn't walk away from the fight unscathed. He loses something in the fight, and by the end of the story he still doesn't get it back. There's no magical deus ex machina that makes everything the way it was. He remains broken. And that's the way it should be. A sacrifice ceases to be a sacrifice when you can easily get back what you gave up. (Which is why I despise magic girl manga/anime.)

I even wasn't too disappointed by the way the book ends. Several questions remain unanswered (like where that magic dagger came from), but overall it was an decent way to end the story.*

*I had originally thought that this was a stand-alone novel, but apparently a sequel is in the works. (<http://www.llandra.com/index.php/cate...>)

Awesome.

Tina says

I would actually put this book at 3 1/2 stars. It is a nice, easy, and enjoyable read. The only reason I don't feel that it deserves the full 4 stars is that it feels like the basic plot structure of most books in this genre. It's like hearing a good joke told by someone new; everyone has their own spin and if it's good, you enjoy hearing it retold. The writing in A Touch of Magic is good and the flow of the tale is nice. I look forward to trying other stories by Mahan.

Oezay says

As the story started i found it to be a bit sad, the characters were well thought of and they were unexpected,

what i mean is that the characters were very life like. I especially liked the magic system and the limitations placed on different types of magics. The ending was a bit short for me but overall i really enjoyed this master piece. Sure some people would think it to be simple but that depends on different perspectives. so kudos to the author and i would recommend this book to fantasy novel readers give it a try you will definitely love this book.

Suzanne says

My son and I read a lot of books together. A Touch of Magic really held us to our daily reading. We could not wait to get back to the book each day and when we had to stop it was always a letdown. It held both our interests with the flow of action and storyline. We will be interested to find out if the next book in the series can also keep us as attentive as we were to this one.

Cheri says

Giving up on this one (35% done). This book reminds me of The Karate Kid, except in this version Mr. Miyagi is a nasty wizard who steals Daniel-San from home through trickery, moralizes non-stop while he gives an underage child beer until he vomits, encourages deception of others and sexual assault, ignores a child's direct inquiries about the dangers of magic (such as associations with the devil), and when the time comes to do all of "wax-on, wax-off" work around the house (which comes in the form of yard work and gardening here), he heals him with a magic rune instead of heating up his hands. I just couldn't find anything positive about the character of Erliand and the magic training was far too extensive for me.

Crystal says

Simply put, I enjoyed the book, finishing it in under 2 days with only a few hours after work to read, but the story was simple, the characters were simple, and the writing was simple. I could most easily recommend this book to fans of David Eddings. There's action aplenty but few new ideas. And that's fine, I don't like to swallow too many uncomfortable ideas in one sitting, but I shouldn't have been able to predict the plot as easily as I did. The beginning was engaging, with Randall discovering his latent magical talent and learning the basics of magic from an ornery old master mage. The protagonist did change a lot over time, starting out as a bored pupil who makes many youthful errors and ending up (only over the course of a year or two) tougher and less naive about the world. There were no other good characters in the book. There was a pet-like creature introduced about halfway through the book whose funny antics were probably supposed to provide a relief from the dreary necessities of survival. But while Randall embraced the creature, his open affection and friendliness was so mismatched from every other character's interaction with it that their relationship was truly unconvincing to me. There is little worldbuilding to speak of, with vague outlines of continents mentioned half-heartedly and entire cities mentioned within a paragraph or two. I couldn't personally distinguish any features of the cities Randall visited even if I tried. One truly positive facet of the book was its ending. Mahan did a great job of tying up the storyline with real effects on the world and the characters involved without the need for a big cliffhanger pointing to a sequel. There may well be a sequel, but I don't feel the need to read it, and the book can stand very well as a rare standalone in a field of lengthy sequels and series.

Lisa Cox says

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. I liked the characters and really enjoyed the descriptions of Randall learning magic. The author handled that in a way that made it seem very realistic. For me, it became a "page turner." The action and pacing were well done, I loved the adventures and humor, and the ending had just the right blend of tension and resolution. Of course my favorite character was Berry. I'm probably like a lot of people in hoping that there are future adventures for Randall Miller coming for us to read about in future books.

Sarah says

This was reviewed as part of Mark Lawrence's Great Self-Published Fantasy Blog Off.

"To be honest, I'm probably not the best person to have read and review this book. I tend to bounce off books with young protagonists, and the young man (Randall) is quite young, 14 to be exact.

The writing is solid, and if you're looking for comfort fantasy – that kind of fantasy that reminds you of the epic quests and the unassuming young man destined for more, then this is exactly what you want to read. There is a place for those books, but honestly, I read so much that new ideas appeal to me more than tried and true.

That's not to say that there isn't value in this book. I could feel Mahan's love for the genre in what he wrote, and his passion for his book. There is real heart in A Touch of Magic, and that heart makes the book pretty addicting, despite the fact that it's not something I'd typically sit down and read. I read it. Every word (and more importantly, I don't regret reading it). That should say something right there. The biggest issue is that there really aren't any new and sparkling ideas in A Touch of Magic. There's a lot of heart, but there isn't really anything here that you probably haven't read before."

<http://www.bookwormblues.net/2015/04/...>

JD says

Another book I got for free as a Kindle download and surprisingly quite good. All you really need to know about the storyline is this: At the age of fourteen, Randall Miller receives the shock of his life when he discovers that he has the talent--for magic! Unfortunately for him, on Tallia, magic is illegal and the penalty is death.

As for why I liked it, but what prevented it from getting 5 stars. This is a well written book that flows nicely. I read it in two evenings. I really like the character development of Randall - he feels very real. And he is just like a teenager. When he does something wrong, he goes into the depths of despair (with quite a bit of humor). When he does something right, he tends to go overboard and cause chaos. As the story progresses, he does a lot of growing and maturing. Yet it never feels forced, it all flows very naturally as a consequence of his experiences. I also enjoyed the author's humor. Not to over powering, but enough to make the book very enjoyable and cause me to chuckle out loud several times. I also enjoyed how Mahan (the author) made an old subject (boy discovering he has magic powers) into his own and created a believable world with it.

One thing I didn't enjoy overly was the gore. Thankfully, nothing too graphic. But definitely geared more

towards boys than girls. And Randall's ability to walk away from some of these encounters so nonchalantly stretches belief for me.

I also didn't like the lack of depth to other characters. I'd like to know more about what Berry is. I'd like to know more about Randall's mother and Erliand. I'm hoping that some of this depth will be explored in future books.

Richard Mcrae says

I'm a 46 yr. old merchant marine who spends alot of time at sea. I found this book to be one of the best reads in a long time. at the end I found myself wishing for MORE RIGHT NOW! Can't wait for the advents of Randall and Berry to continue. Juz goes to show you that evil truly is in the eye of the beholder. Got to love berry and his loyaltiy. Can't wait for the next one . Please hurry!!!!

Matthew says

This book did not have any major errors in grammar or spelling that I noticed, well done for a self-published work.

It was quite slow to start with a lot of silly family stuff that rather dragged and seemed quite similar to other books before it got to the magic.

The concept of the magical system was pretty well put together and different, with words in magical languages, spoken or written, interacting with elements, forming the bulk of the system that used power from another realm called Llandra to power the spells. Also, beings from that realm can be used for magic and have certain innate abilities that they can use by will alone.

At the beginning of the story, Randall Miller feels second rate. He's a second son looking to escape the shadow of his older brother. When he goes to town looking for a job, he is picked up by a mage for training, which is illegal and something he is reluctant about. But he goes along because he doesn't really have another option. The mage has him do menial labor for a long time to teach him discipline before he starts on magic. Shortly after starting on magic, he accidentally comes across a powerful version of a spell that turns parchment into dwarven steel. Eventually, after he has started his training, he goes back home to visit his family and is discovered by townsfolk as a mage and his master ends up in a battle with another mage. Randall runs off with a magical healing stone and this is where the story starts moving, about halfway through. He meets and befriends an imp and has various encounters before ending up involved in a war over the rule of Talia, his home country.

Tanya says

I Loved this book! It felt like a cross between Eragon and The Ranger's Apprentice. After stumbling upon it on Amazon's site, I decided to give it a try. At only \$2.99 for the Kindle version I couldn't go wrong. The characters were engaging and I had difficulty wanting to do anything else but read until I was finished. My kids are going to love this one too. I think I may buy the print version as well so I can share it with more friends. Gregory Mahan is a great new author and I am eagerly awaiting his next book!

Eileen Dandashi says

Audiobook Review:

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. I was remarkably entertained with Randall's journey into being his own person. Even though it is a YA book, probably for a young person between 13 and 17, the plot and story kept me engrossed in its telling along with its excellent narration. Sometimes life lesson's need repeating for us oldies. (smiling)

Randall's journey began just before he turned 14. He was small for his age and had always been ridiculed, not quite as good as the other boys in the village. He wanted to apprentice with the militia so he would be taken seriously and the prestige belonging to men who could reeled their swords and ride horses would only increase his stature and hopefully with one particular girl. But he was apprenticed by a man named Earl who won his family over and paid them handsomely, his wages in advance.

Earl was an interesting individual who had secrets of his own and rode Randall hard. He helped build his character and his body, for Randall was apprenticed to be a caravan guard – as close as he could get to the militia he thought with chagrin. Earl wasn't who he appeared although his cover for his real talent kept him safe. He was a mage, well-respected among his peers. In the times this story plays out, mages were hunted down. I thought it quite interesting his way of teaching Randall about magic and how to use it.

The people Randall met were not always who they appeared to be, however wary of them, he chose to trust them until they became untrustworthy. Without the lessons of magic he'd had, he would not have survived. He utilized these lessons, saving his life more often than not. He befriends a small sprite along the way and this friendship keeps him sane when he was completely alone.

Randall's journey is full of lessons, hurt, danger, and yes, even finding the good where many see it not.

David Stifel's narration was excellent; well told, getting into the very essence of the characters and their personalities. His emotional tone captured perfectly, the cantankerous Earl who had a fiery spirit and short fuse. As Randall moves through his journey, he changes with his learning and we hear the changes in Randall's character through his inner dialog which David Stiffel so very well narrates.

I never noticed any extraneous noise or shifts out of character during the telling. So no sloppy editing here. The story ended with an ending and yet a new beginning preparing the reader for more of this adventurous fantasy. I would very much enjoy continue reading or listening to more of the series.

Mindy says

A Touch of Magic by Gregory Mahan

Summary:

In a world where magic is forbidden and the penalty is death, Randall Miller faces a difficult choice when he discovers his own budding power.

Tricked into apprenticeship by a powerful Mage, Randall is forced to live a life of deception until his mentor is killed. Tracked by Aiden, head of the secret police, Randall teams up with a trio of avaricious traders in his

quest to reach the city of Port Medlin and set sail to the large continent of Salianca, where magic is accepted.

Review:

This was a great book. I loved the world that was created and the interaction between the main character and others. I laughed, cried, and want to know what happens next. That is what I call a good read.

I am always trying to find books that my kids, especially my son, will read and enjoy. This is one that I can happily give my kids and know they will enjoy. I give it 5 out of 5 clouds.

Julia G. Darelle says

I can't begin to describe how much I loved this book! Great storytelling, so rare in our world of action-packed, low-detail.

I hate comparing books to each other but this one reminded me why I love Tolkien.

Hopefully, I'll have time to review later because the work is calling and I already spent an hour finishing this book, but I just want the world to know that there are still fine storytellers left here!

Go read this book now!
