



Godmother Night

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Almost a set of short stories, this novel breaks into discrete episodes, centered on identity, love, and death. Jaqe has no identity until she meets Laurie, introduced and named by Mother Night; in that moment, she knows herself, and that she loves Laurie. But once Mother Night has become part of their lives, Laurie and Jaqe and their daughter Kate cannot live as other people do. Knowing Death, inevitably each of them seeks to use the knowledge, to bargain with Death, and to change the terms in the balance of life and death in the world.

Pollack's characters, major and supporting, living, dead, and divine, are memorably human. As she transplants myths and folklore into a modern setting, she gives new life to old tales and a deeper meaning to a seemingly simple world.

Godmother Night Details

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Author : Rachel Pollack

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Cnidy says

There is a certain 90s lesbian feel to this book that I found strange. I was also left wondering why the characters loved each other. Where did this intense and crazy passion come from? I am pretty sure that if K read it again (not in the 90s he would not be so enamored with it). Although the magic/mundane mix was fun at times.

Esther Recuero says

Historia muy lograda que combina el mundo espiritual con el nuestro, en el que dos muchachas se enamoran e intentan conseguir una vida estable, mientras que la mujer que las presentó, "Madre Noche", no para de interferir en sus vidas, modificando sus destinos y convirtiéndolos en algo extraño y, a veces, demasiado duro.

Muy recomendable, me ha fascinado.

Rachel says

This was quite an interesting read. It was full of intriguing ideas--Mother Night, of course, being the foremost. But it felt a little disjointed, even for magical realism. A lot of what happened seemed arbitrary and random, and while that has its place in magical realism, usually that all ties back into something larger. There really wasn't a sense of that here.

I found the emotional climax to be fairly well done, but... there are too many dead lesbians in this book for me to truly enjoy or recommend it.

Still, it was an interesting world, with interesting characters, and I didn't have trouble getting through it. I just wish there had been a bit more tying it all together.

Nancy says

A modern-day fairy tale filled with love, magic and heartbreak. The writing is gorgeous and the images stunning. A beautiful and unforgettable story!

Kirk Macleod says

Godmother Night asks the question (sorry for the mild twenty-year-old spoiler) of how well would the personification of death do as a Godparent. The story follows two young women, and later their daughter

through their lives as Mother Night (their world's version of Death) becomes directly involved in a young girl's life.

The story works best as a grown-up fairy tale (and yes, there are some very grown-up scenes in the book), and works as a series of vignettes focusing on two generations of a family and their loves, lives and deaths. A really fascinating book and one I was glad to finally check out!

Amy says

I wish I could give this book a higher rating. It grabbed me right away with the very specific tone, a strong voice and point of view. But then came the bucketfuls of information in a single chapter, then came the jerky time jumps, then came the dozens of plot decisions/details that I began to suspect would never be backed up as anything more than arbitrary. By the end, this story had nothing big to say, had no great climax or poignant anticlimax. It's sort of like, "Here - look at these interesting characters and these random plot details I chose for reasons you'll never know. Interesting, right? Here - look at this person's life I made up, how her parents met, how she was born, how she grew up and fell in love and died. Interesting, right?"

...Sort of. I guess. Way to write a novel where all the main characters are lesbian. But what else? Sadly, I walked away with little more than that.

Stephen Poltz says

This book is a tear-jerker. I had tears streaming down my face at the end. I had to walk around a bit to chill before writing this review. It's a modern-day fairy tale told in a somewhat naïve voice about the personification of death in the lives of a lesbian couple and their daughter. Despite its simple language, the prose is wonderful and the plot is inventive. It poses the question of what death would be like as a godmother.

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<https://itstartedwiththehugos.blogspot.com>

Jen says

- one star for late '90s White Feminism (tm) that has not aged well.
- one star for massive amounts of cultural appropriation, with no real attempt to include any people of color.

Still, an engrossing modern fairy tale about identity and our relationship with death.

Linh Nguyen says

Pollack's story-telling style is perfect: beautiful, mysterious and reminiscent of something ancient, long forgotten. The first part of Jaqe and Laurie, which kinda reminds me of Lips Touch: Three Times, is more enjoyable than Kate's part, though now and then I could not quite get my head around what has happened (I didn't even suspect Mother Night is the Death until the second half).

After finishing this alternative fairy tale, I don't know what to feel. Probably confused, but mostly just sad. I wonder which is more tragic: losing your love one at the happiest, or the most unhappy stage of your time together. Either way, there leaves behind only regret.

(And btw Melissa is sooo sexy and adorable, I totally have a thing for nerdy scientist xD)

Megan says

I started Godmother Night about a year ago. And then I stopped. No real reason. I got about halfway through, then returned it to the library.

A couple weeks ago, in some weird midnight thought process, I decided to place a hold on it.

Completely forgetting that the library had been working diligently to transport GN to my on-the-way-to-the-middle-of-nowhere local library, I was quite surprised to see it waiting for me when I went in to use their slightly faster internet connection on Saturday. When I say slightly faster, what I mean is that I only had to wait 3 hours instead of 5+ hours for the music I bought to download. So, in that time, I started reading GN on and off in-between bouts of getting mesmerized by teh internetz.

Apparently, when I stopped reading a year ago I was almost to the good part...

I finished Godmother Night last night. It was good. Confusing at times, but good. I didn't get all of the allusions to things, but I know that they're there. Maybe I'll read it again in 20 years and understand it better.

Anyway, after finishing it, I cried for a while. I remembered things from my past that I haven't thought about in a long time for whatever reasons. Then I felt better. I felt good. I still feel good.

Kat says

Wow! I crammed in the last hundred pages of this book in one hour because I had to return it to the library. My very own copy is now in the mail and I plan on savoring it. This book is brilliant, and will take on more and deeper meaning with re-reading. Rachel Pollack packs in references to lesser-known Grimm's tales, to Neil Gaiman comics, and to probably many other things that I didn't catch. The engrossing story follows the relationship ups and downs of two generations of "women-loving women" and how Death (Mother Night) plays a part in their interactions. The writing is simultaneously realistic and fantastic, with the bonus of truly hot sex scenes.

Olga says

poorly written but engrossing guilty pleasure witchy queer girl chick lit

Jane says

One of my absolute favorite books. I originally found it for \$1 at Half Price Books, but since then I have lent it to friends and purchased more copies. It's out of print but worth searching for. I want to read it again and again.

Quinten says

This was a very interesting book. Pollak writes in a very naive style, one that reminds me of a narrated story told to one's child at bedtime more than a novel. This is the only book by her that I've read, so I'm not sure if it's an affectation or if it is her normal voice. I'm also not completely sure if I find the style distracting or if it enhances this "adult fairy tale."

The story is compelling, and follows a clear arc. However, the pacing is uneven. Pollak narrates events, and it is not always clear which events are important and which are distractions. Whole chapters appear to be wasted. Much is implied rather than said outright, and perhaps it is relying on cultural cues that don't always come across, but at times in the story this seems to be over-writing, as the importance of the event doesn't always match the tone of its description. Admittedly, the greatest strength of the book, despite these flaws, is probably in conveying the mood and feeling of falling in love, and some of this may be in these overwritten passages.

Agnieszka says

Du?o paskudnych ludzi, toksyczny zwi?zek (hej, b?d? chorowa?, dopóki nie wymusz? na tobie dziecka) zaprezentowany jako idealna utracona mi?o??, symbolika jaka? taka przypadkowa i na si?? (zw?aszczta ta zwi?zana z kultem Bogini), du?o w?tków po nic. No i najgorsze: dwukrotne opowiadzenie w ramach ca?o?ci niemal dok?adnie tej samej ?zawej historii.
