



## The Spirit Thief

*Rachel Aaron*

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*Alternate Cover Edition can be found here.*

Eli Monpress is talented. He's charming. And he's a thief.

But not just any thief. He's the greatest thief of the age - and he's also a wizard. And with the help of his partners - a swordsman with the most powerful magic sword in the world but no magical ability of his own, and a demonseed who can step through shadows and punch through walls - he's going to put his plan into effect.

The first step is to increase the size of the bounty on his head, so he'll need to steal some big things. But he'll start small for now. He'll just steal something that no one will miss - at least for a while.

Like a king.

## **The Spirit Thief Details**

Date : Published October 1st 2010 by Orbit (first published 2010)

ISBN : 9780316069052

Author : Rachel Aaron

Format : Paperback 310 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Magic, Fiction, Adventure, Young Adult, High Fantasy

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## From Reader Review The Spirit Thief for online ebook

### Derpa says

3,5/5 stars

This took me far, far longer than the length justifies, but I guess I wasn't in the right mood. Sometimes it's just like that, I guess.

Also... I was a bit disappointed. So I guess 3,5 stars is not really a bad rating by any means and to me, the around 3 can mean two things.

Either the book had some good ideas and some pleasant stuff, but some mistakes made me unable to give more, or (like here), something was kind of missing.

The story was about Eli Monpress, a master thief, with two friends, Josef and Nico, and the aspiration of having a one million gold bounty on his head. But this time he needed to work together with Miranda, a Spiritualist, part of a very serious and very regulated guild (church? gang? country? sect?) of magic users. Eli kidnapped a king, things turned shitty, they got framed for stuff they didn't do. Ya know.

Part of the issue is that 'ya know'. I don't feel the story was particularly original. Things happened, it was really short, didn't really have enough room for something super spectacular and deep. Not like I mind that all that much, just entertain me. Here... sometimes it was a bit lacking and I think I actually know the reason.

Not enough time for setting things up. Sure, not everyone loves a gazillion pages long fantasy brick every day of the week, I'm with that, totally, but here the world seemed to lack a certain depth at this point. There were moments that I knew with my rational mind were supposed to have suspense, like a to-death swordfight and all, but I just couldn't feel anything, as it was a culmination of events we don't know about. Imagine a final fight with characters you don't even know, without a context. Not very gripping.

I think part of this comes from Miss Aaron probably spending a lot of time working on the story in her head before actually making it happen. This is just my theory, but her already feeling like these people are her babies and not seeing it all with a fresh eye plays a part.

Another issue was the mistakes. She compares the city to sand dollar, which is a word derived from a currency that doesn't exist in the book. At one moment there is moonlight, then suddenly sunlight without time passing. She describes blue light as warm. She says a fresh, yellow bruise is standing out stark on pale skin, even though A, fresh bruises aren't yellow, they take that colour as they heal and B, yellow is not stark on pale.

Some careful person reading through would have picked up all of these, so I have no idea what her editor and the people actually checking the book did here. Not much, I suppose. These things bother me, not gonna lie, especially with books that got out through a proper publisher.

I'm pretty convinced that I gave it a fair chance, though, and I actually kind of liked the characters, the way they are all quirky and just feel like total misfits. I'm a sucker for that kind of a stuff and it is the reason why I will most likely go on with the series. Maybe it gets better. Maybe discovering more about them and their history and motivations will actually make me care about them more.

It really wasn't such a bad book. Was it brilliant? Nah. So right now I'm not sure how much I am sold on it. Rachel Aaron still needs to do a lot of work to convince me properly, but that is okay, I guess. I'm also kind of interested in her dragon shifter urban fantasy series, because it sounds kind of fun, so we have room for her spreading her wings and blowing my mind.

It's just a bit disappointing, especially right after Sebastien de Castell and his absolute brilliance. A bit of an unfair comparison, the guy is just really good, especially when you look at how he is working on his first series.

All in all, I wouldn't discourage anyone from reading this, it is fine, but I doubt I will enthusiastically recommend it to anyone if the series will be consistently like this first installation.

Now spirit yourself away, guys!

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### **Felicia says**

So I'm giving this four stars because I have read all three books in the series and so I'm rating the series overall as such this far. The second and third books are actually better than this first one. A REALLY REALLY fun series that fantasy fans will enjoy if they like their entertainment fluffy and light, and the books get better and better, so I would definitely encourage you to check it out!

This is a familiar fantasy-renaissance world, but where everything has a "spirit", water and air and even objects like doors and signs etc. The hero of the story is Eli Monpress, a dude who wants to be the most famous thief in the world, and is basically obsessed with raising the bounty on his head. Eli can be kind of irritating in his egoism, but the other characters are great, I particularly love his companion characters, Nico and Josef. (And they get more and more interesting in books 2 and 3).

I really REALLY like the world building here, and as the books go on the world gets more and more fleshed out. Super fun and interesting, I love the sense of humor that a main character can TALK to a door. Overall there is a very tongue in cheek attitude here that I super loved. And there's no heavy romance stuff (which guys might appreciate in the morass of lady-fiction I'm uploading :))

If you like Diana Wynne Jones or any light fantasy like Piers Anthony etc, I think you might really like this series! It is definitely written at a young adult level too, so teens would def like it.

I can't wait for the next one out next summer!

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### **Denae Christine says**

Wow. So, I haven't had that much fun with a new book since Witches Incorporated, last year.

**How I explain this series.** Everything has a spirit, every rock, tree, cat, river. Wizards are the ones who can talk to the spirits. Some wizards are enslavers and force the spirits to do their bidding. Other wizards are spiritualists who take spirits as friends/servants and work with them in mutual relationship.

Then there's Eli, who's neither. He just cons the spirits into doing what he wants, like letting him out of prison.

**Reader thoughts:** This series starts off light-hearted and fun. You read the first book and think little about it except that it was a great story. The second book opens a few more aspects of the world. The third leaves you

very curious with just a glimpse into the higher realm of how things work. The fourth leaves you desperate to know what happens and how it all came to be this way and how-did-I-not-know-all-that-in-the-first-book feeling. The fifth was INTENSE. No kidding. So intense I had to set the book down and take a walk around the apartment. *Twice*.

Original review:

Characters. Not well-developed yet, but I can see how there's plenty of room for me to learn more about them in books to come. They are consistent, and the reader learns about them, just doesn't learn much. It's not a big enough book, though.

Beings. A good plethora, from spirits, Great Spirits, humans, wizards, ghosthounds, and demons (and whatever the Shepherdess is). I hope there will be a few more like the ghosthounds.

Magic. I love the way some people abuse their power and how it's an ethical debate and the different factions and how Eli doesn't side with any of them.

Conflicts. Perfect. With Eli against the King, and the King's brother against the King, and the wizardess against Eli and the King's brother, then enemies of enemies become friends. :)

Pacing. Perfect. Everything happens within a few days, and characters keep acting all at the same time.

Ending. Perfect. Evil destroys the wicked, good character has problems, friend steps in to help, big bad magic goes against big good magic and I won't say more. :)

**Writer thoughts:** The magic system is very well done and very well defined, what a person could and could not do and how magical strength played into it. RA knows how to keep her world consistent. She knows what beats to hit and when. Her cast is small, focused, and her scale grows more epic. With this series, she delves into character ideas and pasts without lots of inner dialogue. Fascinating how that works.

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## Lisa says

Full review at Tenacious Reader: <http://www.tenaciousreader.com/2017/0...>

The story, overall, is fun, starting out with Eli, the greatest thief of all time, stealing not the typical salable items, but rather a King. I mean, sure, you hear stories of princesses being stolen in the night and held for ransom or whatever other nefarious reasons someone might have to steal them. But stealing a king is a bit more unexpected, not to mention ambitious.

I think I had two issues with this book, which unfortunately, turn out are not trivial when it came to my enjoyment. First, while on the surface, the premise of each of the characters sounds intriguing, in execution I don't feel like they were fleshed out enough to feel any connection to them, including Eli. It was just missing something for me, and I decided while the concepts were good, there just didn't seem to be enough there to fully engage me. Perhaps readers that prefer action over characters, this will not be an issue.

The other area I struggled with is that everything just felt over the top for me. There were certain scenes I am guessing others will love, but just didn't work for me. For instance, persuading a door to let him through. I often don't do well with anthropomorphic creatures, so anthropomorphic inanimate objects is just something that rarely works for me. Like I said, others will love this aspect, and that's great. It just wasn't for me and probably creates more of a detachment from the story in my case.

And then there was the humor, often a sticking point for me. Unfortunately I think choosing the audiobook

production probably made this humor harder for me to swallow. Eli is a character that is supposed to be funny, and I was at the mercy of the narrator's performance. How he delivered the lines and jokes may have been spot on with what the author intended, but I would prefer a bit less overt delivery of the jokes. You can say the same joke multiple ways, and the emphasis can really impact how it is received. When I have control of the emphasis, I can tone down overt humor a bit (if that makes any sense to anyone else). The performance in this made it a more over the type of humor than I enjoy. Please keep in mind, I often struggle with overt humor in books, so if you don't, just ignore me.

Overall, I think it is a decent book, but was likely not a great fit for me. I may have done better with the print version, but I suspect even then I would still have listed most of the same concerns, especially with the characters, just the humor may have worked better for me.

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### **Shari Kay says**

3.25 ★

I've liked this author's work in *Nice Dragons Finish Last* and *Fortune's Pawn* and I was in the mood for Y.A. fantasy...so I thought I'd give this one a try.

It was good. I think this was Aaron's debut novel, and you can tell that it is at times. Pacing was off abit, especially during the climax in the throne room. I mean, why are they just standing there letting the villain expound about his...villainy? And after the protagonists let him fulfill his goals without even trying to stop him...where'd he go? They did all this fighting while he what...sat around and twiddled his thumbs?

My other issue was for a book about Eli...it was really more about Miranda. We got her point of view more than anyone elses and I really wanted the thief's. I wanted to know what he was thinking. His motivations. His relationships with Nico and Joseph. I wanted to hear him persuade the spirits more. It was fun when he did.

I'd say ST needed more character development, but knowing this is a 5 book series...I think we'll get it. Eventually.

I enjoyed it enough to pick up book 2

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### **Mimi says**

Too young and dumb for me, and this time I say that as an observation *and* a critique.

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I don't usually rate books I don't finish, but I will have to from now on. Marking this as read and rating it to circumvent the Goodreads recommendation "algorithm" from recommending similar books. It seems that's the only way around the system.

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### **Jacob Proffitt says**

Ugh. It's one thing to write for a younger audience. It's another to write for people you clearly think are idiots. I couldn't find a single character with anything resembling realistic motivations or reactions. The heroes feel like they were written by an 8 year-old asking "wouldn't it be cool if". Everyone else feels like they were written by an 8 year-old asking "who wouldn't want that?" In other words, the world is populated by meanie-heads and egotists with a supporting cast of henchmen and sycophants.

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### **Mogsy (MMOGC) says**

Rachel Aaron's The Legend of Eli Monpress is a series that has repeatedly popped up on my recommendations lists in the past; I swear every few weeks I'll be browsing through suggestions on my online book stores or Goodreads pages as usual and this blue cover will show up, with the man's face on it flashing his sly little smile at me. It's like he's saying, "READ ME! Come on, you know you wanna!"

Obviously, my curiosity gotten the better of me, or more accurately, World Without End's Women of Genre Fiction Reading Challenge gave me the perfect excuse and motivation to finally pick this book up and read it. And I'm happy to report, I wasn't disappointed.

The book begins with a kidnapping. Eli Monpress, the greatest thief of his age and also a talented wizard, has decided to pull off the greatest theft the world has ever seen, and what greater theft is there than the stealing away of a nation's king? His plans to increase his notoriety fall through, however, when he unwittingly brings about political turmoil that could threaten the kingdom and even the spirits of the land. Miranda Lyonette, the spiritualist tasked to hunt Eli, ends up joining forces with him and his friends to put a stop to the evil forces before they can destroy everything.

I've noticed that in recent years, the genre of fantasy has evolved towards being darker and grittier, and on the whole I feel it's a good trend. Still, every once in a while it's still nice to see something like The Spirit Thief that's fun, down-to-earth and makes you feel good after reading it. There's a lighthearted feel to the story, but there's also enough suspense in it to hook you. I for one found it very engrossing from the get-go.

I also found the magic system intriguing. The wizards in this world don't perform magic directly per se; instead they make requests or set up arrangements with the spirits that exist in everything from mundane objects like doors to the natural elements like the air, lava, or even full bodies of water. Miranda the spiritualist, for example, maintains symbiotic relationships with multiple spirits who serve her, and in return she provides them safe places to reside and lets them feed off her magic.

My only issue is a minor one. It has to do with the characters and a feeling that they haven't met their full potential. For one thing, the series' eponymous character feels merely like a side character, and while Eli is described as roguish and charming, I can't help but think of him as more cocky and annoyingly obnoxious. Maybe it has to do with how much he's constantly described as "grinning", and all I can picture in my head is that cover image every single time. The same goes for his companions Josef the swordsman and Nico the demonseed; both are very interesting, but don't seem to feature prominently enough for me to truly care about what happens to them.

My feelings for the characters notwithstanding, this was a good start to what looks to be a series I definitely want to keep reading. If the rest of the books are as entertaining and fun as this first one, I think I'll enjoy it quite a bit.

See more reviews at [The BiblioSanctum](#)

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### **AnonymousBookCritics says**

**2.5 stars**

**Originally reviewed:** 7/1/2012

Unfortunately, for how excited I was about that opening line, how enjoyable it was to see Eli talk to a door and how quirky and fun the whole scene felt, that was as far as it went. It felt to me that all of the effort of catching the reader's eye was put into that first chapter and the rest sort of paled in comparison. We never really get to know any of the characters. We're given the impression there's a story behind Miranda and her ghosthound, Gin. But that's only because as readers we can recognize that set-up, some witty banter here or there, a caring touch or look, we know there's more than just Spiritualist and ghosthound here. But that's all we're given! Every scene where we're actually in Eli's head is nothing compared to that opening scene. In fact, Eli quickly becomes that classic over-cocky thief that always has a witty remark prepared. That would be fine, if we got to know something else about him that pulled him out of that trope, but we don't.

While I understood what was happening and I knew everyone's motivation for what they did, I didn't feel any need to care. So Eli wants his bounty to be one million whatever-the-currency-is-called. I get the impression from the blurb on the back cover that there's a greater reason behind this than just him wanting a new poster, but we're given nothing to work with. In fact, Eli reminds me of Flynn Rider (Disney's Tangled) with none of the character development.

Finally, the abuse of similes was painful. I say this not to be snarky or mean but because it literally stilted my ability to get into the setting. There were too many 'this felt like this' or 'that flowed like this' for me to wholly visualize a single scenario.

Read the entire review [HERE](#).

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### **Beanbag Love says**

No rating. Stopped at about 40%.

I think it might just have been me, but I just could not connect with any of these characters. It's not poorly written and there are elements reminiscent of one of my favorite YA series, Queen's Thief by Megan Whalen Turner. But it just didn't hook me and I felt I gave it enough time.

Again, it might have been me and bad timing for me to start a new-to-me series from a new-to-me author. Especially fantasy where world building is so important and really takes a readers' concentration.

So, don't let me put you off if you find the blurb interesting.

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### **Soo says**

There is a spirit in everything in the world and only a handful of people have the ability to communicate with them. It's the strength of the person's spirit that defines the power they have and their control that maintains how much they can do with it. In this world, there is a man who desires to be the best thief of all time and he does most of his work with carefree chitchat with the spirits that live in everything. Eli Monpress won't let a small thing like plans falling apart to keep him from his goal. In fact, he takes it all in stride with confidence and an impish grin. Throw in a swordsman with a magical sword and a young girl bearing a demonseed and you have the trio of ornery characters that keeps the world of spirits on their toes.

If you enjoy snarktastic characters who confidently walk into trouble and are ready to rumble with anything that stands in the path of their convictions, you've come to the right place! It all starts with a simple ransom of a king for a little bit of the kingdom's gold and a promise to rank up the bounty on Eli. Everything spirals out of control when a contender for the throne comes to play. Enemy of my enemy is my friend is a great concept!

My thoughts:

(view spoiler)

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### **Kitvaria Sarene says**

This is really easy going, funny and entertaining popcorn fantasy!

"I should not like that" was more or less my first thought when starting this book, when the main character talks to a door. A wooden door. Yes - you read that right! And the door even answers and has a conversation with Eli, and decides it actually didn't like to have nails in it. How good for Eli, who needs to get to the other side of that door, and that is quite easy walking over a pile of boards on the floor... Say what?

I have no idea WHY it works - but it does! Instead of shaking my head and putting it down, I kept and kept on reading... I really enjoyed the humour in it, and loved the characters! It also had a bit of a Pokémon vibe for me, mixed with what felt like "Hitchhikers guide" to me.

I smiled, giggled and laughed - I also held my breath and stared.

If you want something really entertaining but not too full on comedy, this is perfect!

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### **Michael Britt says**

Actual rating: 4.5

I had tons of fun with this book! Picked it up due to a recommendation from one of my favorite authors, Michael J Sullivan, and it turned out to be very entertaining! She seems to have the same writing style, well as close as you can get, to Sullivan. But she doesn't do as well at creating characters as Sullivan does. Well, let's face it, I don't think anyone does. My only complaint is that I didn't feel as much of a connection to many of the characters at first, but they grew on me. The first 1/4 of the book was super entertaining, then it died down a bit for the next 1/4, but picks back up for an amazing ride for the last half. It's got great action and a pretty neat magic system. I really liked how she used spirits for her magic system and you have to learn how to control or convince spirits into working with you. Or you can be an evil warlock and enslave them. I did roll my eyes, at first, at how suave Eli was and how he could get just about ANY spirit to work with him. But when we found out why he could, I was fine with it. All-in-all, I would highly suggest this book if you're in search of an entertaining and fun book.

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### **Lakshmi C says**

What I liked :

- The writing - light, fun and fast paced. Just like instant noodles.
- Therapy for a door
- bounty hunters
- sword fights
- giant ghost hounds
- magic system with spirits in absolutely everything.
- exiled and exasperated kings
- Marion - the librarian. She was interesting and unique - I wish she were the female lead instead. Curious, nervous, resourceful, hidden spine, considerate, open minded
- nemesis
- Funny

“Gin,” she said loudly, “if anyone gives you trouble, don’t bother asking permission, just eat them.”

“Treason against the Spirit Court? Don’t you have to be a member of something to commit treason against it? I don’t recall ever joining your little social club.”

“Just a thief?” Miranda gave him an incredulous look. “You kidnapped the king of a council kingdom.” “I was going to give him back,” Eli said, splashing a handful of water on his face.

“You,” Renaud said, scowling, “protect me? What would you do, sneak up behind him and make a speech?”

What I didn't like :

Miranda

I have a list of reasons for not liking her -

- 1 Smug
- 2 Irritating
- 3 know it all with faulty / incomplete information
- 4 interfering
- 5 thoughtless

Will I continue? Definitely, Maybe

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### **Monica says**

This series definitely has a strong start. It is a rapid paced, easy, and really fun read. The world building and magic system are both intriguing, and though there are many common tropes present in the story, it is told with a flair that makes it a distinctive read. I would definitely recommend this series to fans of the fantasy genre.

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### **Kristalia says**

**Final rating: 4/5 stars**

**Final rating - for the whole series: 4.5/5 stars**

*"First rule of thievery,' Eli said, grinning, 'only run if you're not coming back.' (...)*

*'First rule of thievery, never use the same entrance twice.' Miranda rolled her eyes. 'How many 'first rules' of thievery do you have?'*

*'When one mistake can mean your head on a pike, every rule's a first rule,' Eli said cheerfully."*

I just read whole series in 5 days and I want to make one review to encompass all 5 books in the series and my opinion on them.

To be honest, I kinda struggled with the first book. But the rest of them are worth it. Really worth it. This is that type of series where books get better with each book. For example, my ratings would be: book I - 4, II - 4.25, III - 4.5, IV - 4.75 & V - 5.

Why that way? The more I read, the more I realized that first two books were only introduction into something much bigger - the main story which happens in the last 3 books. And main story is much, much

better than the first two books.

And now, having read all of the books, I have to say: THIS SERIES IS DAMN DIFFERENT (SOMEWHAT UNIQUE) LATER ON. And awesome! With great characters and interesting story and well done everything!

Why 4 in this book though? While I loveeeeeeee the story, I didn't understand the characters in the beginning - they felt blank. But how the story went later on I understood them, especially when their pasts started revealing and when I got to see them for who they are. That way I can safely say I would marry Nico and Eli, and probably kick Josef until he landed in the ocean on the other side of the world and I would do the same for Miranda. They kinda deserve it. But Nico and Eli are precious characters that I love, Nico is amazing girl - and she and Eli both have something in common - they struggle to survive & be free.

These books are not focused on romance - if that's what you are looking for. In fact, there is some flirting here and there, some kisses here and there too, but it's NOT a focus and it's not about romance, but a story about doing anything to keep being free and doing everything to save people they care about.

### **? WORLD BUILDING:**

Imagine if everything around you had a soul. IF you were a wizard, you would be able to hear what the door said, you would be able to contract with spirits and use them for self defense and for advices in exchange for power and obedience. These people are called Spiritualists/wizards.

There is also a force of nature that controls everything from the shadows - a white lady called the Shepherdess - and another force of nature, but complete opposite, a Demon who wants to devour every soul it can get its hands on. But the Demon is trapped under the mountain and he can only spread his seeds into (un)willing humans and make them hosts for the demon seed (and the carriers of such seeds are called Demonseeds). Demonseeds are humans who terrify the spirits - as soon as one is noticed all Spirits go into panic.

Demonseeds are hunted by the League - a force led by Lord of Storm, a man of great power, who follows Shepherdess' orders.

And lastly, across the sea there is a continent conquered by Immortal Empress.

Overall, the world building is great, especially later on when all comes to place.

### **? STORY:**

This is a story of a thief wizard Eli, who can make every spirit listen to him and help him. His companions are Josef, a man who wants to become strongest swordsman in the world because he carries the strongest awakened sword "Heart of War" and a demonseed Nico.

The three of them are on a quest to make Eli the man with the highest bounty in the world. How to do that? Steal few HQ pictures here and there, steal a lot of stuff, steal a King... Whatever gets on Eli's mind.

But when he steals a King, he didn't count that it would throw the whole country in chaos - because in the kingdom of Mellinor, wizards are not looked upon kindly, and King's brother is a wizard which got cut off from succession because of it. And now he finally got the opportunity to occupy it now that his brother is kidnapped due to being a lucky target of Eli Monpress.

So, a Spiritualist Miranda and her ghosthound are dispatched to capture Eli and set things right - to make sure Eli doesn't ruin the reputation that wizards worked hard to get for so many years.

But Eli made a deal with a dangerous force and he must play by the rules he set, or else he would lose his freedom - forever.

On the other side, the Demon of the Dead Mountain wants to get free and he would do anything to achieve that.

### ? CHARACTERS:

There are four absolute main characters in the series:

? **Eli Monpress** is a man who wants to become the most notorious man in the world. He would steal anything if it would make his bounty higher. One could say he is a total Attention Whore and that wouldn't be an overstatement. After all, Eli lives for making his bounty as high as possible. His bounty is his everything - after all, his whole future and even life depends on it. Once he made a bet - and that bet is the only thing allowing him to roam free in the world, and if he fails, he would have his freedom taken away and be forced to live a life which is for him worse than death. Being a wizard, he can charm his way out of almost all situations, but the thing is... He is a very special wizard.

Eli is a kind person, who over time understood what it means alive and what it means to have people who are close to you and who you can love, for which he would do anything if that would mean they could be safe. What hurt me the most through the series is the fact that people have habit of misjudging him and his actions even when he is downright honest and literally begs. Everyone is used to him having a plan under a plan. (For example, I almost cried when (view spoiler))But overall, he is a reckless, stubborn and very enthusiastic person. Being a Gentleman thief requires delicacy as well.

? **Josef Liechten** is a swordsman who wants his past to be forgotten. He wants nothing more than to be the greatest swordsman in the world. After all, he is carrying the strongest sword in the world - Heart of War - which has a mind of its own. Heart chose Josef as a wielder, but Josef believes he is not worthy of using such a sword until he is the same level as it. He can also use any type of the sword, be it a short sword, long sword, two handed, daggers, throwing daggers - he is a literal walking armory. But, aside from his sword, he cares a lot about Nico, a girl he saved from dying. He met Eli on a mission but decided it would be best to follow him instead because that way he would be able to face many strong opponents.

Josef is a very... tricky person. What he wants to do, he does. He is stubborn and a person who sometimes judges too harshly... sometimes with a good reason. I can't say I have been his fan because I haven't - and during the five books I have read, I didn't really care about him.

? **Nico** is a demonseed. She is literally possessed by a demon in the form of seed which is in her chest. But because of it she can regenerate very fast, can move through the shadows and go anywhere. But Nico feels

indebted to the man who saved her life, Josef, and wants nothing more than to stay by him. Even when the whole world wanted her to die, except for the Master Demon who urged her to fall into depravity, Josef wanted her to live and stay herself.

Nico is a wonderful bundle of pure cutness which needs to be protected at all costs. She wants to stay alive, she fights everyday to stay human, to not fall into the darkness her Master (Demon of the Dead Mountain) wants and she wants nothing more than to stay with Josef and help him and his ambitions. But later in the story, she becomes so strong that my love for her knows no bounds.

? **Miranda Lyonette** is a member of the Spirit Court sent to capture Eli Monpress before he tarnishes the reputation the Spiritualists worked so hard to achieve. But her missions don't always go like planned. Miranda is dutiful, honor bound and spirits are her everything - even more than humans. She would always do what is right - even if it defies the laws set by her council or even laws set by humans.

Miranda is an action heroine who follows what is right. She despises people who enslave spirits (force their will on them to make them do their bidding) and would do everything to stop them. But, like Josef, she judges too harshly sometimes without even listening to reason.

Also, there is no talking about Miranda if her spirits are not mentioned as well. Her spirits are cute, loyal and interesting. But most of all is Gin - a ghosthound she freed and convinced to work with her - and they get along so well it's so hard to see Miranda without Gin with her.

? ***Others:***

There are more characters in the story, and a lot of them impact it greatly, but many of them appear more in the later book, but I have to write about few more characters - which will include some minor spoilers. But I will put every serious one under the separate spoiler tags.

(view spoiler)

? **OVERALL:**

Interesting series - it is worth reading once you pass first book. Books 3-5 are each about one of the characters - 3 is for Nico, 4 is for Josef and 5th is for Eli. Miranda got her short story as well Spirit's Oath about her past, and this is what I loved. I love when I meet the characters through their pasts because otherwise they feel bland.

Overall, unique ideas, great world building and strong ending - Either there were no plot holes or I did not notice them at all. But overall, for that ending, and for Eli, it is worth it.

The next section is based on all of the books.

***LIKED:***

- ? Characters and their development through the books. Especially Eli and Nico.
- ? Ideas, especially book 2, 4 and 5.
- ? Different perspective on demons and gods and fantastic world building.
- ? Conclusion of all 5 books.

***DISLIKED:***

- ? Slow paced beginning into the series, it takes at least 2 books to figure out how main characters think

***OTHER IMPORTANT INFO:***

- ? **Standalone:** No. Series of 5 books + a prequel story about Miranda's past. Completed.
- ? **Point of View:** Third person, multiply POVs.
- ? **Cliffhanger:** Only in fourth one.
- ? **Triggers:** (view spoiler)
- ? **Love triangle:** NO. THANK GOD.
- ? **Angst:** Of course. But not always. It's usually funny.
- ? **Supernatural:** Yes. Gods, spirits and wizards that talk to spirits. And demons, unique demons.
- ? **Explicit content:** No.
- ? **Ending type:** (view spoiler)
- ? **Note:** It's wonderful series with unique ideas, wonderful world building and great characters once you pass first 2 books. Their development come through 3, 4 and 5th book.

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**Wastrel says**

(also for: people who are secretly five)

This is a fantasy novel in which some fantasy-novel-things happen, mostly in the logical order. The author is mostly not illiterate (though there are a few baffling word choices, and seemingly no knowledge of elementary physics or anatomy). Only some of the characters are insufferable. Imagine a fantasy novel that has been adapted as a cartoon for very young children. Or imagine someone writing Mary Sue fanfics about a fantasy setting they read once, in which characters cross over from popular contemporary TV shows (so far as I know, none of these characters actually ARE hip teenagers from 21st century California putting on bad ren-fair impersonations of how ye people spoketh in ye olden days and shit... they just read that way). And as in those fanfics, everybody is invulnerable, and if they ever look vulnerable it's only for an instant before their previously unmentioned extra-super-invulnerability-powers come into effect. This eliminates any element of narrative tension, and becomes frankly ridiculous in the anime-style Final Boss Battle.

I was interested and surprised to see just how similar this was to the fantasy of my youth - the D&D novels, the David Eddings and so forth - to the point where I felt I'd already met several of the characters before. [In fact, you've met every element of this before, if you've read any fantasy... it's extremely derivative]. The big differences are the adoption of this curiously mixed semi-millennial, semi-fauxdieval style, and the fact that this is much shallower and less interesting than the old pulp fantasies were (there's no depth to the setting in the slightest, for instance). All the distinctive rough edges have been filed off in an attempt to produce something maximally unobjectionable.

The plus side of that, however, is that it really is more polished than they were. The prose is more capable than in a lot of old pulp, and likewise the grasp of pacing.

However, beyond a mild and slightly surprising goodwill that I feel toward it, and the fact that it was an easy read, I can't really think of any reasons at all to recommend it - there's nothing it does particularly well.

Having said that, I found it pleasant enough, in a pandering way, that I will probably read the sequel...

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For my more detailed thoughts, and many more questionable analogies, see my review on my blog.

### **Krista Hansen says**

I decided to read this after hearing that Micheal J. Sullivan recommends it to Riyria fans. Like the Chronicles series, this is a fun, light and charming tale about a thief in a medieval fantasy world. Unlike Riyria, though, this lacks character depth. That's fine for a first novel that kept me entertained enough with fun thievery and a creative magic system. However, I doubt my patience will last through the whole series if the books don't add more character depth and plot complexity.

Luke Daniels did a fantastic narration job. He's great with pacing, emotion and different character voices. He is in part the reason I will be continuing on.

Also, this book is very clean for anyone looking for something family friendly. No sexual content. Minimal violence. I don't think I heard any swearing.

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### **C.G. Drews says**

**So this was a delightful tome of sassy thievery.** Which is honestly my FAVOURITE epic fantasy topic ever so I'm pleased. It was ultimately a little light for me, though...I mean, I spent far too much time hoping the stakes would grow higher but they all stayed pretty lowkey. It actually felt kind of YA??? But with characters in their low twenties. So if you're a mostly YA reader but looking for some epic fantasy = bring your eyeballs here.

(Plus there's no romance, like zero swearing, and not even that much blood.)

(Wow. No wonder I'm not knocked out of my chair with adoration. I need way more angry blood.)

**Basically it's the story of a sassy smooth-talking thief who kidnaps a king.** And also a fabulously capable and epic female wizard who takes no nonsense from anyone. Yas. Two lovely things. Although I confess to being disappointed that Miranda featured WAY more than Eli. Like I really did like her!! But Eli was so interesting and he basically was just slouching through the whole book making jovial quips and talking the world into letting him do whateeeeever he wanted and I wanted to know more about him!! But it was absolutely *endless* relief to actually have an epic fantasy feature a woman who WASN'T a manic pixie dream girl, but instead an intelligent and capable warrior who needed 0% males swooning after her.

Did I mention no romance? Haha. It was SO REFRESHING.

**I also really liked the world!** In this universe, everything has a spirit and wizards work with the spirits of the worlds to keep peace or fight or whatever. It's all HUG THE TREES, YO, which is lovely. Although I *do* have questions. THere's like small spirits in things from the doors to the ink you write with....so like...are there spirits in their clothes? Do they need to ask permission to wear their socks?? Or eat with a spoon?? **I felt the world was a LITTLE hazy on the specifics.**

**The plot wasn't complicated, but it was fun!** Actually I'll just accuse the whole book of that: A DELIGHTFUL LUMP OF FUN. It's not going to twist my feels (see aforementioned *very* low stakes) but it made me smile so much!!

Except for those covers. Oh someone help them please. Worst covers ever.

#### **SMALL LISTS OF OTHER LOVES:**

- there's a talking wolf/hellhound sort of creature whom I love
- Eli can literally talk a door into opening for him, LITERALLY.
- Eli believes if you see food while you're in the middle of a job, you should still eat it
- Yosef is an epic sword dude
- there's a cute demon girl whom the world hates but she's pretty chill tbh
- epic magic swords
- Eli steals all the things
- I have super many questions about his backstory so HECK YES I'M READING MORE BOOKS IN THIS SERIES

#### **SMALL LIST OF DISLIKES:**

- the king was dumb
- the villain was *super* dumb
- too much polite conversation when everyone should be killing each other
- it was too light/lowkey for me to be truly invested the whole time
- it was pretty predictable

**ALL IN ALL: if you're a fan of epic fantasy con schemes and magic, try it!** The sass honestly had me grinning wildly and I have so many questions about Eli that I want to read mooooore. I loved reading a badass female wizard too!!! And I would like to see Eli steal literally everything from everyone. I mean, c'mon, the dude would steal your socks and then just smile charmingly and frolic away. #nice

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#### **Wendy Darling says**

Cool magic and unbelievably funny narrative voice. I loved Rachel Aaron's Paradox scifi series (written as Rachel Bach), but after reading this, it's official: I'll read anything she writes! Eli Monpress is a charmer for sure.

Review to come.

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