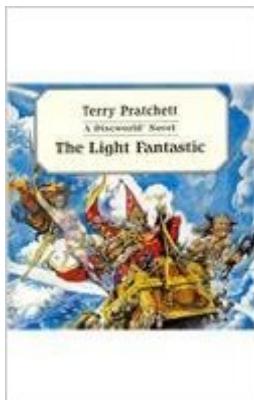


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The Light Fantastic



Synopsis

Great A'Tuin, the star turtle, who supports the weight of the Discworld, labors through the galactic night, the only creature in the entire universe that knows exactly where it is going. Philosophers have debated where this is - they are due to find out in about two months. And then they are really going to worry. As it moves towards a seemingly inevitable collision with a malevolent red star, the Discworld has only one possible savior. Unfortunately, this happens to be the singularly inept and cowardly wizard called Rincewind, who was last seen falling off the edge of the world...

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: ISIS Audio Books; Unabridged edition (April 1, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0753107392

ISBN-13: 978-0753107393

Product Dimensions: 8 x 1.6 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (384 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

The Light Fantastic is the second book in Terry Pratchett's brilliantly funny Discworld series, continuing the tale related in the first book The Colour of Magic. The last we knew, Rincewind and Discworld's first tourist Twoflower had fallen off the rim of the world, which is an especially dangerous happenstance on a world that is totally flat and carried on the backs of four elephants who in turn stand atop the great cosmic turtle Great A'Tuin. While Rincewind is Discworld's most incompetent wizard and all-around unlucky fellow, he manages to evade the clutches of Death (although he does bump into him fairly often) time and again (27 times by Twoflower's count at the midpoint of this novel). Why this is so is, we discover, is because Rincewind carries one of the eight most powerful spells from the magical Octavo. Reality keeps having to reshape itself in order to keep rescuing the wizard. Although Rincewind, the eternally optimistic Twoflower, and the magical Luggage of sapient pearwood are once again on the disc, they face a number of obstacles in getting

home to Ankh-Morpork. They are fortunate enough to join forces with Disworld's greatest hero Cohen the Barbarian; Cohen is an old man now, but he doesn't let that stop him from rescuing maidens, stealing treasures, and doing other heroic things. At this particular time, the Discworld itself is in danger, threatened with an imminent collision with a giant red star heading its way. The wizards of Unseen University believe that all eight powerful spells from the Octavo must be read in order to save the Discworld, so the missing Rincewind must be found in order to release the necessary eighth spell locked inside his brain.

Terry Pratchett's *Light Fantastic* is the second in his acclaimed Discworld series. However, I have not read the series in chronological fashion but in a rather haphazard manner which probably serves as some sort of model for chaos theory. There are disadvantages to such a chaotic approach. I have, for example, covered much of Commander Vimes' career in reverse order. On the other hand, reading the Discworld series in something like a reverse chronological order has its benefits. It is the literary equivalent of an archeological dig in which you start in the present and dig your way back to first causes. In many respects this is my Discworld version of Richard Dawkins' *The Ancestor's Tale*, as this represents my journey to the dawn of Discworld. Unlike the earth, there is evidence of intelligent design behind the evolution of Discworld. That design falls squarely in the deft comedic and thoughtful writing of Terry Pratchett. *Light Fantastic* begins with a real cliffhanger. Actually, *Light Fantastic* begins where "The Colour of Magic" left off, with our two unlikely heroes, the rather cowardly, lapsed wizard Rincewind and the incredulous tourist Twoflower tumbling in space somewhere off the edge of Discworld. The story is rather simple. Discworld is on a collision course with a giant red star. Discworld can be saved but it requires a combination of eight spells, seven of which are safely ensconced in the Octavo, the book of spells left by Discworld's creator. As to the critical eighth spell, Rincewind appears to have accidentally absorbed the spell into his subconscious during a 'visit' with the great book. In order for the world to be saved, Rincewind will have to come to the Octavo or the Octavo will have to come to Rincewind.

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