



Prospero in Hell

L. Jagi Lamplighter

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The exciting, suspenseful story of Miranda's search for Prospero, the fabled sorcerer of *The Tempest*

The search of a daughter for her father is but the beginning of this robust fantasy adventure. For five hundred years since the events of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Miranda has run Prospero, Inc., protecting an unknowing world from disasters both natural and man-made. Now her father has been taken prisoner of dark spirits in a place she could only guess. Piecing together clues about her father's whereabouts and discovering secrets of her shrouded past, she comes to an inescapable conclusion she has dreaded since Prospero was lost.

Prospero has been imprisoned in Hell, kept there by demons who wish to extract a terrible price in exchange for his freedom. As the time of reckoning for Miranda draws near, she realizes that hundreds of years of their family's magic may not be enough to free her once-powerful father from the curse that could destroy them...and the world.

Prospero in Hell is the second novel of the Prospero's Daughter series.

Prospero in Hell Details

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Author : L. Jagi Lamplighter

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From Reader Review Prospero in Hell for online ebook

David says

The wait for the second volume of Prospero's Daughter was worth it - this is a good read. The first few chapters didn't quite gel, and I found myself slogging a bit. As the book went on, and especially once the Prospero clan was all together, it became sufficiently hard to put down that I missed an appointment. The biggest frustration with the book is that, like the first volume, it doesn't *conclude* as much as *stop* - it's clearly one long story chopped into thirds, and now I'll have another wait for the third volume.

Part of the slogginess in the early going of this book was that the explanations of the various phenomena and encounters felt random - like a mystery where the clues aren't given to the reader. Miranda has a particular event occur which leads to an epiphany, and at that moment the book seems to crystallize - the stage is then set for a dramatic climax and dénouement to occur in the final volume.

Of interest and note is Lamplighter's cosmology and theology - it is a very interesting blend of magical pagan thinking and classical Catholic thinking, and I don't believe I've encountered it's like before. The nearest relative which comes to mind is Moore & Williams' *Promethea*, but even that cosmology is far more Jewish than Lamplighter's. She deftly weaves fragmentary traditions together into a whole which appears *designed* rather than *emergent*; that alone would be worth reading - that there is a great adventure story makes it a particular treat.

Al Sirois says

I'm sorry to say I gave up on this after about thirty pages. It didn't engage me. You'd think that if I could plow through **The Night Land** I could make it through this. Perhaps my difficulty lay in the fact that this is the second book in a series... and without the back-story I can't get my bearings. Maybe so, but it has elements of what is called "high fantasy" that I don;t seem to have much tolerance for. I had hopes for this book because *The Tempest* is my favorite Shakespearean play... but no dice. If I get a chance to read the first book I will give that a go. Maybe then I'll be able to appreciate Prospero in Hell. Because I could not finish it, it gets no stars.

Mitch says

I wasn't as impressed with the second book in the series as I was with the first.
I wasn't disappointed but for some reason it didn't quite give me the same thrill as the first.
Really, it probably deserved better than a 3 but I couldn't quite give it a four.
The storyline was still good. Lot's of stuff going on with enough complexity to keep it interesting.
The pace was good and the writing descriptive without being overly done.
Perhaps it was the characters. Maybe they didn't progress as much as I would have liked.
In any case, I will definitely be waiting for the next book.

Sabrina Taylor says

Must better than the first book I do have my complaints. Mainly, why oh why do female characters always have to "lose their powers" in almost every comic or fantasy book I read? Why? And why does she have to lose it in such a horrible way? I mean, if you were going to strip her of her powers, there are other ways to do it.

David says

Great series with Shakespeare, mythology, religion, angels, and a journey to hell to save Prospero.

Tim Hicks says

This series is for people who found Agatha Christie's plots too simple. Perhaps it should have been called, "Unbeknownst to her..." because it is just jam-packed with "A is actually B".

OK, what's good? The good basic idea continues from book 1. The overall plot is quite good, and there are some moral issues. Some of the characters are not bad. Miranda is nowhere near believable as a 500-year-old; she thinks and acts like a late-teens person.

Summary: I think Lamplighter is better at ideas than at writing - or else her editor is a saboteur. Let's examine that:

Early on we have repeating info dozens of times, coupled with efforts to fill in for people who missed volume 1 when this plot is too complex for that. Just tell 'em to go read #1.

".. ways of moving between Prospero's Mansion." ... and? It's hard to move between one place.

Much research has clearly gone in to the mythical characters, so why are so many misspelled? Metratron (Matetron), Partrocles (Patrocles), Abbadon (Abaddon, later correct), Ozymandius (Ozymandias), ...

Faery/Faerie - most writers don't mix fairy and faerie, and few use "faery". Some claim that fairies and faerie are somewhat different things (with the kind in these books being faerie). Tinkerbell is a fairy; a banshee is a faerie.

We have imposter (impostor), "lay" for "laid:", "nobles oblige: (noblesse). We have a character "step foot in" a place (SET foot in, please).

We're told that the open Vault is a dangerous beacon, yet after meeting the Fire King Miranda is in no hurry to close it, choosing to go to the winter garden instead.

We meet Erasmus.

p. 136: "mocking green eyes" (?)

p. 137: gazed mockingly

p. 140: A slight mocking smile played about his lips

p. 140: ... his mocking expression .."
p. 141: .. his mocking smile ..."
p. 144: he asked mockingly
p. 152: ... his mocking dark eyes ..
p. 159: .. asked mockingly ...
OK, we get it.

Here's some of the sort of prose that Elmore Leonard has deplored. It's the Tom Swift school of writing:

p. 144: "asked Cornelius ... murmured Erasmus ... I said ... Cornelius's voice rose in surprise ... muttered Theo ... I said ... Cornelius asked, amazed ... I replied ... Cornelius's voice wavered ... I finished ... Theo said gruffly ... he asked mockingly". p. 145: "Erasmus purred ... I asked, astonished ... he replied smugly ... I said tiredly ... Theo interrupted ... answered Erasmus smoothly ... barked Theo ... Theo growled "

"The garment was woven from night's air and the reflection of moonlight on black water."
Hm. Must have been cold. And it must have been tough to do up the buttons.

We learn that (view spoiler) Bwah-hah, this is even better than book 1 bringing in Santa. This is where I first suspected that Lamplighter is playing this for laughs. Or maybe it was when a window led to the Land of Nod.

Someone says they can get Ulysses with the Staff of Transportation. They should all be aware that they can't, because it hasn't yet been to [where he is].

Here's a Tower of Pain that makes your eyes bleed if you look at it, ya right. That's in a dream, but we are told later that it's real - or as real as anything is in Hell. Similarly, as they are entering Hell, Erasmus is walking beside Miranda as she swims. Are we just playing with perceptions here? Because there aren't many situations where one person can actually while the person beside her walks a dry path, and there aren't many things that cause bleeding from a distance.

We learn late in book 2 that Mephisto has (view spoiler), and has never mentioned or used it. His memory isn't THAT bad. And where was he carrying it, and how did he fail to notice it?

Focalor arrives in the midst of a brawl, and stops to give an eight-line formal speech laying out his history. Everything we're told about him suggests that he really ought to just get right onto the slaying part.

Mephisto leaps from a flying lion, does a double back flip that knocks his hat from his shoulders to his head, grabs a sword in passing, knocks aside the bad guy's sword and stabs him. Hahahahaha, I get it, this is the book from which the author expects a cartoon to be made, right?

This book stinks - but I am going to read #3 anyway because it's a compelling story if you overlook a LOT of details - and I want to find out how Miranda's story turns out.

Oh - the title? I've been careful about spoilers, but if you've got this far I'll spill one: despite the title, we do not meet blankety-blank Prospero in this book. Unless he turns out to have been one of the others all along, which would only be the ninth time that's happened in the two books. He'd better be in the third one or I'm going to write a really long review.

One more: have I detected a not-very-subtle joke that Theo is, for all practical purposes, Theodore Roosevelt, right out of A Night at the Museum?

Claire says

- Miranda, a sorceress
- Ariel, "noir" private eye/cynic
- Prospero, not present-disappeared and stolen away to Hell
- Miranda's brothers, sprites, magic creatures and demons.

Miranda finally gathers all her siblings together and through them learns of some unsettling and all-too-true aspects of her past including the truth about Ferdinand and Caliban. Parts of the story are clouded with mythical artifacts and the nuance of the Prospero Family's past is a bit confusing, but reflects the cloud of doubt that surrounds Miranda as she unravels the mysterious history her father and several immortals have woven. Just when the pieces start falling into place, Miranda's hopes come crashing down in a violent fury. A turn of faith leads Miranda and her family into hell to rescue the dread magician Prospero, but who knows how they will get him back out.

I was hoping this would wrap up into a nice enough conclusion that I could put it to rest until the next book comes out, but what started to be a nice ending then spun into a cliff-hanger and stopped.

Coco says

I really enjoyed the interactions between Miranda and her siblings, the rest of who we get the pleasure of meeting in this installment. This book goes deeper into exploring the character's personalities and fleshes out those we've already met. I found I became closer to Miranda in this book whereas in the previous one, her actions and attitudes left me a little baffled at times. Lamplighter's description of hell was frightening and there were a few moments in the book that I certainly didn't see coming. This is a rare circumstance where I enjoy the sequel even more than it's predecessor.

Paul Weimer says

The second in the series of books by L. Jagi Lamplighter

In the first book in the series, *Prospero Lost*, L. Jagi Lamplighter introduces us to a cross between epic and urban fantasy, where the daughter of Shakespeare's Prospero, is the CEO of a corporation devoted to managing the many malicious arcane (demonic, and otherwise) threats to humanity. Discovering that her father has disappeared, Miranda sets on a quest to find, question and obtain the assistance of her estranged siblings.

This second novel continues the growth of Miranda, as a leader, and as a person, as she takes the lead in trying to get her siblings together, organized, and pointed in one direction--the rescue of their trapped father.

Middle novels in a trilogy are usually good for marking time. The first novel sets the stakes, the last novel finishes up the situation and resolves everything. The middle novel often serves to tread water, or to reverse

much of the protagonists good work.

Prospero in Hell manages to get real character development, growth, and unfurling of the plot in the midst of a middle volume, a pretty good feat for the second novel for a writer. In point of fact, Lamplighter's writing is strong enough that when a very dark event (foreshadowed, even) happens to Miranda, I felt a visceral reaction.

The stakes and situation evolve and change, and I think I now better understand what the author is trying to do here. Two novels in, I think that my characterization of this as Urban Fantasy is not quite accurate. Instead, Lamplighter appears to be mining a different vein: Christian Fantasy. The discussion of salvation, the appearance of an angel, and more clearly make it clear that Lamplighter is invoking the heritage of C.S. Lewis as much as Roger Zelazny. I didn't twig onto that in the first book when the climax brings them to the North Pole and Father Christmas, but I recall that, too, Lewis has his protagonists meet Saint Nicholas when they needed him.

I have to admit that, although she is clearly writing the novels she wants to write, its a pretty good strategy as a writer to stake out this field. Compared to a lot of the fantasy sub-genres these days, its an underdeveloped field. Players of Steve Jackson's RPG In Nomine, for example, are going to love this novel for the ideas that can be used in that game of Angels and Demons and Other Powers.

The novel doesn't quite come off as preachy or conversion-oriented, but even if I didn't already know that faith was important to the husband and wife team, it comes across strongly in the narrative. One should not worry that this novel or its predecessor stray into didactic Left Behind territory. For one thing, Lamplighter can write better than Lahaye and Jenkins while tied up in a sack with a dyspeptic cat.

And, there is a heavy leavening of a mix of other mythologies into the narrative. This is the kind of universe and book where Miranda meets angels, demons, elves, the Lord of the Djinn, and wields the dangerous and treacherous Laevateinn. Oh, and as you might guess from the title, dares to try and find a way into Hell itself. If I didn't know better, I would swear the author had visited John Myers Myers' Commonwealth of his novel Silverlock and spent copious amounts of time there.

I think Lamplighter's novels deserve a wider audience. Starting here is a mistake, but do try the first novel, Prospero Lost. I wager that readers who finish it will definitely want to continue to read Miranda's story in this volume.

Doug says

Like its predecessor, *Prospero Lost*, aspects of *Prospero in Hell* evoke other works -- most prominently *The Tempest* and *The Inferno*, but Lamplighter's squabbling, centuries-old, magic-wielding siblings recall both Gaiman and Zelazny -- while remaining wholly its own thing. *Prospero in Hell* addresses some of the weaknesses that bothered me about the first volume. Narrator Miranda's emotional remoteness is explicitly dealt with; despite the fact that she's centuries old, the trilogy seems to be a coming-of-age story for her, among other things. And the inclusion of St. Nicholas in the first book, which seemed like an out-of-place episodic encounter, is revealed to be less an aberration than a foundation for exploration of how Lamplighter's world-building incorporates elements of both pagan and Judeo-Christian mythic traditions.

Inconsistent tone continues to bother me a bit. At its extremes, *Prospero in Hell* incorporates both (brief)

moments of gross-out horror and (not quite so brief) dreamy, catalog-of-wonders interludes that place the plot on hold (Millhauser's *From the Realm of Morpheus* came to mind when the book slipped into this mode).

My biggest gripe, again, is structural. *Prospero in Hell* is a novel when judged by word count, but very clearly the second act of a three-act play; it ends with an almost literal cliffhanger. It's been nearly two years since I read *Prospero Lost*, and I struggled to recall relevant details despite a generous sprinkling of "remember when this happened" moments. If Lamplighter wraps up her story satisfyingly we'll have three good fantasy novels in our universe -- but I can't help but wonder if there's a single, slightly leaner and even better novel in some alternate universe where publishing dictates are a little different.

However, there's no chance I'll wait two years to read *Prospero Regained*. *Prospero in Hell* was a lot of fun, incorporating some nifty variations on the classic texts it references, an impressive array of (mostly but not exclusively European) mythic and folkloric elements, some big plot twists (including two that caught me unawares), more satisfying character development than the first book, and clever applications and extrapolations of magical powers.

Judy says

While I enjoyed *Prospero Lost*, the first volume of Lamplighter's *Prospero's Daughter* trilogy, this second volume took a leap forward in many ways. Miranda, who is the eldest of Prospero's offspring, was contacted by her father at the beginning of the first book, informing her that one of his spells had gone awry, that he was accidentally trapped in Hell, and that Miranda was to gather the family and warn them of impending doom.

By the end of *Prospero Lost* she had only found four of her eight siblings, hardly any of whom were on good terms with each other. Many more questions and mysteries had been raised than were answered or solved. As a reader I was mostly impressed but also somewhat overwhelmed by a sprawling plot covering over 400 years and a gargantuan cast of characters both human and supernatural.

Oh reader of little faith! In *Prospero in Hell*, Miranda locates her remaining siblings, they overcome their differences barely enough to band together, and set off for Hell. Several points of confusion are made clear and Miranda grows into an admirable character even as she remains conflicted, cold and oddly capricious.

The expression "all hell broke loose" takes on new meaning as Prospero's children begin their trek towards the prison of torture that holds their father. Lamplighter's writing blossoms into a Tolkeinian effect both in terms of description and the powers of evil which these characters must overcome.

With this second volume, which belies the tendency of the middle book of a trilogy to be the weakest, Lamplighter demonstrates that she is addressing well thought out themes. What appeared to be a weakness of plotting skills in the first book turns out to be just the beginnings of many complex plot threads that coalesce into an astounding world view. Miranda is not the only contradictory character in the story. Each sibling has deep faults, even if those faults are caused by demons, and the quest to rescue Prospero is the means by which they will overcome weaknesses and grow into their true selves.

Prospero in Hell contains equal parts of despair and hope. By the end I was convinced I was in the hands of a competent fantasy writer and sure that I would follow along to the trilogy's conclusion, experiencing changes in myself as I read.

Trixie says

Ahahahaha oh my God it was better than I remembered.

We get deeper insights into every single character, not just the Prosperos, and when it comes to saving the Dread Magician himself there is finally forward momentum! But, oh, the tragedies of being both immortal and merely human.

If anyone loves character development, this is the book for them. While "Prospero Lost" was an introduction to the world, "Prospero in Hell" makes it a richer, more wonderful, sinister place with a cohesion that only someone who's written for years can create. So good. At least, I think so.

I would re-read this right now but I finally have the last book and I am not going to wait another second. I MUST KNOW.

Kat says

Couldn't put it down! The mysteries continue to deepen as Miranda continues to gather her siblings in an attempt to rescue their father Prospero from the grips of hell. We get a few answers, like the source of her brother Mephisto's madness, but more are brought up, like the identity of Miranda's mother. In the previous book, I was most intrigued by the relationship between Miranda and Mephisto, but in this book, it's the antagonism between her and her brother Erasmus that drew me in. Occasionally Miranda takes a little too long to figure out things that I got immediately, but not so often or so long that I remained annoyed. Really enjoyed this installment and jumping into the final book!

TheBookSmugglers says

Original Review [HERE](#)

REVIEW

First Impressions:

Thea: My first impression of Prospero in Hell began a few months ago, when the gorgeous cover was unveiled. I loved the cool, silvery Miranda on the cover of the first novel, and was just as enamored with this warm, sepia-toned cover for the second book. Even more delightful, however, was the discovery that Prospero's beautiful cover was the perfect complement to this incredible series. Miranda, her surly detective and her squabbling siblings are reunited in this second installment as they travel to Hell itself to rescue their entrapped father (and, in the process, humanity). Prospero in Hell is one of those rare middle books that is

even better than its predecessor; I loved it.

Ana: (Why do I have the feeling that this entire review will be a succession of “I agree with Theas”?)

I loved *Prospero Lost* for all that it was a slow burner of a book: I read it and I liked it but with time, the more I thought about it, the more I appreciated it. I even grew fonder of the cover, which at first sight had repelled me; When I saw the cover of *Prospero in Hell* I immediately loved it. Cover aside, did the book live up to the expectations I had after loving the first one so much? YES and I agree with Thea (see?), it is an even better book than its predecessor and I too, loved it, in spite of a couple of hiccups (which shall be addressed in due time).

On the Plot:

Thea: Picking up immediately where *Prospero Lost* left off, *Prospero in Hell* opens with dutiful Miranda, her cuckoo brother Mephisto, and her trusted detective Mab on the back of Pegasus, hurtling towards Mephisto's secluded mansion. After learning that their father, Prospero, is trapped in Hell, Miranda works on gathering her errant, self-absorbed, and suspicious siblings together, and persuading them all to make a rescue attempt to free Prospero. Miranda's task, however, is not without sizable obstacles the most notable of which is the lack of trust between the Prospero children. Mephistopheles is quite mad. Erasmus despises Miranda and believes her to be a liar and manipulatress. The thief Ulysses teleports away (using his handy staff) from any confrontation with his family, protecting his own self-interests. Titus is nowhere to be found. Logistilla is cruel and has some deeper secret to guard of her own. Theo, under some strange compulsion, has refused to take the water of life and has grown into an old man. Cornelius, blind, has been implicated in the death of another of the Prosperos (as have Ulysses and Logistilla) – Gregor is dead (or is he?).

All the while, the Three Shadowed Ones stalk the Prospero children, sowing distrust between the siblings in a grander scheme to destroy the family, and literally unleash Hell.

As we've said before, *Prospero in Hell* is a “middle book” – it is the second book in a planned trilogy. Usually, middle children suffer from that less-than-scintillating “in betweenness” i.e. the book maneuvers the characters we fell in love with in the first volume and sets them up for some grand battle to come in the final volume. The middle child is often neglected – a vital part of the storyline, certainly, but not nearly so exciting, dramatic or developed as its bookending siblings.

Every so often, however, a middle child comes along that defies this mold (hi, *The Empire Strikes Back!*). Such is *Prospero in Hell*.

The sheer mass of revelations in this second book – Miranda's heritage, her father's attitudes and true feelings for her, the role of her siblings in the fall of the Prospero family, for example – are staggering. Taking the core conflict of the missing Prospero from *Prospero Lost*, in *Prospero in Hell* the plot thickens with corruption, back-dealings with demons, and identity reveals. From a pure plotting perspective, *Prospero in Hell* knocked my socks off. I can safely say that I had no clue where the story was going or the reveals that would gradually come to light in this second novel, and found myself impressed with each subsequent development. But more than just pure story, L. Jagi Lamplighter has a beautiful writing style and an imaginative scope that is flat-out awesome.

One of the things I love the most about this series is the broad and wonderfully comprehensive the scope of Miranda's world. There is a strong Judeo-Christian sensibility with familiar demons and a Dante version of Hell, but there also is a strong blend of western folklore interwoven with this model (including Aerie Ones

and Elves). Although I am a bit wary of Christian themes in my books, I will say that it makes sense in the frame of these characters. Each of the Prospero children are from an earlier, very Catholic, time and would view the world in these different ways (heck, Gregor used to be a Pope). From the Prosperos' perspective, it makes perfect sense.

I will say, however, that I do have a bit of fear for the upcoming book. So far, Ms. Lamplighter has written a beautiful story that does not preach nor feel conversionist – however, there is an undeniably strong thread of Christian-type themes and messages in the text, and I cannot help but fear that the final volume may deliver some sort of Message (note the capital “m”). I am not fond of being preached at, nor do I like Messages in my reading. That said, Ms. Lamplighter has shown beautiful restraint in her writing thus far, telling what is essentially a fantasy novel with some very Christian themes without crossing the line into preachy territory. So long as this balance is maintained, I will be a happy camper.

Ana: Yes, to all that. I cannot begin to express how impressed I am with the scope of these novels from the mythologies and stories it encompasses to each and every one of the characters. Although at times the story does seem too convoluted, every single thing has a place or meaning: sometimes sinister, sometimes sad, sometimes happy. For the geek in me, it was a feast: every time a creature from mythology appeared, every time someone talked about something like The Ark of Covenant, I became giddy with satisfaction. The fact that all of those are not simply thrown into the story as a gimmick but rather had an actual purpose is even more impressive.

The plot moves along with twists and turns (and OMG the twists!) and every single revelation left me breathless. This is why I read folks, for this need to know what happens next, for the breathless excitement of a damn good story. The Prospero series are providing me with just that and I love them for it.

Other than that, Thea covered the positives very well – and I agree with every single thing she says.

However.

I have a few concerns which I have been thinking and considering ever since I finished reading the novel. Although they did not diminish my enjoyment or my admiration for the novel, which says a lot, I think it is worth bringing them up. This is where my part of the review gets really spoilery so step away now if you don't want to know.

ALSO: TRIGGER WARNING (rape).

Miranda is raped. Which is a BIG deal because her virginity is part of what keeps the Prosperos immortal (she is a Handmaiden of the Unicorn and as a Handmaiden she is allowed the Water of Life which extends their mortal lives). She has been trying, for centuries to move above and become a Sybil because as a Sybil she would still be entitled to the Water of Life but also, to marry or have lovers. In this book, she loses it all after being raped by one of the Shadowed Ones.

Now, as a matter of principle I hate when a female character needs to be raped to be stripped of her powers and to propel her into change. I think it is lazy writing. But I need to consider this particular case and this particular scenario: I think that the rape itself was handled well and it fit within the story. The scene was not too graphic and the writing conveyed how horrific it was; I think Miranda's reaction to it, her brokenness, the physical and psychological repercussions (all the “if onlys”, almost broke my heart) were also handled well as were her brothers' and friends' reactions.

I am though, most concerned about how the lasting effects of what happened to her will be addressed; and

above all, about the possible connections it might have with the Christian-type themes and messages in the text which Thea refers to above. My main concern is that the rape is being used to strip a woman of her power (which comes from a FEMALE Goddess) so that she can find... something else that fits in that theme. Note: it has not happened yet and I hope it won't. But I wouldn't be honest if I didn't mention my reading of this part of the plot.

It is a statement of how much this book is good, that I remain extremely excited for the final instalment even if this excitement is tainted with a sprinkle of wariness.

On the Characters:

Thea: Ah, children of Prospero! How I love thee. Prospero in Hell works so damn well in part because it truly takes the time to develop its characters. In this second novel, all the Prospero children are gradually reunited (although they certainly aren't happy about it), called from whatever self-absorbed tasks they usually spend their immortality performing to band together to save their father. We finally get to meet the other Prospero children in this book, and discover that they are all flawed, deeply real people – except in the Prospero case, they are the only family of immortal humans in the world (that we know of) and as such, family disputes cause much more prolonged drama. In particular, Erasmus's antagonism towards Miranda is fascinating – what caused this mistrust? Why does he loathe his older sister so? Of all the siblings, the mad Mephisto (who is not really so mad, as we discover in this book), the cruel Erasmus, and the aged Theo are my clear favorites. Of course, there's also Mab, whom I love (in part because he is modeled after Bogart's portrayal of Chandler's Marlowe), as well as a few other Aerie ones. There are also the Three Shadowed Ones themselves, in particular Seir, the incubus, who has deep ties of his own to the eldest Prospero child.

Which brings me to the star of the novel; Prospero in Hell is Miranda's story, narrated by her in the first person, and it is because of Miranda that any of the Prospero children are reunited and know of their father's plight. It is Miranda's character that propels the trilogy, and my goodness does she go through a lot in this second book. Faced with hidden truths and blatant lies about herself and her family, Miranda's pristine world is smashed to smithereens, her self-perception distorted and marred. These revelations change everything, and how Miranda is forced to adapt to these self-truths is a hard thing to read (at one point in the book, something terrible happens and it is heartbreaking for poor Miranda) – but, as the series progresses, Miranda continues to grow as a character and learns to rely on her own internal strength and find her own voice, separate from her father's wishes or the protection of her Lady. Terrifying for poor Miranda, yes, but empowering at the same time.

Ana: Do you know what I think is the MOST impressive thing about these books? That the majority of the characters are self-absorbed, egotistical pricks who think themselves above and better than anyone else. And that in spite of that they are all incredibly human for all that because it makes perfect sense that they would be like this; just consider that the Prosperos are the ONLY humans that are immortals, the only humans that are as powerful as the creatures they meet and who have a task to protect the entire human race. How could that not go to their heads? Because of that I might not love or admire them as people (as fictional as they are) but I love them as characters because they are well drawn and in the midst of all of their adventures there is time for a glimpse of two of what motivates each and every one of them. Just like Thea, my favourites are Mephisto, Mab and Theo.

All of that is also true of the protagonist and narrator of the novel, Miranda. Cold, detached, superior, Miranda was almost unbearable over the course of Prospero Lost but a lot has changed ever since. Transformation, evolution, call it what you will, but she has changed according to what she has been experiencing and her arc is for lack of a better word, amazing. It cracked me up when she experienced

empathy for the first time ever in Prospero in Hell and was puzzled by it.

And for everything that is holy in this world, I must know what the frak is up Erasmus's behind and why does he hate Miranda so much? I am not exaggerating when I say that this is possibly the mystery I want to see answered the most. I imagine the answer to that will rock our worlds, Thea.

Final Thoughts, Observations & Rating:

Thea: I loved Prospero in Hell from nail-biting beginning to its dramatic (cliffhanger!) conclusion. I can only count the days between now and the release of Prospero Regained next year. Bring it on, Ms. Lamplighter!

Ana: In spite the couple of aforementioned misgivings, I truly, deeply loved Prospero in Hell. I have high hopes for Prospero Regained and will keep my fingers crossed.

Clay Kallam says

There will be another installment in L. Jagi Lamplighter's series, the finale, and hopefully it will be more like the first volume, "Prospero Lost" than the latest one, "Prospero in Hell" (Tor, \$25.99, 347 pages). The setup is that the characters in Shakespeare's "Tempest" survive into the 21st century due to various forms of magic, and that they use magical means to control the malign forces of demons, and other supernatural nasties.

"Prospero Lost" balanced on the fine line between a willing suspension of disbelief and downright incredulity, but "Prospero in Hell" falls on the wrong side a little too often. The concluding volume will define the series, so my advice would be to wait until that one comes out before jumping in.
