



Jerome and the Seraph

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Following an unfortunate accident in the friary cemetery, Brother Jerome is pitched unexpectedly into the afterworld. When he meets up with his pet cat, Leo, he assumes that the cat, too, is dead. But Leo's real name is Quant and he's a very special cat.

With the quantum cat by his side, Jerome sets out to explore the new world he finds himself in--though it seems to be, rather, an old world when he hears Pan's ethereal music and has to step aside as a couple of centaurs gallop past. Have his years as a Christian friar been a dreadful mistake? But the cat reminds him that Christ said there were many mansions in His Father's house: the Lord is Lord of all pantheons, God of gods.

Back at the friary, the Guardian, Father Fidelis, fears that his past has finally caught up with him. Who can help him?

-- "...entertaining book that ironically connects complex topics (the afterlife, mythology, and quantum physics) into a wonderful fantasy that hooks readers from the moment Al and Jerry exchange a few words. -- The Midwest Book Review

Jerome and the Seraph Details

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Author : Robina Williams

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From Reader Review Jerome and the Seraph for online ebook

Robert Walsh says

I enjoyed the book, but I'm afraid it was filled with symbolism that I didn't truly understand. It was engaging but without any real plot that I could discern. I kept reading, hoping that I would grasp the storyline with the next page turn. To me, it ended somewhat abruptly. I think the fact that I wanted to continue reading despite the fact that I could not find the point says something about the author's ability to hook and entertain the reader. I look forward to the sequel, Angelus.

Paul says

At a rural friary in Britain, Brother Jerome slips and cracks his head open on the gravestone of Brother Aloysius. Jerome is killed instantly. When he wakes up, he is not in Heaven, but alone in a gray, featureless sort of place. The first person he meets is Brother Aloysius, who apologizes for the circumstances of Jerome's death. Jerome eventually meets up with all the dead Brothers of the friary. The "leader" or "guide" of the group is Leo, an orange tabby cat who wandered into the friary one day and made himself at home. In the other world, Leo is named Quant, short for Quantum, and can talk. Jerome realizes that Leo/Quant is not your average cat, if he can move between dimensions with no trouble at all.

Meantime, back at the friary, Brother Fidelis, the "boss" of the friary, has been spending a lot of time with a middle age woman new to the parish. When men become friars later in life, some are good at keeping their religious vows while others are not so good at it. By this time, Jerome has made a few visits back to the friary. He makes contact with one of the living friars, and is asked if he could possibly find himself inside the woman's cottage while Fidelis is there; just for a peek, of course. He does, and finds a totally innocent scene of two people at lunch. Whether or not Jerome can be seen by the living friars on his walks around the friary seems to depend on the cat, Leo/Quant. A lot of things seem to depend on that dimension-hopping cat.

This is a very "quiet" novel (set at a friary, there will not be much in the way of action). It has little bits of weirdness here and there that will keep the reader interested. This belongs in that large gray area of Pretty Good or Worth Reading.

Sheila says

Told masterfully from multiple points of view, Robina Williams' Jerome and the Seraph, first in her Quantum Cat series, is a beautifully quiet, slow tale set in the fields and forests, monasteries and village homes, and even churches of the English countryside. Since the protagonist is unexpectedly dead, it's also set somewhere else, but Jerome takes a while to work out where this "other side" is and how closely it relates to the world we all know.

Jerome hasn't "passed away." He's "passed on." The difference becomes a beautiful part of this tale where dead and living almost interact, and a small cat leads the way. Of course, this is no ordinary cat. The author's clever trail of clues leaves readers to intuit the details while the protagonist flounders. Art plays its part as

well, with a well-known painting of Saint Jerome and a lion forming a pleasing backdrop to nicely understated mystery.

Some mysteries are thoroughly and delightfully earthbound of course, and Jerome's by no means too heavenly minded to be of earthly use as he tries to find out where the leading monk has been straying to and why. These honest, human monks battle honest human failings in a very real way as they make themselves available to the townsfolk in this tale.

The story blends a pleasingly down-to-earth attitude with a distinctly otherworldly, and often surprising plot. Blending art with the everyday and mythology with faith, the author has crafted an intriguing, absorbing tale, whose gently complete but distinctly non-final ending, invites readers to look for more. I sincerely hope I'll get to read the sequel, Angelos, sometime.

Disclosure: I was made aware of a free ecopy of this novel and am delighted to offer my honest review.

Sarah Crawford says

Brother Jerome hits his head on a headstone and dies. A friar visits him briefly and then he runs into a cat named Quantum which talks to him.

No one waiting for him, although one friar visits him briefly. Brother Jerome has a hard time going from the afterlife place to the living world and back. He rather easily gets panicky doing that, though.

Then there's a chapter examining the various men at the friary and what kind of personalities and weaknesses they have, including a weakness for women.

Quant tells Jerome that he's sort of an unguided missile; his landings are not always where they are supposed to be.

Later Brother Peter is looking at headstones and Jerome appears to him and the guy who is buried in one particular grave also appears. Peter realizes Quant is a supernatural cat.

Jerome and Quant get into a major discussion about 'in my father's house there are many mansions' and its an excellent discussion, explaining how there is no one right religion.

Billions of beings could be in the spirit world in the same place but a person may be sensitized to see only some of them.

An unusual but good book.

Philip says

For much of this story - especially the beginning - I kept thinking how much this writing and story reminded me of Neil Gaiman, which is kinda weird since I've only ever read one of his books and watched a movie

based on one of his book. But that comparison stuck for me, regardless.

This is a quick story to read, but the author tries to delve into some really deep topics. Unfortunately, the way the author goes about doing this involves a lot of Jerry sitting and thinking to himself or monologuing/asking Quant questions without any response at all. Less than ideal, perhaps. Luckily, such episodes are the minority of the novel.

The majority of the story is much lighter and more fun. The premise is somewhat ridiculous, though clever in its way. The interactions between some of the characters - especially Jerry and Bernie - are quite silly, but not too much that it doesn't work. I found myself laughing a few times, though the characters at the time are being serious. In general the story is written with a light and somewhat silly tone, so such situations fit just fine with it.

There isn't too much to the story; the characters are great, though not particularly developed. Jerry has a tendency to talk too much and become annoying. Ignatius is fantastic; I want to be him. Quant is super cool, of course, and always made me want to cuddle with a cat.

The ending was abrupt without really ending much of anything. Then again, there's wasn't a particularly strong conflict of any sort that needed to be resolved. The plot was more 'Jerry died, let's see what happens' then any particular drama that needs a solution. Still, it set up for a sequel well. Which I'll likely get.

I guess that's about it. A quick, easy story; fun characters; an interesting premise in a tone that makes it almost silly, yet broaching deeper topics; and an awesome cat.

The worst thing about the book, in my opinion, was that at the end, the author had an appendix of notes to explain all the allusions used. Which seems stupid, as if the author is expecting the readers to be too dumb to understand the references/be able to look them up for themselves. It just seemed cheap, like explaining a joke.

Juliana Rew says

I became acquainted with author Robina Williams, when she wrote a story for the Third Flatiron Anthology, "Over the Brink: Tales of Environmental Disaster." Her excellent short story, "Essence of Bat," was a suspenseful horror tale about how the angry king of the bats, Camatoz, awakens to punish the humans who are killing his bats.

Robina has also written a series of novels called "Quantum Cat," with "Jerome and the Seraph" as the initial entry. The basic premise is the fascinating paradox of Schrodinger's Cat, the quantum physics thought-experiment in which it seems possible for the cat to be both dead and not-dead.

We meet Brother Jerome, a monk who has just died, and found that he is still conscious yet not a ghost. Much to his shock, Quant, the pet cat in the friary, talks to him. Quant explains that Jerome can go anywhere he wants merely by shifting some molecules around, and that he can see

events past and present and people living and dead. Quite a lot to take in when the afterlife isn't what you expect.

Robina deftly sets the scene, introducing several of Jerome's fellow monks, who begin to glimpse their deceased fellow and the supernatural nature of the cat they've always assumed was a simple tabby. By chapter 6, I felt I was in the hands of a masterful author. Everyday life in the friary is quiet and casual, with conversation in the kitchen over coffee and scones. At first no one wants to talk about what they've seen, until it just becomes impossible to ignore.

Central to the novel is a discussion of faith and religions, which turn out to co-exist simultaneously within the framework of time and space. The cat Quant leads Brother Jerome on a journey in which he meets ancient mythological Greek characters as well as the Hound of Heaven. The latter creature was the creation of Christian poet Francis Thompson, who used the metaphor to show how souls all try to flee, but the hound patiently pursues them to bring them to God.

The first book ends on a note of suspense, making me eager to read the next in the series to see how it all turns out.

Mary says

A very light read in a short book. It follows the after-life of Jerome and the parish he was from. Jerome learns more about his beliefs in the after-life than he did as a priest. He also learns that the after-life isn't what he expected and there's more going on around home than he thought.

My only disappointment was the ending. It explains some of what was happening, but didn't resolve it. Likely that's what the author intended, making you think about what you/Jerome learned in the story. I was just waiting for more.

Chris says

Interesting idea, but writing could be a little better.

Linda says

It was a fun read with some interesting philosophy. Plus, I love science, and a cat named Quantum who seems dead and alive at the same time - how could I resist?
