



Fool

Christopher Moore

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"Hilarious, always inventive, this is a book for all, especially uptight English teachers, bardolaters, and ministerial students."

--*Dallas Morning News*

Fool--the bawdy and outrageous *New York Times* bestseller from the unstoppable Christopher Moore--is a hilarious new take on William Shakespeare's *King Lear*...as seen through the eyes of the foolish liege's clownish jester, Pocket. A rousing tale of "gratuitous shagging, murder, spanking, maiming, treason, and heretofore unexplored heights of vulgarity and profanity," *Fool* joins Moore's own *Lamb*, *Fluke*, *The Stupidest Angel*, and *You Suck!* as modern masterworks of satiric wit and sublimely twisted genius, prompting Carl Hiassen to declare Christopher Moore "a very sick man, in the very best sense of the word."

Fool Details

Date : Published February 10th 2009 by HarperCollins William Morrow

ISBN : 9780060590314

Author : Christopher Moore

Format : Hardcover 311 pages

Genre : Humor, Fiction, Fantasy, Comedy, Historical, Historical Fiction

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From Reader Review Fool for online ebook

Alex says

Hilarious! ...if you're really into gay jokes. If you're not a frat boy, on the other hand, this really has nothing for you.

The idea is an exploration of King Lear through the eyes of the Fool, imagining him as the hero of the story. That's a perfectly good idea, but Moore does a dreadful job. Jane Smiley's *Thousand Acres* is a smart, insightful retelling of Lear from the point of view of his daughters; Fool is a bullshit *Dungeons & Dragons*-y retelling where the Fool comes with awesome throwing daggers and dick jokes.

Listen, if you think it would be funny if someone announced that they'd said "Merci" in "perfect fucking French," then you will laugh like 30 times while reading this book, because boy does he make that joke a lot. And again, if you think jokes about buggery and poofers are funny, then this is the book for you. But - look, I don't like to get all classier-than-thou with books. It makes me feel like an asshole. But this is low-class shit, man. It's sophomoric. It's awful.

Michael says

Christopher Moore's re-telling of Shakespeare's tragedy of King Lear has great comic potential. It's just too bad that this novel doesn't come close to its potential.

Told from the point of view of Lear's court jester, there are some genuinely amusing moments in this book. However, as I read the book, I kept thinking this was like a Saturday Night Live skit that had been stretched beyond its initial humorous value and just kept going and going and going.

Vivian says

Shakespearean wankfest making a mockery of King Lear in the most entertaining and loving way. Bonk...BONK.

Perfect black comedy that made me laugh out loud. Pocket is my hero.

"I need to be spanked."

"A constant, I'd agree, lady, but again we're declaring the sky blue, aren't we?"

"I want to be spanked."

Kelly (and the Book Boar) says

Find all of my reviews at: <http://52bookminimum.blogspot.com/>

“We are all Fate’s bastards.”

In what may be the longest synopsis in the history of the universe, Moore does a great job explaining that his book is actually a *retelling* of *King Lear*. The differences in the modern version? *Fool* is told from Pocket the Fool’s perspective and the tale is presented as a comedy rather than a tragedy. Things that remain the same? The cast of characters (Lear and his three daughters with a bevy of supporting cast members along for the ride) as well the distribution of Lear’s wealth to the daughters . . .

Soon followed by the realization that said division was premature as well as **seriously** stupid. Like *Lear*, *Fool* is a story filled with “**heinous fuckery most foul**” and there is a raven and a ghost because “**there’s always a bloody ghost**” and “**there’s always a bloody raven.**”

Basically, if something like this . . .

or characters like this . . .

are your idea of a good time, *Fool* is a story not to be missed.

So there you have it. Now for a public service announcement . . .

Here ye here ye here ye. All ye members of thy generation oft known as butthurt. Refrain from reading the works of one Christopher Moore as he is sure to offend and doth giveth zeros of the shits about said offenses. As Mr. Moore would sayeth to thee . . .

“It’s a jest, you wanker. Suspend fucking disbelief for a bit, would you?”

This selection was chosen as part of the library’s Winter Reading Challenge. Many thanks to the book fairy who provided me a copy since the “you are next in line for this title” library list apparently meant in line FOR ETERNITY. Only THREE more books and the limited edition beer mug will be MIIIIIIIIINE!

Leland says

OK so, I don't wright many reviews, but I had to for this one because it is one of the funniest books I have ever read. Even if you hate Shakespeare or can't stand the sound of iambic pentameter, this book will make you laugh. If it doesn't, well then at least you know that you don't have a good sense of humor... and that's a good thing to know.

Amanda says

It's really hard to describe a Christopher Moore book to anyone who has never read one. Or to anyone without a sense of humor. Or to a Republican. Mainly because when Moore says that "This is a bawdy tale," he certainly isn't lying. Couple that with his completely absurd sense of humor and you're guaranteed a read that will certainly never bore. This is delightfully raunchy stuff; gleefully vulgar; immensely readable. However, there's more to a Moore novel than just the humor. Moore's take on Shakespeare and King Lear pays homage to the Bard's own randy sense of comedy as he retells the tragedy through the eyes of Pocket, fool to King Lear, shagger of his daughters, and instigator of wars. This may be my favorite Moore so far.

Jeffrey Keeten says

Okay I laughed out loud numerous times reading this book. Bawdy, witty, a mishmash of various Shakespearean plays. Packet, the fool, is the main character and he rains barbed insults down on everybody from King Lear to the laundress (with spectacular breasts). This dangerous need to express himself leads to the daily threat, sometimes several times a day, of being hung (once even threatened with being hung twice) or run through with something sharp and deadly. I used this book as my "just before bed" reading. There is nothing like a shameful chuckle at the end of the day to cast aside the cares of the world. I read a good bit of the book to my wife. The need to share the best parts with someone is always the sign of a good book and in this case a very fun book.

Brian says

"Life is loneliness, broken only by the gods taunting us with friendship and the odd bonk."

Not since Shakespeare has Shakespeare been this clever. "Fool" is a retelling of Shakespeare's "King Lear" from the Fool's perspective. The fool in Shakespeare's text is an integral supporting character who utters most of the play's philosophical secrets. Moore picks up on that and expands it into the plot for this novel. Although I have heard many people say (including Mr. Moore) that you don't need to be familiar with "King Lear" in order to appreciate this book, I am not sure I agree. The basis of the plot is that all of the intrigues that one reads and sees in the original play are actually the machinations of the fool, named Pocket in Moore's version, who is manipulating almost all of the novel's actions. This is a clever device, and well woven into the original story from the play. It is appreciated on a whole other level if one can actually recognize what Moore is doing. In order to get this, one must know Shakespeare's "King Lear".

One of the strengths and weakness of this text is its humor. It is clever, and mindbogglingly vulgar at times. That is a blessing and a curse. Too much of a good thing becomes an irritation, and after a while it takes away from the story and the characters themselves, turning them into caricatures. A little more restraint on Moore's part with the bawdy humor would have gone a long way.

One of the strengths of this text is the creation of Pocket. His is a wonderful voice to guide the reader and through his eyes most of the other characters come across as believable, despite some of their more outrageous characteristics. No easy feat, kudos to Moore.

This comic novel has some touching moments, and if you are familiar with British humor, you will enjoy the numerous nods Mr. Moore makes to a style of humor that he freely admits he loves. Also fun for those who are familiar with the Bard are the references to at least a dozen of his other works strewn throughout the text. The novel mimics and celebrates the anachronisms to be found in Shakespeare and also very cleverly utilizes the pagan and Christina references that are both in the original "King Lear"

I enjoyed this novel, but the ending is a letdown. Rather anti-climactic after the buildup that precedes it. Still, it is better than many other reading choices, and if it leads you to Shakespeare, then even better.

Mara says

I'm gonna go ahead and co-opt a term Dan used in his review of this bawdy book, and call it simply *Moore-gasmic*.

Fuckstockings! is just one of the many expletives and/or insults that spew forth from the mouth of King Lear's fool, Pocket, that I'm hoping to sneak into my everyday vocabulary. ***Twatgoblin*** and ***chunder-monkey*** (used to refer to the King's bulimic royal taster) will definitely be making appearances as well. I'm not sure how much use I'll have for ***boffnacity***, but I'll give you Pocket's helpful footnote just in case.

Boffnacity—an expression of shagnatiousness, fit. From the Latin boffusnatiōs.

Between Pocket's repertoire for off-color songs (including the "solemn ballad, *Dragon Spooge Befouled My Bonny Bonny Lass*" and the upbeat shanty, "Alehouse Lilly - She'll Bonk You Silly") and his use of his puppet (and sometimes weapon), Jones, I couldn't help but be reminded of Gob and Franklin (and, obviously, Buster's Franklin highjacking as well).

Christopher Moore's humor is of a specific breed that can't quite be described, but that leaves me *literally* (I'm using the term correctly) LOLing. I didn't enjoy this one quite so much as I did ***Lamb: The Gospel According to Biff, Christ's Childhood Pal*** (one of my favorite books of all time), but that's likely due to my unfamiliarity with *King Lear*.

Chloe says

It is little secret that I think that Christopher Moore is one of the funniest writers currently putting ink to page. Whether he's writing about playing stone the adulteress with Jesus, talking fruit bats or a schizophrenic former B-movie star who still believes that she's a warrior babe of the outlands, Moore almost never fails to leave you panting on the floor with tears in your eyes and lungs aching for air. Needless to say, I was all up

ons *Fool* when I first heard of it.

A humorous take on Shakespeare's *King Lear* told from the perspective of the royal jester, a fool named Pocket. Moore gets to wield his wit against such worthy targets as the British, the French, Royals, Shakespeare, redheads, scullery maids, British cuisine, witches, the hopelessly mad and, of course, the epically tragic Lear himself. Hell, one could roast Lear for hours and still have enough material left over for a follow-up. He's always been my least favorite of Shakespeare's protagonists and I loved reading Moore take him down a notch or two.

If anything though, the book hewed too closely to the source material which only rarely allowed Moore to let loose with his trademark hilarity. The tongue-in-cheek takes on death and mortality that made *A Dirty Job* such a great read are missing here. Pocket tries to lighten the mood but when you are competing against the heinous fuckery of Lear's daughters you can't help but get dragged into dark waters. Still, it's a deliciously fun read that I'm sure I'll return to. Those looking to read Moore for the first time would be better off with *Lamb* or *A Dirty Job*.

Jim says

This was great even though it's been too long since I read *King Lear* & only have the vaguest recollections of the original. It didn't matter. Actually, it might have been a plus since I had no real expectations of where Moore was going with this. Sometimes I wondered if he knew, but it turned out he did & he eventually got there, not without a lot of shagging, death, & horribly funny situations, though.

There was horror, but there was more fun & sex and a lot of funny sex. I can still see Pocket embracing the wall when the Bishop walked in. It's a good thing I was alone while I listened to this as I'm sure I was cackling out loud like a demented crone. They were in the story, too. Three of them, first met in Birnam Wood.

Oh, you thought this was just a retelling of *King Lear*? No, it's mostly that, sort of, but Moore tossed in whatever seemed to work at the time, including the fucking French. Nothing is said in French or about the French, it's always the 'fucking French'. Does that offend you? Do poofters, carpet munchers, twats, discount Popes, manly nuns, & spunk monkeys? If so, don't read this. Even the place names are hilarious, such as Dog Snogging. As one of my friends wrote in his review, "...it's mind bogglingly vulgar at times." Quite often, in fact.

This was REALLY good as an audio book narrated by Euan Morton. His voices, tones, & accents were superb & added a lot to the story. Shakespeare's barbs, jests, & curses rolled trippingly off his tongue no matter which character delivered them, but The Fool was always the best. While there were a lot of great characters, he was fantastic.

My edition had an excellent afterword by the author. I pity him for his research, but thank him very much for the final project. Highly recommended. While I've enjoyed a couple of other books by him, none of the struck me quite so well or repeatedly in the funny bone.

Matthew says

Moore's retelling of King Lear from the viewpoint of the Fool. Full of crass, tongue-in-check innuendo and clever wordplay - just like the real Shakespeare!

I didn't enjoy this one quite as much as The Serpent of Venice. That might be because I read Fool first and I was used to the writing by the time I got to Serpent.

If you enjoy Shakespeare, satire, and/or crass humor - don't miss this one!

Lyn says

“This was a bawdy tale!”

Thus begins Fool by Christopher Moore, a parody of King Lear by William Shakespeare but also really a comic tribute to all of The Bard's work. Besides Lear, I recognized several other direct or indirect references and Moore himself, in an epilogical aside said he had blended over a dozen plays into the narrative.

Unique amongst Moore's work, it does not operate in his connected universe of Hawaii, Pine Cove and San Francisco (as of the publication date). Irreverent, profane and vulgar, it is the kind of fun Moore fans have come to expect.

Though not a member of his larger pantheon of demons, vampires and sea monsters, Moore's loving attack on Stratford on Avon is still a must read for his fans and maybe even Shakespeare fans who are none too uptight and with a sense of humor.

Dan Schwent says

Nothing like a good Moore-gasm to end the evening.

Fool is a comic retelling of King Lear from the fool's point of view. Pocket, the fool, is lecherous, duplicitous, and all round magnificent. He engineers the downfall of Lear's kingdom by pitting the king's daughters against each other, along with other nobles and their bastards.

There are references to Shakespeare, as well as a vanished race called the Mericans, ruled by the mad King George. For me, the biggest laughs came from the faux English place names, like Dog Snogging. There were a few laugh out loud moments, which was embarrassing for me since I was allegedly working at the time I was reading it. "Sounds like a moose trying to shit a family of hedgehogs." See? Hard not to laugh at that, isn't it?

I'd rate fool in between Fluke and A Dirty Job in terms of hilarity, with the caveat that you'll probably enjoy it more if you're familiar with Shakespeare's plays.

Lance Greenfield says

Yet another outrageously hilarious tome from the keyboard of Christopher Moore!

I know for a fact that not all of my friends and family will like *Fool*, but many will love it as much as I did, and many will be rolling around laughing, in fits of laughter, as I was.

The jester of the court of King Lear, known as Pocket, proceeds to orchestrate the history of England, Great Britain and most of Western Europe. There is very little authenticity, quite deliberately, and absolutely no respect for either royalty or aristocracy.

I particularly liked the pseudo glossary, which you really must refer to as you hit the reference marks on your journey through the book. Examples include:

Tosser - one who tosses, a wanker.

The dog's bollocks! - Excellent! The bee's knees! The cat's pj's. Literally, the dog's balls, which doesn't seem to be a great thing, yet, there you are.

Now, this truly is authentic English usage!

Balls up - Slang, to ruin, to fuck up, also "bollocks up" and "cock up."

I was actually surprised that Moore didn't use this opportunity to transfer the legendary cock up of King Alfred's burning of the cakes to King Lear!

The author's notes at the end should not be over-skipped. They are well worth reading. Christopher Moore must be delighted that the London 2012 Olympics were centred on Stratford. The only pity is that the IOC omitted the one sport that Moore recommended. You'll see what I mean!

My final thought on *Fool* is that I couldn't help noticing a similarity between the opening lines of this book and those of *Puckoon*. Here we have "*Tosser!*" said the Raven, there we have "*Caw*" said the crow. Both books made me laugh in equal measure.

PS. If historical inaccuracies irritate you, you'll be scratching like you've got fleas!
