



The Land of the Silver Apples

Nancy Farmer

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THE CHILDREN FROM *THE SEA OF TROLLS* BRAVE THEIR WORST NIGHTMARES -- UNDERGROUND.

Jack is amazed to have caused an earthquake. He is thirteen, after all, and only a bard-in-training. But his sister, Lucy, has been stolen by the Lady of the Lake; stolen a second time in her young life, as he learns to his terror. Caught between belief in the old gods and Christianity (790 AD, Britain), Jack calls upon his ash wood staff to subdue a passel of unruly monks, and, for his daring, ends up in a knucker hole. It is unforgettable -- for the boy and for readers -- as are the magical reappearance of the berserker Thorgil from a burial by moss; new characters Pega, a slave girl from Jack's village, and the eager-to-marry-her Bugaboo (a hobgoblin king); kelpies; yarthkins; and elves (not the enchanted sprites one would expect but the fallen angels of legend). Rarely does a sequel enlarge so brilliantly the world of the first story. Look for the conclusion in *The Islands of the Blessed* in 2009.

The Land of the Silver Apples Details

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Author : Nancy Farmer

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From Reader Review The Land of the Silver Apples for online ebook

Carrie Slager says

First off, let me say that the 'AD 790, Britain' part of this blurb is complete nonsense. If you'll recall, the first book apparently takes place in 793 AD. So either the blurb writer is confused about the timeline or does not know that AD goes forward while BC goes backward. If you're really picky, let's just say that this book takes place 3 years later, in 796 AD.

I love this book because we finally learn why Lucy is such a brat. That may seem like a lame reason to like a book, but I really, truly hated her in the first book and she's even more obnoxious in this book. But Nancy Farmer has an excellent reason for adding what seemed like the token cute character at first and a seemingly unimportant event sets off a series of events in motion that will change Jack's future forever.

Of course old favourite characters like the Bard, Thorgil and Lucy reappear, but we're introduced to many new ones: the slave girl Pega; Brutus, a descendant of Lancelot himself; the Bugaboo, king of the hobgoblins; Ethne, a Christian half-elf and many others. My personal favourite characters include the charming and unpredictable Brutus, the Bugaboo and the Nemesis, who is a hobgoblin whose duty is to keep the Bugaboo from getting an inflated head. Now if only all leaders had someone like the Nemesis...

With amazing characters, a fast-paced plot and extraordinary world-building, The Land of the Silver Apples is a fitting sequel to The Sea of Trolls. readers will lose themselves in Nancy Farmer's fascinating world where the old religion collides with the new rising religion, Christianity. I can't think of an author who puts a better spin on old fantasy clichés than Nancy Farmer while still staying true to the time period.

I give this book 5/5 stars.

Lillian says

Just finished the book and can't wait to go and buy the 3rd book. It got my attention with every page, though not as much as the sea of trolls. The original characters (Jack, Thorgil, and Lucy) didn't develop as well as I hoped, but the new characters made up for it. My favorite parts of the story was when they were with the hobgoblins, they made the story much more interesting.

Amanda says

I was very excited when I saw this on the bookstore shelves, because I really enjoyed the first one, and I'm a huge admirer of Nancy Farmer in general.

I enjoyed the adventure, and certainly the kids who liked Sea of Trolls will love this one, too. However, I was disappointed in the mythology and folklore allusions in this one. Perhaps it's just that the world of hobgoblins and elves is more well-trodden than the realms of Nordic mythology that Farmer introduced us to in the first book. The story is good, even great (and addresses some of my earlier issues with the character of

Lucy), but the novel lacks the depth and innovation of Sea of Trolls.

All of that being said, I will be eager to see what happens to Pega and Thorgil next, which, I now see from the flap copy, we will learn be able from The Islands of the Blessed in 2009. Why does it seem so arrogant and pushy to have the publication date for the final book so soon? It feels like they're flaunting it in my face, "Ha, ha, the final book is done, but we're going to make you wait two years before we let you see it!"

Sheesh. Think of the effect on a fifth grader. Are they still going to be interested when they're in the seventh grade?

Jacob says

Love how it just threw me into a land where just about anything could happen. Had a lot of suspense, and got me wanting more every time I set down the book! One of my favorite books because of the historical ties.

Sanja_Sanjalica says

An excellent sequel to the first book, the characters are still finding themselves and their place in the world. Love the hobgoblins and the portrait of Elfland. The characters we got to know in the first book are learning and developing, which is always great, as well as the mythology woven into the book. Can't wait to read the next one!

Trini says

I was *so excited* to read this book. I LOVED The Sea of Trolls. It was a five star for me and I enjoyed it so much.

But a mere 50 pages into this book, I could tell something was wrong. *Something* was up. And here arose my first, and huge, issue about this book that quickly changed the rating from a "probably 5 stars" to a "definitely 4 stars or lower".

The characters were so very different. And in a bad way. You suddenly get thrust into the characters and they are so terribly, terribly different. It seemed like only their names and their experiences were similar with their Sea of Trolls personality.

I didn't find myself enjoying the book very much. Sometimes, I had to force myself to pick up the book, and then I would stop 20 minutes later because I couldn't take it anymore. I just...I don't know. I couldn't get hooked into this book.

Another issue.

It says that Jack is 13. He was around 12 when The Sea of Trolls was finished. Which means...an entire YEAR passed after the events of The Sea of Trolls, which means another year of training with the Bard. What magic did Jack learn? Close to none, because when he names off all the magic he knows throughout

the book, it's magic that we've seen him do in Sea of Trolls.

Then, of course, Pega was annoying at some points and lovable at the others. Sometimes she would just start bawling for no apparent reason, when she says that "she's been through worse before", and it's so, so stupid.

The appearance of Thorgil felt rushed (and this is not a spoiler, because it states so in the description that Thorgil comes back). It felt rushed and it never got very explained much. We don't feel much coming from Jack at all, either, during this moment.

Then also, several plot twists, many important, are introduced throughout the book, but Jack doesn't seem to elaborate on these very much, nor does he care to talk about them much at all. Only a few paragraphs are spared on them, and nothing more.

I understand it can be hard to devote just the right amount of time and words to plot twists. It might seem too short, or too long, whatever amount of time you spent into making the characters realize the plot twist. But all you need is all of the characters realizing the plot twist, them expressing a few thoughts, and you're done. Mention the plot twist in passing and everything, to make it seem official! Whatever.

Everything in this book felt rushed. The beginning came swiftly, and I couldn't find myself attached to any character. They all felt like background characters compared to Jack, who starts doing literally everything and knows everything, I guess. I really liked Thorgil once more and also I found myself caring for Father Severus just a tad (also, Severus? Snape? Are you there?). But really, there was nothing else.

As for the writing, it was fine. It flowed well enough and I could deal with that.

I honestly couldn't figure out the point of this book. Other than to provide more worldbuilding, which we HONESTLY didn't really need in the first place, there wasn't anything. The first book did the worldbuilding fine and could have left the world at that. But oh no, Nancy Farmer can't have it that way. She needs to have it explained...thoroughly...with loads of creatures...

We could have just left the worldbuilding off with "there are the Saxons, then the berserkers from the North, who are Northmen, and there are also trolls from a long way away, in the world of Jotunheim. Also, there's this Great Tree, Yggdrasil, which is basically Life, and then there are also multiple heavens that you go to, depending on your religion."

I know that this is based off of Norse mythology, but if we were really interested in Norse mythology, we could have snagged a nonfiction book from the library to learn more about it, if we were that intrigued.

But please.

I did enjoy this book a little bit, and some parts were fun. But I also found all of the characters extremely stupid, not knowing anything, until BAM! They seem to know EVERYTHING, at just the RIGHT TIMES!

All in all, here's how I'll sum this book up:

Jack, aka the classic Stupid-But-Actually-Intelligent Protagonist, is stupid but seems to do everything and know everything. Thorgil, aka Subtly Main Character #1, whines about people and things happening to her, but suddenly Jack tells her something great and she is ELATED! Pega, aka Subtly Main Character #2, cries terribly but then is strong-headed in more serious situations! The Bugaboo and the Nemesis, Background But

Recurring Characters #1 and #2, are only there for comic relief and to save the main characters when they are always in deadly situations! Father Severus, Background But Recurring Character #3, is there to merely provide more information about Christianity! Ethne, Background But Recurring Character #4, the comic relief elf that apparently loves suffering! And there is also Brutus, Background But Recurring Character #5, the annoying slave whose "special powers" are never actually revealed!

Then we have the Bard, the classic Mentor Who Does Nothing During the Quest, who is actually tolerable but hardly appears in the book at all!

And let's not even talk about Lucy, the classic Annoying Sibling, but taken a STEP FURTHER! It appears in the description that she would again be a damsel in distress, but nah, she's just an annoying, heartless, selfish brat.

This book should be renamed to: What Was The Purpose Of This Thing Again? More Worldbuilding? I Guess So!

(NOTE: I actually did like this book, and I will be checking out the third book just to round this trilogy off, but wow did I have a lot of issues.)

My review of *The Sea of Trolls*

Danielle says

Ooh, I wanted to *love* this book as much as I loved Sea of Trolls. But as happy as I was to see Jack, Thorgil, and the Bard again, I just wasn't as thrilled with this one as I was with its predecessor. The characters were great, especially the new monks and the hobgoblins, but the story meandered entirely too much and I often got confused as to how things related to each other. But still, a fun read and I liked it. I will definitely read the next one...

Kurtis says

I read the first book in this series way back in about 6th grade. Back then, I thought that it was a great book. Now, all that I remembered about it is that the main character learned some magic. I usually enjoy those kinds of books, so I thought I would read the second book. What a bad decision! It dragged on and on and I just kept hoping something more interesting might happen. At one point, there's an earthquake, and the author somehow managed to make that part boring! There was no climax in the whole entire book, either. No exciting parts, no energy. You could see what was going to happen from miles away, and when it did happen, it was even worse than I imagined it to be. I wanted to put the book down after the first 50 pages, but I didn't want to just in case it improved and had a good ending. Now, I've completed the whole thing and I can take the sequel off my "to read" bookshelf.

?Meera? says

Not *quite* as good as the previous. I found myself longing for the adventures in the Sea of Trolls, but the

same enchantment just wasn't here. I felt like skimming through it really often. But...because it still was enchanting...Five stars.

Joanna Brauckmann says

A great sequel to the Sea of Trolls! The size might intimidate some kids, but the adventures that Jack has as a bard-in-training makes it hard to put down and of course they'll sympathize with Jack as he struggles with envy, self-control, anger, and disappointment. Tolkien is the only other author I know who took such pains to explain mystical creatures and legends, but at such a level with density of information that children could never follow. Farmer does an excellent job of presenting different creatures of middle earth and elf land to medieval England. I highly recommend this book!

Kiwi Begs2Differ \ says

[(a puzzling mix of fairy tale creatures: hobgoblins, elves, kelpies, mermaids, nymphs, knuckers, The Lady of the lake, Lancelot, The man in t

Alex says

i really enjoy nancy farmer, as she does a fantastic job of weaving tales and making them feel very accessible to all readers (The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm is just brilliant). The Land of the Silver Apples is the second book involving the children from The Sea of Trolls, and Jack journeys to the Fairie World to rescue his sister, picking up strange friends and having adventures along the way. Thorgil, the daughter of a berserker, provides great comic relief. Although I was amused, I feel overall the book was a little too long and that some of the stops along the journey did not do much except add to the total number of pages.

Christina says

I didn't like this one quite as much as the first one, The Sea of Trolls, because it didn't seem to be as original as that one (I'd never read anything about Norse berserkers before!) but it was still fun. Jack is back home in Saxon England, but his sister is not behaving nicely at all, she's a very spoiled brat, and so their father takes them to the local monastery to have her exorcised, fearing that she's possessed. Well, it turns out she's a changeling--Jack's real sister was kidnapped while a baby and this elf child put in her place! So off Jack goes to the underground Elfland to try to find his sister and bring her back, braving magical mushrooms and the sparkling illusions of the elves. His traveling companions are the freed slave Pega and the Roman slave Brutus--who is more than he seems. And the Viking warrior girl Thorgil soon shows up, too. Plus there are some fun "pookas" or hobgoblins (they go by many names), Bugaboo and his Nemesis, who are a hoot. Kind of a comedy duo of short proportions. They were the best thing about the book. Beware, it's book two of a trilogy and has a lame ending, in my opinion.

Chris says

Low three, honestly. Didn't grab me like the first book and I struggled to finish. The narration is quite good though.

There's lots of religious backgrounds and mythologies or whatever mixed into this. Sort of a "there are many ways to heaven" deal, so maybe not for kids (or adults) who are keen on sticking to nothing at all or their own kind.

I got lost in the names and places and events a bit. It didn't help that I took one or two big breaks in my listening, but still.

The writing was fine. I didn't get the same vibe of pithy wisdom as from the first book, but it had moments. Holy cow my neighbors are full on smoking something fierce right now and probably super high. Anyway, it was fun to have Thorgill appear again, and Pegga was a neat character. I kept thinking Brutus would grow in personality and character but he never did, I thought.

I probably won't rush into the final book of the trilogy. I forget if I've bought it already. If not, I may never. That is, even if I can get it from the library I may not. I may just move on.

Pam ?Because Someone Must Be a Thorn? Tee says

I liked this one quite a bit better than "Sea of Trolls".

Of course you don't know but I thought the first book in this series was one that certainly some people would thoroughly enjoy while others, like myself, would find it 'meh'. The problems had nothing to do with writing so much as the plotting and lack of satisfactory character development in the main character Jack. (The secondary characters were much more interesting.)

In this second volume, we get to see Jack develop a bit, plus there are a pair of very nice plot twists involving his family. Overall though I was astonished to find that I had the same darn reaction to this book as the first. About a 75 pages from the end, the reader-part of my brain felt like the book should end, and yet it didn't. It made everything that came afterwards almost annoying and like a protracted dénouement that isn't all that cathartic. I don't know that I've ever experienced anything like this before. Quite puzzling.

Sooo, if you also thought the first book was mediocre, know that this reader liked this one better.

Pam T
mom/blogger
booksforkids-reviews
