



The Paths of the Perambulator

Alan Dean Foster

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There goes the neighborhood! Nobody wants to be around when a freak of supernature called a Perambulator enters the world, bringing with it some really weird shifts in the fabric of existence...like suddenly turning Jon-Tom into a giant blue crab, or Mudge the Otter into a nasty disease... But the mad Perambulator is there to stay, unless the wizard Clothahump can muster all his power and boot it into the next dimension. So, despite the bumbling of Sorbl the drunken owl and the fitful runes of a koala amateur wizard, Jon-Tom, Mudge, and Clothahump make their way ever deeper into the realms where Chaos perambulates...to find a deadly foe that only the combined forces of illogic can hope to defeat....

The Paths of the Perambulator Details

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Author : Alan Dean Foster

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From Reader Review The Paths of the Perambulator for online ebook

Nai Wang says

Graphic Audio makes these books a hoot to read! Hoot Hoot Hoot!

David Sarkies says

Off to fight a baby carriage

4 February 2012

It appears from looking at some of the reviews that the concept of anthropomorphic animals wearing clothes is something more for children and teenagers as opposed to adults, however I would hardly call the Spellsinger series a children's book. It is probably more suited to the young adult market, but then by the time one gets to being a young adul, the whole concept of talking animals simply seems to be a little childish, despite Foster attempting to make some of them (like Mudge) crewed and sex mad.

It seems that Foster's imagination was declining a bit in these later books, particularly since all of the book's titles have been alliterative (that is using the same letter to start each of the main words – I believe that is what alliteration is, but please correct me if I am wrong). This is not really all that surprising since most of Foster's works tends to be the novelisation of movies. I'm not a big fan of novelisations since if a movie is made from a book, the adaptation generally does not adequately bring out the best of the book, whereas I struggle to understand how novelising a movie can really produce a decent work of literature.

As for the idea of talking animals, I am sort of on a borderline with that idea. When I consider C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia, which included talking animals, I find that the strength of Lewis' story telling easily outweighs the use of such animals. There is a similar idea with Alice in Wonderland (not that I have actually read the book so I cannot say whether this is the same thing). However Narnia is clearly a children's book, and both Narnia and Alice in Wonderland are allegories. This is the form that most fantasy novels would take up to Lord of the Rings (though one can also argue that Tolkien is writing allegorically as well, exploring the conflict between the idyllic and the industrial, despite the fact that he vehemently denied it).

Some have said that Foster has returned to a good novel in this one, but it is something that I can't really say too much since it has been a while since I read these books (and the fact that I am writing about them now is evidence that it is unlikely that I will read them again). Apparently an extra-dimensional being, known as the Perambulator, has appeared and is causing havoc and turning the world into a chaotic mess, so Jon-Tom, Mudge, and Clothahump go and attempt to kick it off into another dimension. The funny thing is that a perambulator is actually the proper name for a pram, the type used to push babies around.

Dave Peticolas says

This is the only book I know of, fantasy or otherwise, with a title containing the word "Perambulator". FYI.

Ensiform says

A huge improvement over the last one; and maybe I expected too much from a fantasy series about magic anthropomorphic animals. The only sketchy parts for this one were two places where the humor bits were predictable. As for the rest, the book was imaginative, funny and extremely entertaining. (I would like just a little more realism in the characters' actions, more motivations than humor... but that's a minor complaint.)

Jeremy Michael Gallen says

In the fifth entry of Alan Dean Foster's Spellsinger saga, a mysterious creature known as the Perambulator, which accomplishes things such as temporarily morphing characters, protagonist Jon-Tom himself briefly becoming a blue crab, enters the world, with the spellsinger and his friends such as the lutrine Mudge, turtle sage Clothahump, and the owl drunkard Sorbl, going on another journey to resolve the issues brought to their land, with a new companion, the koala wizard Colin, joining the gang on the way. The story somewhat feels like it cuts off abruptly at the end, but this is otherwise an enjoyable read for those who enjoy more adult animal stories.

Brian says

8/11/2018 - 4/10

Another adventure romp with a sloppy, scattershot, non-cohesive plot that only consists of dealing with perambulation after perambulation. The romance is very juvenile.

Some passages I liked:

Location: 237

“Anyone is capable of anything,” Clothahump informed him sternly. “There is nothing that can be imagined that cannot be done given enough time, devotion, intelligence, and blind luck.”

Location: 969

I never drink to excess, mate. Me body don't know the meani' of the word. I just drink till I'm full. Then I piss it out and start over. So I never reach excess, wot?

Location: 2,537

This was a different kind of magic, ancient and simple, as alien to Jon-Tom as Republican economic policy.

John says

1986 grade C+

2006 grade C-

Series book SS5

Chris King says

I read this as a teenager.

Back then I read sci-fi and fantasy almost exclusively, and this author (ADF) was one of my favorites; in particular, his Spellsinger series.

This is the first book in the series that I read, after my cousin Michael recommended it to me. I liked it so much at the time that I read the whole series.

Don't know if I would like this book the same if I re-read it as an adult, but in my memory it was an entertaining read.

Serena says

I enjoyed the characters, and their world and hope I get the chance to read the story again and/or to read more within the series.

My Rating System:

* couldn't finish, ** wouldn't recommend, *** would recommend, **** would read again, ***** have read again.

Robert Whisner says

This was a great series. I'm considering re-reading it now. I'm looking for images of Clothahump to use on a pathtag, perhaps. I'm a Whizard from Turtle Creek, so it fits.

Rob says

Re-reading this one. Always liked Alan Dean Foster.

Max says

As entertaining as the rest of the series. The concept of the perambulator is fairly creative. The cover is quite different from the others, but to me it feels like it's perhaps a more accurate depiction of the tone of the novel than the more realistic covers on the previous and subsequent volumes.

Todd Mulholland says

The same-ness starts getting to you in binge reading.

This is the fifth book of the Spellsinger series. However, there ends up (other than the first) being a level of same-ness to the stories. A problem appears. Jon-Tom has to go take care of it. Mudge doesn't want to go (Although I'll note he does want to go this time, after deciding that everywhere else is too dangerous). They take a long journey. Jon-Tom succeeds in getting them past the problem, except for one time when Mudge has to save them. They get to the problem, and things go badly, until Jon-Tom manages to defeat/solve the problem. There is a hint that more adventures continue. When the next book starts, those adventures haven't appeared, but details from the previous story have been dropped.

This book: Problem = magical force of the universe is trapped, making widespread changes to reality.

Problem Mudge has to solve = Cage of insults

Dropped threads into the next novel = Colin (and technically Dormas, but that one at least makes sense.) I *am* glad to see that the Jon-Tom / Talea relationship didn't suddenly reset / disappear into the next novel, like it did between 2 & 3.

Last book, problem = An evil wizard who may be from Jon-Tom's world that's taken over a town. Problem Mudge has to solve = Plated folk colony. Dropped threads into the next novel = the troupe of otters they've picked up along the way.

That said, they're entertaining escapist fiction. If you've liked the others, you'll like this one.

Peter Curd says

This is my favourite Spellsinger book so far. The story is a little mad but it has a good premise and allows Foster a lot of freedom to try things out. The titular Perambulator is a well conceived "big evil" character and all the way through I was wondering what beast from Jon-Tom's world it would be. It made it clear to me what the earlier stories were missing - something that I actually care about!

My biggest issue with this book is a bit of blatant sexism about half way through which is handled quite poorly - there is an attempt to deflect it as being "oh, it's just his way" but that is then undone by another set of comments later. Perhaps this was acceptable at the time, but it's unpleasant now.

I overall enjoyed the story and whilst it is definitely not worth reading all the books just for this one (as it might be for, say, the later Harry Potter books) it's a nice joy to have it appear in the middle of the series as a reward for (suffering?) coming this far.

I'm a big fan of the John Wayne-alike that appears too..

Lorrie Gipson says

this was a good one

