



A Gathering of Gargoyles

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Aeriel's love has broken the curse on the darkangel Irrylath, making him human again and freeing him from the control of his mother, the dreaded White Witch. But the Witch is far from defeated. Her wicked plans require all seven of her vampyre sons, and she will not give one up so easily. There is but a single hope for the Witch's defeat--solving an ancient, mysterious riddle. So Aeriel sets off to solve the riddle, sailing across a sea of dust and straight into the worst of the Witch's terrors. But if Aeriel is to save Irrylath and her world, she will have to overcome his bloodthirsty darkangel brothers--and ultimately confront his terrifying mother face-to-face.

A Gathering of Gargoyles Details

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From Reader Review A Gathering of Gargoyles for online ebook

Lauren Schumacher says

The first book is a trial, and the second book is a journey. What always strikes me about this installment is our heroine's transformation into...a prophet, a sorceress, a scientist, take your pick. All her seemingly magical feats are explained so easily to her (and to us) as "help from another" or "not my doing" or "not what I intended." It reminds me of becoming an adult woman--a string of events mostly outside of your control makes you become sought-after, hated, desirable, a prize to control. Aerial's journey proves that she is still very much a child--a child still in love with her first, most inappropriate crush. The ending of this book always entranced and terrified me. The "Sibyl," the Feasting Stone, the slave markets of Orm...Aerial's consistent fear of being re=enslaved, of becoming ignorant and passive again, is most telling of her development. She can't articulate that she's free, but she instinctively defends it.

I used to feel such smug joy to find that Irrylath traveled halfway around the world to apologize for, essentially, not loving her back. But as an adult I can see that his journey mirrors hers, just tragically out of sync. When they meet again, it is still as two strangers who would chase the idea of each other to hell and back but still, painfully, have nothing to say to each other.

Emily says

This review is for *A Gathering of Gargoyles* and *The Pearl of the Soul of the World...*

Some might think that the *Darkangel Trilogy* is in the paranormal genre because of the vampires, but it isn't. It is mostly fantasy and even a little sci-fi. Pierce creates worlds, new species, and terminology.

The cover quote describes the books as Heart-warming and Heart-breaking and it truly is. Aerial is a good heroine who follows the path of self discovery. She learns that to do great things it requires sacrifice. Nothing comes easy. Anything worth having is worth working for. I love that message.

The other main characters Prince Irrylath and Erin are very relatable. At first, Prince Irrylath seems uncaring and indifferent towards Aerial. Aerial even calls him her "husband in name only." Through the battle and eventual victory over the White Witch, Aerial realizes that Irrylath does love her. Erin is a dark girl from Bern who Aerial saves from a Darkangel. She is the truest friend anyone could ever have. Some of the secondary characters did not come off the page well. I was hoping to feel more for Ravenna and the White Witch.

My biggest criticism is that Pierce uses words that do not exist in the English language. If they do exist there is not modern meaning and not in the dictionary. I understand a new vocabulary is part of the "world creator" mentality, but it irks me to not know words on a page. Pierce also uses a couple different names for the Darkangels (vampire, icari, birdman) and the White Witch (lorelei, oriencon, sorceress). It just gets confusing. Anyway, when you're reading this prepare to concentrate.

Overall, I think this is a good read. It will exercise your imagination and take you away if you let it. Very creative. Enjoyable.

Annie says

I enjoyed the second volume more than the first. The plot is allowed to stretch out more, while still staying interconnected, with no unnecessary rambling.

Poor Aeriel is still in love with her prince-husband, but he cannot love her back, even though she has literally given him her heart. She really grows into her destined role of hero, though, and by the end of the book she is no longer a timid slave, but a force to be reckoned with. I like that it's not a feeling of destiny that drives her, though, but her feelings of love and affection and hope.

I can't wait to get my hands on Volume III. At the end of this volume was a teaser, which was intense. It looks like Aeriel is going to be betrayed. She has to overcome the evil witch, but at what cost?

Lauren says

This was the 2nd in the series and my favourite. I've always enjoyed the quests against witches such as LOTR and Narnia as a kid. I still do in my early '30s. I would have loved this book dearly in my youth. The middle of series usually are my favourite because the set-up was already done but the ride isn't over.

I enjoyed the journey Aeriel took on her quest to reunite the lions to defeat the White Witch who still has her husband ensared. Irrylath is unable to love anyone until the witch is dead.

(view spoiler)

Kiersten says

An excellent sequel to The Darkangel and a solid precursor to the third book of the trilogy. We learn some more history of Irrylath's enchantment, bring in a host of new characters, and awarded plenty of riveting plot twists along the way. We get a much broader picture of Aeriel's world in this installment, as she traverses half the nations and encounters different cultures and colorful people. I really enjoyed that aspect of it, and in some ways it had a "fuller" feel than the first book, as if it's expanding on the world we only glimpsed one detailed corner of in the first book. Pierce does a good job of hinting at certain things, giving the reader enough clues to foreshadow that there's something really important about certain events or objects, but without revealing enough to give it away before the time is ripe. It very subtly adds to the suspense and holds the reader's attention without frustrating them. Aeriel is still a solid heroine, well-balanced between human and an unknown variable. I was really impressed with the way the author hints at her "strangeness" without ever really giving away if it's due to some innate power of Aeriel's or merely a result of her circumstances. I thought it was a very unique novel in many respects. Overall, I thought it was an unusually solid second book; it's written as if it's really worth your time as a novel of its own and not just to fill in the middle of a trilogy.

Elizabeth says

please god, let girls stop reading stephanie meyers & read this series instead!

Pickles says

I liked this book better than the first, and I'm looking forward to reading the next book, but it seems like I might be the only reader who doesn't particularly like Aeriel. She just seems so clueless sometimes and some of the things she does make absolutely no sense. It seems like she can barely figure out anything for herself and everyone else is always having to give her the answers. I think the world and story are really interesting, though, and I like the side characters. I'll definitely keep reading to see how it ends and I hope I grow to like Aeriel more during the next book.

As a side note, I noticed a lot of typos in this book, just like the first one. I don't know if it's like this in all editions of the book, but it seems like really sloppy editing and it can be a bit distracting at times.

Yue says

[that he used to be the Witch's lover, who is his adoptive mother... Yikes. (hide spoiler)]

Melissa McShane says

Having rescued Irrylath and escaped to his mother's kingdom (his birth mother, not the witch who told him she was his mother), Aeriel is now stuck with a husband who won't even let her touch him and a reluctance to tell anyone the truth about where (or who) Irrylath has been for twenty-four years. When she receives the second part of Ravenna's rhyme, she sets out alone to solve it by finding and restoring the lost guardians ("lons") of the six other realms. The part that I still think is really cool is the revelation about where the lons have been all this time, which isn't obvious. Aeriel's heritage is way more obvious, but at least Pierce doesn't tie the story in knots trying to keep it a secret.

On the other hand, I know as a kid I didn't appreciate the final plot complication, when Irrylath finally explains why he can't be close to Aeriel. I'm sure all I noticed was that he finally showed that he **does** care for her. The truth (view spoiler) is far more complex and sad; it goes a long way toward making Irrylath more clearly a victim.

As with the first book, I admire Pierce's worldbuilding, and I think this is a stronger story. I just don't love it anymore, and that makes me sad.

Emma says

I thought this book was more enjoyable than the first. I love books that take you on a journey with the

characters, and a Gathering of Gargoyles did not disappoint. Granted I worked out a lot of the rhyme before Aeriel did, but I liked that, it made me realise I understood and actually loved the book. The gargoyles were adorable, although I never even considered them to be the lons until the lyoness nudged Aeriel in that direction. It was an amazing book that I look forward to reading again and again, it is one I will not tire off. The Pearl of the Soul of the World is next I just hope that it doesn't disappoint.

Nicole says

I found this book to be less interesting and enjoyable than the first and third of the trilogy, but still good. I was somewhat irked by how predictable several of the supposed "twists" were. Parts of the story lagged a bit too, and the book didn't have the same fairy tale feel as the first book. Certain parts were really neat though, like the dust shrimp and it's metamorphosis later in the story.

Karissa says

This is the second book in the DarkAngel trilogy. If you liked the first book you will like this book. More happens in this book and it is just as creative as the first one. You definitely need to read the first book before reading this book though.

In this book Aeriel is living in the palace with her Prince, Irrylath and his family; the problem is Irrylath cannot stand to be around Aeriel because he is forced to be in love with the evil water witch. When the second part of the rime/prophecy is revealed to Ariel she is forced to go on a journey to make sure the prophecy will be fulfilled and to save Irrylath from the water witch.

The tone of this book is similar to the first book. Aeriel very much goes with the flow. She is an interesting character in that she does not seek out action, the action comes to her. Yet, she shows admirable strength in dealing with whatever hand is dealt to her. This book is a bit more of an adventure/quest than the first one was. Aeriel does a bit less waiting around; but there is some inconsistent pacing. Again Pierce has Aeriel go through a lot of action, then times passes as Aeriel waits, then action, then more waiting.

The storyline is very fairy-tale-like and very creative. The writing is beautiful and descriptive; at times you feel as if you are floating through the story. It was a beautiful book and a great continuation of this story. While the main story point was resolved, the major storyline remains to be resolved in the third book. I am looking forward to reading the third book as soon as I can.

A.C. Lillywhite says

I sort of figured that this was probably one of those series where the first book is really the only story and after that the narrative just kind of limps along so you get the satisfaction of knowing about the rest of the main character's lives. It's not though. You can actually tell that this is the next chapter in the story. There is more to know and experience and there are still questions that you didn't even know you had about the first story.

More of the world opens up and we get to see just how alien this place and these people are. Like in the first

one, everything has significance and a purpose and it isn't taxing yet to try and guess what that may be. The authoress gives you credit here. You're going to figure out a lot of what's going on before the characters let you know about it, but there was at least one pretty impressive surprise for me at the end.

Probably my only major complaint would be the lack of Aerial/Irrylath. I do realise that there needed to be a certain amount of 'off camera' character development. They've got issues and this part of the story isn't really about them, but the couple of scenes they had together were quite good and pretty much a total tease.

I'll move on to the third book tomorrow and hopefully we'll get a resolution...

Linda says

Following on the heels of THE DARKANGEL, Aerial and Irrylath were married but in name only. She was aware something was amiss and, before long, took it upon herself to find out why. A riddle, her staff, the gargoyles and magic accompanied her on another adventure.

I fell in love with the author's unusual words, crisp descriptions (especially of food) and the many gray areas of the plot. Each character Aerial met taught her something about her destiny without her actually aware of it. By the time I finished this story I realized I had to read THE PEARL OF THE SOUL OF THE WORLD as soon as possible.

I wanted closure for *Aerial and all of her fellow travellers*. I sought a finality to the White Witch. And, most importantly, I desired a happy denouement for Aerial and Irrylath.

TheBookSmugglers says

Originally reviewed on The Book Smugglers

After cutting out her own heart and giving it to the darkangel Irrylath, Aerial has not only found a way to save her world from the clutches of the White Witch and her seven icari, but she has also found a way to save Irrylath's soul. After breaking the curse on her new bridegroom, Aerial and Irrylath make their way to Isterne, the childhood home of Irrylath, before he was treacherously traded away to the White Witch by his nursemaid Dirna for life and power. Here, Irrylath finds his true mother, his brothers, and his birthright as the eldest son and heir to the land - but though he and Aerial are welcomed with open arms by his Esternese kin, their struggles remain.

Irrylath remains plagued by terrible dreams and withdraws from Aerial's touch and compassion - and Aerial learns that her husband, in name if not in truth, still is snared by the hook of the White Witch. If she is to save him - and to truly save her world from the Witch, who even now searches for a new babe to make into a darkangel - Aerial must embark on a dangerous quest, and solve an ancient, hidden riddle.

A Gathering of Gargoyles continues the story of a brave young woman named Aerial, who has inexplicably become the one person that can stand against an evil that threatens to consume her world. And, dear readers, I loved this book so very much. I must start this review properly by thanking the lovely Megan no h for her emphatic recommendation, because *A Gathering of Gargoyles* is truly and utterly awesome. It is in fact a

better novel than *The Darkangel*; *The Empire Strikes Back* to the first novel's *Star Wars*. I know that science fiction analogy may seem at first blush NOT to make sense with this trilogy, but in actuality it has far more resonance than one might suspect - because *A Gathering of Gargoyles* makes it abundantly clear that this series is actually one rooted in science fiction. Aeriel's world, as it becomes known in *A Gathering of Gargoyles*, is actually our moon; a "daymonth" to Aeriel and her fellow creatures, is the equivalent to a lunar day, with the constant companion of the Earth, or "Oceanus" to Aeriel, shining its pale blue light upon the moon's surface. Unlike our current moon, though, Aeriel's world is a place of impossible, fantastical life - in which there are seas of dust hiding moonwhales and serpents, with deserts and forests, gargoyles and lons.

This is the most impressive thing about this trilogy, and *A Gathering of Gargoyles* in particular - the incredible scope of *imagination*. To be sure, this is a fantasy novel with magical creatures and gifts, but the story never once feels tired or familiar because of the magic of Ms. Pierce's prose and the wildly imaginative setting. Reading *A Gathering of Gargoyles* is almost like being in a dream - things are strange and ever-shifting, but you never really feel confused or lost, because it is *your* dream, and impossible things are accepted as a matter of course.

From a pure story perspective, the actual plot of the novel is fairly simple - Aeriel leaves Isterne to find the lost lons, so that Irrylath's brothers can ride them into battle against the White Witch - and her journey takes her to the edges of the world. In truth, the story is about Aeriel as she discovers who she is, what she is truly capable of, and how far she will go to stop the Witch and win Irrylath's heart. The riddle - actually more of a prophecy - that sparks her journey lies at the heart of the book, and I love that its meaning changes as Aeriel's self-awareness grows.

For all that she is risking everything for Irrylath, this is truly Aeriel's story, and I loved every last second of it. I loved following Aeriel from Isterne, across the Sea-of-Dust, to singing for her sup and on the run from bandits, to the desperate land of Pirs and the terrible truth of its ruler, to eventually back in her own home of Terrain. On each leg of her far journey, Aeriel learns a new truth, gathering Irrylath's former gargoyle guards along the way. My main complaint for *The Darkangel* was Aeriel's lack of oomph, and her utter, unflinching goodness. While she is still unerringly moral and good in *A Gathering of Gargoyles*, this book shows us glimpses of her vulnerability. She falls for the tricks of a false king and a hag; she shows her frustration when all her work seems to have gone to waste. And, most touchingly, we *feel* her heart breaking as she realizes the truth of Irrylath and that he does not love her.

This volume ends on a sweet note, with the promise of even more fantastic adventure and peril ahead - the trilogy must close with Aeriel and Irrylath's confrontation of the White Witch, and I cannot wait to find out how it all ends.

If you haven't read this gem of a series before, I implore you to find a used copy and start. Absolutely, wholeheartedly recommended, and one of my most cherished finds of the year.
