



Phaze Doubt

Piers Anthony

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The merged worlds of Phaze and Proton face a new threat from an invading force--leaving the fate of the two planets in the hands of Nepe/Flach and Lysander, two children possessing magical powers.

Phaze Doubt Details

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From Reader Review Phaze Doubt for online ebook

Kessily Lewel says

This one was a tough one to review, I'll be honest. There is some brilliant writing here, and also some stuff that is upsetting. If it weren't for certain things I would give it a 5 because it was as good as the first books in the series and much better than the two before this one.

Spoilers and what not

So, the fleshing out of Brown as a lesbian is amazing. The way they handled it felt truly authentic to me--her doubts and her fears, which were mostly unwarranted because many people were perfectly fine with it. The conservative 'family' member that can't quite understand or accept... these brought up real emotions. Sometimes Neysa is the most irritating nag... gah. But she does redeem herself in the end for quite a lot of the frustration I've felt with her since book three. Brilliant stuff.

The merging of the frames made the last book hard to follow but in many ways it was easier with this book. The way he approached it made it less confusing and easier to follow. If you have a bit of science education that will help when it comes to following the conclusion of this book. It does get a bit technical and scientific and I see from reviews a lot of people had trouble following--and others said "it doesn't work like that." well I expect it doesn't but this is a magic and science based world so. you know... fantasy.

Now for the bad. Anthony, over the years has written a number of child like characters that aren't very childlike--and sometimes there's good reason and it works. In this case Flach/Nepe have reason to be far older than their age and so much of what they do borders the line of "that makes sense" and "wtf" in a previous book we had an adult man attempting to rape Nepe (who was 6) and that's just gross, but you can't say there aren't evil people out there who hurt children, the man was a villain so, it's hard to read but at least he's presented as evil.

In this book you have a sultry ice demon of 18 who is blatantly hitting on and trying to have sex with Flach, though she knows he's 9 years old. He's clothed in the illusion of an adult, but she knows he's not. It goes beyond a little teasing and flirting (Which was gross but made sense in public as they were trying to maintain the illusion.) but in private she actually wants to have sex. I do account for the time it was written because this book is almost 30 years old and attitudes were different then but...

Just because it's an adult woman, and a little boy doesn't mean it's okay. Boys can be sexually molested too and I get it. Teen boys are told they are supposed to be 'flattered' if a woman chooses them... thankfully that's slowly changing, but still this is a 9 year old! The whole scene is just cringy, and that's not all of it. Nepe and Flach, since the merge are now basically in each other's heads all the time. So while Flach is getting all hot and bothered by the ice demon, Nepe is making notes on how an adult woman should behave--and honestly that's horrifying too.

Andddd.... one more horrifying scene is when Nepe, in her amoeba form flattens out to completely cover Lysander's body to disguise him. This is a clever use of her abilities, and totally made sense...but it was REALLY unnecessary for Anthony to mention that the feel of being totally surrounded by a female (even an immature one, he notes) would have turned him on if he didn't shut off his circuits (He's an android.) That whole sentence could have been left out and the section would have been fine.

Honestly if the rest of the book hadn't been so good, those scenes would have made me mark him way down. I have to say that I understand what Anthony is trying to do. He's trying to present children as more complex people than they are given credit for. Many authors, like Orson Scott Card have gotten complaints because they make kids too adult. As a kid who was VERY adult I side with them. Kids are overlooked and underestimated. They aren't simply creatures, but Anthony's attempts to make them more adult sexually are cringy and even though I love his writing otherwise, I wish he'd stop.

Troy says

Read only the first 3 novels. Skip the rest.

Al "Tank" says

An interesting conclusion to the *Apprentice Adept* series.

I got a bit confused by the name references and had a hard time keeping track of which character(s) was which.

It seems that after the two worlds (Phase and Proton) were merged, everyone who had an alternate in the other world, merged with that alternate and became one person. This is part of the identity problem since the two identities within the individual continue to be self-aware. So part of the time Flach is in charge of the body and the rest of the time Mach is (or something like that). Now, since this takes place three generations from the first book, we're dealing with original characters, their offspring, and their grandchildren.

It was all just too much for my limited brain to handle (I don't do well with names in the first place).

To balance that out, the plot and the solution as to how to defeat the invaders were very well done.

If you're better at remembering names, you'll probably enjoy it even more than I did.

Emily says

With this last book in the *Apprentice Adept* series, Anthony almost (but not quite) redeems himself for the poor quality of the last three books. With a good bit less random sex, a strong lesbian character, and a proper enemy, he provides a fitting conclusion to the tale of the split worlds of Proton and Phaze.

Since the frames were merged in the last episode, the planet's value has gone up in the estimation of the local alien takeover experts. The Hectare come to exploit the expensive and rare Protonite. They are true Bug Eyed Monsters, but fortunately also have a love of gaming and a sense of honor. Almost all the former players are immediately captive but Flach/Nepe (the two of whom merged into one when the frames did), is free and are entrusted with a three-part plan to save the world. Accompanying the youngster is Lysander, a

human-like android with a Hectare brain, who is an enemy sleeper agent whose mission is to infiltrate the local resistance and betray it to his leaders. The resistance is aware of this, though, and their counter-plan includes a prophecy that states Lysander can be turned. They engage every bit of magic at their disposal to make that happen, and Lysander's eventual choice involves heart-pounding suspense. Fortunately, as well, there is less (not none, but less) random games that decide extremely important things. This wouldn't be an Adept novel if it were entirely devoid of this device, but it works better when there are fewer contests, particularly at this late stage when most of the games which would be interesting to read about have already been depicted so far.

Overall, a satisfying end to the series

Benjamin Thomas says

The seventh and final novel in the “Apprentice Adept” series goes a long way towards making up for the last two novels. For a series that started out so brilliantly over the course of the first three novels (originally planned as only a trilogy anyway...should have stayed that way) the second part of the overall series rapidly declined. In fact it’s been over a year since I read book 6 just because I was worried the whole thing would fade into the sewer.

But not so, thankfully. The magical world of Phaze has long since merged with the scientific world of Proton but now we experience a threat from off-world in the form of the Hectares. Hectares are BEMs (Bug-Eyed Monsters) who desire to exploit the resources of the Phaze/Proton world. The intriguing character of Lysander is introduced and his motivations drive the plot. Many many characters come into play in this novel, most of them making return appearances from the previous 6 books in the series. Consequently, following the story can be tiring; I could not imagine doing so without having read the previous novels in the series. The plot is vintage Piers Anthony though with lots of clever plotting, twists, game psychology, and juvenile sexual innuendo.

This was a satisfying conclusion to the series and I’m glad Mr. Anthony or his publisher didn’t try to squeeze out yet another in this universe. As intriguing as the concept is, mashing fantasy with science fiction, to do any more would be to drive it all into the ground.

Annette says

I strongly encourage this be read as the entire series. The last books go in a very different direction than the first few.

At first, this seems a rather typical fantasy type book. Toward the end, well, the comparison to our own world is inevitable and powerful.

Why can't we all just get along?

I'm giving the **series** a rating of 4. Some of the books in the series are better than others. As a whole, I think it's worthy of a 4.

Brian says

This is almost a stand-alone story within the universe of Anthony's *Apprentice Adept* series. I liked it better than the prior book, so it was a redeeming end to his 7-book "trilogy." (The truth is that the original trilogy would have been superb if left alone!)

The one point of contention I had with the book was his portrayal of the suddenly-lesbian character (seriously, she's gone 6 books without being gay - while he explains it, this was obviously something he hadn't planned prior to the last book). In his author's note, he talks about how he didn't want to ignore the gay community in his universe, so I think he did have noble intentions. However, I'm not sure he's ever met a lesbian.

Mkittysamom says

Ok ending.. was kinda like went through all of that Alien Invaders and the musical Land shifting to save the planet.. again.. how many times will they have to shift the planet lol. I still liked the characters but the beginning Trilogy was strongest for me. I like the surprise of the 3 last tasks and all the planning involved.

Kristoffer says

This book was a really great conclusion to the *Apprentice Adept* series. The aliens who invaded are fairly interesting, and the quest to prevent them from taking over the planet had some really interesting parts. There was some really great stuff involving time magic. I kind of wish that the series had a book following this to see what happens after the conclusion, but this book was a great conclusion to the series. I definitely would recommend this book to people who had read earlier books in the series. Even if you were starting to lose interest in the past few books but enjoyed the first few books, this one is definitely a worthwhile read.

James Stockbridge says

I enjoyed this series.

Debra Meyer says

The author redeemed himself from the past book but just barely, it was a totally unexpected ending which helped and the book was not bad although not as good as it seemed it could have been, the narrators character voices were aggravating but at least understandable although barely with some like the harpy voices. I have to admit I'm kind of glad this series is over and erased off my computer now to make room on it for more worthwhile items.

Amber says

This book was an amazing end to this series. My head was positively whirling with all of the dual, triple, and quadruple character aspects. Anthony truly is a gifted author to put all of this together in such a clever and exciting way. And to keep all of his characters and their aspects straight is incredible! Once again Phaze/Proton is in danger of being destroyed, but this time it is from alien invasion. Our heroes and heroines must again band together and save the planet. Flach and Nepe show their superiority in magic and cunning as they avoid the enemy time and time again. In this book, Anthony really takes the time to address the LBGT community by adding in a lesbian character. It is obvious that he did this as an afterthought and it decreases the overall quality of the story because he didn't put his heart into developing her character. And then he goes and ends the book with her lifestyle being accepted by all, an obvious statement of his acceptance of the LBGT community. I understand his need to do that for the sake of his book sales, ratings, and reviews, but I wish he would've ended the book a better way. I'm still not entirely sure where all of the characters ended up. Somehow all of their aspects got switched around, but does that mean that Flach is female now? Or just Moebite? Is Nepe male and Unicorn? So confusing! I am dying for another book in this series, but seeing as to how Anthony is 82 years old now, I suppose I won't get another book. Sadface. Ah well. Five out of five stars to Phaze Doubt.

Dark-Draco says

This is the big finale of the 7 part series. Phaze and Proton are merged as one, with people able to change from their magical to scientific counterpart at will. But there is a bigger threat coming - an invasion by an alien species that wants to exploit the plant and people. The unique dual personality of Flach/Nepe is once again the key to defeating the invaders, implementing a devious plan to put the plant completely out of reach of the Hectare.

I was a bit disappointed in this - everything seemed rushed, crammed together in one volume to get it all done. The whole thing of the black hole seemed be dropped in completely to allow the story to be done - there has been no hints of it before - and so it felt a bit artificial. I did still enjoy the story, but the earlier books were so much better and it seemed a shame for it to end on such a damp squib.

K. Fritz says

So glad to be finished this series. P.A. milked his audience on the final 2 books, in my humble opinion. Too many characters w/ too many alternate selves & the mergings of all of the above. Anthony still has a prolific imagination, however, and this alone saved me from being genuinely disappointed. The worst part was Anthony's insistence on trying to make sex & sexuality a core theme, often where it didn't belong or wasn't natural. To sum up, I may have just read my last Piers Anthony book.

Molly says

I will say that this last book helped redeem the series a little bit. The prior two books were awful to get through. I would almost jump ahead to this one and just finish the series. I'm just glad I made it through.
