



The Fall of the Readers

Django Wexler

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The final book in the exciting fantasy adventure series featuring a strong heroine who grows from reader to leader in a world where magic is contained and controlled through books.

When Alice defeated her uncle Geryon and declared war on the totalitarian ways of the Old Readers, she knew she would have a hard fight ahead. What she didn't anticipate was how ruthless the Old Readers would be. All the creatures she promised to help are being threatened, and slowly all of Alice's defenses, emotional and physical, are being worn away. So when Ending (the giant cat-like creature who helps rule the magical labyrinth in Geryon's library) hints at a dangerous final solution, Alice jumps at the chance, no matter the cost to her life. She and her friends—a fire sprite, Ashes the cat, and the other young Readers she met during her previous adventures—go on a quest to free the one creature possibly strong enough to overturn the Old Readers once and for all.

But Alice has forgotten one crucial thing: Ending is a cat, and cats are not known to be trustworthy. And Ending has plans of her own...

The Fall of the Readers Details

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From Reader Review The Fall of the Readers for online ebook

Django Wexler says

I hope everyone enjoys this one. It's been amazing finally bringing the series to the end I thought up years ago!

Sana says

[ESPECIALLY AFTER THEY KISSED.
LIKE FUCKING TWICE???? (hide spoiler)]

Sriya Mudumba says

If I was not it in a book store, I would have screamed with joy when I read the last page.

As Hot As Jack Frost says

THERE'S ANOTHER BOOK? I THOUGHT THIS WAS A TRILOGY OMIGOD I'M SO EXCITED NOW!!!

John says

Decent conclusion to the series. As previously, my only cavil is that books here are pretty much used as furniture--they only serve as convenient plot devices and seldom if ever do you see anyone actually reading. Still, a diverting fantasy, fairly logical in construction and featuring lots of truly scary creatures.

Rob says

Executive Summary: A good ending to the series, but I didn't like it as much as The Palace of Glass.

Full Review

I read very little Young Adult, and absolutely no Middle Grade. I'm not the target demographic by any means. I really like Django Wexler though, so I decided to pick up The Forbidden Library from the library a few years back.

By the time The Palace of Glass came out I was really enjoying the series and bought all the books. I was late in coming to fantasy, not really reading very much of it until college. If there had been more books like

this when I was growing up, I probably would have been more interested.

I really like the world building and the magic system. As someone who loves books, the idea of magical books has always appealed to me. This series combines elements I've read or seen in other books and games, but done so in a unique way as to not feel derivative.

Over the four books, Mr. Wexler did a really good job of telling a stand alone story, while building up to a bigger narrative. The characters and creatures are a lot of fun, and Alice is a great protagonist. I've always been more of a dog person than a cat person, but I know Django has cats and that really shows in the way he writes them in this series.

All of the past books have had an element of seriousness to them, but this one seemed to have the most of all. I found that weighed it down a bit compared to past books, where it was always just a fun, light read.

Don't get me wrong, this was still a fun read I just thought it was a bit slow in places. I think he did a really good job with wrapping everything up. I feel like he could tell more stories set in the world, but there isn't a need to do so.

Overall this is a really fun series and I'm glad I decided to pick it up. I still prefer his Shadow Campaign series to this one (where I'm much more the target audience), with The Infernal Battalion coming out next month and finishing that series, I'm interested in seeing what he does next. Whatever it is, I'm sure it will be good.

Nicki says

With Geryon trapped in the Infinite Prison, Alice has marshalled the other apprentices and the library creatures at his estate to fight back against the old Readers. Even with the aid of Ending to push back the Readers' creatures who invade through the Library, they are hard pressed to hold their ground, and Alice knows it's only a matter of time before attrition takes its toll. Together, she and Ending concoct a plan for Alice to seek the Great Binding that holds at bay a creature who could destroy the Labyrinthines, which the Readers use to keep them under their thumb. If Alice can take control of the Great Binding herself, she can free the Labyrinthines from the Readers' influence and take away the source of their power. But if she isn't powerful enough to hold the binding, she'll die, dooming magical society to live under the Readers' cruel ways -- and in the quiet of her mind, the Dragon's voice warns her that his sister cannot be blindly trusted...

When **The Palace of Glass** was the first book in the series to feel like it really had forward momentum, I worried that trying to wrap this story up in only four books was going to feel very rushed. I'm happy to say that Wexler pulled it off better than I expected, although **The Palace of Glass** remains the series's peak.

Alice has been a weak point throughout, with her stunted emotional range, but in **The Fall of the Readers** (these passive titles are making me twitch) this is much improved. She wrestles with the leadership role she's been thrust into and the fact that making battlefield decisions means taking charge of lives, some percentage of which, no matter how well you command, are going to be snuffed out. There are some revelations about Alice's history that perhaps also make her earlier emotional detachment feel earned, and are cleverly foreshadowed, such that I was a little ashamed not to catch the twist until just before its reveal!

The secondary cast also remains delightful, but didn't get quite as much opportunity to shine as in **The Mad**

Apprentice and **The Palace of Glass**. I felt a little too much time was devoted to the fairly bland Isaac and the flourishing of the romantic connection that's been hinted at throughout the series, which isn't something I'm really interested in seeing with children this young, and I would rather have had a little more Dex or something instead. Ashes still gets to dominate the show with his wonderful prissiness and snark, though.

A complaint I levelled at the first couple of books was the lack of truly fantastical elements given the premise. This was something **The Palace of Glass** did a great job of addressing, with its fire sprites and haughty turtles and the general feeling that the Library was attached to whole *worlds*, not just set pieces. I guess the fourth book is a little bit of a step back in that regard, because it has to keep up quite a pace and there's not as much time to make the weird and wonderful things it visits feel as alive as places like the fire sprite world, but it's still a significant improvement on the first two, with moments such as dancing skeletons on alien landscapes and inventive fights against rock elementals.

In the end, Wexler did an impressive job of wrapping up all the loose ends. I really expected to be hankering after a fifth and maybe even a sixth book to feel like things had been properly wrapped up, but it turned out not to be needed, and I set **The Fall of the Readers** down content that all I need to see of Alice's story has been told. I might wish he had taken a slightly different route getting there, one that allowed a deeper appreciation of all of the colourful places that the Library could take us, but I'm pretty content to be left without questions, just satisfaction. I think there might be room for other stories in this world, perhaps to see what kind of society the next generations ended up with, but I'd be equally okay with the author just leaving it here and going on to explore other things. The series as a whole was a fun, light read that recovered well from its early flaws, and I'm looking forward to checking out Wexler's adult fantasy series.

Review from Bookette.net

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

4.5 of 5 stars at The BiblioSanctum [https://bibliosanctum.com/2017/12/04/...](https://bibliosanctum.com/2017/12/04/)

Django Wexler's outstanding Middle Grade series *The Forbidden Library* comes full circle in *The Fall of the Readers*, the concluding volume of this richly dark and enchanting adventure through the magical world of books. So far we've seen the young protagonist Alice through some very harrowing times, following her as she visits new worlds and encounters their strange and whimsical inhabitants—some of whom turn out to be allies, while others reveal themselves to be fiendish and dangerous enemies.

But now, Alice is about to face her biggest challenge. If you're not caught up with this series yet, please be aware that this review may contain spoilers for the previous three books, because *The Fall of the Readers* is definitely not meant to be read on its own. This fourth and final installment wraps up a saga that has been long in the making. It all began with the disappearance of Alice's father which landed her in the care of her uncle Geryon, a crotchety old man who actually turned out to be a member of a ruthless organization of sorcerers known as the Readers. To her shock, Alice discovered that she has the same magical powers that allow her to enter the world of certain books, enabling her to subdue and bind the nasty creatures locked within to harness their special abilities. Although she agreed to study as Geryon's apprentice, it soon became clear that her uncle may have had something to do with her father's disappearance. Stricken, Alice decided to strike back, but in doing so, she also incurred the wrath of the older and more powerful Readers who are now targeting her and her friends in retribution.

Desperate for a way to safeguard those she cares about, Alice decides to turn to the powerful cat-like entity known as Ending for a way to defeat the old Readers once and for all. The mysterious Labyrinthine reveals that in fact there is a way—but Alice probably won't like it. The plan will involve great risk to our protagonist and her friends, as well as all the otherworldly creatures they've agreed to protect. But with the old Readers' attacks growing more frequent, Alice knows it's only a matter of time before her defenses will fall, and since surrender is not an option, it is better to take the chance and hope for success. Better to go down fighting than to sit and watch as the enemy destroys you little by little over time.

This being the last book, there is a distinct sense of urgency to the story which keeps any digressions and mini side-plots to a minimum. In every aspect that counts though, Wexler comes through with flying colors, conceding no ground in areas like character and story development. The Fall of the Readers basically thrives on its plot, the book's greatest strength proving to be its ability to make you want to turn the pages and never put it down. As a result, this was a lightning quick read for me, but it's important to note that the pacing still remained well-balanced and appropriate for the different events of the story.

But the most amazing thing about this book is Alice. Not only is she a heroine you want to root for, she's also one you'd definitely want on your side. She's smart, brave, and strong. She's an amazing friend and role model, as well as a leader who takes charge. But because she's young and still learning a lot about the burdens of responsibility, the pressure of so many lives depending on her can sometimes lead her to make rash decisions. This book sees Alice growing up fast, having to learn to deal with the consequences of her mistakes, but instead of growing more jaded with her failures, she simply becomes even more determined.

Because the story itself is so streamlined though, this does leave little room for other characters to play much of a role. But ultimately this might not even be an issue, given the way we've been made to care so much about Alice, thus conveying the understanding that this series has always been about her journey, and now only she—and she alone—can see it through to the end. My only disappointment in this is the fact that we got to see much less of favorites like Isaac and Ashes the talking cat. Still, I believe Wexler was fully aware of this, because he also made sure to make the most out the scenes between Alice and Isaac, continuing to develop their friendship and perhaps nudge it towards something more, and yes, thankfully we still get plenty of Ashes' epic snark!

Of course, the world-building was also fantastic, and what impressed me was seeing how all the elements of the world finally came together in this climactic conclusion. There was a big twist near the end that I wish I could have said I saw coming, since I pride myself on paying attention to the details, but the truth is, the author was imply very clever and subtle in his foreshadowing and hint dropping.

Like all good endings, The Fall of the Readers managed to unite the various themes and elements from the previous books, gradually building tension and momentum until events culminate in an epic showdown. This novel has everything you want in a finale, from excitement and suspense to tenderness and heartbreak. I think fans of the series, no matter how old you are, will be very happy at how things play out. I know I am! The Forbidden Library is another winner from Django Wexler, a series of magical and endearing books that I would not hesitate recommending to children and adults alike.

Becky B says

Alice made her decision in the last book and now she and those allied with her are paying for it. The Old Readers are relentless in their attacks on Ending's library. For now Ending, Alice, and the other apprentices

have been able to hold them off, but it is becoming increasingly clear that it is just a matter of time before they do break through. And their revenge against Alice and others will not be pretty. Ending provides Alice with one alternative to facing the ongoing onslaughts, but it is not in any way guaranteed to work and will likely cost Alice's life. Feeling the pressure of all the lives under her care, Alice decides to try it and ventures off on her greatest adventure yet.

This book has not one, but two twists. The first I suspected would come, afterall, hints have been dropped. (Sorry, no details, this is going to be vague because it is a better read that way.) The second twist I did not see coming and was a little stroke of genius by Wexler. Alice must address some really hard questions in this one and is starting to feel the pressure of being The One. But her friends are spectacular. Everyone needs friends like Alice has. Friends to say hard things to you, to give you hugs when you need them, and to make you a net of moonstone whenever needed. The true friendship in this, and the way the battle between selfishness and love plays out in the broader world make this the best book in the series. That is not an easy feat for the end of a series. Way to go Wexler.

Notes on content: No language issues. No sexual content. Some fantasy violence that results in a few deaths (nothing gory on page) and injuries (but thanks to magical abilities, most of those are quickly taken care of).

GaiasWonderland says

I really enjoy this series and this one was just as fun as the first three. The ending was just right.

What I liked the best were the original creations from the author like 'portal books', 'prison books' etc., the creatures from other 'portal books', the labyrinthine's and the **forbidden library** itself with all the cats in there.

I adored Ashes the talking cat the best as he has a feisty character and I thought Alice was becoming a bit more mature in this book.

Overall I enjoyed it and recommend it to anyone who loves books, fantasy, magic and adventure!

Maša says

In the last installment of the series, our heroes are betrayed and have to rush to save the world!

I like how the protagonist seem real, and how Alice grows more determined and focused after hardships and mistakes - I am really over moaning protagonists that overthink every little thing. I want to feel inspired by book people, not have them reflect my own failings! But I digress..

There is much at stake here bit it doesn't feel that way - in a book of 200 pages, you can't convey the context so good. A pity! Also, I felt Alice was never in real danger, and deus-ex-machina dissappointed me, to be honest.

All in all, I *really* enjoyed the series, a solid 4 from me for the whole: intriguing world, good characterization, nice plotting, and sensible page-count. Probably going to grab Wexler's other works when

the opportunity arises, even though he wrote it's mostly in "doorstop" (thick books) category.

Denise Spicer says

This 358 page book gives us a great ending to this fantastic series. The author does a wonderful job of leading us through his plot with nicely drawn characters in intriguing settings. Surprise Twist!!! I highly recommend the entire series.

Adam Hoffman says

This review is from an advanced reading copy given freely and without obligation (my thanks to the publisher and author).

Where to start! I do not want to give ANY spoilers as we are still a few months from the official release date and I don't want to give anything away. Book 4 provides a satisfying finish (not a spoiler that this is the presumptive finale as stated on the cover and description). If you've read books 1-3 it's an obvious go out and buy and read. If you haven't, go grab books 1-3!

I can certainly see opportunities for the author to flesh, or even "drag" the series out. Actually I was slightly surprised how quickly Alice ascends and finishes the series. Certainly there were opportunities for the author to tell more stories about Alice and the other Readers (and apprentice readers in particular). I think I would have enjoyed learning a bit more about the world and adventures therein before wrapping things up here in book 4.

I am reviewing this about 4 weeks post-reading, for better or worse. While it is not as fresh in my mind, it also gives me time to reflect. Sadly I can't say this series excited me as much as, say, Alcatraz and the Evil Librarians (also for younger readers) - but Sanderson is some pretty tough competition! In comparison to Alcatraz, since I bring it up, it is a bit more honest in its storytelling and characters are willing to be ruthless to one another, even our heroine if necessary and there are casualties in the series and that continues in book 4.

Wexler has done a good job of foreshadowing, and we do have some pretty big climatic surprises revealed in this book. I take that back, not big, MAJOR. The foreshadowing is more obvious in retrospect (of course!) I really think he did a good job of not being overly obvious because I was certainly surprised and I'm often trying to puzzle out things. It's really not so much fun when it's spoon-fed to you, and it isn't here, at least for the big plot points. Still it's great that they are developed and not sprung without back-story. Very well done, particularly for a young adult book where authors usually go to far in the foreshadowing leaving too few surprises to excite readers (and Readers). While it is the finale, and the finish is satisfying it does leave you wanting for more. I don't mean that in a bad way, plot points are tied up but it leaves room for the imagination on where the world could go next as the author has said this is his finale, and I do like that. Sometimes books can end so utterly completely that it's unsatisfying (i.e. everyone dies, the end; everyone lives happily ever after, the end) I appreciate the maturity of leaving some things to the imagination.

In summary, Readers of the series, your wait will be rewarded. Points you've been waiting to be wrapped up will come together and we get a great conclusion.

I look forward to the next series that Wexler has recently announced in this genre, and even more anxiously await the finale to his Shadow Campaigns (for adult readers)!

Daniel says

Moram da priznam da sam možda imao nerealno velika očekivanja od završetka ovog serijala ali u svoju odbranu kažem da su prethodne tri jedne od mojih omiljenih (dark) YA knjiga.

Kako da objasnim, knjiga je odlično napisana, likovi su stalno opasnim situacijama ali se ponašaju onako kako bi od njih očekivali. Niko nije savršen, grške se dešvaju i prava nas drži u neizvesnosti tokom večeg dela. Ali meni lično knjiga jednostavno nije odisala da se dešava nešto epsko, iako se dešava, da vidimo finalnu rezoluciju. Plus nema se osećaj da su glavni likovi stvarno u opasnosti da stradaju ko u prethodnim delovima a i kraj je nekako suviše... fin. Lep.

Odnosno očito da kažem da knjiga nije dovoljno mračna i da dosta odskače u odnosu na prethodne knjige i to mi je najviše smetalo.

Sem tona sve ostalo je bilo odlično i služi kao fin završetak serijala koji treba pročitati. Naročito oni malo mlađi :)

Cheers.

Steen Nielsen says

What to say?

This is good, really good :)

I absolutely love the reader system and all the worlds that they can move through!

I think the tests in the grand labyrinth were a bit underwhelming, but the reveal later in the book more than made up for that.

Ashe the cat is pretty funny
