



The Steward

Christopher Shields

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Maggie O’Shea expected the worst when her family relocated from the lively beaches of Boca Raton to the secluded forests of the Ozark Mountains. What she didn’t expect was a new beginning – one full of Fae, magical powers, dangerous physical and mental trials, and two surprisingly gorgeous young men. These aren’t the fairies you’re familiar with, but dangerous superpowers embroiled in an enduring struggle among themselves over the fate of all humanity. Some want to protect us, and others would love nothing more than to see us, and especially fifteen-year-old Maggie, dead and buried. Now, torn between her new duties as Steward of the most sacred Fae land and her burgeoning love for Gavin, a powerful Fae, Maggie must fight to protect her family, her friends, herself, and the fate of the entire world.

Join Maggie as she learns that fairy lore is not as far from the truth as she had believed, but neither is it anything like the tales in books or movies. As she navigates the treacherous schemes of the magical Fae, Maggie must become a quick study if she hopes to protect the lives of many, and possibly all, people from the insidious plot the Unseelie Fae have planned for centuries.

The Steward is the first book in the four part series: the Weald Fae Journals by Christopher Shields.

The Steward Details

Date : Published August 7th 2012 by Weald Fae Journals

ISBN :

Author : Christopher Shields

Format : Kindle Edition 336 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Fairies, Fae, Young Adult, Urban Fantasy, Paranormal, Magic

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From Reader Review The Steward for online ebook

Kayla Stonor says

Unique and enjoyable - loved it.

I met the author via social media and managed to pick his book up through a free promotion. I'd heard great things, but hadn't read any reviews so only had the blurb to go by. I knew this book formed part of a series. I hadn't realised that the story really spans the series. The Steward ends with an exciting finale and one of the best cliff-hangers I have ever read. It is not a standalone novel. I reached the last page and wanted to howl my frustration. There is still too much to find out. Having said that, it is a great place to stop - there is a sense of resolution, a sense of where it needs to go, and such a huge, terrible new problem, I can't wait to read the next book.

So my first point is The Steward is the first book in a SERIES. If you buy it you will need to buy the rest. This is not a bad thing for this world will hook you in. There is a tragic start. The story skips forward a generation and slows down to introduce the main character. Maggie slowly discovers the Fae world in the Weald, and her role as Steward. She learns her gifts over a period of several months during which she and the reader are introduced to Fae characters and Fae politics. I emphasise the slowness, because despite the initially measured pace, it is such a beautiful read. Time is spent getting to know Maggie giving me time to experience her growth as she faces four different tests, turns sixteen, learns to drive, and falls in love with the forbidden.

There is an underlying love story with a difference, a love hidden and unacknowledged, as intense as it is innocent. I was so hooked as the story picks up and races to the end. Maggie makes some amazing decisions highlighting her worthiness for the responsibility bestowed on her young shoulders, and yet she retains the immaturity and vulnerability of youth. She is a great character, facing inordinate heartache and possessing extraordinary strength of purpose.

This is a great fantasy. Buy it, be prepared to buy the sequels, and invest time to enjoy this marvellous and original tale.

Ginny Bryce says

The story is fast-paced and the characters well defined. Maggie is a strong protagonist. It is an excellent book for young adults and also for other readers.

Uprooted from Boca Raton, Maggie O'Shea is brought to the Ozark Mountains with her mother, father, and younger brother, because of her father's lack of work. What she finds in her back yard is a magical world of the Faes (fairies) who rule the Weald. To her surprise, her Aunt May informs her she is selected to become the next Steward as a human liaison to the immortal Fae who live in the Weald.

Some of the Faes are good and others are dangerous. When they battle each other in a power struggle, Maggie shows her bravery and skill at leadership.

Christopher Shields guides us from the real world into the magical world of the Fae. Are they hiding in our backyard? As I look quickly over my shoulder, what is that shadow that slips behind the tree? Or shakes its leaves? I recommend this book.

Lord David Prosser says

I really should dislike Christopher Shields. I never have enough time on my hands and diverting my attention to what I expect to be a YA book is not how I want to send my time these days. But I started it and therein lay my first mistake. The story grabbed me, the style of writing grabbed me and the characters grabbed me. I'm tempted to sue for assault.

Maggie is forced to move from her home in Florida to Arkansas where the family will live with a relative of her father's. The relative, (Aunt May) is the Steward of the Weald, the land she owns and on which her house is situated. Maggie is to be the next Steward but she has to pass certain tests first. Someone really doesn't want her to pass them and is prepared to go to any lengths to hurt her, her family and her friends to stop her. This someone is Unseelie Fae and though she has Seelie Fae friends, it's not clear they're all on her side either.

The book moves steadily from action to action with barely a break but you're never given time to become bored or confused by the story. It's perfectly crafted.

I thought to read a couple of chapters a night of this and give it no thought until I next opened up my Kindle for PC. Instead I've been stuck on this chair for hours unable to break away until I fall asleep over the keyboard. If this were a book in my hands it would be UNPUTDOWNABLE. Christopher Shields is a top Author with all the skills of a Tolkien. I have no choice now but to read the second book to carry on the story. I tell you, I hate the man.

Christoph Fischer says

“The Steward (Weald Fae Journals, Book1)” by Christopher Shields is an excellent and magical piece of fantasy fiction. In an Arkansas forest of the Fae, the Weald, the human world edges on to the world of fairies and nature's elements. Maggie, a teenager, comes to live there and is chosen by the ‘council’ to be their next steward.

What follows is a delightful labour of love about Maggie's duties and her training as steward, about the tribes, their characters, the mythical and magic world and Maggie's place in it. All the while the young woman is of flesh and blood with morals and also some teenage crushes. Maggie is a wonderful character, written with much affection and obvious care. We relate to her instantly, we celebrate her victories, we feel sorry for her disappointments and we see this great exciting world with her loving and youthful eyes. Shields has created a unique and wonderful world populated by fascinating and engaging creatures and characters, both good and bad; the story has a hint of romance, suspense and lots of fairies in it. I loved the concept of differing and individual powers and the elemental (earth, ether etc) aspect to the creatures. I also loved the amount of detail in which the world of the Fae is being described and even properly introduced,

almost like a short history or an almanac of the species and its mythological origins and traditions. As only occasional visitor to the genre I found myself surprised at the way I was drawn into this world, losing myself in it despite being an often too rational man for fantasy stories.

Perfectly crafted, plotted and with an expertly smooth flow of beautiful prose the book is palatable and comfortable to read. Knowing the author as a rational and intellectual man from an author's forum I was stunned at the playfulness of the novel and the enchanting character of the writing and the obvious versatility of the creator's mind.

If you are a fan of the fantasy genre or fairy stories this is a must read, there is no two ways about it. If you know someone who isn't sure about the genre but would like to try, I would recommend this book to them. Above all is it great fun to read.

John Dolan says

“The Steward” by Christopher Shields is the first book in the “Weald Fae Journals”, a series aimed at young adults.

Sadly, I find many of today's fantasy writers sloppy and lazy in constructing their ‘worlds’, but Shields has clearly put a lot of thought and time into his portrayal of the shadow side of our otherwise-familiar planet. His ‘fae’ – ‘fairies’ to the uninitiated – are immortal creatures of pure energy. They can, however, take physical form, and when they do so they become endowed with powers to alter and manipulate matter and elemental forces.

The author carefully interweaves the familiar with the mystical, leading the reader by the hand so that he is by degrees drawn into an universe which would otherwise be incomprehensible.

The story is morally unambiguous (if we put to one side the infatuation of a teenage girl with a 130,000 year-old-being), so we are left in no doubt as to who are the goodies and who are the baddies. The plot-line has been carefully orchestrated and Shields steadily builds tension as the guardian-elect of the fae lands is put through a series of trials and the stakes grow higher.

The “Weald Fae Journals” series has the potential to be huge, and you may want to get on board now while it's still in its early stages.

Travis Luedke says

I started reading this novel through the holidays. It dragged me back to its pages despite all the holiday insanity. I launched one of my own novels Christmas day, camped in front of my PC for hours, but I couldn't escape this book. I kept trying to find the time to snatch a few more minutes of reading.

About a 1/3 of the way in I was thoroughly seduced by the 2700 acre Weald. I found myself contemplating the purchase of real estate in Arkansas, and I've never been there. The author transported me to this enchanting countryside through three whole seasons of the year. Forestry, islands, country cottages, gardens, cliffs, caves, I could see it all crystal clear in my mind's eye.

The tale is an enthralling read about teenage Maggie's discovery that what she thought was a dead-end backwoods life in Arkansas is actually a secret sanctuary of the Weald Fae, a.k.a. Fairies. But these are not little Tinkerbelle pixie wing creatures. These are the demigods of old, masters of the elements. The Fae are extremely powerful, and not overly fond of mankind. Trespassers on the Weald property find horrible misfortune. And this brave teenage girl Maggie has been entrapped into a position of great responsibility and peril as the new Steward of the Weald.

It's a coming-of-age romance, an awesome supernatural thriller. It's a young adult paranormal fantasy. It's a damn good book for just about anyone of any age. I can't help but wish this was a movie.

And of course, I must read the second in the series, "The Changeling". The ending guarantees you cannot live without reading the next book. Hooked on the Weald.

Wendy says

really it's a 3.5, The world building and details of the Fae in this book is genius but i really don't feel to attached to Megan, she annoys me. Somethings that she does just don't make sense. How can you be so smart about some things and make such stupid choices with others (Gavin)? Also, i don't buy it that her Dad doesn't know something is going on and hasn't even asked her about it. I will read the next book 'The Changeling' because the book really picked up at the end and i am hopeful that these things will be put to rest.

Beth says

I enjoyed this story and have already added **THE CHANGELING** (Weald Fae Journals, Book 2) to my wish list. I did find that it was a little slow moving. It contains lots of dialog which provided back story and world building but distracted me from seeing and investing in the emotional connections between the characters. I truly believe this series will have huge potential and am giving it 3.5 stars.

Paula says

Wow, this book was AWESOME! If you are anything like me, and love Fae-tales (they really don't like to be called fairies), magic, myth, and mystery you have found the right book (or series as it looks). I was interested by the brief book description, but once I started reading, I found I was no longer on my front deck, but had stepped through to the incredibly real, and full world of Maggie O'Shea. I have said before that a character was real or fleshed well, but I have never read through the eyes of a character that felt so solid and true. This YA book reads as adult, not due to subject matter, but because the story is deeper and richer than most YA stories tend to be. The love story, or hint of a triangle is not the focus of the book, or at least it was not for me. Maggie's family and their history in the Weald is enthralling. As she discovers her place among them, you feel the connection along with her. The description is flawless, and the setting is enchanting ~ The Ozarks make for a magical back drop. The ending leaves you no choice but to dive into book 2, which is exactly what a series first should do. I want to thank Mr. Shields for providing me with a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

Jinx Schwartz says

Maggie O'Shea's life has seemingly turned disastrous; at fifteen, she's been jerked out her Boca Raton beach life and plunked into the Ozark Mountains in the middle of nowhere. Okay, so there is this hunky neighbor, Gavin, to distract her, and she does make some new friends, but she still longs to return to her old life.

What she soon learns, however, is that the forest is chock full of faeries, and she is a key player in a power struggle between warring factions. And when faeries fight, they don't always do so fairly

This book is a great read for any age, even though it is categorized as a Young Adult romance. While I do not normally read YA, I was delighted with this well-written Faerie tale, and look forward to the sequel.

Simon Okill says

The Steward (Weald Fae Journals, #1) by Christopher Shields is a wonderful teenage romp in fairyland gone bad. This is not a Disney version but more dark with a war between good and bad Fae.

15 year old Maggie is uprooted from her home and friends and starts a new life in rural Arkansas. Could life be any worse. But what follows is a delightful journey as Maggie discovers the nearby forest leads to a magical Fae Land and she is made The Steward. She learns her new duties through trial and error as any teen would, but she is a mere mortal, flesh and blood with feelings that all teenagers are inflicted with.

Maggie's wonderful character carries this beautiful fantasy with consummate ease, written with obvious love for the genre and her character. Christopher expertly weaves a bold and vivid landscape that enthrals and delights the reader with such poetic prose. This reader had no trouble picturing in detail every scene with such minute microscopic focus.

This YA fantasy is full of wonderment, breathtaking beauty and thrilling adventure that will keep readers of all ages glued to the book, unwilling to sleep until finished. That should make parents very happy keeping their teenagers from under foot.

So what are you waiting for go buy this FIVE STAR YA Fantasy that I highly recommend.

Teresa Garcia says

I just finished reading, and would have been done sooner if my family vacation had been less active. The characters are all very well written, the plot is exquisite, and the lead female character is strong. I loved reading how she overcame her obstacles.

Chalen I wanted to see destroyed. He was the epitome of Unseelie to me. I very much enjoyed the way that the clans were portrayed, with even the Seelie having darker aspects.

I am very glad to be able to read the next in the series, because I've got to see what he does with changelings.

Thomas says

A must read for anyone who loves magic and adventure. Any word, short of awesome cannot describe this book, I loved it. The author creates a timeless tale, which speaks to old and young alike, seamlessly weaving the simultaneous macabre and splendor singsong of Celtic and Ozark folklore together with the modern world. His storyline balances the real life challenges of the story's teenage heroine Maggie (she is the chosen one, but I will say no more, you have to read this book) with the realm of the otherworld or fae, as well or even better than more widely known writers promoted by major publishers. The tension of Maggie's real life struggle to blend in at school after moving from Florida and her discovery the secret fae under otherworld in modern day Eureka Springs makes this book flow through the chapters as fast any of the stories vintage cars snaking through the winding switchbacks on the highways of the Ozarks, and the end of the story leaves you excited for the sequel (which, I am now about finished with). Reality and magic also blend well with the Author's ability to use narrative to get the reader to visualize the colorful and rugged landscape of the Ozarks and the Beaver Lake region. Which, for anyone that has traveled to this part of Arkansas is a tapestry of color in the spring and fall, and always beautifully rugged anytime of the year. This only adds to the rich texture of his story and its seamless tie to natural forces and elements as the magic of the immortal and powerful fae. The author also has an uncanny ability to skillfully intertwine the mystery of Eureka Springs and its eclectic, hip and artsy culture, with its healing springs and historic Victorian architecture into his story lending life and interest to all the supporting characters, both human and fae. You will love or hate them all by the end of the book. So vivid is his descriptions of Maggie's world of the Fae and the Ozarks that I hope he someday publishes a guide to the magical realm his mind's eye has created for folks not from the region.. In short this is a must read, for fans of fantasy and adventure. The first I hope of many books by this author..

D.H. Nevins says

Mr. Shields interweaves a rich, fantastical world with the fabric of our own, creating a new reality which exists just under the surface of the mundane, invisible to all but a few. The Steward is a well-written book with fascinating story line. Its intricate plot reveals a complex supernatural world of Fae—or fairies, as we know them—living among humans, influencing us, and in some cases, fighting over whether or not they should exterminate us. Maggie, the protagonist, unwillingly falls headlong into this world, and those closest to her end up paying the price. Maggie was strong and likeable. I love female characters that are tough, intelligent and resourceful, and Maggie doesn't disappoint! In fact, Mr. Shield's book is full of interesting, believable characters with depth and quirks. I found I could connect with them instantly. The Steward is proof that the term YA refers to the age of the protagonist and not the book's reading level or overall tone. This was a fun book, but with language that was mature and a style of writing that was polished and compelling. I enjoyed it immensely and will, without a doubt, be continuing on with this series.

Clinton says

This book was straight. Ill be generous and give it the four star rating.

3.5 is my real rating for The Steward

The Steward starts of extremely slow, it really starts to pick up about half way through.

The main character can be a complete dumbass at times, but whats new? Its YA.

I did like the world and the different take on the Fae.

The lack of logic behind some of the characters actions kept taking me out of the book.

I think I have read too much YA and now I get annoyed by the small things easily (Mainly dumb characters)
