



Esrever Doom

Piers Anthony

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In our Mundane world, Kody undergoes controlled coma, with possible side effect of Reverse Mood (title backwards). He wakes in Xanth, immune to curse that switches how people see each other, pretty as ugly, and vice versa. He likes zombie Zosi, starts double Quest, to break spell and save zombies. Team has unknowing spy for villainess NoAmi. Demons have wagers on outcome.

Esrever Doom Details

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Author : Piers Anthony

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From Reader Review Esrever Doom for online ebook

Patricia says

There sure are a lot of mundanes getting into Xanth lately. I hope this isn't the start of a wave!

This is another Demon bet (with a capital D) I kinda feel like Piers may use Demons to make certain things happen quickly. When the story line starts to fizzle and he can't figure out a way to segue into the next part of the story... Boom! in pop some "all powerful" Demons. All previous problems disappear, Status points are exchanged, and the story goes off in some new direction.

Here we see a new world of Ida, Trojan's sense of humor, the land of Hades and even spend some time in the small galaxy of Fornax. Without being too much of a spoiler, I will say Piers has moved away from the idea of child sexuality, thankfully, and has kept the flirting and panty showing down so that it doesn't detract from the storyline.

I give five stars because I remain a faithful fan of Xanth and this is another great installment to the saga. If you are not already an established fan I would recommend starting this series with some of the earlier books before diving in at the end. Xanth has become a bit set in its ways, (probably much like its creator) and may have become an aquired taste. But for those who have aquired the taste, this is just as delectable as the rest of them.

Brian says

#37 in the delightful Xanth trilogy finds Kody Mundane brought to Xanth in a dream to reverse the effects of a reverse bomb that is make ugly people beautiful and vice versa. With companions, Zosi Zombie, who has been humanified, Maiden Yukay, Zap Griffen, Kody sets out the rid Xanth of the awful curse. They are joined by Ivan and Naomi Naga as they travel the width and breadth of Xanth searching for the bomb. Another wonderful romp through the land of puns and magic.

A Wonderful read.

Brian Miller says

This book was a bit confusing to me unless I was very much mistaken the main character was a gay man turned straight by the magic of xanth I have loved this series for many years but was more then a bit hurt by this story.

Linda says

Yawn

Esrever Doom (read it backwards) is not bad enough for a 2 rating, and not good enough for a 4. Chances are I will have forgotten the storyline within a week. And yet ...

Having read all 37 books in the Xanth series so far, I am planning to continue with books 38 - 41. Inertia or optimism? Maybe a bit of both.

Scratch says

I shall begin by echoing what other reviewers have said about this Xanth novel, and probably the last 10 or 20 Xanth novels-- the plots have become formulaic beyond all reason. The protagonist is usually a stranger to Xanth, quite possibly a Mundanian. He goes to see Humphrey to ask his question, braving the 3 challenges like usual. He goes on a quest to solve whatever the magical dilemma is for the book. Along the way he picks up companions. There are various romantic entanglements upon the group of travelers, there are several references to panties and stork summoning, and then the quest concludes more or less successfully.

It has been done to death. Xanth used to be incredibly entertaining with the first 10 books or so. But after that... the formula is a little too much for me. Not so much because the formula is annoying, but because it feels like something is missing. There is nothing new to Xanth anymore. And the serious moments, the really good fight scenes and serious problems, are gone. There used to be a "flavor" to reading a Xanth novel, and now that flavor is gone.

Next, let's address the elephant in the room with this protagonist, Kody. ... Did Piers Anthony turn a gay man straight in this novel?

We were given no background on the protagonist, Kody, whatsoever. Nothing about his job or education or where he lives... Nothing. We know that he's fairly attractive and that when he wakes up from a coma in Mundania, his "friend Josh" is the person to come get him. But then we have all these little "hints," peppered throughout that are never explored. Throwaway references to Kody knowing something about facing discrimination.

So I would normally be pleased with the protagonist falling for the least attractive woman in his party, a former zombie, who seems perfectly nice. But if he truly were a gay man that the magic of Xanth somehow made straight, and he was busy getting freaked out by panties and getting seduced by various women... That's just wrong. Offensive.

What the Hell, Piers Anthony?

This is particularly insulting because in 37 books there have been almost NO references to homosexuals. And the few times there were references, they were offensive. A couple dozen books ago there were male winged elves who were referenced as not wanting people to think they were fairies. One time, many many books ago, there was an outbreak of both love and hate spring water at the same time, and there was a reference to women fighting and looking like they were mating at the same time.

As recently as last book, we --sort of-- got our first transgender character. ... A heterosexual man was magically transformed into a woman, and Piers Anthony interpreted this as creating a heterosexual woman who was knowledgeable about what would pleasure men, and was happy to use that knowledge. (Shouldn't she have become a lesbian? Or started out as a gay man, if now she loves nothing more than pleasuring penis?)

And... that's it. In Xanth, panties reign supreme. Women always hold all the cards both in terms of

dominating the relationship and wielding sexual magic. Men's attractiveness is hardly ever referenced, and if it is, it is only as an incidental asset for attracting the more attractive women in his party. I feel like if Piers Anthony were forced to write a love scene without any women involved, his head would explode. Hell, he won't even allow lesbians in his universe that loves panties so damn much. (Side note-- how would panty magic work on lesbians in Xanth? Would a lesbian written by a straight man accidentally freak herself out every morning as she got dressed?)

Some day. I have hopes that two male characters can enter a love spring and find their love for each other is true. Or maybe not, because that would imply homosexual love could only be induced artificially and it would be a curse to overcome. But why should straight people have all the fun with love springs?

And in a world where babies are LITERALLY delivered by storks, why the Hell couldn't two characters of the same sex "summon the stork"? If we no longer have to worry about fallopian tubes and birth canals, what difference does it make to the storks if parents are of the same sex?

Kristen Coffin says

"We do have a future, however temporary it may be. We can make something of it."

What is there really to say about the Xanth novels at this point? There's a hero (Kody Mundane) who is traveling with his misc. companions (a griffin, a naga, a human, a robot dog, a maiden) to complete a quest (to abate the Curse of Reversal) and save Xanth. As usual, there are problems (Demons with a capital D, in this novel), and ends happily - because, well, it's Xanth.

And, obviously: puns.

Kirsti says

I dunno, I just wasn't feeling this one. It seemed far too similar to most of the recent books, and I kind of wanted more than the usual demon bets and couples pairing off. It feels too much like following a recipe; add in attractive human male, mix in a few crossbreed species, world of Xanth in peril, Good Magician sends them on a quest, demon contest. Of course attractive human male makes best decision ever, and Xanth is saved. Hn.

I know there is a new book out after this, but I feel a little bitter. I'll wait a while before reading it, I think. Three stars.

An Odd1 says

Many puns; some I miss. Goes round about; some predictable zigs, other confusing zags. For when you're in the mood for unusual alert brain and English language tickles. Most likely could not translate. I needed pauses to catch up with twists.

Kody wakes up in hospital, hears anesthetic for "controlled coma" p 12 may cause mood reversal, title

backwards. Kody next wakes in Xanth, grabs a catbird from ogre before the monster stomps off. Hipporoc crossbreed, friend of catbird, gratefully gives Mundania (our world) arrival a "check her board" p 15, or carved cheese statues. Besides games, picture carries whoever is touching square to locale depicted. Some segues are too easy.

Kody is immune to land-wide curse, sees outwardly beautiful or ugly as is, whereas Xanthians see appearances as opposites. Quest companions are not "assembled seemingly randomly, but to turn out to have relevant abilities when the need arises" p 99. After Kody meets sweet zombie Zosi, second Quest aim is "restore zombies to Xanth before they are rendered extinct" p 98.

In this fantasy land, when people "do the signalling ritual" storks bring babies "not very efficient; it takes about nine months" p 227. Clothes and food grow on handy bushes. Trouble comes from strange places. Surprises. One of the team is a spy for the villainess, NoAmi. (view spoiler)

Amanda Summers says

Another fantastic adventure in the land of Xanth! Piers Anthony has really outdone himself with this one. Some of the puns are hilarious while others will have you groaning they're so bad. Loved the varied cast of companions this time. Was lovely to see some new creatures never presented before. Only one negative to report -- you never learn what the incident was that landed Kody in the hospital and required surgery at the on-set of the book. Sure, it's the pretense for bringing him to Xanth, but still it would have been nice to tie that little tid bit up in a bow.

Margaret says

As always, Piers Anthony gave me good giggles.

Rex Libris says

This was the 37th installment in the Xanth series. In it someone created a bomb that made ugly people attractive and attractive people ugly. A Mundanian is brought in to lead the quest to end this reversal.

The Xanth series used to be fun, light-hearted, and entertaining. But it lost those features a long time ago. The books have become tiresome, the formula no longer works because it has been done into the ground, and the over-arching story line has become unnecessarily bizarre.

Jeff says

Any Xanth is comedy as well as fantasy and must be read for the pun of it!

Samantha Eve Kennedy says

I have been reading the Piers Anthony Xanth series for years. Although I plan to keep reading the next installments in the series, I find that I do not love them quite the way I used to. The plot has become very formulaic. A foreigner (Mundanian or otherwise) ends up in Xanth unexpectedly. He or she goes to the Good Magician to get answers to an issue. The Good Magician assigns the visitor a quest. Others join the quest. At least one or more parties fall in love. (There are passages related to summoning the stork.) The more powerful elements in Xanth make an appearance (Demons, Princesses, etc.). The quest ends (more or less successfully).

The fun in reading these books, despite the pendantic plots, exists in the puns (seriously awful and funny in turn), and the various magical creatures that exist in the Xanth world.

Jenn says

This has been one of my favorite Xanth books. After a hiatus, I returned to reading the series and hadn't found them as entertaining as I had in the past, but this one reminded me why I started reading them to begin with.

The characters are humble yet virtuous, likeable and realistic. The story explores themes of love and sacrifice while staying light-hearted. Very well done!

Mark Burnham says

Always a good read.
