



## Dangerous Lord, Innocent Governess

*Christine Merrill*

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The dark Lord's ultimate temptation...

Daphne Collingham is convinced that her beloved cousin died at the hands of her husband, Timothy, Lord Colton, so decides to masquerade as a governess in his home to discover the truth. What Daphne hasn't bargained on is how the brooding Lord will make her feel under his dark gaze... Lord Colton is suspicious of the alluring new governess – and with the scandal surrounding him he must control his passion.

But a man has his limits, and the delectable Miss Collingham is pure temptation...

## **Dangerous Lord, Innocent Governess Details**

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## From Reader Review Dangerous Lord, Innocent Governess for online ebook

### Karyn Gerrard says

I will admit up front, I love the governess romance angle, innocent miss coming into the home of a tortured or scarred hero, who has closed off his heart. it has been done many times and I never get tired of it. Jane Eyre never gets old in my book.

Daphne Collingham is pretending to be a governess in Lord Timothy Colton's home, because of her cousin's mysterious death, at the supposed hands of the evil Lord. Daphne is determined to get at the bottom of it. First, she was a beloved cousin, yet Daphne never visited her cousin's home? Never met her husband, Lord Colton? The explanation seemed a little thin, but I am willing to go with it.

Being a pampered Miss of the ton, what does Daphne know about being a governess, to three children no less. Her interaction with the three children is engrossing, they are as eccentric as their standoffish father. The youngest hardly speaks, and is obsessed with drawing graphic pictures of her mother dead, at the bottom of the stairs.

This convinces Daphne all the more that Timothy Colton is the murderer of her cousin. But what disturbs her is just being in this brooding Lord's presence sets her blood afire.

Timothy Colton is brooding indeed, and no wonder, his marriage was a shipwreck. He withdraws emotionally, scarred really, as his wife, Daphne's 'beloved' cousin, was a wanton. There is even some question to his youngest daughter's parentage. He is immediately taken with Daphne's beauty, lust at first sight. It's been a long, long time since he has been with a woman. Daphne may be innocent, but she saw the seductive gaze in Lord Colton's eyes.

Daphne's fresh and honest approach endears her to the children, shades of Maria from 'The Sound of Music', for it also endears her to Timothy as well. There is a touching reconciliation between the drifted apart father and children, all thanks to Daphne.

While Timothy is grateful, he suspects the governess may not be what she seems, her lack in certain knowledge and geography mistakes has him doubting her education, and her persona. Timothy finds some serenity and calm from his tortured thoughts by spending hours in his greenhouse. I found this a nice twist. He cut and arranged flowers and left them in Daphne's room, each flower having a special meaning. How can a man, so gentle with his children, his plants, be a murderer? His gentle kiss in the greenhouse soon turns into a wild, uncontrollable passion and a heated, secret affair. After finding incriminating letters in her cousin Clare's room, she begins to wonder, was Timothy behind the murder?

This was eminently readable, all the characters well drawn with astonishing depth, even the children and neighbors, the Duke and Duchess of Bellston, who have a role to play in the culminating drama. Daphne's father showing and spilling the beans on her real identity doesn't help matters. There is an emotional finish, twists and turns as the so-called 'murder' is resolved satisfactorily.

Also love the cover, just how I pictured Timothy, though the look is a bit too sly.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book, layers of emotion, romance and suspense, all working in tandem to make for a great read.

### **Jess the Romanceaholic says**

This is a Quickie Review. For the full review, please visit The Romanceaholic.

Expected Release Date: July 1, 2011 (re-issue)

Publisher: Harlequin

Imprint: Harlequin Historical

Author's Website: <http://christine-merrill.com>

My Source for This Book: Netgalley

Part of a Series: Yes, Book 2, Belston and Friends

Series Best Read In Order: Yes but works well as a standalone

Steam Level: Steamy

This is the sequel to Miss Winthorpe's Elopement which received a 4/5 Star rating from me. Readers should be aware that this is a reissue, so I do not know if the version that I received has been altered from previous versions.

We first met Timothy in Miss Winthorpe's Elopement as the cuckolded husband of the villainess from that tale. This book picks up a fairly short time after the suspicious accidental death of his horrible wife, Clarissa, which actually occurred shortly after the last time we saw Tim in MWE.

Distraught by the death of her beloved cousin Clarissa, Miss Collingham has allowed the very sort of reckless behavior that Clare would've encouraged to land her in a mild scandal in London and is being send to the country to allow the scandal to blow over. On the journey, she discovers that one of her traveling companions, Miss Collins, is to be the new governess for the her cousin's children, and she hatches a plan to trade places with her so that she may discover the truth behind Clare's death.

What she didn't expect was to not only fall in love with the children her cousin had left behind, but to also fall for Lord Colton, the man she suspects of having murdered Clarissa.

I really enjoyed the transformation of Tim from monster to good hearted man in Daphne's eyes as she got to know him and advanced in her investigation into her cousin's death, despite the mounting evidence that he was indeed responsible for her death. While I felt that Tim overreacted when he discovered her true identity, I think the time apart served them both well. I thoroughly enjoyed the children. It was nice to see them be mischievous as children should be, without their lapsing into the total brat category.

Overall, this was a highly enjoyable read. The dark theme of Daphne's murder investigation definitely added gravity to the story, and I absolutely adored the progression of her and Tim's relationship. A very cheerful 4/5 Stars.

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### **Janga says**

*Dangerous Lord, Innocent Governess* is a sequel to *Miss Winthorpe's Elopement*. In the earlier book,

Timothy, Lord Colton is the betrayed husband. In this one, he is the tormented hero suspected of murdering his wife. Daphne Collingham, cousin to his wife, is among those who are suspicious of him. She infiltrates his household in the guise of governess to his three children. Predictably, the innocent governess, after suitably harrowing moments of doubt, fear, and reluctant attraction, falls in love with her charges and their dangerous and lordly father.

There is little new in the plot Merrill uses, but she crafts her characters with great skill and writes lucid prose in an appealing voice. I thought having read *Miss Winthorpe's Elopement* added an interesting layer to *DLIG*, but the latter book can easily be read as a standalone. Readers who dislike children may be unhappy with the roles of Lord Dalton's three offspring, but those who like their romance Gothic flavored should enjoy this one. I admit reading it left me nostalgic for the older Gothics that I read by the dozens in the 70s. I don't think this is Christine Merrill at her best, but it is an entertaining read. This book will be released July 1. I received my copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

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### **nurmawati says**

3.5 bintang....

Daphne Collingham nyamar jadi governess dan pergi ke rumahsepupunya clarissa yang di duga meninggal di tangan suami nya, Timothy, Lord Colton...

clarissa (clarre) adalah sepupu kesayangan daphne...so pas clare meninggal daphne mau mencari cara supaya suami nya bertanggung jawab....

daphne menyamae sebagai miss collins yang bakal bekerja sebagai governess untuk ke 3 anak tim....

anak2 mereka terkenal sulit di atur ...terutama anak bungsu nya yang aneh, gak mau bicara dan suka manggambar yang aneh2 kayak kondisi ibu nya pas meninggal dan jatuh dari tangga....

tim juga sangat menyalahkan dirinya karena dia kira dia yang menyebabkan clare meninggal...clare jatuh dari tangga karena berdebat dengan dia....

daphne yang awalnya gak suka anak2 dan gak pinter2 banget buat ngajarin anak2 tim yang jenius (sering salah baca peta, gak ngerti latin, perancis dll :p)lama2 benar2 peduli dan sayang kepada anak2 asuhannya..terutama si bungsu yg berusia 5 tahun dan pintar menggambar itu (duh lupa namanya)

tim pun awal pertama kali di kenalin sama daphne langsung berdesir perasaannya dan juga 'anggota' lain bagisn tubuh nya :p (makluuum....lama pisah ranjang sama istri nya....lebih dari 5 tahun....:p)  
tapi tim curiga dengan daphne karena dia sama sekali gak keliatan seperti governess..baik dari kelakuan maupun cara berpakaian....

daphne pun walau awalnya benci tim karena dikira membunuh sepupunya....lama2 memiliki perasaan thd tim dan mulai percaya kalau tim gak bersalah atas kematian clare...

rupanya memang bukan tim yang membuat clare meninggal...

clare yang dikira daphne sepupu yang baik ternyata seorang perempuan jahat dan murahan...suka whoring dimana2..bahkan tidur dengan teman2 dekat tim....

kehidupan pernikahan mereka juga amburadul ...mereka saling membenci dan gak tidur bersama

bertahun2....

tim lebih mengurus kebunnya krn dia suka tanaman dan ahli botani..sementara clare suka berpesta dan tinggal di london dan berganti2 kekasih....

clare merasa gak puas menikah dengan bangsawan yang gak teratrik mengejar politik dan lebih suka jadi botanis....

pas tim tau kalo dapne kesana buat mencaritau kejadian sebenarnya terkait kematian clare...dia bilang ke daphne kalo dia akan kasih tau asal dapnhe mau tidur sama dia...

en emang dapne nya juga suka sama tim...so gak ada salahnya sambil menyelam minum jus :p  
so tim datang ke kamar daphne dan mereka uhuk2 disana.....

abis gitu tim bilang ke daphne kalo dia yang membunuh clare karena waktu itu mereka ribut ....tim abis minum2....clare mau membawa si bungsu pergi karena dia bilang dia bukan anak tim.....

tim udah tau lama kalo dia bukan anaknya tapi tim tetep sayang dan gak mau clare bawa si bungsu.....

lalu tim tersadar ada di dalam ruangan after mabuk dan clare di temukan meninggal di bawah tangga....tim kira dia yang mendoron clare...

daphne yang gak percaya tim seorang pembunuh akhirnya menemukan bukti bahwa kejadian yang sebenarnya gak begitu...

ternyata pada malam claire mau membawa si bungsu..si bungsu berontak dan gak sengaja mendorong clare dari atas tangga karena gak mau dipisahkan sama kakak2 nya dan ayahnya....

after tau kenyataannya tim sangat lega....dan tau itu semua kecelakaan dan gak ada yang mesti di salahkan atas kematian istri nya....

tim pun merasa terbebas dari rasa bersalah dan dia melamar daphne....

daphne gak percaya tim mau menikahi dia karena cinta...karena tim sama sekali gak tau mengenai dia....yang mereka berdua lakukan banyakkan ya uhuk2 ( di kamar, di rumah kaca dll :p) tapi tim gak tau apa yang dia suka dan siapa sebenarnya daphne itu...dan apa tim bakal memaafkan krn dia udah berbohong ngaku sebagai governess padahal dia kesana niat awalnya pengen mencari bukti kalo tim membunuh clare....

so dapne minta waktu....

sayangnya pas daphne akhirnya mau jujur kasih tau tim kalo dia adalah sepupu clare....ayah dapne datang mencari daphne..

dia bilang ke tim kalo daphne dan clare adalah sepupu dan mereka dekat sekali....

tim merasa di bohongi.....dia gak mau melihat daphne di rumahnya lagi...

dia pikir daphne gak beda dengan clare..mereka sahabat dan lebih suka bersenang2 di kota daripada mengurus anak2 ...

apalagi ayah daphne juga bilang kalo daphne itu gak suka anak2.....tim tambah yakin kalo daphne bukan org yang cocok buat jadi ibu anak2 nya..

so walau daphne mau jelasin tapi tim tetap gak mau dengar...

so akhirnya daphne pulang ke london bersama ayahnya...

sepeninggal daphne tim merasa kesepian dan ada yang kurang....dia jadi gak ngurus diri sendiri dan lebih banyak mengurus tanaman...

dia selalu memikirkan daphne apalagi anak2 nya juga selalu nanyain kapan daphne kembali...

akhirnya tim sadar kalo dia mestinya gak pisah dari daphne karena dia melihat dan merasakan sendiri kalo daphne beda dengan claire...daphne mencintai dia dan anak2....

so tim mau bwrsiap2 ke london mengejar daphne dan bawa daphne pulang kembali walo dengan paksaan

(kalo daphne nya gak mau)

tapi ternyata daphne udah keburu datang....

and then bisa ditebak...after ngungkapin perasaan akhirnya mereka berpelukam dan berciuman...yang di gap sama anak2 nya ;p

endingnya sweet seperti biasa....mereka semua berpelukan dan happily ever after .....

the end

my opinion :

gw baru sekali baca hq historical romance...lebih tebel dari hq biasa dan lebih bagus sih.....so semoga aja suatu hari nanti gpu nerjemahin hq jenis ini...rada bosen ama hq2 biasa yang tipis2 dan ceritanya terlalu pendek....

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## Ruth says

I **really** loved the book this one follows, Miss Winthorpe's Elopement. I loved the characters, the plot and the writing. I just didn't enjoy this one quite as much, I'm afraid.

The plot itself is quite an intriguing one, and although I guessed WhoDunnit, it made a nice change of pace in my reading, if a little too gothic for my tastes.

I also really liked the hero. Tortured, withdrawn, essentially a tragic fragment of what we saw in Miss Winthorpe's Elopement.

But I did have some problems with the book too. The hero falls into lust far too quickly. With the wall of despair he has built around himself, I just don't believe he'd take one look at her and immediately want to rip her togs off. Equally, I couldn't believe that he wouldn't have met the heroine socially, since she was his wife's cousin.

My main problem, however, came with the heroine herself. It felt a bit like a wasted opportunity, since later she comes across more sympathetically, less certain of herself and more interesting and complex, but, particularly to start with, she comes across as a clueless, foolish child, with less maturity than her charges. I also didn't understand why we couldn't have the story start with the heroine in London before she goes to Wales. It just would have made her more human.

There is also another character missing from this book - Lady Colton herself. I don't normally like flashbacks, but with the hero and heroine having such extreme memories of the hero's wife, and the woman herself such a horrible, but energetic and magnetic character in the first book, a few sprinkled-in flashbacks would have really made her come alive, and ratcheted up the suspense.

There were also some errors - in a divorce case of this era, the mother would never have been given custody of the children (the children belonged to the husband, as did the wife), and this continued in the case of the

wife's infidelity until well into the mid-20th century. This is a widely-known fact.

So, it was OK, but I can't help but be disappointed, since I loved Miss Winthorpe so much. 2 stars.

For disclosure purposes, I received this book through Netgalley.

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### **Jenn says**

This book got better as it went on. I didn't really appreciate the premise of the story, but that's a personal choice. I'm guessing most of the things I don't like about the book might boil down to personal preference so take the rating for what it's worth.

I found the first "love" scene, in which she is a virgin, to be outlandish and overly painful, it paints the hero as a complete jerk, an unrecoverable jerk.

As for her, her motives were absolutely ridiculous.

I don't like the cover much

I rolled my eyes too much. And the book was full of WTFckry.

I received the book from NetGalley for review.

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### **Cyn Mistress Kitty says**

This story was ok for me. I just couldn't quite connect with the characters. Daphne seemed much too willful and childish although she did change a lot. Lord Colton was a bit too brooding although I could see that he had gone through a lot. I guess it might have helped if I had read the first book in the series.

I liked the suspense in the story of what really happened to the dead wife and I felt bad for what the children had gone through.

\*\*I received this as an ARC from NetGalley\*\*

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### **Judy & Marianne from Long and Short Reviews says**

Daphne Collingham is masquerading as a governess in Lord Timothy Colton's home—determined to discover if he is responsible for her beloved cousin's death. She's prepared to uncover secrets and scandal, but the biggest revelation is the way she feels under the lord's dark gaze....

Lord Colton is suspicious of the alluring new governess—and with the furor surrounding him he must control his passion. But a man has his limits, and the delectable Miss Collingham is

pure temptation....

Daphne Collingham takes on a whole new persona to learn the truth about her cousin, Clare's death. This deception turns out to be a rite of passage for Daphne but it also brings on lots of heartache. Instead of attending balls, musicales, parties and flirting to the point of creating scandal in London, she is in Wales playing governess to three troubled children who have joined forces against the world. Lily, Edmund, and little Sophie know more about their mother's death than anyone realizes, but keep quiet with deep-down fear.

The children's father Lord Timothy Colton, whom Daphne believes is a murderer and a brute, turns out to be a self-loathing man devoid of any hope for redemption for what he believes he did while drunk and in a fit of temper.

Timothy's marriage to the promiscuous Clare had made his life a living hell. Now, even after her death, her past actions continue to influence. Timothy acts totally out of character, seemingly bent on proving to all how horrible he is, but somewhere along the way he realizes life goes on. The governess that he so resented having to tolerate brings needs, desires, and bone-deep longing rushing back into his life.

Little Sophie and the older children Edmund and Lily are the catalyst in unraveling the mystery of the death in the house. As their fears become known, the truth emerges. Christine Merrill reveals how children see and cope with stress in life. The strengths they possess and the faith they have in a mother's word (lies though they be) gives the story a special poignancy.

The duke and duchess, Timothy's friends, add a significant element to the story, while the dead Clare, the antagonist, continues to control emotions. The guilt, fear, and self-loathing she engendered in those she should have loved colors their actions and stalls out their lives until Daphne, without realizing it, finds the key to set them free to move on.

The plot of the story is predictable and the protagonists have traits, flaws, and lack of insight in so many ways that I found myself not as invested in the story as I usually am. However, the children, especially little Sophie, kept me reading like crazy to be sure that they got past the trauma and had a healthy start on their happy-ever-after.

The arrival of Daphne's father brings on the seemingly insurmountable conflict. Deception is a big obstacle to overcome. How Christine Merrill works through the emotional upheaval, fears, and tears makes page-turning reading. When she finally gets Timothy and Daphne back together with their true personalities in place, the house in Wales, so long full of negativity and fear, bubbles with joy of lovers reunited and happy children secure in the knowledge that they are LOVED.

Originally published on Long and Short Reviews

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## **Kimm says**

I really enjoy Harlequin Historicals. They are just the right length for a nice easy evening read after a long day in the grind (work, family, life, whatever you want to call it). Because I am a huge Regency fan, I was immediately drawn to this title when I saw it. Nothing terribly long and complicated, but sound writing that leaves you with a feel good ending. On a technical note, I'm going to jump straight to the one thing that struck me the most about this story – the tight focus of the setting. I've been dying to spit that out!! Everything pretty much centers itself in one house, between two people – Daphne and Lord Colton. I am not sure why that has stuck with me for so long, but it became the single thought that overshadowed everything else – minus the scene where Colton gives Daphne flowers (it's the message behind the flowers that I liked).

The chemistry between these two is good. The children, whom Daphne is attempting to govern despite her lack of experience, were a nice addition and helped to keep things moving along. Lord Colton was perhaps too tormented and twisted at times, making one hope that he truly gets over the complex that he is carrying around (hint: guilt).

Overall, a fair book, worthy of some attention by those who prefer to tuck into something easy and don't want to bring a large amount of emotional investment to the story. I think you would walk away feeling that it was nice, but not blown away.

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## **Marcela (BookaholicCat) says**

This review is also published at <http://thebookaholiccat.com>

Daphne Collingham suspects fault play in her favorite cousin's death, she thinks Clare's husband is responsible for her dismissal. Daphne feels the need to find out the truth and bring the responsible to the courts of law.

Daphne is living as her cousin thought her to, trying to enjoy life as much as possible without thinking much about the consequences of her actions. Thanks to this she is found in a compromising situation. Her family decides to send her away from London for sometime until the scandal in which she was involved dies down. During her trip to the country Daphne meets with a governess bound to the Colton residence. Mrs. Collins is the new governess for Clare's children. Daphne sees this as an opportunity to infiltrates the Colton's household and decides to buy off Mrs. Collins and pose as the new governess. The only problem is that she has never been a good student, she is really bad for math and languages and doesn't like children.

Lord Colton is not what Daphne was expecting, her cousin always describe him as a despicable man and in reality he could be anything but that. She is also caring for the children a lot more than what she ever thought possible.

Now more than ever she needs to find out the truth, not just for her but also for the wellbeing of the family.

Lord Colton is a torture hero, he was not just cheated and deceived countless times by his deceased wife but also received many public humiliations from her. Now he feels guilty because of the circumstances of her death and feels he doesn't deserve anything good or positive in his life.

On the beginning Daphne is as a selfish and immature girl, but with the passing of times and the experiences she is living she grows and matures becoming a caring and a more real woman.

Lord Colton and Daphne's chemistry was perceivable since their first meeting and evolved page after page. Their relationship felt real and was well developed, even though there were some things as their first "close encounter" that I found a little bit unrealistic and a bit shameful as Daphne first experience.

I loved the kids, they are caring and protecting of each other and of their family in general. But what I liked the most is that they behave as kids do. They felt real and it was very easy to begin to care for them.

**My final thought:** Dangerous Lord, Innocent Governess was an entertaining historical romance with a gothic touch, a plot with some twists and turns and a nice romance to add-on to the story. The characters are developed really well; the setting is an interesting one and the transformation they characters experienced was plausible and feasible.

Dangerous Lord, Innocent Governess by Christine Merrill was my first book by this author and I'm sure it won't be my last.

I recommend this book to all historical romance readers.

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### **Vampire-lk says**

Sooo sweet!!! Loved how she went from high society girl to demure country/governess she find her true self & it's not in the countless new ball gowns or endless ton parties, but with love of a great man & a family to call her own!!!! Eeeekkkkssss!!!!!! :) ❤?

Yipppeeee!!!! LOVED THIS STORY!!!!!!

Awwwww true love....a second time around!!!! :)

Lord Colton was a tortured soul & Miss Collins (Collingham) has never been a governess, but embraced the role out of loyalty to her cousin finding out how she really died!

It is always heartbreaking to figure out a close family/friend is not who you though they were! Grrrrr Clare & her vain & in humane treatment of her children & husband! They never should of married in first place, with that said Lord Colton & Miss Collins would not been able to meet like they did & fall in love!!!!

It was such a touching story of letting go of the past, but also figuring it out so it had no power to torment any longer!!!!

Proper British spelling yippeeee!!!! Authentic regency romance!! TRULY A KEEPER!!!!!!!  
Will re-read this anytime!!!! :) ❤?

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### **Gloriamarie says**

I love a comedy of manners. I truly do. This book is highly entertaining.

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### **Jen Davis says**

Daphne is convinced there is more to her cousin Clare's death than meets the eye. In fact, Daphne is certain that Clare's husband Timothy is to blame. So in order to find the truth, Daphne poses as a governess for

Clare's children. The plan is simple: ingratiate herself into the household and expose Timothy as a murderer.

She never expects to care for the children. And certainly, she could never anticipate the undeniable attraction between Tim and herself. Yet, she finds herself falling in love with the entire family. With her changing feelings, she starts questioning whether Tim is really a man who could commit murder... and she realizes her cousin may not have been the woman she thought she knew.

I enjoyed this book. It had a kind of gothic, *Jane Eyre* feel to it. I know some people are put off by such a similarity, but it worked for me. There was solid sexual tension, steamy love scenes and some delicious angst from our brooding hero. All good things, as far as I'm concerned.

It wasn't perfect. It's kind of hard to like Daphne at first. She's pretty self-absorbed and callous about the children.... though that changes over the course of the book. And I was a little taken aback by the manner in which she lost her virginity. I won't get into specifics, but it's not exactly gentle and there was no acknowledgement that such a thing may not be all sunshine and roses for an innocent. But, in the grand scheme of things, I wasn't bothered all that much. It was sexy, dark and satisfying. 4 stars.

\*ARC Provided by NetGalley

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### **Mande Garrett says**

Even i didnt care for hoe Daphne tricked Lord Colton on why she was there at his house or how Lord Colton treated her in return. But it ended up being a very sweet story at the end.

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### **Mnms says**

A nice story, with good characters and a classic plot

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