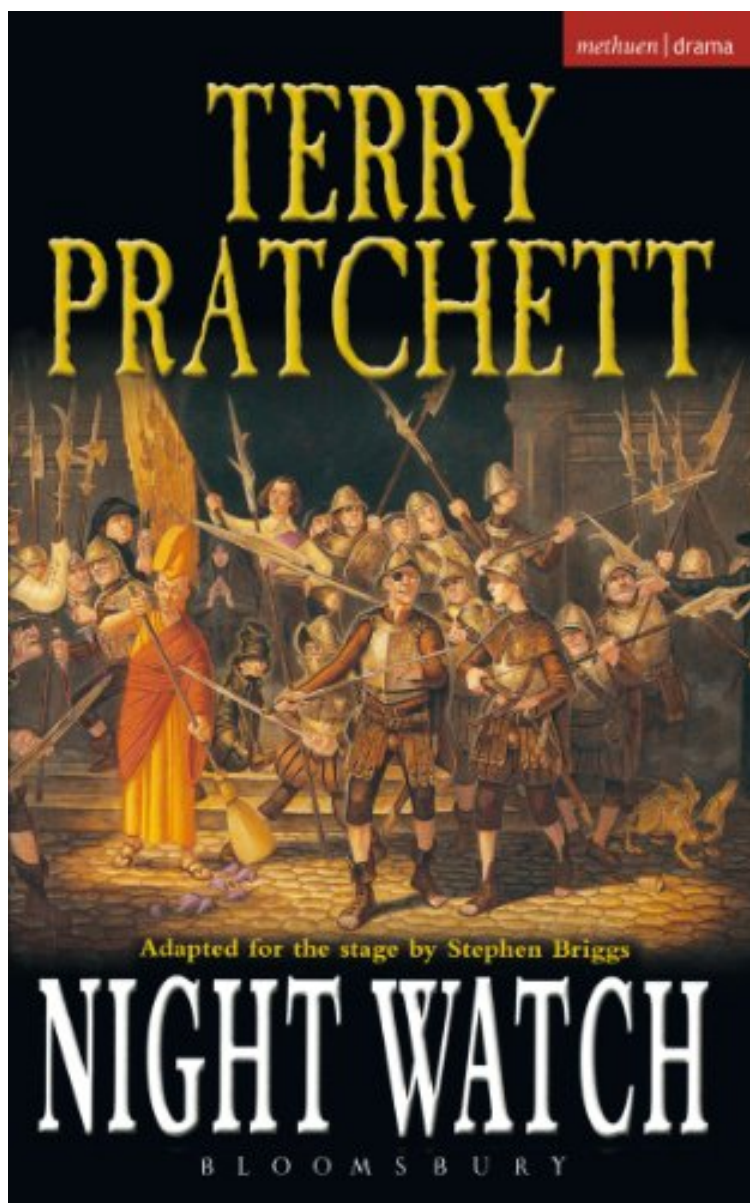


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Night Watch



Par Terry Pratchett
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Description :

Présentation de l'auteurA new stage adaptation of one of Pratchett's best-selling novelsSet in Ankh-Morpork one of the most thoroughly imagined cities in fantasy, Night Watch is the story of Sam Vimes, running hero of the Guards sequence, who finds himself cast back in time to the Ankh-Morpork of his youth. With a psychopath from his own time rising in the vile ranks of the Cable Street Unmentionables complicating things, Vimes has to ensure that history takes its course so that he will have the right future to go back to, and to keep his younger self alive."One of the funniest English authors alive" (Independent).co.ukThe new Discworld novel Night Watch has the power and energy that characterizes Terry Pratchett at his occasional

best, as well as the wild surreal humour he always gives us. Sam Vimes, running hero of the Guards sequence, finds himself cast back in time to the Ankh-Morpork of his youth--a much nastier city, with an actively deranged Patrician and a sadistic secret police--and finding himself filling in for Keel, the tough honest copper who teaches the young Vimes everything he knows. And, more worryingly, who dies heroically in the insurrection Vimes knows to be imminent. With a psychopath from his own time rising in the vile ranks of the Cable Street Unmentionables complicating things, Vimes has to ensure that history takes its course so that he will have the right future to go back to, and to keep his younger self alive--this is Pratchett's plotting at its most thoroughly constructed and wonderfully devious. Ankh-Morpork has for a long time been one of the most thoroughly imagined cities in fantasy--here Pratchett gives us a fascinating gloomy glimpse of its past and of the younger selves of some of his best-loved characters, and of the brief-lived People's Republic of Treacle-Mine Road. --Roz Kaveney

Extrait

Sam Vimes sighed when he heard the scream, but he finished shaving before he did anything about it. Then he put his jacket on and strolled out into the wonderful late spring morning. Birds sang in the trees, bees buzzed in the blossom. The sky was hazy, though, and thunderheads on the horizon threatened rain later. But, for now, the air was hot and heavy.

And, in the old cesspit behind the gardener's shed, a young man was treading water. Well . . . treading, anyway. Vimes stood back a little way and lit a cigar. It probably wouldn't be a good idea to employ a naked flame any nearer to the pit. The fall from the shed roof had broken the crust. 'Good morning!' he said cheerfully. 'Good morning, your grace,' said the industrious treadler. The voice was higher pitched than Vimes expected and he realized that, most unusually, the young man in the pit was in fact a young woman. It wasn't entirely unexpected - the Assassins' Guild was aware that women were at least equal to their brothers when it came to inventive killing - but it nevertheless changed the situation somewhat. 'I don't believe we've met?' said Vimes. 'Although I see you know who I am. You are . . .?' 'Wiggs, sir,' said the swimmer. 'Jocasta Wiggs. Honoured to meet you, your grace.' 'Wiggs, eh?' said Vimes. 'Famous family in the Guild.' 'Sir' will do, by the way. I think I once broke your father's leg?' 'Yes, sir. He asked to be remembered to you,' said Jocasta. 'You're a bit young to be sent on this contract, aren't you?' said Vimes. 'Not a contract, sir,' said Jocasta, still paddling. 'Come now, Miss Wiggs. The price on my head is at least-' 'The Guild council put it in abeyance, sir,' said the dogged swimmer. 'You're off the register. They're not accepting contracts on you at present.' 'Good grief, why not?' 'Couldn't say, sir,' said Miss Wiggs. Her patient struggles had brought her to the edge of the pit, and now she was finding that the brickwork was in very good repair, quite slippery and offered no handholds. Vimes knew this, because he'd spent several hours one afternoon carefully arranging that this should be so. 'So why were you sent, then?' 'Miss Band sent me as an exercise,' said Jocasta. 'I say, these bricks really are jolly tricky, aren't they?' 'Yes,' said Vimes, 'they are. Have you been rude to Miss Band lately? Upset her in any way?' 'Oh, no, your grace. But she did say I was getting over-confident, and would benefit from some advanced field work.' 'Ah. I see.' Vimes tried to recall Miss Alice Band, one of the Assassins' Guild's stricter teachers. She was, he'd heard, very hot on practical lessons. 'So . . . she sent you to kill me, then?' he said. 'No, sir! It's an exercise! I don't even have any crossbow bolts! I just had to find a spot where I could get you in my sights and then report back!' 'She'd believe you?' 'Of course, sir,' said Jocasta, looking rather hurt. 'Guild honour, sir.' Vimes took a deep breath. 'You see, Miss Wiggs, quite a few of your chums have tried to kill me at home in recent years. As you might expect, I take a dim view of this.' 'Easy to see why, sir,' said Jocasta, in the voice of one who knows that their only hope of escaping from their present predicament is reliant on the goodwill of another person who has no pressing reason to have any. 'And so you'd be amazed at the booby traps there are around the place,' Vimes went on. 'Some of them are pretty cunning, even if I say it myself.' 'I certainly never expected the tiles on the shed to shift like that, sir.' 'They're on greased rails,' said Vimes. 'Well done, sir!' 'And quite a few of the traps drop you into something deadly,' said Vimes. 'Lucky for me that I fell into this one, eh, sir?' 'Oh, that one's deadly too,' said Vimes. 'Eventually deadly.' He sighed. He really wanted to discourage this sort of thing but . . . they'd put him off the register? It wasn't that he'd liked being shot at by hooded figures in the temporary employ of his many and varied enemies, but he'd always looked at it as some kind of vote of confidence. It showed that he was annoying the rich and arrogant people who ought to be annoyed. Besides, the Assassins' Guild was easy to outwit. They had strict rules, which they followed quite honourably, and this was fine by Vimes, who, in certain practical areas, had no rules whatsoever. Off the register, eh? The only other person not on it any more, it was rumoured, was Lord Vetinari, the Patrician. The Assassins understood the political game in the city better than anyone, and if they took you off the register it was because they felt your departure would not only spoil the game but also smash the board . . . 'I'd be jolly grateful if you could pull me out, sir,' said

Jocasta. 'What? Oh, yes. Sorry, got clean clothes on,' said Vimes. 'But when I get back to the house I'll tell the butler to come down here with a ladder. How about that?' 'Thank you very much, sir. Nice to have met you, sir.' Vimes strolled back to the house. Off the register? Was he allowed to appeal? Perhaps they thought- The scent rolled over him. He looked up. Overhead, a lilac tree was in bloom. He stared. Damn! Damn! Damn! Every year he forgot. Well, no. He never forgot. He just put the memories away, like old silverware that you didn't want to tarnish. And every year they came back, sharp and sparkling, and stabbed him in the heart. And today, of all days . . . He reached up, and his hand trembled as he grasped a bloom and gently broke the stem. He sniffed at it. He stood for a moment, staring at nothing. And then he carried the sprig of lilac carefully back up to his dressing room. Willikins had prepared the official uniform for today. Sam Vimes stared at it blankly, and then remembered. Watch Committee. Right. The battered old breastplate wouldn't do, would it . . . Not for His Grace the Duke of Ankh, Commander of the City Watch, Sir Samuel Vimes. Lord Vetinari had been very definite about that, blast it. Blast it all the more because, unfortunately, Sam Vimes could see the point. He hated the official uniform, but he represented a bit more than just himself these days. Sam Vimes had been able to turn up for meetings with grubby armour, and even Sir Samuel Vimes could generally contrive to find a way to stay in street uniform at all times, but a Duke . . . well, a Duke needed a bit of polish. A Duke couldn't have the arse hanging out of his trousers when meeting foreign diplomats. Actually, even plain old Sam Vimes never had the arse hanging out of his trousers, either, but no one would have actually started a war if he had. From the Paperback edition.