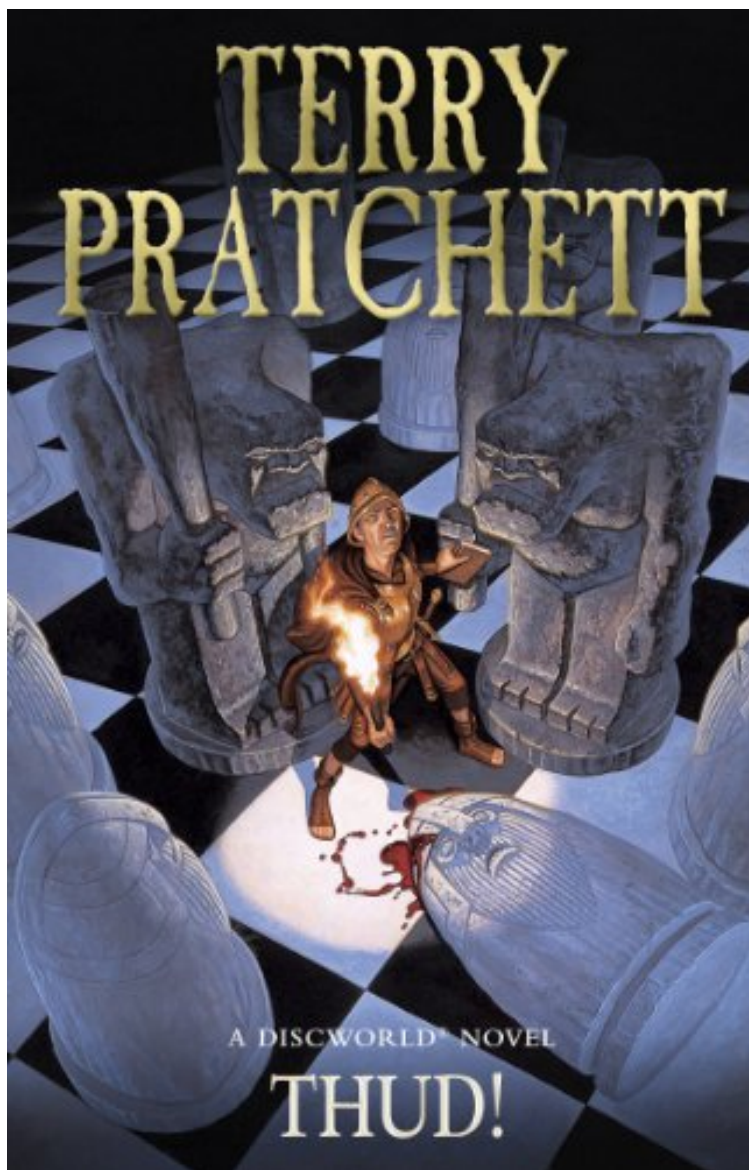


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Thud!: (Discworld Novel 34)



Par Terry Pratchett
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Par Terry Pratchett : Thud!: (Discworld Novel 34) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Thud!: (Discworld Novel 34):

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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteur'Some people would be asking: whose side are you on? If you're not for us, you're against us. Huh. If you're not an apple, you're a banana'Koom Valley, the ancient battle where the trolls ambushed the dwarfs, or the dwarfs ambushed the trolls, was a long time ago. But if he doesn't solve the murder of just one dwarf, Commander Sam Vimes of Ankh-Morpork City Watch is going to see it fought again, right outside his office. With his beloved Watch crumbling around him and war-drums sounding, he must unravel every clue, outwit every assassin and brave any darkness to find the solution. And darkness is following him. Oh . . . and at six o'clock every day, without fail, with no excuses, he must go home to read 'Where's My Cow?', with all the right farmyard noises, to his little boy. There are some things you have to

do. From Publishers Weekly The 31st Discworld novel begins with a thud—the sound of a club crushing the skull of influential dwarf leader Grag Hamcrusher. Tensions between dwarves and trolls has been high for centuries, so when a troll club is found lying nearby the murdered Hamcrusher, a villainous troll is the obvious suspect. But the dwarf's death is not so simple, and Commander Samuel Vimes of the Ankh-Morpork City Watch must investigate the murder and discover the truth...lest renewed tensions between the dwarves and trolls tear his city apart. While some of these characters have appeared in previous Discworld volumes, newcomers to the series should have no trouble following and enjoying this audiobook. Like all of Pratchett's work, *Thud!* is infused with wit and good fun throughout. Briggs, a 2004 Audie Award winner, enlivens the humor with his exuberant and masterful narration, and his pleasant British brogue is a joy to listen to. A man of many voices, Briggs flawlessly handles the wide variety of characters, which range from slow-witted trolls and gruff dwarves to arrogant lords and non-blood-sucking vampires. Canon reading for fantasy-fanatic audiophiles. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From The Washington Post's Book World/washingtonpost.com One problem with writing a comic series is that the later books have to include all the brilliant inventions from the earlier books, leaving less room for new brilliant inventions, which are, after all, the reason for writing the series in the first place. Terry Pratchett wrestles with this problem in his latest Discworld novel, *Thud!*, and mostly pins it to the mat. Just how many Discworld novels are there by now? I would guess at least 30, though the actual number seems to be as difficult to locate as Unseen University, a magician's college founded in Ankh-Morpork, principal city of the principal continent of Discworld, about 15 years before Hogwarts and a much tougher place in which to matriculate. The problems inherent in an amassed back story -- very like, I think, those clanking boxes Dickens's Marley had to tow through the afterlife -- are best shown by a comparison between the current installment and the first book to introduce Discworld, *The Color of Magic*. There the basic structure and what we might call the rules of engagement were laid out. Discworld, in a universe not quite parallel to ours, is, as the name suggests, a giant disc, containing continents and oceans and many populations, and resting on the backs of four elephants, who in turn stand on a giant turtle, who is swimming steadily, relentlessly, across the universe. If this picture seems familiar, you have seen it in some art from the Indian sub-continent, but Pratchett purloins the concept and goes his own way with it. In *The Color of Magic*, Ankh-Morpork is a dangerous, seedy, bloody city, whose rulers learn that a tourist has come from some other part of Discworld to take in the sights. Once the disbelief dissipates -- Ankh-Morpork never had a tourist before, nor ever expected one -- the city fathers realize that, if they can keep this tourist alive, they just might have the beginning of a new industry. With this wisp of a hope, they hire a failed magician, a dropout from Unseen University, to follow the tourist around and, if possible, keep him from being slaughtered. That's the setup, and the whole novel is ingenious, brilliant and hilarious. Terry Pratchett himself is still ingenious, brilliant and hilarious, but by now he has a lot of baggage to lug along. The hero of *Thud!* is Sam Vimes, an earnest young man who in an earlier book married a wealthy aristocrat, Lady Sybil, which would make him Duke of Ankh-Morpork if he were willing to accept the role. For now, though, he is the local police chief or, to give him the proper nomenclature, Commander of the Watch. And the Watch, instead of the ragtag, corrupt, defeated few hopeless cases who, way back in *The Color of Magic*, wouldn't even be asked to help keep a tourist alive, is now a serious modern police department suffering from, as so many police departments are these days, political correctness. An equal opportunity employer, the Watch contains, in addition to Sam Vimes and a few other humans and sorta humans, an array of trolls, dwarfs, golems and one girl werewolf, and is about to integrate their first vampire, a shapely lady named Sally, whose elegance appears to be borrowed from Bela Lugosi's tuxedo. The primary tasks of this cleaned-up Watch are two: forestall a riot-cum-war between the city's dwarfs and trolls, and solve the murder of a dwarf in a tunnel under the city. The looming riot, if it occurs, will be yet another re-enactment of a battle between the two groups hundreds of years ago, up in the wild country of Koom Valley, a battle out of which both sides emerged feeling betrayed and thirsting for revenge. If an echo of the Balkans comes to mind, I don't think Pratchett would object. The working out of these two problems, with many asides for Pratchett's corkscrew brain to riff on the material, is the meat of the book. By the end, the members of the Watch even seem to believe they've solved the murder, though I confess I still haven't. But that's all right; the riot is averted, and the farmers and the cowboys -- sorry, the dwarfs and the trolls -- can perhaps be friends. Sally the vampire is becoming girl chums with Angua the werewolf, and peace temporarily stalks the land. But the plot of a Discworld novel is never the point. The asides and the general goofiness and the imagination run amok are the point, every time and this time, too. And if, for instance, Carrot, the shy six-foot-tall dwarf

(you had to be there), seems by this episode to be overstaying his welcome, that's also okay. All in all the only thing to be said about a Discworld novel is: Read it. You'll like it. ed by Donald E. Westlake Copyright 2005, The Washington Post. All Rights Reserved.