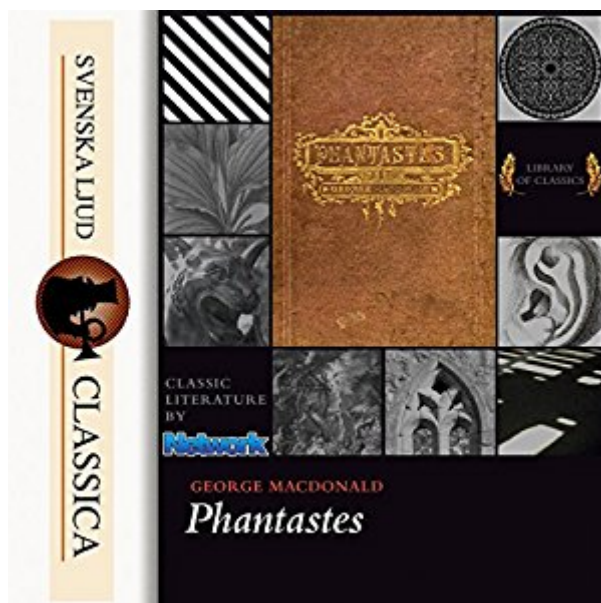


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Phantastes



Synopsis

A young man named Anodos experiences dream like adventures in Fairy Land, where he meets tree spirits, endures the presence of the overwhelming shadow, journeys to the palace of the fairy queen, and searches for the spirit of the earth. The story conveys a profound sadness and a poignant longing for death.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I read Phantastes because of the very high recommendation of C. S. Lewis. I'm surprised by the negative reviews, but if MacDonald's other books are really better than this one then I'm excited to read them, because I really liked Phantastes. At first it was hard to get into because for a while the story seems to wander aimlessly. MacDonald describes Fairy Land beautifully, but I just didn't see any plot to connect the seemingly random events. Also, it was sometimes a chore to get through the long sections of poetry (as I'm not a big fan of poetry). BUT at about halfway through the book, a story started to take shape, or rather, the "story" was hinted at all along, and the central struggles finally came to the surface, like love vs. possessiveness, and sacrifice. It's really a connect-the-dots kind of book, but not in the sense of a detective story: in a deeper sense of seeing the picture that MacDonald paints of the human heart, a picture that at first looks like random splotches, but then, as if we were watching the picture being painted, becomes more and more recognizable as the separate shapes are connected and finally find their meaning as a whole. MacDonald has painted not only a fairy story, but he has painted us, our own heart, in all its joy and pain. Once I saw this, it really changed my attitude toward the book. I read the second half in one sitting! I'll definitely read it

again sometime because I'm sure I missed a lot of the layers and hidden meanings. My advice: If you're bored in the first half, just keep reading! It gets better.

It's a shame that not many people know of George MacDonald, they're missing out. Whether you haven't read his stuff, or if you're a huge fan, this book is worth your money, the beautiful illustrations alone are worth your money- if you already have a copy of this story. If this is your first venture into this story, don't hesitate, get this copy if you love stories of a magical nature. If this is the first way you venture into George Macdonald, you are one lucky gun

It's rare that I give a book 5-stars, but "Phantastes" definitely earned it. This is the first time I've read one of MacDonald's books, so if the others are even better I can't wait to read them! About the book: The first half is like a beautiful, but fragmented, dream. It's difficult to see how the fragments relate to each other, or what purposes they serve. Many chapters could easily work as stand-alone short stories. In the second half, everything starts to come together. It's like piecing together a puzzle to see what picture forms at the end. The story often becomes philosophical, but in a way that encourages individual thinking rather than promoting only the narrator's viewpoint. Readers of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien (or any other Inklings, for that matter) will probably find "Phantastes" worthwhile.

Do not expect to like this book if you have never felt the immortal longings of Fairyland stir in your soul. But for those who have heard the faint notes of fairy music whispering to you on some golden Midsummer twilight, they might find some enjoyment in this strange tale of a man's wandering through the fairylands. This is not a plot-driven book. The story is simple enough. A man wanders into the mystical other world and encounters strange goings on. The plot springs from this like a dream, shifting unexpectedly and often, flowing like a river shifting and twisting in its banks. An act as simple as opening a door might bring a sudden shift in the narrative, a jump in time and place. If this lack of structure sounds unappealing, then this book is probably not for you. The story recounts the journey of Anodos through the spiritual realms of Faerie, and his triumphs and failures therein. As a reader who enjoys such fantastical journeys, I found this book to be a pleasant read. The ending of the book was not as satisfying as I had hoped it would be, especially after the long winding road to reach it. Also, the book includes a lot of poems, verse and songs, which I find bogs down the flow of the narrative. The songs in particular, which can be quite lengthy at times, I did not like. Because they lack music, the lyrics are somewhat dead on the page. Some of these songs

seemed to go on and on for pages. Tolkien showed this same irritating trait later in his works, so if you find the songs in the Lord of the Rings unappealing, then you probably won't like these. C.S. Lewis claimed that Phantastes was the book that baptized his imagination, and it is easy to see why. This is certainly a powerful book, and for anyone interested in the breadth of Fantasy literature (beyond Tolkien and Tolkien-derivatives), I would recommend reading this. Don't expect to find high adrenaline excitement on every page. But do expect to encounter a haunting vision of Faerie that will stick with you for a while.

Beautiful book! I bought this for my girlfriend at the time because it's her favorite book and she loved it! The illustrations and how the whole book is put together is very nice!

The book for me was hard to read as it went on these random thoughts, stories inside of stories that the relevance is not obvious, the author seemed to wander with his imagination. I had the impression that he was writing just what ever came to mind. The story starts out well, and grabs you. And you are taken in by this adventure, and where the story line stays on track with this theme of a man finding his way into faerie land and how he must find his way back out keeps you hooked to read more to see how it will end. Which is why it gets the 3 out of 5 stars. I think different people will get different takes so I would not be discouraging for others to read. Those deeply into symbolism and finding the moral of the story might enjoy it more.

Wow! It's no wonder this was one of C.S. Lewis' favorite authors. The opening paragraphs alone are breathtaking. George MacDonald was a brilliant writer and a fabulous story-teller, and he certainly displayed those talents in this book. As far as the quality of the Kindle publication itself, I can't argue with free. At just about any price, MacDonald is worth reading.

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Phantastes

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