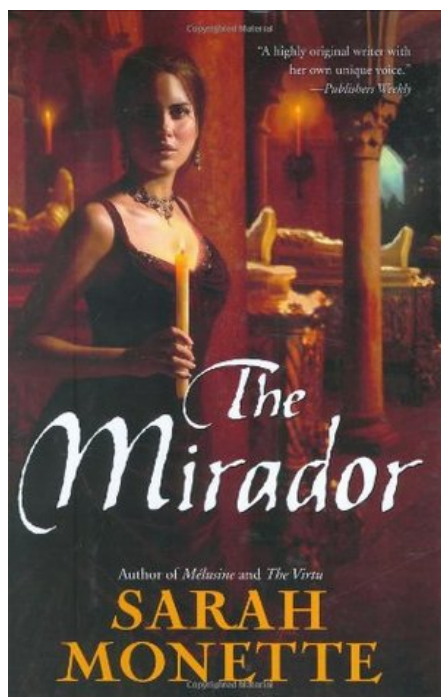




The Mirador

Sarah Monette

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The dashing wizard Felix Harrowgate has reclaimed his sanity, magic, and position in society. But even as he returns to his former place in the Mirador-the citadel of power and wizardry-there are many who desire his end. Mildmay the Fox is an ex-assassin, a cat-burglar, and Felix's half-brother. Tied to Felix by blood and magic, Mildmay goes where Felix goes-even into the Mirador. There, Mildmay finds himself drawn to an alluring spy of the Bastion, a rival school of wizards.

The Bastion desires above all else to bring down the Mirador, and Felix is the key to its destruction. But Mildmay cannot let Felix stand alone, and will fight to save both his brother and his city from certain ruin.

The Mirador Details

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From Reader Review The Mirador for online ebook

Juxian says

I disliked this book while reading it but the ending kinda made up for it. So, okay. It's not the series where you can skip anything, and I hope the last book will be better.

Elena Johansen says

This entry in the series appears to be a jumbled mess for the first 90% of the book, with subplots springing out of every hinge and joint and dovetail, but then, at the end, everything comes together in one fantastic crash that resolves the vast bulk of the previously unrelated story threads.

I can admire the masterful plotting as a writer, juggling so many things at once, but as a reader, I was more often frustrated than not. I honestly couldn't see much in the way of foreshadowing that would let me put together some of the clues myself, and the slow-as-molasses pacing coupled with story threads being dropped and picked up again a hundred or more pages later made this a more challenging read to follow than either of its predecessors.

One thing I'm pleased that was dropped, though, was the will-they-won't-they incest angle between Mildmay and Felix. Rumors of that twist to their relationship are mentioned in passing by other characters, mostly as part of the complex court intrigue that carries most of the plot--but as far as Mildmay and Felix themselves are concerned, it seems to be entirely in the past for them. Felix's tumultuous relationship with Gideon was something I was glad to see carried over from the end of the previous book--given Felix's nature, I had no idea if that was going to last, especially when it became clear how much time had passed since.

And I did like how Mildmay's relationship with Mehitabel, in some key ways, mirrored Felix and Gideon. Mehitabel herself was a fine addition as a POV character, leading to some of my favorite bits of dialogue and twists of intrigue, and her absolute inability to take shit from people was a nice contrast to Mildmay, who basically does nothing but.

The end really does make the book, and I'm glad I stuck with it, though I would have preferred if the insane complexity of the plot that led me there had been toned down some.

Sheila says

4 stars--I really liked it.

It's the characters and the writing that keep me interested in these books, not the plot. Like with the last book, the pacing is strange, and Mildmay and Felix seem trapped in loops of self deprecation and anger that are repeated over and over. The plot is a slow burn, with some meandering mysteries that connect/get intense in the last 10% of the book.

What bumped this from 3 to 4 stars was the introduction of Mehitabel's chapters. Even though I have a hard time reconciling this Mehitabel to the one we met in the last book, her voice was so refreshing in this male-angst world.

Really sad about something that happened at the end of this book. (Trying to be spoiler free, but if you've read it, you know what I'm talking about.)

Ascian says

The only book of the series with a first-person point of view that is female, Mehitabel Parr.

The main attraction of the book for me, and the aspect that sets it apart for me from the rest of the series, is that it gives for the first time a relatively humanizing look at the ruler of the city of Melusine, Stephen Teverius. Not as bad a guy as Felix Harrowgate's perspective depict him.

Desinka says

It's 4.5 stars but I'm rounding up because the second half of the book was pure 5 stars. I couldn't put the book down.

Well done, Madame Monette. A very high paced and convoluted court intrigue yet with enough emotional depth and great relationship development. I can't wait to start Corambis.

Belmanoir says

Felix annoyed me even more than usual in this book (seriously, does he have any redeeming qualities left?) but I loved Mehitabel's narration and Mildmay is still the hottest ex-assassin ever, and I think I'm glad the author didn't go the expected places with their romance. I sort of wished there had been more plot, but on the whole I was too entertained to care. Sarah Monette rocks my world, also her meta on Due South is love. Everyone who hasn't read already read Melusine (the first book in the series) needs to go do that now.

LenaLena says

This book in the series feels like an intermission. We're just hanging around in the Mirador and there are a bunch of little, non-urgent mysteries being pursued by way of plot. You kind of figure that, seemingly unrelated, they'll all come together somehow, and they do, but not until the very end, when crash-bang-boom everything blows up in Felix's face without much build up. The plot under the plot is about how Mildmay and Felix, the Master Non-Communicators, gain a bit more insight into themselves and their brotherly relationship, but advancement in that one is doled out so sparingly, it sometimes seems barely there. So, I for one am happy we are about to leave Melusine behind in the next installment.

RF says

Some notes on Melusine and The Virtu: I love these books. The narration takes turns going between first person PoVs of Felix and Mildmay. I should also point out that Sarah Monette is one of the best authors I've seen when it comes to putting colloquial, 'incorrect' english/grammar down on paper and not making it grate on my nerves. I recently picked up a book.. boy, what was it... ok, I don't remember, but oh boy... I put it down after I read the first page, it was absolutely grating. Sarah Monette makes it look easy. Mildmay's slang is fantastic, and his curse phrases are becoming some of my favourites. Anyway... the point is that Felix goes insane. This is no big secret; I'm not spoiling anything. But yeah, Felix goes insane, and the point is that this series is not to be taken lightly. It has a lot of heavy and disturbing imagery, but oh boy is it amazing. I honestly think everyone should at least try it. Psychosis can get ugly but Sarah Monette writes it so well it gives me the creeps.

So that was my little plug for Melusine and The Virtu. Now moving on to The Mirador.

My opinion of The Mirador by Sarah Monette: Quite honestly, I think Ms Monette dropped the stick on this one. Possibly I think this was because of how much I loved the first two books and how much I therefore expected of the third, but I don't think so. Compared to the fast-paced action of books one and two, three was about nothing. Absolutely nothing. Nothing happens, and the only way I can justify this is that there will be a fourth. So I'm guessing The Mirador only served as a transition, and I can sort of see how that could be. But a big part of me thinks that Ms Monette could have condensed The Mirador into two or three chapters. But oh well, I'm not her, maybe she knows better. All that said though - I still enjoyed the books. And the reason is this: Sarah Monette has a real knack for characters. Her characters are absolutely amazing, especially the ones who narrate. And even though the book is hardly about anything enchanting plot-wise, it is certainly still enchanting when we see the world through the characters' eyes, and that is why I still enjoyed this book. So in conclusion: no, it wasn't nearly as good as the previous two, but it was still enjoyable. I could say more, but only spoilers, So I'll stop here.

Antonella says

[her love interest Hallam Bellamy stays prisoner in the Bastion and we don't hear anymore of him in book 4 (hide spoiler)]

liz says

Less grindingly unpleasant than the previous two but I'm not totally sure why I keep reading this series. Mehitabel is a fun narrator at least.

Lyra says

I'm warning people once again: this is not, I repeat *is not* a m/m romance, despite what the tags may lead you to believe. It *does* contain two men who have a certain degree of romantic and sexual involvement with each other, but that does not make the story itself a romance. Just as this book doesn't get tagged as "romance" for having two heterosexual characters with some level of romantic and sexual involvement, this isn't a "m/m romance." That doesn't mean it's a bad book (I enjoyed it) but if you're looking for a romance, this is not your book.

With that out of the way, this book is much, much darker than my usual fare, so much so that I'm actually surprised that it's going over as well with me as it is. Really bad things happen to lots of people, and these bad things don't get resolved in a happy way.

Also, Felix is still an asshole.

But I really did enjoy the book. Mehitabel was particularly fun (I wonder if she'll be in the next book?) and I loved the world building as always. I'm absolutely going to read the next book, and I'm hoping so hard that it's going to end on a happier note than has been evidenced so far in this series.

Wealththeow says

This is the third book in Monette's series. Felix and his younger brother Mildmay have returned to the Mirador, where court politics and dark magic are once again complicating their already complicated lives. All the main characters' love lives are complicated and fucked up, *of course*, and I enjoy it but it does get a bit old. I hope that the next novel has more action and less moping.

Robert Beveridge says

Sarah Monette, **The Mirador** (Ace, 2007)

In many series, there comes a tipping point where the ongoing story of the recurring characters becomes more important to the author than the story line contained in each book. Perhaps one can consider the mark of a good series author to be how that tipping point is handled; in the case of, say, Robert Parker (who hit it in *Early Autumn*, the best Spenser novel that ever was), we may find that the ongoing story is actually more interesting than the book-length story. (And then, on the other side of the coin, there is Terry Goodkind. Yeesh.) *The Mirador*, the third book in Monette's series *The Doctrine of Labyrinths*, doesn't so much hip the tipping point as go screeching headlong into a tipping wall; there are plots that are fully contained in this book, yes, but they are trifling matters indeed; what the book is really *about* is unanswered questions from the first two books (who was it, really, that killed Mildmay's most recent girlfriend?) and sharpening focus on what had previously been vague clouds, at best, of ominousness (what would seem to be a coming war between the Mirador and the Bastion). And how is it handled? Very well indeed.

Things take up not long after the end of *The Virtu*, the second book in the series. Mildmay and Felix are still at one another's throats, Felix and Gideon are still together, and Mehitabel has found herself a comfortable spot in one of the local theaters. There's some rumbling about the ex-Bastion members who sought refuge with the Mirador being spies (and some of it might actually be true), but things are actually kind of calm for the moment, which leaves Mildmay to ponder the question of who got his last love dead (and whether he's already taken revenge for it), Felix to ponder stuff he learned while overseas and tailor it to Mirador-style magic, Gideon to study ancient texts from the Mirador's voluminous library, and Mehitabel to spy for the Bastion. Oh, yes, as it turns out, there is a Bastion spy in Melusine, it's just not one of the wizards...

The main plot of the book, assuming there actually is one, is the who-killed-Mildmay's-lover line, but this is an ensemble plot more than anything, and all the more so because most of the subplots never tie together the way they do in neater (and less realistic) books. Yes, I did use the term "realistic"; given the world in which the book is set, there is magic, of course, but less here than in Monette's previous volumes. This is about spy work and mysteries and domestic strife rather than wizards battling one another, and that brings a sort of

homey intimacy to it. Assuming your home was anything like, say, the Borgias.

Where series novels, no matter the genre, are usually plot-based affairs, books like this tend to be where a writer focuses much more on characterization than in earlier books in a given series, which is why I think the tipping-point book is the mark of a good writer. (Granted, some series don't have them. What to do in those cases? Don't ask me.) The writing must sparkle in order to make such character-based books work well, and *The Mirador*, lovely thing that it is, does sparkle. Even if you want to kill Sarah Monette after you've read the final chapter of this book. Some questions were never meant to be answered. ****

Jay says

I was apparently a bit too enthusiastic in my review of the first book of this series. It was a kinda "can't see the forest for the trees" moment. I absolutely adore Mildmay. That really helps since I can't stand Felix more often than not. The only time I *can* stand Felix? Is when he's tortured and gone bugfuck. He's not a likable character, but I don't think he's meant to be. Or he is meant to be, but only after he's been tempered by the extreme heat of how he keeps fucking up his life. And Mildmay's by proxy.

I liked the new pov in this one, as Mehitabel is pretty snazzy. I will admit that now that I've a chance to go back and read all three books in one go, the swapping perspectives every few pages can get old. I have no problem with each chapter having a different narrator, but new narrators every few pages? Can be excessive. I still read it, though, and will pick up the final book in the Quad when it drops next summer, because whether I like the characters or not. Whether they started out having their motivations or their world well-explained or not, I'm still intrigued by what they do and what's going to happen to them. It's just unfortunate that the first book wasn't really marked as the first in a series, because jumping in en media res without any obvious payoff at the end of the first book threw off quite a few folks I recommened these books to. Ah, well. Such is life. Such are books.

Siina says

The Mirador is the third part of the Doctrine of Labyrinths, but not the last. Still one more to go and really, when you have a tetralogy? One of the books tends to be lacking in content, always. This was the one. The Mirador centers around Mirador and Felix and Mildmay's lives there not to forget Tabby of course. We have these three narrators and there doesn't seem to be any unifying theme as such, but mostly the book is about betrayals, political shenanigans and death that end up getting our brothers kicked out of the city. Plot-wise the book doesn't offer anything new and it's kind of hard to keep track on what is happening in this one. Mostly the book is about Felix and Mildmay avoiding each other and not confronting their problems. They keep repeating the same patterns, which is annoying and hundreds and hundreds of pages this makes you lose your mind like Felix did. I kind of wished the brothers' relationship would go somewhere, anywhere. Yes, I also wished they'd got on with it, but of course not (why not??).

The flow gets better during the series and Monette surely knows how to write. Perhaps a trilogy would've sufficed and wrapping up the story tighter would've made wonders. The Mirador is a good continuation to the series, but slightly sporadic and I do hope the last book will be better. The rhythm is at least better and I do like the characters and even Tabby, so I look forward what is going to happen next.

Annelies says

(I'm assuming you either read the previous two books if you're gonna read this or you read nothing at all, but either way, I might spoil things)

I liked this book much more than its prequels, actually. At first, it was weird that two years had passed since *The Virtu* ended, and my head certainly couldn't remember everyone's ages (is it bad that Felix still acts like a teen 50% of the time?? it weirds me out sometimes...)

Mildmay is still the greatest sweetheart to have ever existed, Felix is still a brat and Mehitabel gives us some new insights. Although I didn't particularly care for Tabby, at least she talked about her feelings instead of shoving them deep down like two other people I might or might not have mentioned just now. All three seemed kind of focused? Felix wants to get rid of Malkar, Mildmay wants to know who betrayed (and killed) Ginevra, and Tabby wants to get information about anyone and anything. My problem with her is that she just doesn't seem to care about anything

Another thing about these books in general is that it is SO hard to keep track of all those names! I mean, I finished reading *Mélusine* not even a month ago and I had so much trouble remembering whether or not a character had appeared (or was named) in either *Mélusine* or *The Virtu*, and I didn't have the energy to switch back and forth. This also made the murder of Amaryllis more complicated than it could have been. So confusing! (I say this as I've actually gotten used to the septad/Great Septad thing! still not entirely sure what a septad-foot is, but I guess I can't have it all. like the names of the days/months/years boy oh boy)

The molly/ganumedes/janus thing is kind of annoying too. I guess it was to sound fancy, but it only made it more confusing (and more mental notes!)

A different thing is how easy it is to forget things. Thamuris? Didn't exist after 2/3's of the story. Malkar? Background noise for Felix once he got rid of those rings. There are a few things like this which really bothered me :/

Also, why in the world are Felix and Mildmay so damn awkward around each other??? (I know the answer but it still irks me shush) Either Mildmay is already agitated and lashes out, or Felix gets angry and lashes out, or Felix is already angry and lashes out despite Mildmay not having done something wrong.

But! Overall, I definitely liked it more than *Mélusine* and *The Virtu*, and the ending hurt me because I am invested in this story (despite everything maybe) and I'm almost afraid of what I'll find in *Corambis*... Wish me luck! :D

Alena says

The blurb sounded interesting, but I just couldn't get into this book. For starters, it was very difficult to keep track of the characters and their various political alignments; at about thirty pages in, I realized that all the fingers of my left hand were marking places so I could flip back for reference to check what character was affiliated with which group and sleeping with which person... Part of this confusion may have been due to the fact that this book is apparently part of a series, so readers are expected to be familiar with the characters and situations already. (Upon learning this, I looked all over my copy and could not find *anything* that indicated it was book 3 of a series -- bad marketing!).

Also, I felt that the excessive quantity of profanity and sexual content detracted from the story. If a person

swears once or twice, we can infer that he's a rougher or more earthy character; by the eighth or ninth time he's used f--- or its derivatives on the same page, it's overkill.

I didn't finish this book, and with this one as a sample I'm not likely to pick up either of its predecessors. It's disappointing, as the premise sounded interesting... but there are too many really good novels out there to waste time on one I'm not enjoying.

Margaret says

Sorcerer Felix and cat burglar Mildmay are still two of the POV characters, and Monette has added a third, actress Mehitabel Parr, whose sections I enjoyed very much, particularly as she brings to bear an outside view of Felix and Mildmay's complex, troubled relationship; as always, Monette handles the three different voices beautifully, always making it clear who is speaking. I don't want to go into plot details for fear of spoilers, but I will say that this book has a little less action and far more court intrigue than the previous two, and it works just as well.

Brian says

This series just about blew me away. Most of the fantasy series I've found in the last couple years fall under the "Grimdark" genre, and it was enlightening to find this. (There is commentary from the author that claims these books are as dark and grim as they come, but there is entirely too little bloodshed, the characters are too sympathetic and relatable, and the overall world is too vivid and realistic with the possibility of being nice, for me to consider this grimdark.)

The books are written from a shifting first person perspective, and Monette gives excellent voicing to her characters. The writing itself is intentional and engaging; I found all of the books hard to put down. The story is deep and compelling, and while I found a lack of character growth in the first three books, the fourth book finally brought about some of the resolutions I thought were coming earlier in the stories.

Jennifer says

SlashReaders: Okay just a note if you plan on reading this you might not want to read all of this. I will however leave that for the end. So if you wish to read the first part without reading the spoilers you can.

I guess I should start off by saying, I enjoyed this book as I did the other two. However I felt that this volume was lacking somewhat. I also found that the back of the book was misleading to me. That aside, I enjoyed reading it but I was also annoyed with it all at the same time. This volume raises more questions that it answers which is highly annoying when the next one isn't out.

The point of this book isn't about saving the city, it becomes more of an insight into Mehitabel Parr than anything else. We get glimpses of Mildmay and Felix but nothing is resolved between them. I think we get advances in both Mehitabel and Mildmay's characters however Felix still seems to be stuck in the mire that is himself despite the glimpses of possibility that he shows. Though I think perhaps the events at the end of the book shove him back towards madness and may give him a chance to make progress away from the ass that he most typically is.

Like the underlying back stories that we have been going through here. Of the past kings and queens and such, it adds a nice backdrop. I think that it also gives things an air of reality that we might not otherwise have. However, again this raises more questions. I really want to know how the laying of Magnus at the end of this book really plays into things because it seems out of place and slightly superfluous right now.

Okay SPOILER, Rant down here.

(view spoiler)
