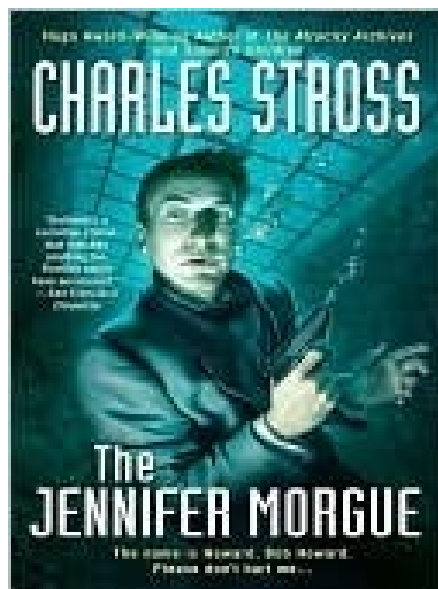




The Jennifer Morgue

Charles Stross

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Bob Howard, geekish demonology hacker extraordinaire for "The Laundry," must stop ruthless billionaire Ellis Billington from unleashing an eldritch horror, codenamed "Jennifer Morgue," from the ocean's depths for the purpose of ruling the world...

The Jennifer Morgue Details

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From Reader Review The Jennifer Morgue for online ebook

? Irena ? says

3.5

To be honest, it is much better than the first (which I also liked). I would have loved this if not for one of the tropes I hate the most in fiction. It was so unnecessary, especially in a story like this.

Oh, well, it doesn't matter. The rest of it has been as crazy entertaining as you could imagine in a story where you get a mashup of lovecraftian and James Bond themes, maths and physics, the occult and lots of humour. And a bunch of other stuff.

Bob gets saddled with a special partner and he gets to save the world. Again. Only this time he is playing an unlikely role.

A couple of things were a bit dated but nothing too distracting from the story.

To finish on the positive note, Mo was awesome.

Lesley Arrowsmith says

Bob does Bond! Great fun!

Chris says

3.5 stars. Good paranormal thriller as Bob teams up with a partner from another secret agency and is caught up in a very specific hero archetype geas... This edition also contained the short story *PIMPF*, which I'd subtitle *Bob Gets an Intern and Almost Lets Said Intern Die...Whoops*.

Denise says

3.5 rounded up

Tfitoby says

Lazy Review: It's like an urban fantasy version of James Bond mixed with H.P. Lovecraft.

Very Lazy Review: OMFG TOTES RIPD OFF Ben Aaronovitch & Chris F. Holm!!!!

Blurb: Second book in series, follows Bob a computer hacker who accidentally discovered that magic and demons and stuff are real and is now a desk jockey who occasionally has to run field ops for the Laundry, the MI6 of magic and demons and stuff. This time he gets sent to a beautiful Caribbean island to stop an evil billionaire from destroying the world with magic.

Thoughts: Pretty good stuff, Stross does this amazingly well, his ability to build worlds and tell a story within them is top class, this urban fantasy series has many similarities with others that came afterwards (see very lazy review) but none of them come close in terms of quality of writing and for me at least entertainment. Bob is an enjoyable character, and his conversation/relationships within the story/world are what makes these books for me. There's a lot of narration of action sequences but they largely felt unnecessary or dull compared to just witnessing Bob interact with the sex demon he had become entangled with for example.

Two for two on the enjoyment stakes but I'm not going to rush out and get more from this series.

Robert says

Maths is magic and the Elder Gods are real. Bob Howard works for the Laundry, the UK's secret intelligence agency that protects you from these facts and their consequences, which include such delights as insanity, possession and having one's soul eaten.

I'm reading this series in random order, having gone 3-1-2-4. This is book 2, in which our reluctant hero has to stop the megalomaniac business man turned would-be Ruler of the World by circumventing a fiendish geas that will only allow a highly unrealistic type of super-agent to get close to the villain. Yes, some-one has to *become* James Bond in order to save the world! Cue stereo-type and cliché subverting jokes such as a glamorous hottie that's really a succubus and minions that are literally zombies.

Great fun.

Derek says

I'm at the intersection of knowing Bob Howard's cultural references, understanding the Lovecraft flavor injections, and being in the vicinity of the mathematics and technology. And while it is is grade-A technobabble and cultural snark and surface mathematics, it eventually makes my eyes glaze over. This is unfortunate because the plot relies on various MacGuffins and deep borrowing from James Bond--spoilers!-- and without Bob spouting this stuff, the story falls apart.

There are series of parts that are interesting, but I didn't connect to the whole.

What's scarier: Lovecraft's view that there are vast, unsympathetic intelligences and humanity is utterly helpless and unknowing...or Stross's view that there are vast, unsympathetic intelligences and humanity is barely on top of the situation, and control is in the hands of those mouth-breathers from IS who can't get IGMP snooping to function reliably on the 10Gb Ethernet switch attached to my test rig?

Jordi Balcells says

Menuda brutalidad de libro. Tengo los sesos que me echan humo. Nunca pensé que leería un infodump sobre la historia de los sistemas de eyección de la cabina en helicópteros, pero eh, este libro lo tiene, junto a muchos otros infodumps que molan mucho. Lo recomiendo a frikis de a) la informática, b) los horrores lovecraftianos y (sobre todo) c) las historias de James Bond. Además, tiene detalles como las notas al pie y la

narratología/tropos que me recuerdan un montón a Pratchett. Como cualquier otro libro de Stross, no es nada fácil, pero vale mucho la pena.

Además de la historia principal tiene un relato corto sobre los videojuegos de rol masivos en línea (bastante chorra, pero con buenas reflexiones) y un esclarecedor ensayo sobre James Bond, el espionaje anterior y posterior a la 2.^a GM y los villanos muchimillonarios.

Nicholas says

So...how do I explain this. This book was written for me. I don't mean, personally for me, Charles Stross wouldn't know me from Adam; I mean that I'm a former UNIX administrator with a love of nerd humor, geek culture, Bond movies, Cthulhu mythos, and the trappings of eldritch horror. This book was written FOR ME. I am its people. If you were to take down the refined details of the target audience, I'd hit every checkbox.

I assume there are less than a hundred people ON EARTH who would fit the same criteria. This book proves that I am completely and utterly wrong on that point.

First of all, let me be up front that I'm a former government employee. I'm familiar with the bureaucratic on levels that most people can't fathom.

Second, let me admit that I get every nerd reference in this book. And they are legion. The level of entry here (even with the hyperlinked glossary in the Kindle edition) is pretty high. Script-Kiddies and Windoze-only admins will probably not get all the jokes, but they'll get the gist and that's what matters. It's a nerd book, make no mistake, but you don't need to be a nerd to read it.

I will say that I'm not sure you'd enjoy it in the same way if you weren't one. Several of the jokes couldn't be explained to my wife and she's certainly no technology slouch. She'd enjoy the book, but she wouldn't giggle on nearly every page like I did.

Which is the crux of this review: I think it's a great book. I think many people can find the premise approachable and enjoyable, like the TV show Chuck meets Call of Cthulhu meets Casino Royal. But for the nerds among us, this book is a treat and I challenge you to read it without laughing out loud at least once about something you simply can't explain to someone who doesn't know their AIX from their Ubuntu.

J.L. Sutton says

Combining a tribute to Ian Fleming (and his hero, James Bond) with Lovecraftian overtones, Charles Stross once again delivers an entertaining tale of bureaucracy versus the evil forces of the universe. It was only a short part here, but I did enjoy the reveal about the diabolical forces behind PowerPoint. There's a reason (rooted in the occult) why you go to sleep when someone whips out a PowerPoint presentation. It definitely fit the mood of the book.

Trish says

This is the second book in the *Laundry Files* series and proudly presented to you by Cthulhu-like oceanic

overlords as well as Ian Flemming and a certain agent he created.

Once again, Bob is more stumbling than purposefully walking and it frustrates him and the reader alike. It's not frustrating as in the book isn't good, but frustrating as in "can't these people see what a glorious geek he is?"! Because Bob is. He's a nice guy, a good guy, a smart guy (unless it comes to how to talk to women), and he's really good at his job if only you give him the intel he needs and then let him do it.

Alas, that would never do here because of what the bad guy set up as a shield to protect himself until he can accomplish what he set out to do (raising a terror from the deep) just at the right moment. Sounds vague? That's because I don't want to give away too much. But I can tell you this: no 007 movie was ever this good. I mean it.

Thus, Bob is sent to a tropical setting together with a beautiful creature from the American counterpart of The Laundry, we get Bond-worthy gizmos mixed with possessions and other demonology stuff that included creatures akin to mermaids (which was especially funny when comparing these ones to the ones I read about in my last book), and a cat!

We also get some new (or should I say old?) information about Bob's boss as well as Mo, and in only two books I can honestly say that I really love all the characters Charles Stross has created.

On top of the sheer fun this adventurous romp brings us, there is also the author's trademark humour. Right at the beginning, when Bob has to go to Germany, get's a small-ish rental car, and has to drive on the Autobahn I almost needed an oxygen mask because I couldn't breathe from laughing too hard. Clearly, the author has been in Germany and got scared by our non-existent (or, in places where they exist, higher) speed limits. BWAHAHAHAHAHA.

But apart from the laugh-out-loud humoristic moments, we also got treated to a number of very funny scenes simply because Bob is a bit socially inapt.

The story is a puzzle you have to slowly piece together like an investigator and I like that as much as the blend of relatively realistic problems such as having to sit through a corporate power point presentation and the supernatural aspects like getting brainwashed into being a zombie that will then be used in the battle for world domination. Quirky, in the best sense.

P.S.: Finished this last night but was too tired to write a review that would have made sense.

P.P.S.: I think the audio is the right way to enjoy these because the narrator knows exactly how to bring out the humour.

Stephen says

3.5 stars. The second book in "The Laundry" series after the excellent The Atrocity Archives. This story can best be described as Ian Fleming meets H.P. Lovecraft (or James Bond meets the "Old Ones"). A spy thriller set in a world where the metaverse can be breached using complex mathematics and mankind co-exists with entities right out of the best Lovecraftian horror tales. As usual, Stross' writing is excellent and the plot is pretty well thought out (though certainly far-fetched). Overall a very enjoyable read.

Also included is a good short story called "Pimpf" that should appeal to MMO gamers and an essay by Stross on James Bond that was interesting.

Nominee: Locus Award for Best Fantasy Novel.

Alan says

I think Stross' Laundry Files books fit a particular niche crowd. They definitely aren't for everyone, and perhaps that is why this doesn't receive a four star rating (even though I'm likely to read more of his work).

The humor in the books is subtle, and much is really aimed at those who might have a better than average understanding of tech (having done some sys ad work I'm sort of qualified there). For the averegae reader the tech references and humor could be a big miss, one that would detract from their reading of the tale.

The Laundry is the division of of the British government that eals with the fact taht so-called magic is really higher mathematics. These civil servants work at keeping Lovecraft's old ones from coming, and other multi-dimensional "supernatural" events from harming the general populace.

So why is Bob Howard now acting like James Bond while on assignment with a demon infested CIA trained assassin? That's where Stross mixes sorcery with science. Stross does a better job at giving Bob some character this time around, as Bob becomes much more relateable for the average reader.

Sherwood Smith says

What a wild ride! Charles Stross takes Bob of the Laundry, which is a mix of occult, spies, and bureaucratic nightmare, and mixes it up with James Bond style spy craft. The entire book spoofs, riffs, and engages with the Bondverse, adding in lots of humor, action, twists and turns, and of course Lovecraftian grue. Don't miss the fascinating essay at the end about Bond, Fleming, and spies.

I will probably space these out: while I enjoy Bob, the computer tech and math that mixes with magic, and the way Stross riffs on popular genres, there is a sense that the supernatural aspects are not going to change. Kind of like watching the Winchester boys and their eponymous supernatural otherworld that seems to only get bigger and badder monsters. At one point early on in this book a character accuses Bob of being religious, and Bob retorts no way, he's an atheist! To which the bad guy fires back, "You believe in Hell."

And that kind of sums up the weird in these books, like watching *Supernatural* the show--there is no awe, no frisson of the numinous, it's all horror all the time with bigger and badder monsters. So I read for the fast-action plots and the humor.

Bradley says

Third read! 2/23/18:

I'll give a more loving review this time. :)

After much much reflection, I have to say that this is probably the funniest of all the Laundry Files books. The Ian Flemming style works perfectly not only for the plot, the geshes, and the snark... but for the fast pacing and the dry, dry humor. :)

Smart cars on the Autobahn? Destiny entanglements? Hero traps? Supervillains controlling the world through their military spec word processors? Delicious. Utterly delicious. :)

And of course, there are a few absolutely gorgeous musical scenes with Mo. But I won't get into that here because that's some of the best parts of the whole story. But Bob absolutely shines. :)

I'm still giggling at all the great scenes and the snark. And please don't mistake me when I refer to snark. The snark is built into every level of the novel, from dialogue right down the scenes, the characters, the themes, and the plot. All of it: SNARK.

Yummy. :) :) :) One of my favorite UF series ever, and it has everything a growing boy could ever want. Tentacular horrors, hacking, Bond action, and utter geekiness. :)

Original review:

This book is my personal favorite of the series so far. Maybe I happen to enjoy Ian Flemming's style, and maybe I just happen to love the freaky humor that turns the whole novel into a very prolonged visual joke. The best reason for loving the novel is the same as the previous stories: the beautiful mixture of ideas.
