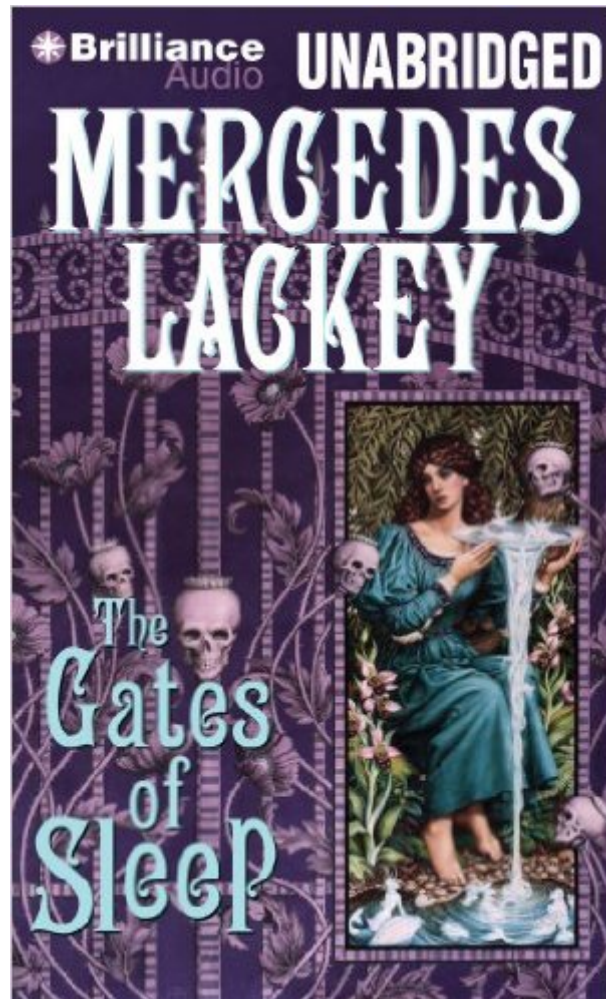


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The Gates Of Sleep (Elemental Masters)



Synopsis

In the tradition of her acclaimed fairy-tale-inspired novel, *The Serpent's Shadow*, bestselling author Mercedes Lackey re-imagines *Sleeping Beauty* as a dark and enchanting Edwardian fantasy. Marina is the cherished daughter of the wealthy Roeswood family, practitioners of Elemental Magic. But evil portents have warned her parents that Marina will be killed before her 18th birthday by the hand of her own aunt.

Book Information

Series: Elemental Masters (Book 3)

Audio CD

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Customer Reviews

"Gates of Sleep" had more of a fairy-tale feel to it than "Serpent's Shadow;" and while I did like this novel quite a bit (and really enjoyed the charming twist that Mercedes Lackey put on the Sleeping Beauty motif, esp since in Lackey's version it is Sleeping Beauty/Marina who has the final showdown with the Wicked Fairy Godmother/Arachane), I did not find this book to be quite as compelling as "Serpent's Shadow." Part of the reason was that while Marina is intelligent and canny and likable, she seemed incredibly bland in comparison to Maya (the heroine of "Serpent's Shadow). Another problem I had with "Gates of Sleep" was that the character of Arachne was just not 'fleshed' out enough -- why did she hate her family so much? Was it because she was born without any powers? Had her family treated her differently? Why did she marry so unsuitably? (and why was her husband considered unsuitable?) And how did she come by her dark powers? I wanted proper answers, and didn't find any. After all in "Serpent's Shadow" we know why the aunt carries out a virtual vendetta against her brother-in-law and her niece. And I was quite disappointed

that Mercedes Lackey did not fill in the blanks (as it were) with "Gates of Sleep." Another thing I couldn't figure out was why, given that Marina had been filled in the fact that there was a curse placed on her, no one saw fit to tell her that it was Arachne who cursed her? The omission seemed a little foolish to me. Except for that, this book is a rather enjoyable read. Most of the characters (except for Arachne) were well 'fleshed' out, esp that of Marina's.

This is the third book in Ms. Lackey's series of retelling fairy tales with sensible, modern women who happen to be Elemental Magicians. In this "Sleeping Beauty" adaptation, Marina Roeswood has a curse put on her in infancy and is sent away to live with three Elemental Masters, the closest friends of her parents. She grows up, as all of Ms. Lackey's female heroes do, a liberated, educated woman of the early 1900's, this time in the English countryside. Unfortunately, tragedy strikes and Marina is taken away to live with that same aunt who put the curse on her in the first place. The Fire Rose had too much plot and not enough story--The Serpent's Shadow had too much story and not enough plot. The Gates of Sleep finally strikes a balance between the two and the result is horrible. The writing is repetitive, the sentences never end. There's none of the fun love story that we got in Serpent's Shadow or even in Fire Rose--instead, Marina realizes about five pages from the end that "she must have fallen in love with him without realizing it." The plot itself is predictable and populated with shallow characters. Marina herself, supposedly the embodiment of a well-educated and liberal woman, goes contrary to many things that Ms. Lackey has spent several books establishing. And speaking of contradictions, the errors here are blinding. It's as though Ms. Lackey, as she has gotten more and more involved in her "real-world" doings with Magic (formerly spelled Magick, a contrivance now abandoned), has made up new rules that fly in the face of the old ones. It's as though Ms. Lackey made no effort to keep track of things she wrote in earlier novels before writing this one.

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