

The Colour of Magic

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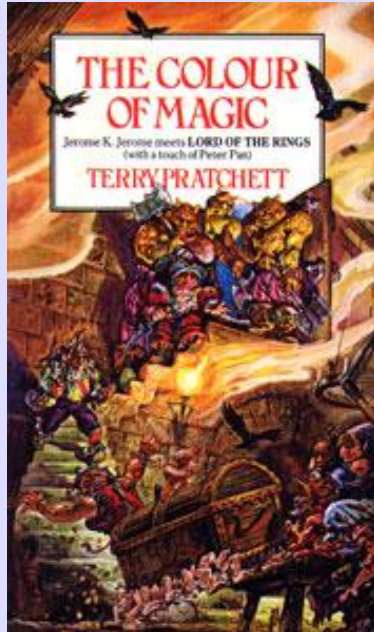
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This article is about the book. For the TV film, see [The Colour of Magic \(TV film\)](#).

[Terry Pratchett](#)

The *[Discworld](#)* series

1st novel – 1st Rincewind story



Outline

Characters	Rincewind
	Twoflower
	The Luggage
Locations	Ankh-Morpork
	Krull
Motifs	Fantasy clichés, Role-playing games

Publication details

Date of release	1983
Original publisher	Colin Smythe
Hardback ISBN	ISBN 0-86140-324-X
Paperback ISBN	ISBN 0-552-12475-3

Other details

Other notes	93rd in the Big Read
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The Colour of Magic is a 1983 [comic fantasy](#) novel by [Terry Pratchett](#), and is the first book of the [Discworld](#) series. Pratchett has described it as "an attempt to do for the classical fantasy universe what *Blazing Saddles* did for [Westerns](#)."^[1]

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[\[edit\]](#) Plot summary

The main character is an incompetent and cynical [wizard](#) named [Rincewind](#). He involuntarily becomes a guide to the rich but naive tourist from the [Agatean Empire](#), [Twoflower](#). Forced to flee the city of [Ankh-Morpork](#) to escape a terrible fire that was caused by a bartender who misunderstood the concept of insurance, which Twoflower told him about, they begin on a journey across the Disc.

Unknown to them, their journey is controlled by the Gods playing a board game. Rincewind and Twoflower are controlled by the Lady, and is pitted against the champions of Zephyrus, the god of slight breezes, Fate and Offler the Crocodile God, in the game supervised by Blind Io. The duo face a mountain troll and are separated. The ignorant Twoflower ends up being led to the Temple of Bel-Shamharoth, and Rincewind ends up in a tree-nymph inhabited tree. Rincewind manages to escape while the tree-nymphs try to kill him and is reunited with the tourist. Together with Hrun the Barbarian, they escape from the Temple of Bel-Shamharoth the Soul Eater, which collapses. Later, Hrun agrees to travel with and protect Twoflower and Rincewind in exchange for Heroic pictures of him from Twoflower's magical picture box.

They visit *Wyrmborg*, an upside-down mountain which is home to dragons that only exist in the imagination. The names of the dragons' riders feature punctuation in the middle, making reference and parody of the [Dragonriders of Pern](#) series by [Anne McCaffrey](#). They nearly go over the waterfall on the edge of the Disc, only to be rescued and taken to the country of [Krull](#), a city perched on the very edge of the [Discworld](#) inhabited by hydrophobic wizards. The Krullians wish to discover the gender of Great A'Tuin, the giant turtle which carries the Discworld through space, so they have built a space capsule to launch over the Edge. They intend on sacrificing Rincewind and Twoflower to get Fate to smile on the voyage. Instead, Rincewind, Twoflower and Tethis the water troll hijack the capsule in an attempt to escape and are launched off the Disc themselves.

[\[edit\]](#) Structure

The Colour of Magic is one of the few of the thirty-nine *Discworld* novels to be divided into sections or chapters, some others being [Pyramids](#), [Going Postal](#), [Making Money](#), and some of the books for younger readers, specifically [The Amazing Maurice and his Educated Rodents](#) and the four Tiffany Aching books, [The Wee Free Men](#), [A Hat Full of Sky](#), [Wintersmith](#) and [I Shall Wear Midnight](#).

[[edit](#)] Adaptations

[[edit](#)] Graphic novel

A [graphic novel](#), illustrated by Steven Ross and adapted by Scott Rockwell, was published by [Corgi](#) in 1992. The graphic novel is split up into several chapters like the book, and is faithful to the source material in that it is built up like classic barbarian stories (in this case comics a la [Red Sonja](#)). Crucial differences between the book and comic include the cutting-out of some of the adventures in [Ankh-Morpork](#) and Krull. Also, in the book, the female Dragonriders are described as being topless, as barbarian women in fiction tend to be. However, in the graphic novel the women wear chain-mail bras as well as the clothing described in the book. It has been published in hardcover along with the graphic novel of *The Light Fantastic*, as *The Discworld Graphic Novels*. ([ISBN 9780061685965](#))

[[edit](#)] TV adaptation

Main article: [The Colour of Magic \(TV film\)](#)

[The Mob Film Company](#) and [Sky One](#) have produced a two-part adaptation, combining both *The Colour of Magic* and *The Light Fantastic* broadcast over Easter 2008. [David Jason](#) starred in the role of Rincewind.^[2] Sean Astin took the role of Twoflower. [Christopher Lee](#) took over the role of Death from [Ian Richardson](#)^[3] (a role Lee previously portrayed in the animated series [Soul Music](#) and [Wyrd Sisters](#)).

[[edit](#)] Computer game

Main article: [The Colour of Magic \(video game\)](#)

The plot was adapted for a [text adventure](#) computer game in 1986.

[[edit](#)] References

- [^] [Why Gandalf Never Married](#), by [Terry Pratchett](#), originally presented at [Novacon](#) 15 (1985), collected in *Xyster* 11 (1986); archived at [ansible.co.uk](#)
- [^] ["Del's spells as David lands role"](#). The Sun Online. 24 April 2007. Retrieved June 8, 2007.
- [^] ["Colour of Magic Cast"](#). *Paul Kidby official website*. July 31, 2007.

[[edit](#)] External links



Wikiquote has a collection of quotations related to: [*The Colour of Magic*](#)

- [Terry Pratchett discusses *The Colour of Magic* on the BBC *World Book Club*](#)
- [Annotations for *The Colour of Magic*](#)
- [Quotes from *The Colour of Magic*](#)
- [Synopsis of *The Colour of Magic*](#)
- [Sky One's *The Colour of Magic*](#)
- [Colin Smythe Ltd](#)
- [Full Length Commentary on *The Color of Magic*](#)

Reading order guide

Preceded by
None

1st [Discworld Novel](#)

Succeeded by
[The Light Fantastic](#)

Preceded by
None

1st [Rincewind Story](#)
Published in 1983

Succeeded by
[The Light Fantastic](#)

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Terry Pratchett's *Discworld* (Portal)

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Short stories	<p>Troll Bridge • Theatre of Cruelty • The Sea and Little Fishes • Death and What Comes Next • A Collegiate Casting-Out of Devilish Devices</p> <p>The Discworld Companion • The Science of Discworld • The Science of Discworld II: The Globe • The Science of Discworld III: Darwin's Watch • The Pratchett Portfolio • The Art of Discworld • The Unseen University Challenge • The Wyrdest Link • The Streets of Ankh-Morpork • The Discworld Mapp • A Tourist Guide to Lancre • Death's Domain • Nanny Ogg's Cookbook • The Discworld Almanak • Where's My Cow? • The Unseen University Cut Out Book • The Discworld Diaries • Once More* With Footnotes • The Wit and Wisdom of Discworld • The Folklore of Discworld</p>
Other books	<p>The Colour of Magic • Discworld MUD • Discworld • Discworld II • GURPS Discworld • Discworld Noir</p>
Games	

Films and TV series	Welcome to the Discworld · Soul Music · Wyrd Sisters · Hogfather · The Colour of Magic · Going Postal · Unseen Academicals
Characters	Tiffany Aching · Death · Hex · Moist von Lipwig · Nanny Ogg · Rincewind · Susan Sto Helit · Havelock Vetinari · Sam Vimes · Granny Weatherwax · more...
Races and creatures	Auditors of Reality (characters) · Dwarfs (characters) · Elves · Gods · Golems (characters) · Nac Mac Feegle (characters) · Trolls (characters) · Undead (characters) · Igars · Other races · Flora and fauna of the Discworld
Locations	Discworld (world) · Discworld geography · Ankh-Morpork · Other dimensions
Organisations	Assassins' Guild (members) · Other Guilds · City Watch (members) · History Monks (members) · Unseen University (members) · The Witches
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