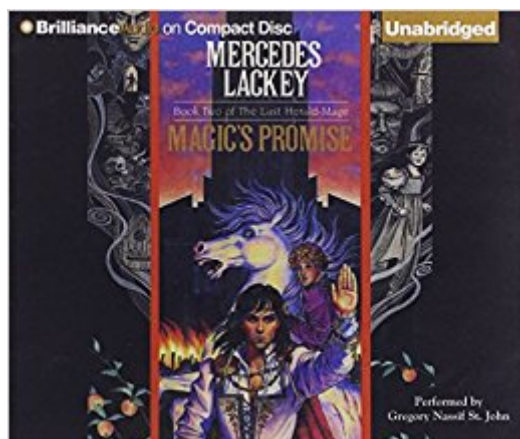


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Magic's Promise (The Last Herald-Mage)



Synopsis

The wild magic is taking its toll on the land. Many Heralds and Herald-Mages have died fighting to preserve the peace. Even Vanyel, the most powerful of the Herald-Mages is almost at the end of his strength, in need of a respite from the dual threats of war and dark magic. But for Vanyel, there can be no rest. Not when his Companion, Yfandes, receives a summons which can't be ignored—a desperate cry for help which draws them both into the heart of a magical holocaust in the neighboring kingdom. Almost overwhelmed by the devastation they discover there, Herald-Mage and Companion must try to unravel this tragic mystery. Is the young Prince Tashir, a newly Chosen Herald who can't control his own magic, responsible for the destruction? Or is Tashir a pawn in a deeper, more deadly game—and, if so, will Vanyel be able to find and defeat the true destroyer before this master of dark powers can strike again? Don't miss **MAGIC'S PAWN**, the first novel **The Last-Herald Mage** trilogy.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Praise for series: "Lackey has written another intensely wrought, finely detailed story of heroic victims struggling to do the best with their fate. Vanyel's magical strengths are countered by his very human insecurities." •VOYA "Lackey's characterization, plotting, and wit are all of a high order. A real page-turner for any fantasy collection." •Booklist "Emotionally tense and full of drama and magic." •Locus "In Vanyel, [Lackey] has created her most empathetic male character to date, making our emotions

run high as he meets his fate. And best of all, the very last plot twist is one of haunting beauty that will touch your heart." —RT Reviews "In this trilogy, Lackey reaches an intensity she had only begun to achieve.... The story of Vanyel is darker than her earlier books, and the pace is unrelenting." —American Fantasy Magazine --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Mercedes Lackey is a full-time writer and has published numerous novels and works of short fiction, including the bestselling Heralds of Valdemar series. She is also a professional lyricist and a licensed wild bird rehabilitator. She lives in Oklahoma with her husband and collaborator, artist Larry Dixon, and their flock of parrots.

I read these books some years ago and am rereading them. Vanyel's story (3 books) is, in my opinion, one of the best of the Valdemar series. I am a huge fantasy reader and I love this entire series. There are times I would like to smack Vanyel though. He sometimes seems to be whiny and childish but even then he does his job. Anyone who loves fantasy would love any of the Valdemar books but these three are the best. Magic's Promise is the second book with Magic's Pawn being the first and Magic's Price the third. Van is having to deal with his family and their problems along with his feelings of what life with them had been like. He goes "home" for a badly needed rest but that just ain't gonna happen. I won't say anymore so not to ruin the plot for others.

This book takes up long after the end of Magic's Pawn and Vanyel is exhausted by the wild magic and trauma that he has been through. He is almost an entirely different person in this book, changed and matured with the experiences of his past. As much as I loved the first book, I think I love Vanyel as a character even more in this book. Over the years, he has become everything he was meant to be... and all of the things his father would never have imagined. He is a hero of Valdemar and has dedicated his life to keeping its people safe, even at his own expense. He is told to take some leave to rest and recuperate and goes to the most unlikely place,... Askevron Manor. But it isn't long before he realizes that there are things happening just beyond the borders that threaten everything. Once again, I think Vanyel and his circumstances are universally relatable. I love Vanyel and I love his story. He is such a sympathetic character so it is easy to root for him throughout the story. Even after everything he has done for the kingdom, his parents still can't see him for who he is. His father is still dismissive and his mother is still throwing her ladies at him. And as a person, despite all that he has been through, he still has so much to learn about life, love, and

moving forward after grief. This book also answered a lot of questions about some characters from the first book, particularly the family priest and the weaponsmaster. They were extraordinarily hateful in the first book with no real explanation as to why that was so extreme. As with the other books, this one is full of twists and turns and intrigue. I think that there is an added level of suspense in this particular book because Vanyel is, as the series title suggests, the last of his kind. He is the last Herald-Mage. So much rides on him and there are moments when you wonder, even knowing there is another book in the trilogy, if he is going to survive. My Recommendation: I highly recommend this series if you love high fantasy and rich, relatable characters! This review originally posted on my blog [The Caffeinated Diva reads](#).

Much like the first book, I could not put this one down. I love the world Lackey creates, how real it feels and the characters feel, and how heavily we fall in love with them. Vanyel is tough and wrought with despair alike; both strong and complex. The overall message was clear, to learn to move on, to learn to understand yourself - but it did not take away from the overall deep plot of this series. I'm on the edge of my seat, waiting for the final installment to arrive so I can see what becomes of Herald Vanyel.

Like many I wish this book had not started fifteen years later. Leaves you wanting a prequel to this book. As well as wishing that there was a series covering Herald Savil's life as well, such a strong character deserves her own set. I still love the Elemental Masters books more than the Valdemere ones but these still are well worth the read. This book starts out with Vanyel again drained of almost all his powers and again trying to fight off depression over his lifebonded's death. Taking a much needed break from war on one border he finds trouble at home with another possibility of war. Along with his mother trying to turn him straight and his father thinking that he is trysting with every male at home. Lucky Savil is there to help take on his family and to help solve a mass murder before it leads to war.

The Last Herald Mage series is one of my all-time favorite stories. The love story is beautiful and sad. I don't remember how many times this series made me cry. My husband started to read it but was very disappointed with the subject matter (the first person narrated homosexual relationship of the major character) and almost wouldn't read anymore of Mercedes Lackey's books, but, she is such an excellent writer that he has read most of her books.

So, if you like complex characters and complex plots, this book is not for you. Usually the characters straight up explain how they feel, instead of being emotionally developed through their actions over time. Having said that, it seems to be your typical fantasy stuff - boy is unhappy with his life, boy discovers he has magical powers, boy becomes an incredibly important/powerful force for good against the unmentionable hoards of bad guys...etc etc etc. A friend once explained to me that all fantasy falls into 2 categories - deeper, heavier, chewier, more rewarding things, like steak (i.e., LOTR and Game of Thrones), and then there is lighter, airier, fluffier things, with less substance (but which also taste good in their own way), like candy. This is definitely candy. If you are a fantasy person, it's worth picking up. P.s. the main character is gay, and that is pretty cool and unexpected.

The first book was great on its own. Setting up these characters and the time period. When you read the second book though you realise the first was just to set up this all powerful self sacrificing Vanyel. If you've read this far you've gotta be hooked.

Love Valdemar

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