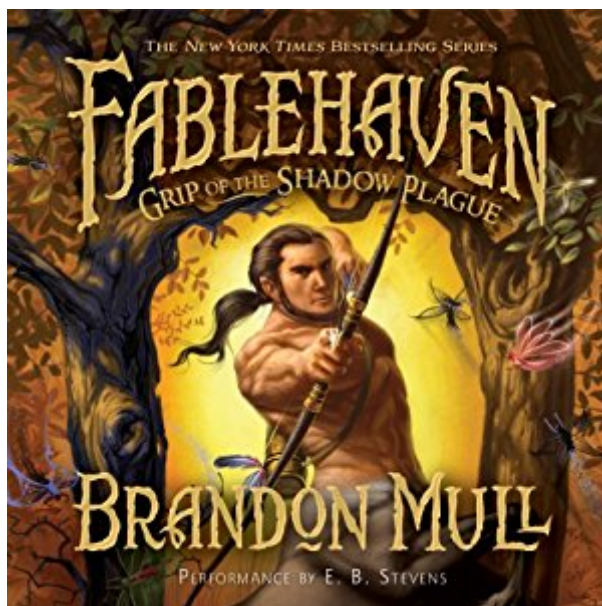


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Fablehaven, Book 3: The Grip Of The Shadow Plague



Synopsis

Strange things are afoot at Fablehaven. Someone or something has released a plague that transforms beings of light into creatures of darkness. Seth discovers the problem in its infancy, but as the infectious disease spreads, it becomes clear that the preserve cannot hold out for long. In dire need of help, the Sorensens question where to turn. The Sphinx has always given sound advice - but is he a traitor? Inside the Quiet Box, Vanessa might have information that could lead to a cure - but can she be trusted? Meanwhile, Kendra and members of the Knights of the Dawn must journey to a distant preserve and retrieve another hidden artifact. Will the Society of the Evening Star recover it first? Will the plague eclipse all light at Fablehaven? Find out in Fablehaven: Grip of the Shadow Plague.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This series continues to deliver! The characters continue to develop and the world continues to become much richer in detail. This book was for sure the best so far. The plot was intricate and kept you guessing until the end. And I like how Seth really began to hold his own as a character. It's great that Kendra was so rounded out from the beginning, but I felt that if she was going to be the focus then the perspective shouldn't have bounced back and forth between her and Seth. Finally though, Seth delivered on the promise that his personality offered glimpses of in the first two books. He is a great second strong character instead of playing second fiddle to his sister. I highly recommend this series. Its really good fun and will have you invested from the very beginning. I can't wait to read book four!

Book one sat on the bookshelf for 4 or five years. Tried to get at least one of my 5 kids to read it. Finally got aggravated that I bought something that no one would read, and I read it myself. While reading, the youngest wanted to know what it was about, and started sneaking in to read whenever I put the book down. I liked the book and bought the rest of the series. I had to fight my way to the mailbox to get book 2 because by that time a second child started the series.

NOTE MY REVIEWS OFTEN CONTAIN SPOILERSKendra and Seth are still at Fablehaven even though their parents continue to wonder if they'll come home before school starts. It's left to Grandma to make excuses to them of why the children need to stay in order to keep them safe. However, when out with Doren and Newel, his Satyr friends, Seth discovers two kingdoms of Dark Nixies -creatures that have never had a fallen state before. When the darkness and evil starts spreading to the other creatures of Fablehaven turning even fairies to creatures of darkness, it seems that no one, not even the humans on Fablehaven are safe from the unknown affliction. Meanwhile Kendra is recruited to the Knights of Dawn because of her talents as Fairy kind. She becomes their youngest member and though her grandparents don't dare decline the invitation because they don't want the Sphinx to know of their suspicions, they aren't happy with the idea of her being put into danger. Will becoming a Knight of Dawn get Kendra killed? Will Fablehaven fall to the darkness sweeping through its inhabitants?The third installment of the Fablehaven series has me feeling a little divided. On one hand Mull takes Fablehaven in a different direction, finally writing a young adult/middle grade plot that I can sincerely say will appeal to the adult reader possibly as a favorite. On the other in doing this he loses much of the childlike innocence of the previous novel and like many popular young adult and middle grade fantasy series takes his books in a much darker direction. For the most part in the opening two novels bad things only happened to bad people and for a middle grade novel that's fine because we want for our children to believe that the good guy always wins and is somehow inherently protected. In this novel both sides face losses. The innocence of the characters is slowly stripped away in the pages of this novel. While I love that he has written a novel that would appeal to me as something I'd enjoy reading multiple times, I regret that loss of innocence that makes me as a parent wonder is my daughter really ready to lose some of the good guys in her stories? Arguably you could say Rowling did this on a regular basis and was one of the top young adult/middle grade writers of her time. However I could argue that her fans were more adult readers than children and I've yet to meet a single elementary school teacher (which I classify as grades K-6) that says her students are at the reading level of Rowling's work.

And it's not just the extensive vocabulary included in her work but the violence of it as well. Children are closer to teens when they're ready for Rowling. Before this novel though Fablehaven didn't have as much adult appeal I would safely say the amount of violence included was safe to hand over to the average eight or nine year old reader without worry. This novel as a parent leaves the question is your child ready? I won't fault the language by any means. But know before handing this over for to your child who's gotten hooked on this series that you have a child ready to not see every good guy safe and smiling at the end of the novel. Of course they might see a lot of this in tv, but it's not the same in my opinion as experiencing it in a novel. Actors just aren't able to portray the inner monologue you get in a book or the feeling of being there inside the story. It's much easier for a writer to bring tears to a reader's eyes than an actor on a movie screen. Not saying this novel is quite to that point. It's not as close and heart wrenching as all the losses in Harry Potter, but it's bound to leave more innocent readers with questions about why all the good guys didn't survive the adventure. I won't say that it's not a middle grade novel - it is, but be sure your child is ready before handing them this novel. With this book Mull succeeded in doing a couple of things he didn't accomplish in other novels for me as a reader. In the first novel I noted it was difficult to connect to the characters, in this one I felt like I had known them forever, I really experienced this adventure alongside them instead of from an outside perspective. In the second novel it took forever for me as a reader to be drawn into the tale even though it began with action in the beginning pages. This third novel brings more action and grips the reader from page one, or at least it gripped me as a reader from page one. I meant to go to bed hours ago, sleep didn't wouldn't come until I finished reading this book. The action is more intense, the pacing is faster, and the stakes are higher. To me this was the best Fablehaven novel yet, but that's reading it as an adult reader. Like I mentioned above I'm not sure if my daughter is ready yet for a novel like this one. Like all the other novels this plot is well written, filled with detailed descriptions and plot surprises. However unlike the other novels you're drawn into the action from the very beginning, introduced to what will become Fablehaven's biggest threat within the first few pages and drawn back to the cliffhanger from the last book. Is the Sphinx a traitor? The action as stated above is more intense and the danger is higher. Fablehaven might really fall in this book and they have no one to help them but the people and creatures within Fablehaven which of course as in all the other novels falls to Seth and Kendra, mostly falling on Kendra's shoulders. Seth is awesome for adventures, for going all the places you shouldn't on Fablehaven, but it is Kendra in these novels who is the reluctant hero. She's not particularly outgoing or brave, but her desire to protect and save her family and the creatures she's come to love allows her to take risks and sacrifices normally against her better judgment in order to save the

day. While Mull's plots flow in a logical order never bouncing around, what I love about his books is he's one of the few authors that really manages to surprise me. I mean yeah I can usually be certain opening the book that the leading children will conquer the evil in the end, that's how middle grade titles are supposed to be. But the journey, the challenges, the creatures in between I never know what's going to happen. Every plot twist comes as a surprise to me and I can't help but adore that about this writer. This book is gripping from page one and in excitement it far surpasses the other two novels. The characters are definitely starting to act more their age and while the book does contain illustrations this time I wouldn't say that any of them are distracting like they were in the last novel. There are no pictures in this book where the preteen characters look like eight year olds thankfully. For the most part Kendra actually comes across as a real 14 almost fifteen year old in this novel, to the point that she's thinking about whether or not a boy likes her during a death threatening mission. Now that's a young teenage girl for you. Your world maybe crashing around you but you still can't stop wondering if the cute boy next to you likes you. For the first time reading these novels when faced with scenes through Kendra's eyes it really felt like I was looking through the eyes of a fourteen year old girl. The only thing I didn't like about how she was portrayed was that even though she did cry when losses happened, she seemed to move past it a lot faster than I would really expect her to. Kendra has always been portrayed throughout these books as a really sensitive girl. I would think no matter how close she was to someone or how little she knew them she would have grieved longer than is shown in this novel. I would definitely say that in this novel Kendra and Seth have become really fleshed out, full bodied characters with all the strengths and flaws of real people. The minor characters in the novel are starting to get a little more flesh on them as well, well except for Dale who is one of those characters that I've never really seen the point of. Warren who was an albino mute for the entire first book and most of the second is more fleshed out as a character than Dale who's been present since the beginning of the first novel. Like always the characters are likeable and memorable, but this time I can honestly say I feel they're well developed and realistic which I couldn't really say in the previous two novels. It's a middle grade novel which will obviously find its audience with young readers but this title in the series is one I think will truly appeal to adult readers as well. However I can't help but wonder if Mull has alienated some of his younger readers in order to appeal to the adult audience too. Overall I loved this book and I considered giving it a five star rating but the more I got to comparing it to the other novels and the innocence of those novels despite the dangers the children faced, the more I felt that this third novel was a whole new ball game and may not be appropriate for some of the readers the first two novels appealed to. Yes it is realistic that the good guys will take losses in a battle as well, but children

don't know that and before this book I'd have recommended the series to a much younger reader than I would this current title. If his work had been this dark from the beginning I'd say this was a five star book, I really did love it. But the changes between this and the other two books made me feel unable to say the book is perfect because now it becomes a title that may be appropriate for some children, but isn't appropriate for all children. Regardless of my concerns I can honestly say that this book was a page turner from the very beginning and a journey most fantasy readers will not want to miss.

My husband and I discovered this series through the recommendation tool on .com, and I am SO glad that we did. We took a chance with the first book and loved it, and the second and third books were just as great (if not better!!). We are both 'thirty-something', and have shared this series with friends and family, and they have enjoyed it as well (including our parents). Even my 3-year-old loves me to read it to him - though I do a little censoring so he won't get nightmares. I don't know what more to say about the book that others haven't already written in their reviews, but if you haven't read the series, do it!! We are fans of the Narnia books, Lord of the Rings, and Harry Potter, and now Fablehaven. This is one book that will always be found in our family library.

As the kids get older, the problems become more intense and the writing even better. I am so deeply moved by these books. I love them.

Great sequel to the second book. Entertaining and fun. Would recommend it to anyone. Looking forward to the 4th book.

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