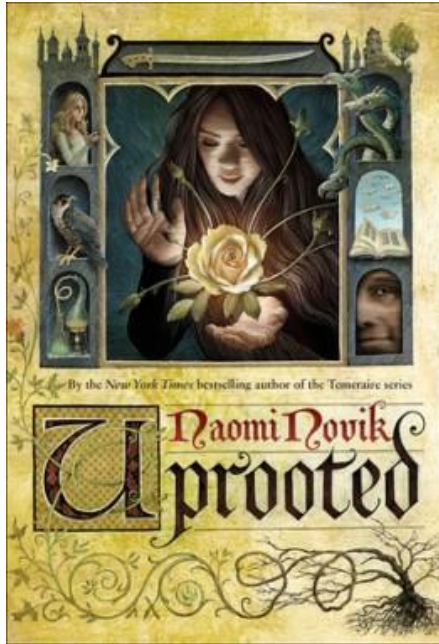


You Look Nothing like a Dragon...



Uprooted, by Naomi Novik, sends you to a world of magic, darkness, and romance. The first few pages captures you with magical splendor. This bewitching novel starts off the sultry mood from the first sentence and pulls you through the story as if you were entranced by a spell.

“Our Dragon doesn’t eat the girls he takes, no matter what stories they tell outside our valley.” Agnieszka is from Polnya, a small village right on the outskirts of Dvernik. She’s a nemophilist teenager: a lover of the forest, and all

things nature, with a green thumb. She loves to be outside and discover new plants and flowers in the nearby forest. She’s always a mess: mud on her homespun skirt and tears in her stockings. While Agnieszka is outside in the forest picking berries and flowers for her family, the other girls her age are learning to cook, sew, bake and become the perfect “house wife.” This is all in preparation for when the Dragon comes. The Dragon is the man who is kept up in the dark, eerie tower overlooking Dvernik. He comes out every 10 years to claim a girl of his choosing and she’s whisked away and never seen again. This is his reward for overlooking Dvernik and keeping everyone safe and alive from the dreaded Wood, the forest that no one ever returns from.

Fantasy books always make me think: What if these worlds exist? What if magic is real? The creation of the magic language the characters used when they were performing spells was divine. They flowed so smoothly that, as I read, I could picture the words slowly hissing of the character’s lips and slinking through the air to perform their purpose. It made me picture such a vivid image of magic and witchery that it made me wish I could cast spells! I admire Novik’s

courage to put herself out there and create, not only a mystical word, but a whole new language to go with it. Not only did she create strong characters but she put in a realistic setting. Dverník appeared real just from words on a page; It became a place I wanted to go to.

I think Novik's choice of first person was fantastic for this book because, personally, I don't enjoy reading in third person. I wouldn't turn a book away if it was. But if this book was third person, since it's such a rich book, I would probably put it down.



The world was so dense with magical realism that, the story being in first person clarified points and added a sense of strength to the main character. She appeared as a heroine and stood prominently throughout the book. Novik's style of writing Agnieszka's point of view felt like I was in her mind and I was seeing through her eyes. The picture of her world was very well painted and portrayed through her point of view.

There are some parts where you can tell Novik is trying to pack the punch about how true she wants her world to be and that she crafted every minor detail to make the experience come alive. There is a section in the book where the material is so dense with new characters and new plot twists, it's hard to follow. I felt that when I got to around chapter twenty, there were new characters appearing and I didn't know where they came from. There is a part where a new person appears, named Alosha. For the life of me, I could not find where she was introduced. Novik should have toned it down a bit with the number of characters she had appearing in the book. I found myself flipping back through the pages to see things I may have missed and felt overwhelmed with the new information that was being given. It made the book lack luster

towards the end. At a certain point, I started to become confused with the proceeding story line, where the characters were, and what was occurring.

The one thing that helped move things along, when things got confusing, was humor. The sarcasm between characters helped me want to continue the book when things got a little rocky. The sly remarks and the side-poking insults adds an uplifting layer of humor to such a ferociously magical story. The banter between the characters made me chuckle a bit. I could relate to how the characters teased each other; it reminded me of my own humor. I love to tease people so, I got a kick out of how the story also provided a funny element to the plot.

Overall, I was very satisfied with this book. Despite my few thoughts about the amount of characters and how they appeared, the adventures are thrilling and kept me on my toes. There were times where I thought “I need to get ready for class, let me put the book down now”, but just kept turning the pages to see if the next spell Agnieszka spoke would clean off her muddy, wool dress and the Dragon would finally be pleased.



*In her spare time,
Lilly likes to read and
watch Gilmore Girls
(which she has a sick
obsession for).*

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<http://www.riversendbookstore.com/book/9780804179034>

Price: \$16.00-\$25.00

Publisher: Del Rey May 19th 2015

Pages 438
