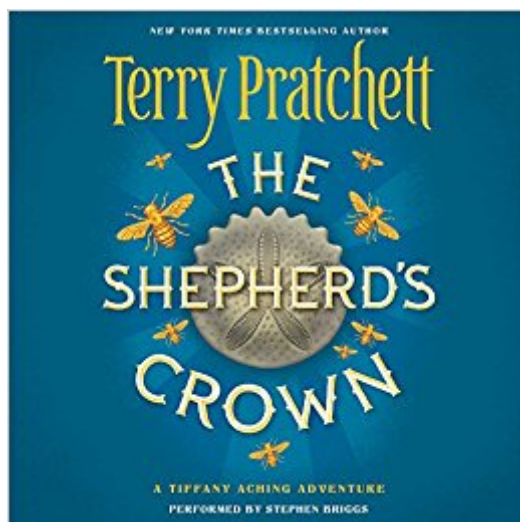


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# The Shepherd's Crown (Tiffany Aching)



## Synopsis

Terry Pratchett's final Discworld novel, and the fifth to feature the witch Tiffany Aching. A shivering of worlds ... Deep in the Chalk, something is stirring. The owls and the foxes can sense it, and Tiffany Aching feels it in her boots. An old enemy is gathering strength. This is a time of endings and beginnings, old friends and new, a blurring of edges and a shifting of power. Now Tiffany stands between the light and the dark, the good and the bad. As the fairy horde prepares for invasion, Tiffany must summon all the witches to stand with her. To protect the land. Her land. There will be a reckoning ...

## Book Information

Series: Tiffany Aching (Book 5)

Audio CD

Publisher: HarperCollins; Unabridged edition (September 15, 2015)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1.2 x 6.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.6 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 594 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #11,664,633 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #90 in [Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > \( P \) > Pratchett, Terry](#) #3053 in [Books > Books on CD > Children's Fiction > Fantasy](#) #3986 in [Books > Books on CD > Children's Fiction > General](#)

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

## Customer Reviews

Gr 6 Up - Pratchett (The Long Utopia [HarperCollins, 2015]) leaves his fans with one last glorious tale of Discworld, this one starring his youngest heroine, the witch Tiffany Aching. When Death comes for Granny Weatherwax, she leaves behind her cabin and, by default, the job of unofficial leader of the witches to Tiffany. For the teen protagonist, being a witch has always been about doing what must be done, so she shoulders the burden but goes about things in her own way. She has soon taken on the first-ever male witch apprentice, Geoffrey, a man who has a soothing way with people and animals. Work becomes the least of Tiffany's problems once word of Granny Weatherwax's death reaches the realm of the elves. A cruel usurper casts out their Queen who is

viewed as weak because of her caution after her earlier defeat by Tiffany and her wariness of the human's new iron horses. Tiffany shelters the diminished Queen while facing the threat of marauding elf hordes, backed by her trusty Nac Mac Feegles and other allies. Though this title was written during Pratchett's final days, there is nothing rushed here; indeed, this final book stands among the very best of his work. In one poignant scene, Death remarks on Granny Weatherwax's passing, "And far away, in someplace unthinkable, a white horse was being unsaddled by a figure with a scythe with, it must be said, some sorrow." And so, too, will readers mourn the loss of such an irreplaceable writing talent. VERDICT Readers young and old will savor this tale that emphasizes the values of hard work and standing firm in the face of evil. An exceptionally crafted finale from one of the greats. —Eric Norton, McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids, WI --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

—“Fans will also find plenty of well-loved elements: exuberant wordplay, vaudevillian humor, the rambunctious blue-skinned Nac Mac Feegle, and beneath it all a susurrus of shivery archetype and myth. Pratchett's final work is a tour de force of compassion, great wit, and gleeful storytelling.” —(Publishers Weekly (starred review)) —“There is something deeply suitable about the significant focus here on legacy and what is left behind. Savor this one; it's literally the last authorized book coming.” —(Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books (starred review)) —“Terry was one of our greatest fantasists, and beyond a doubt the funniest.” —(George R. R. Martin) —“A Terry Pratchett book is a small miracle.” —(Neil Gaiman) —“Discworld is one of the very most fabulous creations in all of literature.” —(Patrick Ness) —“No writer in my lifetime has given me as much pleasure and happiness.” —(A. S. Byatt) —“A writer of monumental talent.” —(Rick Riordan) —“Beloved fantasy writer Pratchett died this spring, and his dedicated and immense fan base will want his final novel. His storytelling is pure magic, and fans will grieve anew that this is the last of it. Stock up.” —(Booklist) —“Elegiac and comforting, funny and serious.” —(Horn Book Magazine) --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Like many other readers I approached Sir Terry's final book with a mix of excitement (A New Terry Pratchett book!!) and melancholy (it is the last Terry Pratchett book). I read it all in nearly one go. There are several negative reviews posted here and elsewhere suggesting that those of us that enjoyed *The Shepherd's Crown* are merely reacting emotionally to it being Sir Terry's final book and are somehow incapable or unwilling to see the book's faults. I would suggest that many of them are

also having a purely emotional reaction because they did not like it, or perhaps it was not the final book they were hoping for. Several have even suggested that Sir Terry did not write *The Shepherd's Crown*, unable or unwilling to realize that Sir Terry's "voice" has been changing for awhile now. A degenerative fatal disease will do that to a person. I did enjoy *The Shepherd's Crown*. It was not the final book I was hoping for; I would have preferred a final romp with the wizards or the Watch. But this is still a Discworld book. It is true this book has its faults. I agree with other reviews that sometimes minutiae are described in minute detail while many important events go by very quickly. I cannot complain about the appearance of a few tangential characters reacting to a major event. This event would no doubt be noticed by a great many people on the Disc. These appearances, particularly Mustrum Ridcully and the Patrician do feel a bit forced, but I view them more as Sir Terry giving a last Hail! and farewell to characters he loved the best and could not let his final work pass without them getting a nod. And it was much less intrusive than it could have been, and much less ridiculous than say Russell Davies pathetic goodbye to Doctor Who. And I did not find any characters demonstrably different from how they have acted in the past. Nanny Ogg seems to be singled out in many reviews, but I thought she was Nanny Ogg. Some have lamented that Sir Terry gave us a few new characters that we will now not get to know better. In some cases this is true, however those wishing for more Mrs Earwig have clearly missed what Sir Terry was telling us about her. In this book a elf causes a person to doubt themselves to make them unable to fight back. This power is strangely ineffective against Mrs Earwig. In my view this is because she is such self centered raging ego maniac that no power anywhere can make her doubt herself. A one dimensional throwaway character at best, and certainly one I did not wish to meet ever again. The plot does indeed boil down to the elves are coming and Tiffany Aching in her new role must stop them. This is one of Sir Terry's young adult books, and as such, does not have the plethora of subplots and twenty major characters running around that we are accustomed to in other Discworld books. This in my view is also not worth complaining about. The only thing that bothers me about this book is it shows us very clearly that even Sir Terry, with all his boundless optimism in the face of his health troubles was indeed losing his sense of humor. It began to show in *Snuff*, became a bit more pronounced in *Raising Steam*, and here it is undeniable. The only really funny bits are the easy laughs that can be had using the Feegles. Undeniably funny, but easy and far too few. Perhaps this was also a function of this being a young adult book and Sir Terry intentionally stayed away from true satire and commentary. I hope this is the case. As his editor himself admits in his afterword, Sir Terry was unable to polish this book as he would have liked, to iron out the bits that many are complaining about. And it is a sometimes uneven read, no doubt. However, we must keep

in mind that it did not get that final polish and allow some leeway there. We cannot simply wish for the book we wanted. This is the final chapter Sir Terry left us, warts and all, and while I agree it is not his best work, I feel Sir Terry would agree with that assessment as well, and we should not be upset that the publisher printed it in this state, we should be grateful that we were given one last go.

We can't have another ten years of Discworld books; this is what we have. And it is far better than I expected. The plot makes sense, the emotional urgency is there, and Tiffany Aching is absolutely herself - as are the other witches. In some spots the writing is perfunctory, and in other spots a minor point is belabored. All typical of a book that the author did not have time to polish. But the book is still emotionally satisfying and a true work of art. Fewer subplots than Terry in his prime...but he was not in his prime when he wrote this. As for those who think he didn't write it, take a close look at what's here and what is in the books he truly had little part in, the Long Earth series. THOSE have only a little Pratchett. Compare the writing, compare the deftness of naming, compare the sentence structure, compare the emotional weight. This is real Pratchett, albeit diluted. Who else would have done the bit with the two pennies? That's not imitation Pratchett. It's real Pratchett. Along the way he says a fond farewell/gives a tip of the hat to many other characters and sub-series from Discworld. A great deal of pleasure to be had here, if of the bittersweet variety.

The Shepherd's Crown is Terry Pratchett's final novel and final Discworld story. It is Sir Terry's farewell to Discworld and, in a way, it is his farewell to his readers. The first three chapters seem almost as if Pratchett were writing his own eulogy. Then the story proper gets underway (and it's a good one) until it reaches its inevitable, heart-breaking conclusion. This is an incredibly moving novel that spotlights Discworld's famous citizens. If you haven't read any Discworld novels, this is definitely not the book to start your journey. But if you've been a faithful reader, you owe it to yourself to visit this land of enchantment and wonder and bittersweet joy one last time. Terry Pratchett wrote in *Going Postal*, "Do you not know that a man is not dead while his name is still spoken?" By this reasoning, Terry Pratchett will be around for a long, long time.

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