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# The Fire Rose (Elemental Masters)



## Synopsis

Beauty Meets Beast in San FranciscoAccepting employment as a governess after hard times hit her family, medieval scholar Rosalind Hawkins is surprised when she learns that her mysterious employer has no children, no wife, and she is not to meet with him face to face. Instead, her duties are to read to him, through a speaking tube, from ancient manuscripts in obscure, nearly forgotten dialects.A requirement for the job was skill in translating medieval French, and she now understands the reason for that requirement, and assumes her unseen employer's interest in the descriptions of medieval spells and sorcery is that of an eccentric antiquary. What she does not realize is that his interest is anything but academic. He has a terrible secret and is desperately searching for something that can reverse the effects of the misfired spell which created his predicament.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Lackey's story of a young turn of the century female who is brought to the wilds of San Francisco to read books for a reclusive alchemist recreates the fable of the monster who wins the heart of a young woman yet forbids her to view him. For the monster here is a magician caught in a werewolf spell, and the young girl is a destitute young woman with no other choices. -- Midwest Book Review  
--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.

As any good fantasy fan must, I love the work of Mercedes Lackey. We share the same birthday (different years) and the same abiding love of the genre of fantasy, music and the renaissance. Mercedes Lackey writes immersive fantasy tales that are not only well-crafted; they rise far above your standard hack-and-slash sword-and-sorcery. In her Valdemar series, Lackey takes the genre and amps it up. This book is a bit outside my usual genre of epic fantasy. When I bought the Kindle download, I assumed The Fire Rose was a romance with a fantasy twist, maybe a book to while away a rainy northwest afternoon. In a sense I was right, but I was also wrong. First published in Oct. 1995, this is a full-on fantasy with a good dose of romance, set in Edwardian era San Francisco. For some reason, I had never come across this book, and was thrilled to find it as a Kindle download. Rosalind (Rose) Hawkins travels by train to San Francisco and is met by Paul du Mond, her employer's secretary. Paul is a mysterious, rather arrogant man and Rosalind doesn't really know what to make of him, but she doesn't like him. She does not physically meet her employer Jason Cameron; rather she gets to know him only through the speaking tube in her rooms. I loved that twist; it reminded me of getting to know a person via email. The mind is not distracted by what the eye sees, and the conversation becomes the driving force in the relationship. Lackey portrays her characters well, and in keeping with the era which she has set them in. Rose is intelligent, highly educated and strong. She is a lady in every sense of the word, yet she has a sense of adventure and loves the experience of learning. She has a backbone and she is not afraid to use it. Of course, Jason Cameron is much more than he has presented himself to be, and he has many ulterior motives for selecting Rosalind out of the list of candidates who could have filled the position. Jason Cameron is a man of vast wealth and great power in every sense of the word. He is fully aware that his own hubris caused his transformation, and to his chagrin, his personality is vastly benefiting from the dose of humility he inadvertently administered to himself. Paul du Mond is also more than he appears. He is also a man with nasty vices and a cruel streak a mile wide, and he knows Jason's plans for Rose. From the outset Paul is not pleased that Rosalind has been brought in to read to Jason. This jealousy drives the plot, and fuels the mayhem that ensues. Paul du Mond is arrogant, self-centered, and a sociopath. He reaches higher than his abilities can handle and has no moral compunction against using any means to achieve the desire

of the moment. Besides being a master creator of some of the most popular sword-and-sorcery in the fantasy genre, +Mercedes Lackey also knows how to write fabulous twists on traditional fairy tales. She knocks it out of the park with this tale. A lot of people are writing modern takes on fairy tales but they frequently fall short of the mark. They forget that there must be a great plot that goes well beyond the original or it's just a rehashing of the tried and true. *The Fire Rose* goes way beyond the traditional tale of Beauty and the Beast, to the point you completely forget the original tale that sparked this idea of novel. NO ONE melds romantic tension and magic into a tale as well as Mercedes Lackey. Her romance is classy and her magic is always well crafted and sensibly depicted, making this book a great read for any day, rainy or not. The final chapters of this tale are gripping and the ending is completely satisfying, and was unexpected--the best kind of ending. This book is a stand-alone book, but I will most definitely be reading the others in this series of books, the Elemental Masters.

This story is darker than most of Mercedes Lackey's stories in this series. What does a girl do when she is a bookworm and nerd before it was cool (try the 1800's.) She is left without a place to live and wondering what to do in Chicago. Out of nowhere, she is offered a job 'to good to be true' in California. She is told she will be working with 2 children but soon finds out her employer needs her to read and translate for him. He has suffered from an accident and is trying to find a way to fix it. He is a Firemaster and has a very shifty assistant. What does she go through and how does she help him? Read this story to find out.

This book was more about character development and a sense of fictional history. I found it pleasurable to read as I do with most of Lackey's books but knowing that it's a twist of Beauty and Beast with a fire elemental twist it just wasn't anywhere near comparable to her other novels with richer histories. It's a good read, fun, and enchanting but you can't compare it to her other series. What I did like was the heroine she was painted much more clever and independent than the original Beauty and the Beast, this isn't exactly your typical love story.

**The Fire Rose**  
Mercedes Lackey  
Baen, Jul 1 2014, \$18.00  
ISBN 9781476736501  
In 1905, Chicago heiress and medieval scholar Rosalind Hawkins has no time to grieve the death of her father as she finds herself in financial straits. With no choices she accepts a position as a governess of Jason Cameron's children in San Francisco. However, her new job proves strange since her enigmatic employer has no children or for that matter apparently any family either. Instead

Jason hired her due to her medieval language translation skills. She translates ancient French texts through a tubular gizmo to him but never sees Jason, who explains to the scholar that he suffered a horrific disfigurement. Jason conceals from his employee that a spell he cast contained a fatal flaw that leaves this Fire Elemental Master in a werewolf-human abominable convergence. She is his only hope, but neither expected to fall in love before she saw his visage. This reprint of the wonderful first Elemental Masters fantasy is a delightful rendition of Beauty and the Beast in early twentieth century California. The enchanting storyline retains its magic due a terrific cast; starting with the changing relationship between the protagonists enhanced by strong support characters and a natural disaster about to shake the City On The Bay. Harriet Klausner

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