

The Golden Compass (His Dark Materials, Book 1)

By Philip Pullman

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******* Includes an exciting preview of *THE BOOK OF DUST*, the long-awaited new book from Philip Pullman set in the world of His Dark Materials, arriving October 2017! *******

The modern fantasy classic that *Entertainment Weekly* named an “All-Time Greatest Novel” and *Newsweek* hailed as a “Top 100 Book of All Time.” Philip Pullman takes readers to a world where humans have animal familiars and where parallel universes are within reach.

Lyra is rushing to the cold, far North, where witch clans and armored bears rule. North, where the Gobblers take the children they steal--including her friend Roger. North, where her fearsome uncle Asriel is trying to build a bridge to a parallel world.

Can one small girl make a difference in such great and terrible endeavors? This is *Lyra*: a savage, a schemer, a liar, and as fierce and true a champion as Roger or Asriel could want.

But what Lyra doesn't know is that to help on of them will be to betray the other...

A masterwork of storytelling and suspense, Philip Pullman's award-winning *The Golden Compass* is the first in the His Dark Materials series, which continues with *The Subtle Knife*, and *The Amber Spyglass*.

A #1 New York Times Bestseller

Winner of the Guardian Prize for Children's Fiction


Published in 40 Countries

"Arguably the best juvenile fantasy novel of the past twenty years." --*The Washington Post*

"Very grand indeed." --*The New York Times*

"Pullman is quite possibly a genius." --*Newsweek*

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Some books improve with age--the age of the reader, that is. Such is certainly the case with Philip Pullman's heroic, at times heart-wrenching novel, *The Golden Compass*, a story ostensibly for children but one perhaps even better appreciated by adults. The protagonist of this complex fantasy is young Lyra Belacqua, a precocious orphan growing up within the precincts of Oxford University. But it quickly becomes clear that Lyra's Oxford is not precisely like our own--nor is her world. For one thing, people there each have a personal *daemon*, the manifestation of their souls in animal form. For another, hers is a universe in which science, theology, and magic are closely allied:

As for what experimental theology was, Lyra had no more idea than the urchins. She had formed the notion that it was concerned with magic, with the movements of the stars and planets, with tiny particles of matter, but that was guesswork, really. Probably the stars had daemons just as humans did, and experimental theology involved talking to them.

Not that Lyra spends much time worrying about it; what she likes best is "clambering over the College roofs with Roger the kitchen boy who was her particular friend, to spit plum stones on the heads of passing Scholars or to hoot like owls outside a window where a tutorial was going on, or racing through the narrow streets, or stealing apples from the market, or waging war." But Lyra's carefree existence changes forever when she and her daemon, Pantalaimon, first prevent an assassination attempt against her uncle, the powerful Lord Asriel, and then overhear a secret discussion about a mysterious entity known as Dust. Soon she and Pan are swept up in a dangerous game involving disappearing children, a beautiful woman with a golden monkey daemon, a trip to the far north, and a set of allies ranging from "gyptians" to witches to an armor-clad polar bear.

In *The Golden Compass*, Philip Pullman has written a masterpiece that transcends genre. It is a children's book that will appeal to adults, a fantasy novel that will charm even the most hardened realist. Best of all, the author doesn't speak down to his audience, nor does he pull his punches; there is genuine terror in this book, and heartbreak, betrayal, and loss. There is also love, loyalty, and an abiding morality that infuses the story but never overwhelms it. This is one of those rare novels that one wishes would never end. Fortunately, its sequel, *The Subtle Knife*, will help put off that inevitability for a while longer. --*Alix Wilber*

From Publishers Weekly

Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy now appears in sophisticated trade paperback editions, each title embossed within a runic emblem of antiqued gold. The backdrop of *The Golden Compass: His Dark Materials, Book I* sports a midnight blue map of the cosmos with the zodiacal ram at its center. *The Subtle Knife* and *The Amber Spyglass* carry similarly intriguing cover art, and all three titles offer details not seen in the originals: in *Compass and Knife*, for example, Pullman's stamp-size b&w art introduces each chapter; *Spyglass* chapters open with literary quotes from Blake, the Bible, Dickinson and more.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 7 Up?A novel set in London and in the Arctic regions of a world that is somewhat like our own. Lyra, apparently an orphan, lives among the scholars at Jordan College, Oxford. She becomes aware of a nefarious plot to steal children and transport them to the far north. As Lyra is drawn deeper and deeper into this

mystery, she finds that the children are being made to suffer terribly. What she does not?and must not?know is that she is the keystone in an ancient prophecy. Her destiny is to save her world and to move on into a parallel universe. She dives headlong into harrowing adventures, totally unaware of her importance. She also discovers the identity of her parents, who are major players in the unfolding drama. In Lyra's world, every human has a daemon, an animal that is sort of an extension of one's soul. This fact is central to the story as the church, the academic world, and the government seek to understand the significance of the phenomenon. Also important, but never fully explained, is a substance called Dust. This is a captivating fantasy, filled with excitement, suspense, and unusual characters. The armored bears are wonderful and more interesting than most of the humans. There is some fine descriptive writing, filled with the kind of details that encourage suspension of disbelief. The story line moves along at a rapid clip, but flags when it delves into philosophical matters. The ending is less than satisfying, but serves as a lead-in to part two of the series. Fantasy lovers will be clamoring for the next installment.?Bruce Anne Shook, Mendenhall Middle School, Greensboro, NC
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Users Review

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