

## Book Lovers: Get Your English On!

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### ***Seeing Redd* — Review by Chris**

***Spoiler alert: This is a review of the second book in The Looking Glass Wars series. By its nature, the review will reveal at least part of what happened in the first book. If you want the first book to be a complete surprise, which is my personal preference, stop reading now and leave this page.***

***You have been warned! :-)***

Not everything is what it seems, Frank Beddor's sequel reminds us. After being immersed in a Wonderland controlled by Redd, we know what to expect: squalor, betrayal, deceit and danger.

However, we also learn that Redd is not the only one to try to bring on such unpleasantness.

As we join our intrepid heroes in *Seeing Redd*, Wonderland is recovering as best it can from Redd's influence, with the cleansing power of Alyss' strong White Imagination. Everyone is back: Bibwit Harte, Dodge, General Doppelganger — even the walrus butler. Hatter Madigan has left the queen in Homburg Molly's capable hands.

And they are capable — only Molly feels inferior. She can't believe that the queen truly trusts her and she looks at many things as a slight.

The queen herself is trying to fit into her new role, but again, she's learning how to be queen every day (with help from her loyal and wise tutor). She has rediscovered Dodge and wants to know where that will go.

Hatter is learning a new role himself while mourning Weaver, his only love.

Even those who are looking to disrupt the new peace are learning. King Arch, the chauvinistic king we met briefly in the first book, is back — and looking for a chink in the new queen's armor. Even Redd and The Cat, banished to the apparent safety of the Heart Crystal, are learning a new role: how to notch up their viciousness while being just a little blurry. (Choosing the wrong painter can have its drawbacks.)

More than once, blindness (despite Glass Eyes) takes characters down unforeseen paths and make alliances they might not ought to — or should they?

Readers learn more themselves: about the Heart dynasty, the Looking Glass Mazes, about Earth and Wonderland. Readers learned more about the politics of Wonderland and Borderland, its neighbor.

This book was hard for me to read. I tend to tense up when the going gets tough, and I was tense the entire time I read the book — which means it was good. Better than that, I literally had no idea where the book was going. Although the story went places I didn't expect, it followed the logic of the world in which it took place. The ending was stunning and marvelous.

It also introduced some very interesting new characters, mostly deliciously imagined Black Imaginationists, beautifully setting up the third book in the series.

I also discovered there are companion pieces to this series, including *Princess Alyss of Wonderland* and *Hatter M: The Looking Glass Wars*, the latter of which is a graphic novel spin-off.

But first, read *Seeing Redd* and *The Looking Glass Wars* (but *not* in that order). You will be glad you did.

Posted by Chris at 9:00 PM