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The young haremaid Dotti and the badger-warrior Lord Brocktree—unlikely comrades—set out for Salamandastron together, only to discover the legendary mountain has been captured by the wildcat Ungatt Trunn and his Blue Hordes. To face them, the two must rally an army—hares and otters, shrews and moles, mice and squirrels—and execute a plan that makes up in cleverness what it lacks in force.

Lord Brocktree Details

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Author : Brian Jacques

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From Reader Review Lord Brocktree for online ebook

Sarah says

I found a signed hardcover copy of this on a BARGAIN TABLE once. Best purchase ever!

Josiah says

"Defend the weak, protect both young and old, never desert your friends. Give justice to all, be fearless in battle and always ready to defend the right."

—The law of Badger Lords, *Lord Brocktree*, P. 370

Thirteen books into the beloved Redwall series, I think Brian Jacques demonstrates remarkably in *Lord Brocktree* that his enthralling tales of Mossflower Wood and its many and varied inhabitants still have a lot of freshness kept in reserve. I would say that this book is probably the best entry in the series since *The Bellmaker*, the seventh installment in the Redwall saga.

Reaching back through the rich and awe-inspiring history alluded to in previous Redwall novels, Brian Jacques casts a mesmerizing spell of gorgeous language and strong, brave characters in the telling of the legend of Lord Brocktree, the first Badger Lord to organize Salamandastron into the powerful fortress that it would become in later years, home to the stouthearted Long Patrol of fighting hares and the ever-present Badger Lord, who always fought with everything he (or she) had in the interest of justice for all creatures, often sacrificing his or her own life to rid the world of unsavory vermin whose influence was good for nothing but to tear down and destroy the thoughtful work of peaceable creatures.

Leaving his mountain home of Salamandastron at a young age, Brocktree wanders the Mossflower country in search of a destiny of his own. His father, Lord Stonepaw, is the acting Badger Lord, and it is always difficult for two male badgers to inhabit the same dwelling without a great deal of resulting friction due to their headstrong personalities. On his way Brocktree makes the acquaintance of a young hare named Dorothea, who had struck out on her own after her parents decided that it would be best for her to make a life for herself away from home. Together, Brocktree and Dorothea find their way in the world, trying to figure out what fate may have in store for each of them, while learning about themselves and what it takes to maintain a friendship.

Back on Salamandastron, the aging Lord Stonepaw and his courageous hares, who are also quite old and well past their peak physical years, are met with an ominous challenge from a dark, evil marauder, a wildcat by the name of Ungatt Trunn. Supporting Trunn is a vast sea of assorted vermin, too numerous to count and impossible to defend the mountain against for very long. The siege follows predictable lines and Lord Stonepaw manages to escape to the interior of the mountain with a couple dozen of his most resourceful hares, to hopefully await rescue from someone who may have what it takes to challenge Trunn's stranglehold on Salamandastron.

Eventually, Brocktree and Dorothea receive word about the goings-on at the mountain, and Brocktree realizes at last where his destiny is leading him. He is being called to lead the charge on Trunn's evil army at Salamandastron with not only the bravery and physical strength of a burgeoning Badger Lord, but more

importantly with the kind of smarts that can lead a terrifyingly outnumbered group of willing soldiers to topple an infectious empire before its hold on the land grows too strong and it becomes nearly impossible to break that hold. Brocktree must rise to the occasion as no other Badger Lord before or since, and demonstrate a level of heroism that will rock the foundations of Mossflower lore forever.

I thought the Redwall series had been starting to slow down prior to reading *Lord Brocktree* and its direct predecessor, but if Brian Jacques can keep up this standard of richly imaginative storytelling, then I have no doubt the final ten or so volumes to the series will be compelling reading I would not want to miss. *Lord Brocktree* stirred my spirit in a way I hadn't really felt for the last several books in the series, and left me eagerly wanting more of the story. I would recommend this book to anyone who has read other Redwall books, or even as a possible introduction to the series. I don't think many readers will be disappointed with what they find in its pages.

I would give three and a half stars to *Lord Brocktree*.

Stephen says

I read this one to my kids. How can you not love an epic fantasy story about a Badger Lord taking back his mountain kingdom from a deranged wildcat? And there are so many otters! It's too bad Jacques has passed away.

Alex H says

In this book there are many characters. Some of the characters are Lord Brocktree, Dotti, Lord Stonepaw, Ungatt Trun, King Bucko Bigbones, and a bunch of hares. Lord Stonepaw is the new Badger Lord who is on an adventure to take his throne at Salamandstron, which is the home of the Badger Lords. Dotti is a hare who is on an adventure with Lord Brocktree to visit her aunt at Salamandstron. Lord Stonepaw is Lord Brocktree's father. He is the current Badger Lord and is waiting for his son to arrive and the mountain to take his throne. Ungratt Trun is a wildcat who has decided to take his army of blue vermin to conquer Salamandstron. King Bucko Bigbones is a self appointed king of the northern mountain hares. All the hares in the story go with Lord Brocktree and help defeat Ungatt Trun.

The theme of the book is that no matter what good will prevail. What this means is that if you keep going ahead and fight the evil good will always come and help you. For example when the mountain was under control of Ungatt Trun all the hares and Lord Stonepaw kept fighting them until Lord Brocktree came and helped defeat them. The main idea of the story is that the mountain of Salamandstron is being held under the rule of a Badger Lord and then a wildcat comes and takes over the mountain then he is defeated by another Badger Lord. In the story there were other themes and main ideas but these were the two main ones.

Alexia says

Loved it. Brian Jacques is a force to be reckoned with.

(I've read the entire series)

James Zanghi says

One of the problems with the Redwall series is that the books have gotten extremely based on a formula and while that formula is pretty easy to like, it's still pretty easy to predict character actions in the later Redwall Novels like Lord Brocktree.

Basically, the formula is villain makes appearance, causes trouble, new (and most times inexperienced) hero appears, lot of eating and description about food, some kumbahya-sing-round-the-campfire songs that are rips from Lord of the Rings and that don't really keep the plot going and just act as some filler space; climatic and predictable battle where villain army get their tails kicked from here to Salamondastron; a lot more eating; and finally narrative ending that tells the reader they shall be welcome in Redwall Abbey.

Plus, the fact that all of Brian Jacques' novels don't coherently fit together and build off of each other like Harry Potter or Wheel of Time is a factor. Lord Brocktree is no exception to his rule. You know how the story turns out after five minutes of reading and nothing really comes as a surprise.

The other thing that drives me nutty lately about the Redwall series is that animals like Rats, Weasels, and Stoats automatically have cruelty and brutality hardwired into their brains. That's almost racist.

Another thing that rubs me the wrong way with not just Lord Brocktree but the entire Redwall Series are the kids/dibbuns are virtually idiots and are basically implied to be seen and not heard. In short, this series of novels are full of conformity and cliché.

So, in short, you're not missing much if you decide to not read the Redwall Series.

Kogiopsis says

There's always a risk involved in re-reading childhood favorites. What if they're not as good as I remember? What if they espouse views I now can't stand?

That last one is a serious potential problem for the Redwall books, because Brian Jacques made no bones about writing morality with very few shades of grey. As he once wrote in the introduction to the Friend and Foe guide, "Goodies are *good!*" And yet, despite growing up on his work, I find myself less and less fond of black-and-white morality over time. At age seven, good vs. evil worked for me; at age nineteen it bothers me. I approached this book, therefore, with some trepidation.

I needn't have feared. Is the morality still mostly black and white? Yes. Is that a problem?

Well, no!

What I feel Brian Jacques did very well was making his conflicts clearly moral, set up along standards of right and wrong with which few can argue. His 'goodies' are friendly, generous, willing to help each other - they are above all devoted to the betterment of their community at large and helping others, and they fight for the defense of their friends. By contrast, the 'baddies' are selfish and cruel, don't treat others like their

equals (Ungatt Trunn, the primary villain of this book, refers to those outside of his horde as 'Lesser Orders'), and respect only physical strength and martial competence. The lesson here is clear: altruism, respect, and acceptance are good; cruelty and treating others as if they are beneath you are bad. As stark morality goes, that's a message that I'm more than comfortable with being imparted to children.

The story is, of course, solid as well. As are pretty much all Redwall books, it's one part quest and one part large-scale conflict. There's a journey undertaken by small numbers of characters - actually, there are two such journeys in parallel. There are obstacles to overcome, minor foes to defeat, and puzzles to solve. An army is raised and, in the end, meets another such in pitched battle. Anyone familiar with the series already knows what to expect in terms of plot. What brings this book to life - as with any Redwall book - is the cast of characters.

It is, as usual, fairly extensive, and I'm not interested in discussing all of them at the moment. Rest assured that they're as entertaining as ever, and that this book has a healthy population of the always-entertaining hares.

I do want to talk about one character in particular: Dorothea Duckfontein Dillworthy, known as Dotti. She's a young haremaid, the first companion of the titular Lord Brocktree, and interestingly placed in the narrative. Despite being young, female, and largely unarmed, she is treated as just as much a warrior as any other character; her first scene is a battle with would-be robbers. She is simultaneously presented with the flaws of youth - overexcitedness, rash decision making, etc - and with a lot of things that, especially in the Redwall universe, are cardinal virtues. She's friendly and loyal, she's courageous, she's dedicated, she's empathetic, she stands strong under pressure.

What stands out to me about this is that, for all he was writing for young readers, Jacques wrote fairly conventional heroic fantasy stories in structure and conflict. It is therefore notable that one of the main characters, and the one written most so that the reader identifies with her, is young and female - not exactly a common choice for a genre which is traditionally extremely masculine.

Reflecting on Dotti got me thinking about one of the things I like best about Redwall in general: that in the years I've been reading the series, I've never felt like there was no place for me in the world it portrayed. As a nine year-old girl, these books told me I could be Dotti, Mariel, Triss, or even Log-a-Log Grenn. There... really aren't gender roles in Mossflower; male and female characters occupy a broad range of roles. There are male healers (Brome of Noonvale) and female war leaders (Cregga Roseyes), among many others.

I'm not claiming that Mossflower is all-encompassing in its inclusivity. But for a young girl who was just starting to get into reading as a hobby, and fantasy as a genre, it was immensely important to find a world that didn't adhere to tired old gender roles. Redwall has always felt like a safe space to me, and I think that's a large part of it: there is no judgement built into it, no strictures other than not hurting others. As characters so often say in the last chapter of the books, the doors of the Abbey are always open to friends.

On a different note - a specific point of the morality of the series where I feel Lord Brocktree is particularly strong. The rule of the mountain of Salamandastron is essentially one of divine right; there is always a Badger Lord or Lady in charge, always hares serving them faithfully. Often, rule passes down family lineages - Stonepaw to Brocktree; Brocktree presumably to his son when the time comes. And yet, their rule is not justified by birth or species, but by actions: as leaders, they must be wise, fair, kind, and brave, and those are the traits that make them fit to rule. Brocktree demonstrates this over and over: most notably in sending Dotti to confront King Bucko instead of doing so himself (simultaneously ensuring both that she

grows stronger and more self-confident and that he doesn't win the contest by unfair species advantage), and in fighting Ungatt Trunn in single combat as honorably as possible, rather than claiming victory by trickery. He earns the right to be Lord of Salamandastron by the virtues of his actions.

To end this rather disorganized review, here are a few of my favorite quotes:

A venturesom ferret, who had aspirations to captaincy, charged forward, urging the rest on.

"There's only three of 'em. Charge!"

He collapsed under a frightening barrage of hefty blows from Bobweave, who shouted as he delivered the punches, "Sorry t'make a liar out of you, old lad, but listen. Eulaliiiaaaaaa!"

His war cry echoed back at him like rolling thunder.

"Eulaliiiaaaaaa!"

"I say, d'you want me to load your sling, miss Dotti?"

"Tut tut, old chap, *I'm* the sling-loader 'round here, y'know!"

The haremaid rescued her sling from the irrepressible twins. "Oh, give it a rest, you two, I'm perfectly capable of loadin' me own bloomin' sling."

These books remain, after all the years that have passed, one of my favorite things from my childhood, and things I wholeheartedly recommend to any young readers who are up for the challenge a 350 page novel presents - and to anyone else, really. They're good fun, and their essential optimism about *people* of all kinds is invaluable in these all too pessimistic times.

Kelley says

This book is a beast to read aloud. But it's a great story.

My 13-year-old son has been reading the Redwall books for several years. He's listened to some on audiobook, so I knew there were a lot of interesting accents and brogues involved. But I had no idea, when he asked me to read one before bed, that I was in for this: "Ho urr, an' dancin', too, oi loiks t'darncce."

That's Gurth, a mole. He's the worst. I could only make out about two-thirds of what I was saying he said. Everyone else I could understand, but that doesn't mean it wasn't challenging: "She an' 'er pals ain't 'appy if they can't 'ave a good blubber. Lissen, matey, you get back t'the cave an' tell 'em to whomp up vittles for victors..."

But I don't want to scare you away from Jacques' world - it's a beautiful, lifelike, engaging place where the badgers and hares and squirrels battle wildcats and rats and a fox named Groddil, who takes a well-deserved place among the literary characters I will never forget.

It's epic good and evil, with feasts and weapons and battle plans and young warriors jockeying for a maid's

favor. But the characters also are deeply emotional, with sharp senses of humor, hurt feelings and bursts of bravery that let them transcend self for the good of the company.

And the words are every bit as good as the story. "To describe the haremaid's voice as being akin to a frog trapped beneath a hot stone would have been a great injustice, to both frog and stone."

You're wrapped thick in the Redwall world by Jacques' flawless care to keep out even the slightest reference to humanity. The characters ask if "anybeast" will join the cause, not anyone, or refer to a "good beast" instead of a "good man."

Some of the expressions might be lifted right from the streets of Liverpool, for all I know, but for me they were fresh and so, so funny, from "jolly" and "bally" to "biff me sideways, he's brought us a rope!"

One leader's speech to his troops rivals anything I've read like it.

"I thought I had enough warriors at my back to face any army, but I was not prepared for anything like Trunn's Hordes. ... I could give the signal right now to continue the battle. I'm certain that my friends, brave friends like you, would hurl themselves on the foe, with no question or quarter given. Most of you would die, and that's no guess, it's a fact. Hear me. I refuse to sacrifice the lives of good and gallant creatures!"

Ridiculous, but I choked up just now, writing that. I cried real tears at the death of one noble squirrel. And something inside me swelled when an evil leader came to an end that was absolute perfection.

I may never be foolish enough to read another Jacques aloud. But I'd be a fool to not go back to a world so rich and fine.

Sara says

Lord Brocktree is awesome...he's kind of like this big, gruff warrior 'guy' with a poor ability to hide his true gentler side.(read about the way he acts around the molebabes and such). Dotti Duckfontien Dilworthy or whatever is a very amusing character, I really like the way Jaques portrays her spunk. The two twin hare brothers that you meet later in the story are also amusing, especially in the way they admire Dotti's singing.(Not everybody likes her voice, you know)

Richard says

My exposure to the Redwall series has been that of attempting to read Salamastron when I was a kid and not getting passed the first few chapters due to the dialect. A few years ago i attempted to try to break into the series again as I read through Redwall and thoroughly enjoyed it. So, here I was, trying to decide where to go in regards to continuing the series. I decided to read Lord Brocktree and while I can honestly say that I enjoyed the book, it is no Redwall.

While Redwall had a pretty direct approach to the plot and getting to that point, Lord Brocktree seems less focused and has a tendency to meander. The last third of the book really comes together and becomes a fun

read when everything comes to a head but the first bit of the book was a little difficult to slog through due to character development and interaction.

I found that while Lord Brocktree has great characters and the interactions between them can be fun, there were too many characters to keep track of and there seems to be a lot of conversation and silly-ness without moving the story along. It's sort of a "too much of a good thing" situation where, sure it's fun and all but, I found myself sitting there saying, "Yea I get it, the animals love all different types of food and they love singing, but what about the takeover of Salamandastron?" I felt as though the book could've been a bit snappier and could've done with editing it done a bit.

Could be a spoiler? -- As a side note, there is also a very dark chapter towards the very end of the book that features the main enemy, Ungatt Trunn, suffering greatly and talks about what happens to him. I was a bit surprised to read this in the book as besides a few mentions of animals fighting and killing each other during certain battles, the rest of the book is animals singing and eating and all in all being pretty innocent.

Lord Brocktree, it's a decent little book but to me it just felt like it needed to be more focused on the task at hand and a little less focused on meals and songs.

Owen says

Spoiler alert!

Beautifully told. When Fleetscut and Jukka died together I literally cried, two enemies united in the end. Perfect.

Elizabeth says

Lord Brocktree is probably the cleverest Badger Lord of the Redwall series and throughout the book relies more on his brain than his brawn. It's a nice departure from the usual, especially since many of Jacques' characters all start sounding the same after a while. Another nice departure was the antagonism between Fleetscut and Jukka and the maidenry of Dotti. Her emphasis on proper manners just to rile her opponents made for some of the funniest scenes in the book, and let's not forget all the times she called herself a "kingess."

All of the Redwall books have fighting in them, and most have some sort of war, but I think that this book has the best depiction in terms of siege, battle plans, etc. Like I said above, Brocktree is smart, and we get to see him both come up with and carry out his plans. That being said, while Brocktree is the hero of the story, he's much more like an Aragorn hero and not like the typical Redwall hero. The only other way I can think to describe him is that he's kingly. Compare him to Sunflash, the badger hero of Outcast of Redwall, and you'll see what I mean.

For some reason, I thought the ending of the book was really well done. The army breaking up and going their separate ways on their ships was just really touching. Also, Rulango is the best heron ever.

But...there was absolutely no reason to include Skittles. None. I am 100% certain that he was only included

to continue the Redwall formula of “adorable, precocious (more like annoying) baby.”

At this point in the series, I’m starting to notice even more the same-ness of everything in Redwall. This one had some unique features (acquiring the army from Bucko, the defense, siege, counter-attack, etc. of Salamandastron), but thirteen books in, this series is starting to drag a bit.

Ian Brunner says

Lord Brocktree is the 13th book published in the Redwall universe but the first to take place chronologically. I've been a massive fan of Brian Jacques ever since I was a child(or a dibbun as they would say in the Redwall world) and re-reading the series changes very few things for me.

The plot is simple: Peace has gone on for too long near the mountain fortress of Salamandastron; the ancestral home of the badger lords. Ungatt Trunn the wild cat arrives with his massive horde and lays siege to the mountain. Meanwhile, an army is amassed to come to the aid of the mountain.

The thing about Redwall novels that makes them great is the camaraderie. All of these novels have darkness in them. There is hardship and suffering, and cruelty. Some of the characters backstories can be brutal, especially for the age group these stories are marketed towards, but the characters never give up.

A major criticism I see from other readers of these books is how formulaic they are, and while that is true it also allows us to really enjoy the lore of the world. We know there is going to be a villain, a land quest or sea quest, some magic, and food, and singing. What that really brings out is the new elements Jacques brings to each story. Redwall is an ever-deepening world.

Each novel ends with an invitation to come back to the world of Redwall and that is why I think so many of us choose to keep coming back.

“Defend the weak, protect both young and old, never desert your friends. Give justice to all, be fearless in battle and always ready to defend the right.”—The law of Badger Lords”

3.5/5

Cameron says

Lord Brocktree is a tough book to rate. On one hand, the book contains a fun and interesting story with likable characters. On the other hand, there are so many things in this book that are either completely unnecessary or just plain annoying (or both). It comes down to this: Are the abundant annoyances present in this book forgivable due to the presence of a well told story?

The answer to the above question, in this case, is no. Yes, Brocktree and Stonepaw are interesting characters who have a fun supporting cast up against an intimidating villain. Yes, the story surrounding these characters and their connection to Salamandastron (is that an awesome name, or what?), while highly predictable, is enjoyable to read about. But with everything that works well in Lord Brocktree, there's a fault that offsets it.

Chief among those faults is the large amount of unnecessary content, especially in the first half of the book. Large portions of many chapters are dedicated to the description of tables full of food, dancing, and the singing of songs. There's nothing wrong with developing a culture for the characters/species in a story, but it has to be interesting. I found myself thinking many times that I would rather be reading about Ungatt Trunn than hungry rabbits (excuse me, hares) and moles. Speaking of moles...

Dialect is another issue in the novel. While I don't expect every species to talk exactly like the others, some characters (any mole, for example) speak in nigh unreadable dialects. I would audibly sigh whenever I was confronted with paragraph after paragraph of "mole speak". What was most frustrating about it though, was that I couldn't figure out if I was missing crucial plot points or just struggling to read an over elaborate description of rice. Perhaps, though, the fault is mine and I merely lack the faculties necessary to read the different dialects.

If you can deal with the above complaints, you'll likely really enjoy Lord Brocktree. It's an epic story with a large cast of fun characters. However, Lord Brocktree will likely cause more frustration than pleasure for less than patient readers.

NATE says

Honestly a really good read, very descriptive and engaging. I was surprised how violent it got for a children's story. It was turned out to be a really good fantasy adventure story, with really interesting and well developed characters.

Lisa says

Beautiful Book, I absolutely adore Brian Jacques' writing, i have read many of his book multiples times starting at a young and continue to read them into my adult years. They never get boring dull or cumbersome. They may come across as whimsical to some, however this is what i love most about them. We all need more Whimsy in our lives.

Jane Jago says

Sad to have finished this one. I do love a Redwall tale. There is something infinitely comfortable about them and yet they still entertain.

Joseph Leskey says

Very excellent. This story, like the previous two books I've read in this series, boasted a nice [somewhat] fresh plot from the usual fare you get from *Redwall*. It was quite well done and enjoyable.

Martina Sanjaya says

I just love every single book of the Redwall stories. I love the simpleness of plot, yet charmingly told. I love the characters, I love the things they do best. I love how the author painstakingly written down every weird accent, and I love how he created all the lovely food. I love all the wise advice along with the story; classic, told in old ways, but never boring with stories like this. A great children book!

Jenny Clark says

Not the best Redwall book, but still good. As many have said, Redwall has a plot pretty much set. Villain comes and does evil (Usualy a wildcat, rat, stoat, ferret, weasel, fox or bird of some sort) and a hero saves the day, usualy with killing only the main villian. Whike entertaining, this gets to be kinda unrealistic. Usualy, there is another to continue said villainy, not just a bunch of cowards. Regardless, a good series and book in general. I like that we get to see more of the Redwall world, like in Mossflower and Martin the Warrior to name a few "roaming" books.
