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Poison

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~~Not a Choice:~~

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Media type:

Book

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In a vividly-realised fantasy world, the humans living in a marshy land take their adult names at 14, and a 'gothic'-looking black-haired girl called Foxglove chooses the adult name Poison. She dislikes her limited horizons and reads stories: legends and tales of phaeries - this affected spelling is used throughout. Phaeries have conquered much of the Realm of Man, and humans have mostly given up city life to hide in the swamps and mountains. Poison's life is drastically changed when her toddler sister is stolen by the evil Scarecrow and a changeling left behind. She resolves to go to the Phaerie Lord to get her sister back: the plot of **Labyrinth** and of Sendak's **Outside over there** before it, and of Terry Pratchett's **The Wee Free Men**, coincidentally published this May. Poison acquires loyal companions, destroys an evil witch and reaches the Phaerie Lord's palace, where she finds intrigue and further obstacles. Her adventure in the Realm of Spiders is thrilling and her destiny unexpected; against tradition she is not reunited with her sister, which is surely sad. The powerful fantasy descriptions suggest Lovecraft and Dunsany rather than Tolkien, and the Great Library which 'reaches into any place where books are kept' recalls Pratchett's L-space. It is good when storytellers become heroes, and we leave Poison in her new role planning to take the Realm of Man back from the phaeries. I would certainly recommend this fantasy, but preferably for the upper age-ranges because of the murderous intrigues in the Realm of Phaerie.

Running Order:

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