



The Tears of the Salamander

Books Reviewed:

[The Tears of the Salamander](#) [1]

Issue:

[142](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Robert Dunbar](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

By the time we are just over half-way through this totally fascinating and absorbing novel we learn that for its young hero, Alfredo, the whole of his life has narrowed to a single purpose, to take vengeance on his uncle Giorgio for the murder of his family. Alfredo, whom we meet originally as baker's son and gifted cathedral chorister, has been brought by Giorgio, subsequent to the murder, to Sicily, where in his role as 'Master of the Mountain' he presides over the fires of Mount Etna and its magical salamanders. Here also he practises his art as alchemist and pursues his search for the Elixir of life, his intention being that Alfredo, through his singing skills, will have a central and cleverly manipulated role in both. Alfredo's gradual understanding of the full (and very sinister) nature of Giorgio's desires is depicted by Dickinson in a beautifully paced and integrated plot where erudition and compassion combine in a truly remarkable feat of storytelling. Warmly, indeed fiercely, recommended.

Running Order:

15

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[1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/the-tears-of-the-salamander>

[2] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/142>

[3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/robert-dunbar>