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# The Looking Glass Wars

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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This is an exuberantly over-the-top story by a larger-than-life author, trailing clouds of publicity as it comes. Beddor is a former champion skier, now an actor and Hollywood film producer, whose own company also markets interactive games. Not surprisingly, therefore, his first novel is marked by a cinematic imagination, the sort of pace and wildly violent non-stop action we associate with video games, and obvious potential for multi-media development. Its natural home seems not the book but the screen. Given that background, then, it is a remarkably literary novel, not only in its classic antecedents but their fresh imaginative treatment. The basic idea is that when Lewis Carroll wrote **Alice** for Alice Liddell, he was only retelling a story that Alice had first told him, and telling it moreover as a distorted and frivolous lie. Alice is really and truly Princess Alyss, rightful queen of Wonderland, who has escaped to England together with her bodyguard, one Hatter Madigan (a piece of human weaponry such as Ian Fleming never dreamed of) after her parents have been killed and their throne usurped by the villainous Queen Redd. Alyss is disgusted by Carroll's misrepresentation of her confidences concerning Wonderland and its people, such as her tutor, a long-eared albino gentleman called Bibwit Harte. Cross words are spoken between them. **The Looking Glass Wars** tells the true story of Alyss's past, and her ensuing struggle to overturn Fedd's dastardly rule. The story is an elaborate literary joke, keeping Carroll at a distance while never losing touch with his world, his characters, or the rules by which Wonderland first lived and moved, but cleverly transposing them into a modern fantasy thriller suited to the high-tech, quick-reaction hectic world of film and video games. Although this makes for a frenetic uniformity of pace, more suited to video games than novels, this is still a thoroughly entertaining read, which manages to be both tongue-in-cheek and fast and furious throughout. It may be the pilot for a large-scale entertainment project, but it is still a proper book. Or an improper book, if you are a Carroll purist.

Running Order:

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