



The Starlight Watchmaker

Books Reviewed:

[The Starlight Watchmaker](#) [1]

Issue:

[237](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Rebecca Butler](#) [3]

Not on Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Hugo is a watchmaker, but not quite like any watchmaker the reader has met before. He works at an academy on a planet far from Earth. The purpose of the academy is to train future leaders from many alien civilisations. Hugo is impoverished and lowly regarded. He is allowed to remain on the academy campus after his master's departure only because he does a worthwhile job making and repairing watches.

Hugo meets Dorian, a green-skinned alien from a very elite planet. Dorian is severely distressed. He has an examination coming in a few days. His time travel watch, essential for the exam, is broken. He issues an imperious demand to Hugo to repair his watch. Hugo opens the watch, only to make a disturbing discovery. The watch is powered by quantum energy. The unit that generates this energy is simply missing. The watch cannot be repaired.

Hugo explains that without its energy generator the watch is not just useless but also dangerous. Dorian believes he knows what has happened. The unit has been stolen by Lady De Winter. This female alien has interesting gifts. She is made of rock and she can split fragments of herself off when she wishes. Dorian and Hugo find and confront Lady De Winter. But they are in for a surprise. Her watch is also lacking its power source. Together the three of them must address this question. Who is stealing these power units and how can they be recovered?

This book is a parable. At the start of their relationship Dorian and Hugo are simply master and servant. But as the book progresses and their shared difficulties emerge, they become friends. The underlying moral precept is that once formal distinctions are set aside, different people with different abilities and limitations can create friendships and provide mutually valued practical assistance.

This reviewer found one weakness in this otherwise excellent book. When the resolution comes it is valid and convincing. But it is delivered in too hasty a manner. It could have been more powerful if it was presented at a more considered pace.

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[1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/the-starlight-watchmaker>

[2] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/237>

[3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/rebecca-butler>