

Unseen Academicals, Terry Pratchett

Best-selling author Terry Pratchett's most recent (2009) novel *Unseen Academicals* is a satire on the phenomenon of European football (soccer), plus a number of other social activities that often go along with it. For that reason, the book may have a greater appeal to a UK audience than in America; especially since one of the main themes is football hooliganism, a distinct UK phenomenon.

But the book is really about much more than football (soccer). It's about the many foibles and follies of human nature, which are Universal, European or American alike. It is also a novel about every conceivable variety of pie (and its connection to football); fashion super models (and their connections to football super stars); as well as about orcs and goblins (connection to football unknown).

In typically characteristic Pratchett-fashion, everything on the Discworld mirrors things in our own world with a slight and hilarious twist. For example, a tail-gate market on the Discworld becomes a cart-tail market. And instead of cheerleaders, there are naiads dancing on the sidelines.

The main character in the book is the goblin-turned-orc Mr. Nutt, who is one of only a dozen or so surviving orcs on Discworld. In a display of philanthropy, two of the world's most powerful despotic rulers decide to take Nutt on as a project, to help not only him but his entire persecuted race.

It should be mentioned that these two enlightened world leaders, Lady Margolotta and Lord Vetinari have previously done the same to help werewolves, rock trolls, golems, and vampires become accepted members of society. Margolotta herself being one of the latter, or so rumor has it.

In his process of accumulating 'worth' in human society, the orc Mr. Nutt gathers a huge following of staunchly devoted friends and admirers. His co-worker Trev Likely will go to any length to defend his orc friend, and an unlikely romance begins budding between Nutt and the head of the night kitchen at Unseen University, Miss Glenda Sugarbean, supreme creator of pies.

By impressing his superiors at Unseen University with his knowledge and knack for strategic thinking, Mr. Nutt eventually gets placed in charge of coaching the school's new football team. And then one thing leads to another.

You don't need to be a soccer fan to enjoy *Unseen Academicals*. It is also a parody on clothing fashion, food (in particular pies), and the general vagaries of human nature. So if you are into wearing clothes, eating food, or being human, then this book will provide you plenty of opportunities for laughter.

About the Author

Britt Hellman resides in North Carolina with her husband and three sons. She's a professional copywriter and does book reviews as a hobby. Visit the website named after [The Light Fantastic by Terry Pratchett](#), where you can order [Unseen Academicals by Terry Pratchett](#) or any of the other 36 novels in Terry Pratchett's Discworld series.

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