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# **Northern Lights**

By Philip Pullman



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FOR USE IN SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES ONLY. Living among scholars in the hallowed halls of Jordan College, Lyra hears rumors of a magical dust that supposedly possesses powers that can unite whole universes, and begins a difficult and dangerous journey to find it.

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## Northern Lights By Philip Pullman Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #2082446 in Books
- Published on: 2013-10-03
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.91" h x 1.14" w x 5.51" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback

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## **Editorial Review**

#### Amazon.com Review

Some books improve with age--the age of the reader, that is. Such is certainly the case with Philip Pullman's heroic, at times heart-wrenching novel, *The Golden Compass*, a story ostensibly for children but one perhaps even better appreciated by adults. The protagonist of this complex fantasy is young Lyra Belacqua, a precocious orphan growing up within the precincts of Oxford University. But it quickly becomes clear that Lyra's Oxford is not precisely like our own--nor is her world. For one thing, people there each have a personal *daemon*, the manifestation of their soul in animal form. For another, hers is a universe in which science, theology, and magic are closely allied:

As for what experimental theology was, Lyra had no more idea than the urchins. She had formed the notion that it was concerned with magic, with the movements of the stars and planets, with tiny particles of matter, but that was guesswork, really. Probably the stars had daemons just as humans did, and experimental theology involved talking to them.

Not that Lyra spends much time worrying about it; what she likes best is "clambering over the College roofs with Roger the kitchen boy who was her particular friend, to spit plum stones on the heads of passing Scholars or to hoot like owls outside a window where a tutorial was going on, or racing through the narrow streets, or stealing apples from the market, or waging war." But Lyra's carefree existence changes forever when she and her daemon, Pantalaimon, first prevent an assassination attempt against her uncle, the powerful Lord Asriel, and then overhear a secret discussion about a mysterious entity known as Dust. Soon she and Pan are swept up in a dangerous game involving disappearing children, a beautiful woman with a golden monkey daemon, a trip to the far north, and a set of allies ranging from "gyptians" to witches to an armorclad polar bear.

In *The Golden Compass*, Philip Pullman has written a masterpiece that transcends genre. It is a children's book that will appeal to adults, a fantasy novel that will charm even the most hardened realist. Best of all, the author doesn't speak down to his audience, nor does he pull his punches; there is genuine terror in this book, and heartbreak, betrayal, and loss. There is also love, loyalty, and an abiding morality that infuses the story but never overwhelms it. This is one of those rare novels that one wishes would never end. Fortunately, its sequel, *The Subtle Knife*, will help put off that inevitability for a while longer. --*Alix Wilber* 

## From Publishers Weekly

If Pullman's imagination dazzled in the Victorian thrillers that culminated with The Tin Princess, in this first volume of a fantasy trilogy it is nothing short of breathtaking. Here Earth is one of only five planets in the solar system, every human has a daemon (the soul embodied as an animal familiar) and, in a time similar to our late 19th century, Oxford scholars and agents of the supreme Calvinist Church are in a race to unleash the power that will enable them to cross the bridge to a parallel universe. The story line has all the hallmarks of a myth: brought up ignorant of her true identity, 11-year-old Lyra goes on a quest from East Anglia to the top of the world in search of her kidnapped playmate Roger and her imprisoned uncle, Lord Asriel. Deceptions and treacheries threaten at every turn, and she is not yet certain how to read the mysterious truth-telling instrument that is her only guide. After escaping from the charming and sinister Mrs. Coulter, she joins a group of "gyptians" in search of their children, who, like Roger, have been spirited away by Mrs. Coulter's henchmen, the Gobblers. Along the way Lyra is guided by friendly witches and attacked by malevolent ones, aided by an armored polar bear and a Texan balloonist, and nearly made a victim of the Gobblers' cruel experiments. As always, Pullman is a master at combining impeccable characterizations and

seamless plotting, maintaining a crackling pace to create scene upon scene of almost unbearable tension. This glittering gem will leave readers of all ages eagerly awaiting the next installment of Lyra's adventures. 100,000 first printing; \$250,000 ad/promo. Ages 10-up. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

#### From School Library Journal

Grade 7 Up?A novel set in London and in the Arctic regions of a world that is somewhat like our own. Lyra, apparently an orphan, lives among the scholars at Jordan College, Oxford. She becomes aware of a nefarious plot to steal children and transport them to the far north. As Lyra is drawn deeper and deeper into this mystery, she finds that the children are being made to suffer terribly. What she does not?and must not?know is that she is the keystone in an ancient prophecy. Her destiny is to save her world and to move on into a parallel universe. She dives headlong into harrowing adventures, totally unaware of her importance. She also discovers the identity of her parents, who are major players in the unfolding drama. In Lyra's world, every human has a daemon, an animal that is sort of an extension of one's soul. This fact is central to the story as the church, the academic world, and the government seek to understand the significance of the phenomenon. Also important, but never fully explained, is a substance called Dust. This is a captivating fantasy, filled with excitement, suspense, and unusual characters. The armored bears are wonderful and more interesting than most of the humans. There is some fine descriptive writing, filled with the kind of details that encourage suspension of disbelief. The story line moves along at a rapid clip, but flags when it delves into philosophical matters. The ending is less than satisfying, but serves as a lead-in to part two of the series. Fantasy lovers will be clamoring for the next installment.?Bruce Anne Shook, Mendenhall Middle School, Greensboro, NC Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

### **Users Review**

#### From reader reviews:

#### **Todd Jacobs:**

What do you consider book? It is just for students since they are still students or this for all people in the world, exactly what the best subject for that? Merely you can be answered for that question above. Every person has different personality and hobby for every single other. Don't to be compelled someone or something that they don't need do that. You must know how great as well as important the book Northern Lights. All type of book can you see on many options. You can look for the internet options or other social media.

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## Tamiko Harmon:

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