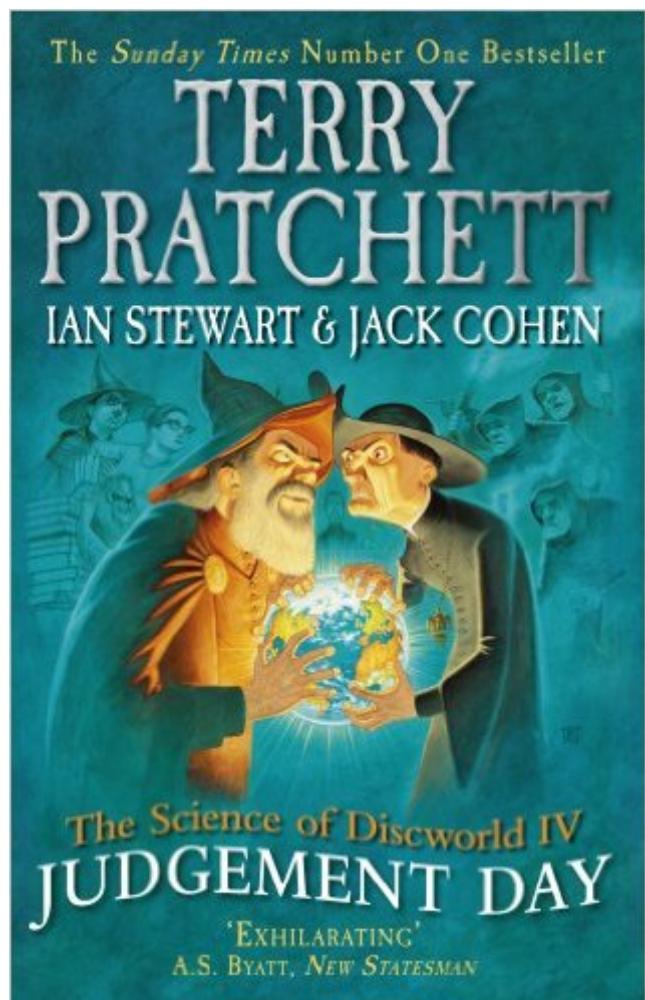


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The Science Of Discworld IV: Judgement Day



Synopsis

A brilliant new Discworld story from Terry Pratchett combined with cutting-edge science and philosophy from Ian Stewart and Jack Cohen. This time the trio take on THE REALLY BIG QUESTIONS -- God, the Universe and, frankly, Everything Else. The fourth book in the Science of Discworld series, and this time around dealing with THE REALLY BIG QUESTIONS, Terry Pratchett's brilliant new Discworld story Judgement Day is annotated with very big footnotes (the interleaving chapters) by mathematician Ian Stewart and biologist Jack Cohen, to bring you a mind-mangling combination of fiction, cutting-edge science and philosophy. Marjorie Daw is a librarian, and takes her job -- and indeed the truth of words -- very seriously. She doesn't know it, but her world and ours -- Roundworld -- is in big trouble. On Discworld, a colossal row is brewing. The Wizards of Unseen University feel responsible for Roundworld (as one would for a pet gerbil). After all, they brought it into existence by bungling an experiment in Quantum ThaumoDynamics. But legal action is being brought against them by Omnians, who say that the Wizards' god-like actions make a mockery of their noble religion. As the finest legal brains in Discworld (a zombie and a priest) gird their loins to do battle -- and when the Great Big Thing in the High Energy Magic Laboratory is switched on -- Marjorie Daw finds herself thrown across the multiverse and right in the middle of the whole explosive affair. As God, the Universe and, frankly, Everything Else is investigated by the trio, you can expect world-bearing elephants, quantum gravity in the Escher-verse, evolutionary design, eternal inflation, dark matter, disbelief systems -- and an in-depth study of how to invent a better mousetrap.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Omnipotent sect refuses to accept that the world is a disc resting on the back of four elephants who in turn rest on the back of a space turtle. In spite of all evidence, they stick to their outdated belief that the world is round. While experimenting with high energy magic, the wizards of Unseen University have accidentally created such a world in a magicless bubble, which they call Roundworld. The Omnipotents want Roundworld and they want the Wizards to cease all their sacrilegious activities. Science, as the Science of Discworld series presents it, is a means for understanding the world around us. We live in a causal world where everything happens for a reason (Science of Discworld 1) but those causes are behind us. Science is predictive in the sense that causes have effects, it is not predictive in the sense that it will predict the future. From Science's point of view, the world has no purpose. Paradoxically, we human beings love stories, in fact we absolutely need stories (Science of Discworld 2) or else we will never understand the raw data the universe bombards towards us. We call these stories "models" and we build models of the universe that are simple enough for us to understand but complex enough to predict how the universe works. Simpler models might be useful even when they are wrong. We say the sun rises and sets, even though we know the earth is spinning on its axis. We need myths and legends and we need Shakespeare to give some sort of spiritual meaning to our lives. From the power of narrative, we get the energy to study the world. But Science does not confuse these myths and legends with reality. When we impose a purpose or a direction to what the universe is doing, we aren't doing science anymore, we are doing theology (The Science of Discworld 3).

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