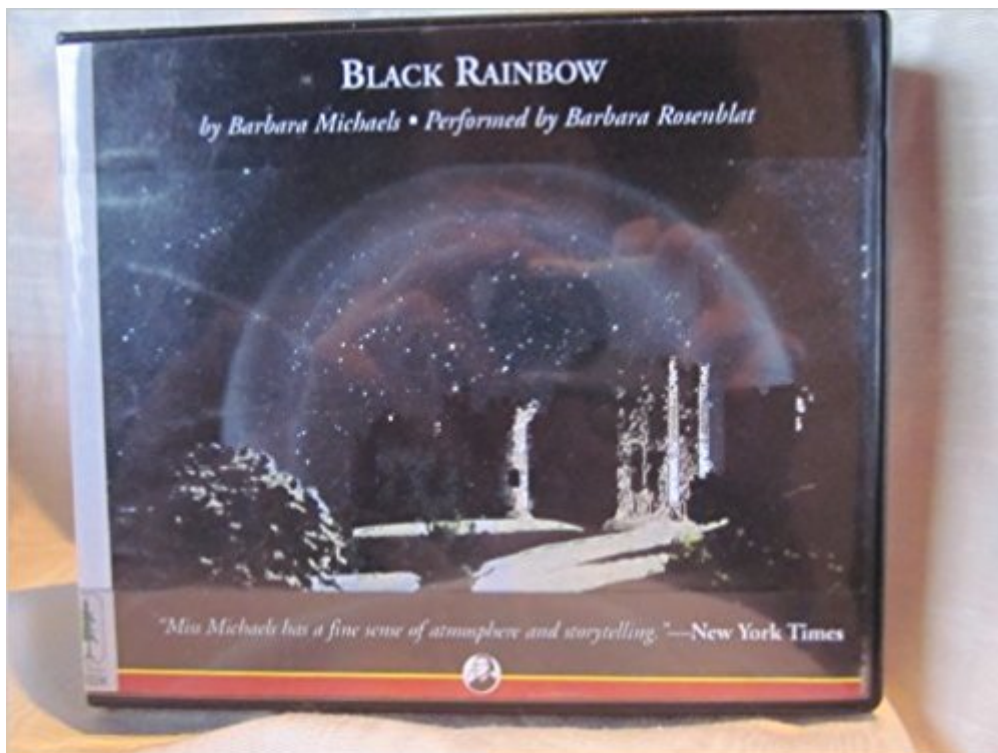




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Black Rainbow By Barbara Michaels Aka Elizabeth Peters Unabridged CD Audiobook



Synopsis

Unabridged CD Audiobook 9 CDs / 10.5 hours long

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Recorded Books (2000)

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Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 stars 20 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

Unabridged CD Audiobook 9 CDs / 10.5 hours long

Black Rainbow is a prequel to Someone in the House. If you read it in publication order, then you will watch the foreordained dance and have additional layers of enjoyment. If not, you still have a rather nice piece of historical fiction. Note that the novel is not romantic suspense or gothic romance as usually Barbara Michaels writes, but is still well written and thought provoking. One character lets us see the time through a more modern glass, but it doesn't feel too out of place. Still the bit of "preachiness" about the upper class and women during the time moved it down a notch. I wish I could give it 4.5 stars. If you are looking for romantic suspense or a gothic, don't pick this book as you will not enjoy it. If you are willing to let it stand on its own merits as historical fiction, then give it a whirl.

Like many others, I have been a long time fan of Barbara Mertz (aka: Barbara Michaels / Elizabeth Peters) and I enjoyed the first novel in this series, "Someone in the House", but this novel really didn't appeal to me. The supernatural qualities of the manor house which were created for the first novel are totally missing from this prequel book and I'm sorry to say that it was a dry, slogging read which was at times almost painful to get through. About midway, I finally gave up and just skimmed the remainder of the book. I can only assume that Ms. Mertz wrote this novel during a time of great

distraction in her life as it lacks the creative, perky, entertaining and imaginative elements so common to all of her other works.

One of my favorites. This was one of Barbara Michaels earlier novels. An historical romance and mystery. I loved the telling of the story by the two women in the book. Two very different women in the victorian times, trapped within those times. loved it.

Quite dark and Gothic, but not slutty.

Okay, but not one of my favorites.

I enjoyed the book very much. It was very hard to put down. I look forward to reading more of her books.

http://www..com/gp/product/B000FCKH7E/ref=cm_cr_rev_prod_imgNot having come across a copyright date, I assume that this book was written during the craze for Gothic novels, and is one of Barbara Mertz's earliest books. All the same, there is really no excuse for it. The story starts out as a typical Gothic--heroine hired as a governess, unable to turn down the job because, for permanently undisclosed reasons, she has no money at all (her father was a professional gambler), and the house is in a remote hinterland of an industrial town, the one industry being a cotton mill belonging to the family she is to go to work for. She falls madly in love with the man who hired her, who arrives at the house some weeks after she did because he has been in London completing his recovery from the typhoid which laid him low in the Crimea. But, quite suddenly, he overhears enough to tell him that "the other woman" is playing him for a sucker, and he instantly proposes to the governess, who of course accepts. So far, so good, but the book is only half the preferred link. There is suddenly a complete change in the story. He is trying to sell the mill to a man who ignores government regulations and human kindness; he has sicked the man on his sister, who is very short and looks like some kind of earth-bound supernatural being; and there is major labor trouble pending. At this point we find out that at some point in the past, for which there is no evidence whatever, our former governess had an affair with the man who is now heading the labor union, and there is a hint, though not a certainty, that her child is his rather than her husband's--not that there is any difference appearance wise, because the Union leader is a distant relative who looks enough alike to be a brother. At this point the reader realizes that the mill owner, who has not succeeded in selling the mill

because his sister, who owns half interest, refuses to sell, is trying to murder his wife and make it look like an accident. In the end, his sister, who previously adored him, kills him herself. Presumably the now-widowed former governess is eventually going to marry the labor leader. Presumably a lot of things. The book has no closure whatever and needs about 30,000 words of continuity inserted throughout the book. It absolutely does not work as a Gothic, a romance, a labor novel, or anything else. It is a hodgepodge of nothingness. In general I love the work of Barbara Mertz not matter which name an given novel is published under. I did not love this book. I would be ashamed of myself if I wrote anything that disjointed. I certainly would not allow it to be republished at any time for any reason. I was totally disappointed, and I would prefer to see the book withdrawn from availability rather than remaining on sale. If I were still teaching writing, I might assign it as a Horrible Example.

I have never liked this period in time because of the injustice women faced, however I am rehabilitated. Some times the ending of a story is perfect and this book has it just right.

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