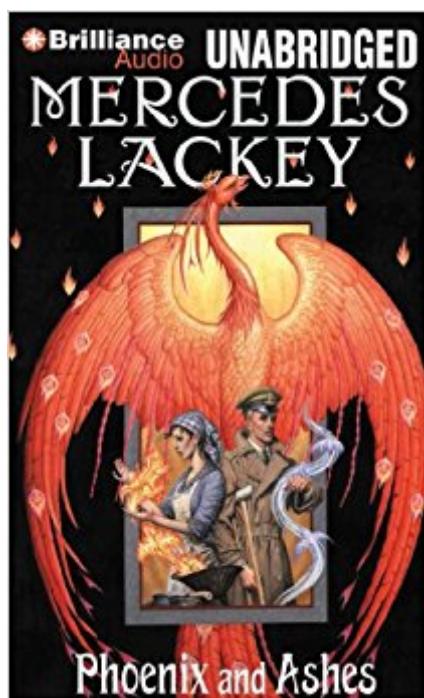


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# Phoenix And Ashes (Elemental Masters)



## Synopsis

Eleanor Robinsonâ™s life had shattered when Father volunteered for the Great War, leaving her alone with a woman he had just married. Then the letter had come that told of her fatherâ™s death in the trenches and though Eleanor thought things couldnâ™t get any worse, her life took an even more bizarre turn. Dragged to the hearth by her stepmother Alison, Eleanor was forced to endure a painful and frightening ritual during which the smallest finger of her left hand was severed and buried beneath a hearthstone. For her stepmother was an Elemental Master of Earth who practiced the darker blood-fueled arts. Alison had bound Eleanor to the hearth with a spell that prevented her from leaving home, caused her to fade from peopleâ™s memories, and made her into a virtual slave. Months faded into years for Eleanor, and still the war raged on. There were times she felt she was losing her mindâ™ times she seemed to see faces in the hearth fire. Reginald Fenyx was a pilot. He lived to fly, and whenever he returned home on break from Oxford, the youngsters of the town would turn out to see him lift his aeroplaneâ™ a frail ship of canvas and sticksâ™ into the sky and soar through the clouds. During the war Reggie had become an acclaimed air ace, for he was an Elemental Master of Air. His Air Elementals had protected him until the fateful day when he had met another of his kind aloft, and nearly died. When he returned home, Reggie was a broken man plagued by shell shock, his Elemental powers vanished. Eleanor and Reginald were two souls scourged by war and evil magic. Could they find the strength to help one another rise from the ashes of their destruction?

## Book Information

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Fantasy

## Customer Reviews

"With colorful characters, Lackey makes her variation of the Sleeping Beauty story great fun to read." "Booklist" [Lackey] turns her hand to historical fantasy in this intriguing and compelling re-creation of England in the waning days of its imperial glory." "Library Journal" Beautiful phrasing and a thorough grounding in the dress, mannerisms and history of the period help move the story along gracefully...fully fleshed out and credible. This is a wonderful example of a new look at an old theme." "Publishers Weekly" --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Mercedes Lackey is a full-time writer and has published numerous novels and works of short fiction, including the bestselling Heralds of Valdemar series. She is also a professional lyricist and a licensed wild bird rehabilitator. She lives in Oklahoma with her husband and collaborator, artist Larry Dixon, and their flock of parrots.

I have been a Mercedes Lackey fan since I read the first Diana Tregarde book. I moved on into Valdemar universe happily, for the many years she spent writing them, but was thrilled with the elemental masters series, which take beloved fairy tale heroines and watch them come into their own WITH their heroes, and own their magical gifts as well as themselves. "Phoenix and Ashes" is a clever retelling of Cinderella, where the stepmother binds her to hearth and in service by magic and is as malevolent a creature as a wicked stepmother should be. The Times are modern (WWI), and magic is central to the plot, as always. I'll give no more spoilers, but Ms. Lackey is true to the tale. One of my favorite authors, she never disappoints. If you care to indulge in this series start wherever you will. Each book stands on its own, all are worth your time, in my opinion.

I did something I seldom do in this book - I skipped almost half of it. As with other Elemental Masters, this is a retelling of Cinderella. However, the author goes through endless descriptions of the horrors of WWI (my husband's grandfather fought there), and I have read enough of the dark history and seen movies to know how horrible it was. The book could have been half as long and moved along well. I really enjoyed Books 1 & 2 of the series, and find #4 engrossing. I think part of the problem was I did not like the "heroine" in this book.

As usual, Ms Lackey has created a seamless blend between history and fiction, creating a magical

world. To be honest, I just bought this because I've read my physical copy so many times it's now falling apart and is hard to hold in my hand.

Think Cinderella with a twist! Truly EVIL Stepmother, ditsy arrogant Stepsisters, Good Witch Sarah (read that Fairy Godmother), and a, well, maybe not a Prince, but at least a Peer. Now set the story in war torn England (1916) and you have the makings of a really good yarn. Mercedes Lackey's Elemental Masters series has been a true joy to read and this book is no exception. What you think is Pure Escapist reading suddenly grabs at your heart with insightful details of the horrors of war and its effects on both the participants and the spectators. It leads you through the sometimes dark maze as both Eleanor and her "Prince" pull themselves up by their own bootstraps and find happiness in a land torn by more than the war. An exceptional and somewhat thought provoking work of fiction with enough real world fact to make it both gripping and realistic!

I love fairy tales, and I love Mercedes Lackey. Do I even need to say how much I enjoy her Elemental Masters series? :) I was particularly pleased by "Phoenix and Ashes" because it's more than a retelling of "Cinderella;" it's chock full of original characters who, though they work with, in and around magic, are still human. If you've read numerous Cinderella tales, you'll find subtle tributes to them embedded in the pages, which is a treat. I also really like how the emphasis isn't on fairy godmothers and glass slippers; it's about finding yourself and the inner strength to overcome adversity and shape your own fate. SPOILER ALERT: A few characters from "The Serpent's Shadow" (Elemental Masters, Book 1) make an appearance in "Phoenix"

Take a tale of Elemental Masters, throw in a war, an evil Stepmother and two step sisters. You have another grand tale by Mercedes Lackey. Eleanor can't wait around for her dashing Prince to come to her rescue though, she must learn with the help of her elementals to help herself. With the help of her godmother Sarah they must try to get help from a master up at the manner before her evil Stepmother's plans bear fruit, but first she must find a way to get to the manner then find out who the elemental master is. A tale well crafted and worth reading a time or two.

A new way to tell Cinderella's tale, but still exhibiting the intelligence and humor that we appreciate in her Five Hundred Kingdom's series, Mercedes Lackey's tale of star-crossed elemental mages is good drama, good romance, and a good read. Poignant aspects of England's experience in World War I, well researched and sensitively presented, form a backdrop to the story. The protagonists

are, one, an heiress forced to labor at the hearth by a darkside Earth Mage stepmother who cuts off the girl's finger to set a binding spell , and two, an aristocratic young Air Mage, a brilliant pilot, who nearly dies from war trauma and the special awarenesses of his kind when he is trapped in the hellish trenches of the WWI battle field. He has returned home, but is locked in a fight for his life and his sanity as the Cinderella-like heiress gradually learns her powers as a Fire Mage and fights her way to freedom. The two come together to defeat the dark mage in a very satisfying ending. Nice little romance, understated but satisfying.

I liked this book enough to try several of it's predecessors, especially the ones from which some of the characters carried over. The characters and the world of magic depicted here are very well fleshed out, the description of the WWI era and the effect it had on the soldiers and the people of England were very well done as well.

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