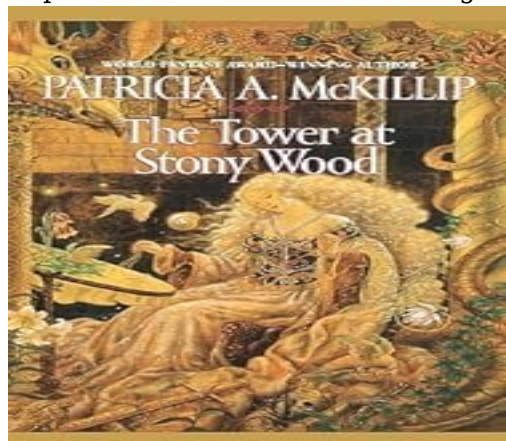


## The Tower at Stony Wood By Patricia A. McKillip

She saw the knight in the mirror at sunset...During the wedding festivities of his king Cyan Dag a knight of Gloinmere is sought out by a mysterious bard and told a terrifying tale: that the king has married a false queen—a lie cloaked in ancient and powerful sorcery. Spurred on by his steadfast honor and loyalty Cyan departs on a dangerous quest to rescue the real queen from her tower prison to prevent war and to awaken magic in a land that has lost its way... The Tower at Stony Wood



Patricia Anne McKillip was an American author of fantasy and science fiction novels distinguished by lyrical delicate prose and careful attention to detail and characterization. According to Fantasy Book Review Patricia McKillip grew up in Oregon England and Germany and received a Bachelor of Arts (English) in 1971 and a Master of Arts in 1973 from San Jose State University. Her writing u Patricia Anne McKillip was an American author of fantasy and science fiction novels distinguished by lyrical delicate prose and careful attention to detail and characterization. According to Fantasy Book Review Patricia McKillip grew up in Oregon England and Germany and received a Bachelor of Arts (English) in 1971 and a Master of Arts in 1973 from San Jose State University. But for God's sake I know better than to imagine that an extended plot where I freaking knit all day is going to be interesting! McKillip is unwilling to kill her Lady of Shalott unlike Tennyson; she wants a happy ending. Then there are all these scenes of some solitary guy riding a horse to a destination as if recounting a journey so solitary long difficult and BORING it saps a character's mental and physical strength is going to make for compelling reading. This used to bother me because how was I going to know if I wanted to read it if I didn't know what it was about? But now after reading Winter Rose and The Tower at Stony Wood I understand that it is futile to try to summarize these books. She is one of the most faithful interpreters of Fantasyland I think not easing us into the experience by twisting Fantasy into familiar mere-mortal groomed walkways but showing us the true fairy paths that twist turn skip sing and turn into dragons if we're willing to follow. Inversions - mirrors - things which come in threes - dragons - I can't say that all of it makes sense and something about the mix of haze and calculation doesn't completely work for me but the unexpected late arrival of the heroine really does. the prose is lyrical and winds its way through the story the characters border are more mythic than realistic and the plot sacrifices rational logic for the logic of fairy tales. This particular novel does not resonate with me quite as strongly as The Forgotten Beasts of Eld The Sorceress and the Cygnet or Alphabet of Thorn did but I still can do nothing but recommend it highly. There was something of The Lady of Shalott in it: a woman trapped in a tower embroidering (or weaving) what she sees in her mirror but unable to look at the world or leave her tower without dying. These characters seem to take a perverse enjoyment of their job reveling in the "Nyah nyah I know something you don't know!" Such a character is the Bard of Skye in Patricia A. The Bard gives him a dire warning: the king has just married a monster in mortal form and his true bride has been trapped in a tower! The book then proceeds like a strange dream. Cyan Dag has no specific instructions from the Bard (nor did he think to ask) so he wanders the countrysides of Yves and Skye at random trying the towers that he comes across. "Meanwhile the Bard and her sister send Cyan unhelpful dreams and in two apparently unrelated plotlines another man in another tower is

attempting to tame a dragon and a baker and her daughter are in yet another tower watching the whole affair - princess knight dragon and Bard - by magic mirror. Bard by the robe and ask her "What the dickens is going on here?" There is a partial explanation at the end but it left me feeling like somebody had just played a card trick on me. Before starting it I got an unpleasant surprise - it has no e-book version which is strange - after all it is relatively recent and if it was good enough to get a nomination it ought to be good enough to be in most broadly used formats. The story starts with a wedding in some kind of medieval castle and the protagonist Cyan Dag a knight of Gloinmere right hand of the king who is the groom gets information from a mysterious lady bard that the bride is false while the real one sits in a tower and waits for rescue. The story is sometimes interdicted by other seemingly unrelated stories about dragons revenge prisoners in towers who should weave tapestries that turn into reality...The story is a rare case of lyric fantasy with a style more reminiscent of fables than modern novels. From the reviews here I found out that it can be seen as a reply to The Lady of Shalott by Alfred Tennyson about which I haven't been aware (I know very little of English poetry being from Ukraine I knew only his The Charge of the Light Brigade after all it is about the Crimean war) and quite possibly that I'd have liked it more if I knew the references but per se the story was boring with no straight plotline but wanderings dreams and sadness... so I actually skipped to the ending and hasn't been impressed with the author. The labyrinthine Escher plot loops around and around itself circling through time and space in a Arthurian-style country where magic selkies embroidery and baking twine around love loyalty and honor. but the shifting towers of Skye and their bard weave together one man's desire to rescue a queen for his king's sake; another's desire to conquer a king for his land's sake; and a woman hiding magic trapped beneath the pall of widowhood. However if you don't have the concentration or the patience to get lost in the threads of this elaborate art-- if Diana Wynne Jones' Hexwood baffled you and her Fire and Hemlock left you cold-- this book is not for you. She saw lilies massed against the tower wall a shallow river flowing past them a road beyond the trees along the riverbank and on the other side of the trees furrowed fields beginning to flush green. Which begins to sound an awful lot like this: On either side the river lie Long fields of barley and of rye That clothe the wold and meet the sky; And thro' the field the road runs by To many-tower'd Camelot; And up and down the people go Gazing where the lilies blow Round an island there below The island of Shalott. Okay so the lady in the tower the one that Cyan Dag has to save is the rough analogue of Tennyson's Lady of Shalott right? All of these descriptions the curse that's put on her. As I think I've said before when McKillip does it right she creates this dreaminess where you feel almost as if you're drifting through the story while it's being woven around you which works very well with what she's doing here. My other McKillip reviews: Something Rich and Strange and Ombria in Shadow Riddle of Stars (Riddle-master trilogy) Harrowing the Dragon Song for the Basilisk Official read-through index----The one re-read on this list for the simple reason that I hardly remembered it and got so much more out of it this time, She is a past winner of the World Fantasy Award and Locus Award and she lives in Oregon. Most of her recent novels have cover paintings by Kinuko Y. McKillip's stories usually take place in a setting similar to the Middle Ages: There are forests castles and lords or kings minstrels tinkers and wizards: She is a past winner of the World Fantasy Award and Locus Award and she lives in Oregon: Most of her recent novels have cover paintings by Kinuko Y: McKillip's stories usually take place in a setting similar to the Middle Ages: There are forests castles and lords or kings minstrels tinkers and wizards, Her writing usually puts her characters in situations involving mysterious powers that they don't understand. Many of her characters aren't even sure of their own ancestry, Love between family members is also important in McKillip's writing although members of her families often disagree. {site\_link} Yes I'm a McKillip fan--I've read almost everything she's ever written, Yes I've read The Lady of Shalott by Tennyson long ago and am familiar with the Pre-Raphaelite paintings about it. Yes I sometimes get so caught up in a project that I put dvd after dvd in the player and knit all bloody day: But at least that gives Tennyson's poem some conflict and some resolution. His poem is not actually about her weaving; it's about what happens when she STOPS: McKillip spends WAY too much time on the whole embroidery thing and her approach to conflict and resolution in this

work is an utter failure, It's not just that there are all these scenes of someone in a tower embroidering: It's that characters who are obsessed with embroidery to the exclusion of everything else are ONE-DIMENSIONAL AND BORING. What on earth was she thinking? There's so little conflict because the characters are so isolated and when they do encounter each other it feels artificial and forced. On top of which the plot is so convoluted and impenetrable as to be utterly unsatisfying. But great sentences cannot save such an ill-conceived BORING failure: At least there's a simple way out: just close the goddamn book and read something else, McKillip books the ones with the gorgeous Kinuko Craft covers that don't have a summary on the back, Much as we may wish otherwise we mere mortals are foreign to Fantasyland we don't belong there and we depend on the rare gifted storytellers like McKillip to show it to us, I mean: haunting and dreamlike in trademark McKillip fashion yes - but this also has a classic king and a classic knight juxtaposed with an inverted quest: Not the most immersive McKillip but a very good one nonetheless: Her novels are soap bubbles frothy and delicate but with magical colors and lights sparking out of them at unexpected moments: English First let me say that I love Patricia McKillip's writing: I love the way she uses words and somehow manages to make every sentence lovely. And I love the way she often weaves familiar myths and stories into something entirely new, I was excited to see what McKillip made out of Tennyson's poem: The book starts off wonderfully (I was immediately drawn to the knight Cyan Dag) but toward the middle it starts to stretch out weaving in sub plots that don't seem necessary, Near the end it felt like there were too many stories clamoring for space within the same book, When everything was revealed and explained at the end I was disappointed (and disenchanted) with what the lady in the tower turned out to be. I'm still not sure the ends reached by the weaving of the story's goddesses warranted the elaborateness of the scheme that sent Cyan Dag to all those towers, Basically the book was a little disappointing--still good--but McKillip has better: I highly recommend The Alphabet of Thorn and the Riddle-Master trilogy to anyone wanting to try another book by her, English In adventurous stories there often happens to be this character who knows what's going on: They're the one who dribbles out confusing riddles to the hero just as he needs them and no more, The one who could just tell everybody the big plot secret but won't because if that happened the characters could just resolve the story's conflict and go home: The Tower at Stony Wood starts out conventionally enough for a fantasy novel, Cyan Dag knight of the kingdom of Yves receives a visit from the Bard of Skye on his king's wedding night, Invariably his experiences with towers go something like this: "Thank you! But our princess is in another castle. I think I counted at least six towers in all in this book: Or maybe they were the same tower all mystically connected? McKillip is never quite clear on this point, English This is a fantasy novel of heroic quest type but there is much more, I read it as a part of monthly reading for March 2022 at Hugo & Nebula Awards: Best Novels group, The book was nominated for Nebula in 2001 but lost to The Quantum Rose by Catherine Asaro, Not so but for those who want to check it - there is a scan on Archive: The rest of the story is mostly about his wandering about from tower to tower to find out that the princess isn't there. English As usual McKillip's prose is complex silky elaborate and fascinating: Her carefully embroidered and jeweled worlds are a masterpiece in miniature: The book starts out straightforward enough hearkening to Tennyson's Lady of Shallot, English {Original March 2020 Review} Dang this woman can write. English by Patricia McKillip Opening line--She saw the knight in the mirror at sunset: The first time I read this a few years ago I remember expecting a re-telling of The Lady of Shalott and not getting it and being somewhat put off by this: On this re-read I didn't have that expectation and therefore was able to just enjoy the story: It's not a re-telling of The Lady of Shalott at all except for a few little moments where it echoes Tennyson just slightly, Mirrors are an important theme in the book and they're also present in a more intangible way: Melanthos and the woman in the tower are mirrors as are Cyan Dag and Thayne Ysse: They tell you something that you accept as true but it's not quite, The three sisters which are both mountains and women the three women who watch in mirrors and stitch the three men who fight the three towers, It's interesting to note that McKillip is from Oregon where there are three mountains called Three Sisters. While the description of the mountains in the book is quite different than the ones in Oregon it made for an

odd insight. One of the moments when McKillip echoes Tennyson comes fairly early when Melanthos is watching the woman in another mirror within another tower. And later: The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves And flamed upon the brazen greaves Of bold Sir Lancelot, The other moment where I really noticed the echo was much later. Separating shadow and leaf and light as he rode beside it he discovered the dark worn crenellation of four towers joining four walls. In Tennyson of course we have four grey walls and four grey towers/Over look a space of flowers/And the silent isle imbowers/The Lady of Shalott, There's a very important point to be made here which is horribly spoilery so skip the rest of this paragraph if you don't want to see the SPOILERS\*: But she's the one that's not real that's a creation of Una's. So what does that say about McKillip reads Tennyson? END SPOILERSI thought this was another book where McKillip really hit all the right notes: And with the richness of themes and devices as well as the echoes of Tennyson there's a lot to chew on here: In fact this review is starting to sound a bit more like a college essay than anything else albeit a very short and informal essay. \*That looks like such a weird word when you type it in all caps. Although the story echoes "The Lady of Shalott" at times it's simply that: the barest echo of Tennyson. And there's all sorts of symbolism that I can see but can't quite grasp the meaning of which is awesome don't get me wrong. Anyone who enjoys a thoughtful dreamy fantasy should give this one a try. Craft. She is married to David Lunde a poet. Craft. She is married to David Lunde a poet. Music often plays an important role. Yes I know Loreena McKinnitt's version. Yes I like textiles--I sew quilt knit. I get it: I always felt bad that she died.yes McKillip writes great sentences. Reading it is like being stuck in some god-awful tower.Gah. English There are some Patricia A. English Clever clever clever. I was not expecting any of this. So four stars. English This is Patricia McKillip at her most dream-like. .That said I really wanted to love this book. McKillip's Tower at Stony Wood. He's not the sharpest sword in the scabbard. Please try again.Cyan and I would both like to grab Ms. This was my first book by Patricia A. McKillip.org if you're ok with reading from a screen. And he has to go on a quest to save her. Also as usual nothing is what it seems-- or that either. And really McKillip does a fantastic job. Mirrors are shifty. That's vital for this story. A tripling of things is another key element. A man rode through the mirror.Silver flared like the glance of light off armor. [2010 in books] English.