



Return to Labyrinth, Vol. 1

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Returning home after his initial visit to Labyrinth, Toby has grown up, noticing that many things come easily to him, even when he's under pressure. Little does he know that Jareth, the Goblin King, has been looking out for his best interests.

Return to Labyrinth, Vol. 1 Details

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From Reader Review Return to Labyrinth, Vol. 1 for online ebook

Willow says

If you're thinking about reading this comic because you're feeling nostalgic for the amazing movie, DON'T.

Whatchyareading says

Oh my God, you guys, oh my God. I love Labyrinth, the movie. Have you seen it? Are you a fellow child of the '80s like me? Then you love it, too. Of course you do.

Imagine my shock and amazement when I found out there was a manga series that was considered the official sequel to Labyrinth. And it came out five years ago! FIVE. Why didn't someone tell me about this?

Well, if you were in the dark like me, this is me telling you about the official sequel. It's a four-volume series and it's essential to have all four parts before you begin. I read the first two volumes and then had to wait weeks before I could finish it. *agony* Also, watch the movie before you read these. It helps.

So, the story. Return to Labyrinth focuses on Toby, Sarah's infant brother. It's about fifteen years after Labyrinth and Toby's a lazy teenager. Jareth, the Goblin King, has kept a close eye on Toby throughout his life and had his goblin minions fulfill whatever Toby's heart desires, grooming him for the day he'll return to the Labyrinth as heir to the Goblin Kingdom.

There's so much more going on in these volumes than the synopsis tells you. I don't want to hype it up too much, though, especially if you're a newbie to manga. The world is a bit confusing at first, but don't worry, explanations come along the way. I've learned to never base your expectations of a manga series on the first volume. At least read the second because that's usually when the real plot is revealed.

Honestly, I would have been completely behind them making this a six-volume series. The wrap-up before the ending didn't answer all of the lingering plot lines. But alas, there were only four volumes, so we must make due.

I liked teenager Toby. He was a bit lazy, having grown up with goblins giving him whatever he wanted his entire life, but he eventually matured a bit. Strife and trials usually do that to a person.

Jareth was yum. Did anyone else have a crush on '80s David Bowie from the movie? Well, I did. I guess due to legality or infringement or something, the illustrator couldn't draw an exact likeness of Jennifer Connelly or David Bowie, but it was close. I kind of like this version of Jareth better since he's not as old. Sorry, David.

And I don't want to ruin anything, but every time I watch the movie, I want Sarah and Jareth to get together. Every. Time. So I held out hope that maybe now, with her grown-up, this would happen. You'll have to read them to find out if it does, but let's just say, I'm happier than I was before.

The illustrations were great. I consider them the best part. Working with an already established world, it must have been hard to keep the art similar to the movie, but Chris Lie did a wonderful job.

This is a great continuation that I really enjoyed and will be featured on my bookcase for a long time. If

you're new to manga and not sure about it, I suggest checking out if your library carries them, or get them through the InterLibrary Loan system.

Now, let's have a Labyrinth watching party! =P

Reviewed on WhatchYAreading on April 21, 2011.

Sara says

A relatively interesting concept and gorgeous cover art are not enough to save this very, very awful looking sequel series to possibly my favorite (and still a firm fixture on the adult top ten list) childhood film.

Its one of the all time great romantic fantasy films. I mean its practically every little kids game of imaginary castles and kings and dragons brought to life. A perfectly normal girl does battle with a tempting not quite evil magical king to save someone she loves and she meets marvelous, unbelievable creatures along the way who make her stronger and teach her the lessons of growing up but with the wonderful footnote that its okay not to entirely give up those innocent imaginings of childhood. Oh and David fucking Bowie sings amazing songs while wearing a series of awe inspiring codpieces.

I'm sure that, like me and countless other fans, you always kind of wondered what happened next. What happened to that beautiful, cold king and that beautiful young woman? It can't all just end with a goblin slumber party and owls flying off into the night can it? I mean yes, there's been some enormously good fan fiction but that's not "real" in the canonical sense is it?

I mean did Sarah grow up and find her way back through the labyrinth and a destiny as a queen? Did Jareth forsake the goblin kingdom and his power to find her in the human world (once she was a legal adult of course)? Maybe she became a great actress who used her time in the labyrinth to make amazing fantasy movies. Maybe Jareth began to fade away without her love and she came back to rescue HIM!?

So many possibilities.

And we get this mess.

I'm NOT reviewing all four of these separately. I'm gonna sum this sucker up real quick. We begin quite a few years post the lovely Sarah saving her baby brother Toby from the equally lovely Jareth, king of the goblins. Peaches have long been eaten, waltzes danced, fieries foiled, bogs of stench avoided, and cold, cold hearts broken.

Toby is a directionless teen who just wants to play fantasy based video games and Sarah is an English teacher who doesn't remember any of her time in the labyrinth and Jareth is a petulant brat who's still angry about Sarah not taking him up on his offer to "fear me, love me" and "do as I say."

There are hoardes of new characters, all of whom are drawn in that horrible Disney sequel style that's like one degree above a frickin' He-man cartoon. Actually that's giving them too much credit. They're drawn like the sketches for an old school Scooby Doo cartoon. I'm talking the episodes like that Batman cross-over where Batman's tights disappear randomly because they forget to color the cell in.

Sad art aside I just don't even know what the story is here. I *think* its basically the same one as the original except this time its Toby who has to grow up and stop expecting everyone to do everything for him? Maybe?

All I really know is there is a shit ton of complaining. SO MUCH COMPLAINING!!!!

There's a side story where a sad creature named "Moppet" is trying to figure out who she is (view spoiler)

Also? Practically no Sarah which is just a bummer. When she does show up its not as an ass kicking Queen or even the resourceful beauty from the original story. She just kinda shows up because story wise people would be upset if she didn't.

Ugh, this whole thing is one hum drum glum mess of crappy drawing, frantic, nonsensical action, characters I didn't give a crap about and a non ending that resolves NOTHING.

Oh well, its been awhile since we had an entry on the crap shelf.

Dian says

One of the greatest disappointments of my life. And the cover is nothing but deceiving.

Juli says

I have been a fan of the movie Labyrinth since it came out in 1986. Return to Labyrinth is a 4-part manga series from Tokyo Pop that continues the story. A couple years ago I was given the first 3 books in the series. Unfortunately, the person who gave me the books didn't have the final book. Because I made it a personal challenge in 2018 to read more books I want to read and more off my own shelves, I went online tonight and found a copy of Volume 4 for a good price. I am finally going to finish reading this series! While I'm waiting for Volume 4 to arrive in the mail, I am going to re-read the first 3 volumes.

I am by no means an expert on manga. So I will leave the in-depth style and artwork critiques to others. I'm just going to concentrate on my own personal thoughts about this series.

Return to Labyrinth is American style manga, reading left to right. I really prefer the Japanese style...there's just something about reading from right to left that sets the genre apart and makes it different and more fun to read. But, that does not mean that I didn't enjoy this series. I'm always up for a revisit to Labyrinth!

This series takes place more than 10 years after the movie. Toby is a troubled teenager. Unknown to Toby, the goblin king has meddled in the teen's life for years, causing him to be a bit of an outcast with his peers. Toby is lured into the Labyrinth by Jareth, who wants the boy to be his heir. A mysterious queen and the Mayor of Goblin City want to steal the throne from the goblin king, so they try to prevent Toby from finding Jareth in the Labyrinth.

Toby meets up with some characters from the original movie like Ludo and Sir Didymus, but there are also new characters like Moppet, Skub and Queen Mizumi.

As a fan of the movie, I'm really enjoying reading this manga series again. I can't wait to get the last book and finally discover how it ends!

On to Volume 2! :)

Karissa says

I have had this book for a while to read and was excited to finally get to read it. I was a huge fan of The Labyrinth movie when I was a kid and was eager to revisit the story. The book ended up being a bit disappointing; both the story and illustration were okay but not great.

It's been many years since Toby left the Labyrinth and he notices that things come easy to him, especially when he is under pressure or stressed...little does he know that Jareth, the Goblin King, has been helping him out in not so subtle ways. Now Toby, who is sick of Jareth messing with his life, journeys down a secret tunnel into the Labyrinth to confront Jareth.

This series had a lot of potential but I was left wanting more. Sarah is in the book only briefly as a somewhat sad and downtrodden teacher who has given up any belief in things like imagination and fairy tales. This was kind of depressing. Toby is a selfish teenager, who whines a lot and complains about his lot in life. I didn't really enjoy either character. There are lots of cameos by other characters from the Labyrinth movie; some of these were very well done and most were in keeping with the movie.

I was also a bit disappointed in the drawing. It was okay and pretty easy to follow, but they used this dot-type of shading for grey areas and it was distracting and took quite a bit away from the drawing. The characters definitely looked similar to how they appeared in the movie, but the backgrounds could have used more detail.

The big twist of this novel is that Jareth names Toby as the heir to the Goblin Throne...which was kind of anticlimactic. But don't worry Toby whines about that too. There are some interesting side stories going on in here; so those do add something to the story.

Overall an okay continuation of the Labyrinth story. I wasn't a huge fan of the characters or the illustration style. I did enjoy seeing some of the old favorites from the movie and did enjoy how some sidelines were added to complicate the story. I just didn't find this engaging enough to keep reading it and honestly I wouldn't really recommend it.

Heidi-Marie says

I will be honest and admit that I am a "Labyrinth" fan. Not a fanatic. But something about seeing this movie when I was 6 or 7 (and possibly with older people--so that might have added to the experience) has made an impression on me. I mean, a movie that can make me laugh, cry, fear, and have nightmares is a pretty wide-ranging movie. Nightmares not only from the guys who take off their heads, but David Bowie in leggings. Ick!!! David Bowie aside, I was intrigued as a little girl by the character of Jareth and that he was so mesmerized by Sarah. Another plus was the "magic of Jim Henson" is throughout. While it may be 80s, there are definitely worse 80s things out there. ("Pretty in Pink?" "Sixteen Candles?" New Kids on the Block? MTV music videos? "Summer School?") I will always have my little affinity for the happier things: "Labyrinth" and "Willow."

That being admitted, I have no reason to justify my intrigue when I stumbled across this book in some amazon searches. I protect my views/opinions/ideas of "Labyrinth" as much as I do my Austen heroes and heroines. So when I saw that a 4-part graphic novel series was so far following my same views, I gained a

desire to read it.

And it's good. I'm not a graphic novel fan. But I would gladly have read this one for the graphic novel genre study and actually enjoyed myself, too. Possible because I had more "connection" with the characters here than in so many other graphic novels. There was a wink into the ug/crude/bathroom humor and references. However, overall, not too bad of a book. I would have preferred less graphic on various costuming. But the characterization--whether new or continued from the movie--was nice. I loved the reunion of Ludo, Hoggle, and Sir Didymus.

Very good cliff-hanger ending and I look forward to reading volume 2--especially as I know how that one ends, too! I'm excited to read someone's version of the history of various characters. I look forward to getting to know more of the character Moppit. I would really like nothing more to do with the two daughters--very disturbing, each in her own way.

Basically, it is an enjoyable way of living a little more in the Labyrinth world while not having to spend too long in pages and pages of a print book or slug through a poorly done sequel film.

Nicola says

I got all four of these books as an Xmas gift this year. I am a massive fan of the Labyrinth film and of Brian Froud's work, so when I first picked these up I was nervous as to whether these would be any good or not. I have previously read bad reviews on these series and I'm not really into manga like graphic novels/comics. As soon as I started reading them I couldn't put them down, I finished them within the week I think but then they are quite small. The illustrations are really lovely to look at and the story flowed quite well. I think the only downside was at times they seemed quite childish and it would have been nice to use original goblins from the Labyrinth and from Brian Froud's field guide to goblins. But all in all a good read, but not a very long one.

Julie Zantopoulos says

I appreciated seeing some of my old favorite characters from the movie/book adaptation. I also appreciated that the art style of the goblins stayed true to what they were in Jim's original sketches and the movie. The manga vibe of the way the people were drawn seemed to contrast pretty starkly with how the goblins and the rest of the world were drawn, though.

The plot of this bind up was pretty slow, nearly non-existent, but it's fun being back in the world. Because I love the source material so much I'm going to continue but I'm really hoping things pick up.

Emily Luebke says

LIGHT SPOILERS

This. Was. Tripe.

Especially if you are a fan of the movie, and I don't know why you would be reading this thing if you were

not. I picked up 'Return to the Labyrinth' because I really enjoy the movie and was hoping whoever wrote this would take an idea that I had actually had myself for possible fanfic and run with it. 'What if Toby still had some right to the Goblin Kingdom as its price?' That sounds intriguing, right?

I think I might still have to write the fic to make up for this rubbish.

I was most offended by the art style. Black and white, and completely failing to capture the magic, style, or characters, of the twisting and turning Labyrinth. The characters were all poorly drawn and went off model from one panel to the next. Animals were the worst, with the artist having no notion of how animal legs look. Jareth himself just made a cringe. He's just a generic, vaguely anime-esque pretty boy and I could have drawn his hands better! Sarah was unrecognizable and Toby was bland. I found myself wanting to redraw every page.

Now for the characters. Needless to say Toby winds up in the famed Labyrinth. He immediately encounters a random, hot fairy and later another attractive human chick, because this magical world needed some boobs. Toby "befriends" this fairy who has a bland backstory that completely robs the Labyrinth of its magic in one fell flashback. Then Toby hardly speaks to her, seems annoyed by her at all turns, and then later claims they are bosom companions. This sad book's attempts to recapture the sweet charm of Sarah's friendship with her strange traveling companions in the movie fails utterly.

The characterization of all the characters from the movie is terrible as well. It was like the author was give a one sentence overview of each and told to write.

Towards the end of the book we get cameos from Hoggle and Ludo, but it is too little too late, and Hoggle looks like he got a facelift somewhere in there while he was apparently working as 'Prince of the Land of Stench' because I guess his life did kinda suck after Sarah left. Thanks Sarah.

Basically, this is a steaming pile of poo in book form. The art is bad and bland, the story is poorly executed, and I spent my entire read with a permanent grimace etched across my face as these atrocities were committed to a world and characters I loved. I will NOT be reading the next in the series.

Nadir says

... I hate how the cover is so beautiful but the inside art is armature. The plot is predictable, the characters without personality - a disgraceful sequel to the movie.

Say says

I read this years ago.... I'm a huge fan of the film (it is my childhood) I hated this bastardization with a passion....

First off the cover art is done by a very talented woman name Kouyu Shukei who did a lovely manga called Alichino that was left unfinished due to a crippling injury..... but then she went to do this.... and if you look in the pages of Alichino, you will see a beautiful, unique and detailed panels.... if you look in Return to Labryinth, you will see some really really lack luster art work that is NOT done by Kouyu Shukei...

The panels had little background, the art style is paired down as well the character's don't look right.... they

made Jareth (Bowie's character) look like a haggard woman.... not even androgynous!

The story is crap, Sarah has become dull and gave up on pretending (apparently Jareth took that from her.... that's right, the thing that he loved about Sarah in the first film he took from her and altered her personality so that she would be different..... hmmm maybe that's a metaphor I'm missing) On top of that Jareth now wants to kick it with Toby (the baby from the film who is now a teenager) and Sarah's little friends have realized that Sarah really didn't need them..... despite the suggestion at the end of the film/source material.

It's just plain bad- it lacks all the imagination of the film... if you want something to add to Labyrinth, I suggest the film Mirror Mask (which came in the box set that included Dark Crystal) or maybe some other Neil Gaiman delights

Tanya says

As a big fan of the movies I'm interested in where this manga series is headed but so afraid of being disappointed.

Starfire says

Hmmmmmm... not overwhelmed with delight at this first instalment in the series so I suspect I won't go on to read the rest of it. It's not particularly bad - just... didn't live up to what I was expecting, I guess.

Toby as a character is... I guess he's realistic as a teenaged boy who seems to think he's the centre of the universe and whines a lot (which, again I guess, is actually not that far off how Sarah was portrayed in the movie, although Toby seems to be even less sympathetic to me - I could at least identify with Sarah despite the whining!) Jareth is... complex and hard to figure out, which I guess is also true of the movie - here I get the idea there are a whole load of things going on beneath the surface that are hinted at, but I reach the end of the book none the wiser as to what they are.

The one thing I *did* like were the couple of shoutouts to other Jim Henson productions in there though. At one point there's a fairy/pixie type character who meets Toby and asks "Did they catch you and cut your wings off too? Oh, wait, of course you don't have any... you're a boy!"

So yeah, I'll give this one a 6/10. It was easy to read in a single setting, which is in its favour, but even so, there are way too many other books I want to read more to seek out and read the rest of the series.

Emma says

With misleading beautiful art on the cover and weak, chibi-like art similar to the Kingdom Hearts spin-off manga on the inside, it's a disappointment at first sight - especially if, like me, you bought it online. If you're thinking of buying it, try and look at it in a store first.

Looking past the art, there's the story - weak, rushed, and fanfiction-like, though no doubt a lot of fanfic writers could outdo this.

Just watch the movie again.
