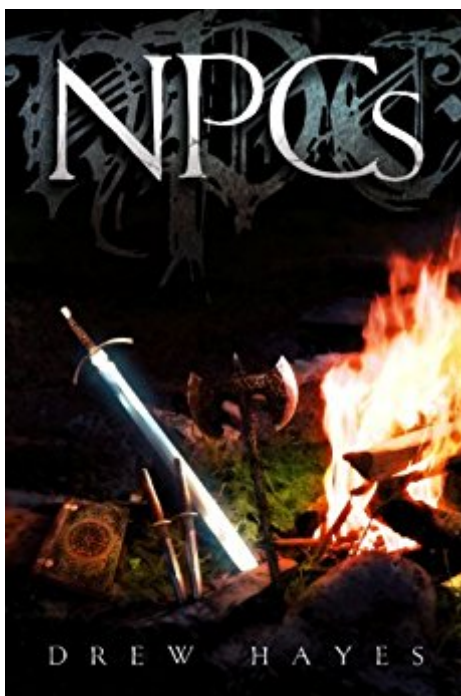


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NPCs (Spells, Swords, & Stealth Book 1)



Synopsis

What happens when the haggling is done and the shops are closed? When the quest has been given, the steeds saddled, and the adventurers are off to their next encounter? They keep the world running, the food cooked, and the horses shoed, yet what adventurer has ever spared a thought or concern for the Non-Player Characters? In the town of Maplebark, four such NPCs settle in for a night of actively ignoring the adventurers drinking in the tavern when things go quickly and fatally awry. Once the dust settles, these four find themselves faced with an impossible choice: pretend to be adventurers undertaking a task of near-certain death or see their town and loved ones destroyed. Armed only with salvaged equipment, second-hand knowledge, and a secret that could get them killed, it will take all manner of miracles if they hope to pull off their charade. And even if they succeed, the deadliest part of their journey may well be what awaits them at its end.

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Customer Reviews

I enjoyed this a lot. I don't play D&D style games, but I do play rpg's and the whole idea of the

NPC's having a life after the game ends for any reason, appeals to me greatly. I loved how the characters start out assuming they know who should be the mage, warrior, thief and berserker and as they travel they realize how very wrong they are. There is humor, a must for books, and games, that I love and a story that tickled everything in my nerdy heart. It's a great book with a great story. Highly recommend, and I've started the 2nd one.

This is a review I wrote for another book by Drew Hayes, in a different series (undeath & taxes). I'm repeating it almost verbatim here because it just fits for any of his books that I've read: This author is great. Very unconventional ideas, but more importantly - he obviously has a lot of love and first hand knowledge of D&D and geek culture. His books will not go well with people who don't love table-top gaming / geekdom. But for those of us who do - these books are all we could ever hope for. At least idea-wise. The execution... well, I just hope Drew grows as a writer and learns the art of story-telling. Great twists are ruined by hints which are too thick. (in this particular book, the twist happening when one character threw a dagger at a demon comes to mind. Could have been mind-boggling twist, ruined by the author trying too hard). There are many other "faux pas" that give you the feeling the books could have been so much better if an experienced writer would go over them and tweak them slightly. Very slightly. But still. And yet here I am giving it 5 stars. Is the book that good? Well, no. It's far from perfect. But this book (and others from Drew Hayes) really are the best "of its kind" I have ever encountered. I relish each new book I read and I await more with anticipation. I know what to expect when going into them. And they don't disappoint. If you love light-hearted, fun books that don't take themselves too seriously, and you love gaming in the "cards / dice / friends around a table with pizza" sense, you can't find anything better than these books. Really. You will find better written books, but you will not find better books.

I picked up this book a while back either free or cheap and it turned out to be a very pleasant surprise. In it we enter a world of table top role playing games in which characters drawn up by the gamers enter an actual alternative world inhabited by real people. NPCs are Non-Player Characters in RPGs. They're the unnamed bartenders, shopkeepers and townspeople in the background who occasionally interact with the players. In movies and TV they are the extras. In a clever twist the extras here find themselves the stars of the show when four adventurers enter a tavern in the village of Maplebark and drop dead, victims of bad mushrooms combined with alcohol. In our world the gamers simply re-roll some new characters for themselves, but in the alternate world things are not that simple. The four townspeople in the bar, Gabrielle, the mayor's daughter; Eric, a town guard;

Grumph, a half-orc bartender; and Thistle, a gnome merchant are unconcerned until they find on the bodies a summons from the mad king to come to his castle and receive a quest. If he learned that his emissaries had died from poison in Maplebark the mad king would destroy the town and kill everyone in it as punishment. The only way to save their friends and families is for the four to assume the roles of the four adventurers and fulfill their quest, or die trying. Either way, the town would be saved. So the untrained and inexperienced four friends assume the roles of paladin, barbarian, rogue and mage to begin what looks to be a suicide mission. The four characters are very likable and their adventures entertaining and often amusing. There is a follow up story due out later this year and I look forward to reading it.

When I bought this, I expected a light hearted, 'easy to read' book about what happens with NPCs when the adventurers are not around. What I got was a much more enjoyable book on what could happen to the NPCs world after adventurer's pass through (or on). For someone who grew up with the launch of D&D and AD&D (and other), this was a great choice and a really good read. You can see yourself playing these sorts of characters or playing in this sort of world just fine. And I like how choices make a difference - not all my GMs acted this way but this world does. Well worth the purchase - especially if you play or played these sorts of RPGs.

If you like litRPG, this is a keeper. Not that it's a competition (who knew Russians were so darned good at litRPG anyway?), but it's nice to read a book that doesn't make regular references to the Russian bear and the like (sorry, yes, American here). Anyway, there are definitely a few grammatical errors (though only a few) and I agree with another reviewer that the mind-jumping is a bit too frequent (though I don't mind it nearly as much as that reviewer did), nonetheless this is an awesome book. Enough so that not only did I read it in one sitting via my kindle unlimited subscription -- I bought the book as well, because I'm sure I'll want to re-read it (and, seriously, if you're going to re-read a book, you should buy it). Anyway, this book sets the tone for a very intriguing take on the litRPG genre and is well worth your time. Read it.

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