

What if the 17th Century had Magic, Claire Fayers

Mirror Magic imagines a world exactly like our own but with one big difference – magic exists. Fairy mirrors connect us to the Unworld where the Fair Folk have promised to provide magical goods and services to anyone who asks.

The story starts in 1842, when most mirrors have stopped working and only one small town on the border of Wales and England still has access to the Unworld. The Wyse Weekly Mirror (expertly designed by Jess at Macmillan Children's Books) gives an insight into daily happenings in the last town of magic.

But what of other time periods?

The first newspaper, the Oxford Gazette appeared in 1665, but what would the events of the 17th century have looked like with magic?

Real Fairies Take the Stage

It has long been suspected that William Shakespeare has the help of Unworld playwrights. How else could he write so quickly and with such uncommon genius?

Now, for the first time, audiences can see Unworld actors close-up in Shakespeare's new play *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*.

Featuring a story of fairies and mortals, several roles in the play are filled by fairy actors. The theatre management refuse to disclose which roles. Come along to the Globe Theatre and see if you can tell.

Walter Raleigh Arrested

Sir Walter Raleigh has been arrested for treason following his latest expedition to the Unworld.

Raleigh has made many trips to the Unworld over the years, bringing back strange vegetables and aromatic plants. However, critics have always claimed the adventurer is entirely too fond of the fairy people and, following the death of Queen Elizabeth last year, concerns have grown about where his loyalties really lie.

“The Unworld is no threat to us,” Raleigh claimed, as he was taken to the Tower of London to await trial. “Our covenant with the Unworld means the Fair Folk will never seek to harm us. In any case, why should they want to take our world when they went to such pains to leave it?”

Why indeed? Maybe it is time we took a long, hard look at our relationship with the Unworld.

Remember, Remember

An anonymous tip-off has led to the discovery of a conspiracy to blow up the Houses of Parliament. The tip-off is thought to have come from the Unworld itself. The conspirators, a group of conjurers, rented a pair of houses close to Parliament, and used Unworld servants to fill the cellars beneath Parliament with explosives. But one of the Unworld fairies turned against his masters and informed Parliament of the plot.

This has proved two things: magic needs greater control, and the Unworld cannot be trusted.

The government responded with an immediate ban on the transportation of magic mirrors. More restrictions are due to follow.

Fire in London

Fairy magic is at the centre of a new controversy following a fire that destroyed much of central London. To understand the debate, one must delve back in history.

Following the ban on the movement of mirrors of 1605, magic mirror became 'fixed assets' and town and cities with an abundance of mirrors became wealthy - not from the fairy magic itself, but from the tourist trade that grew around these centres.

Discontent and the increased gap between rich and poor led to the English Civil War and the reign of Oliver Cromwell whose first act was to ban the use of frivolous magic.

London, as one of the main centres of magic, had glittered beneath fairy enchantments for decades. Suddenly stripped of all that, the inhabitants realised how dull and shabby their city had become. Clean-up efforts involved the burning of accumulated rubbish, and it was only a matter of time until one of these fires raged out of control.

Parliament has promised a new debate on the use of magic.