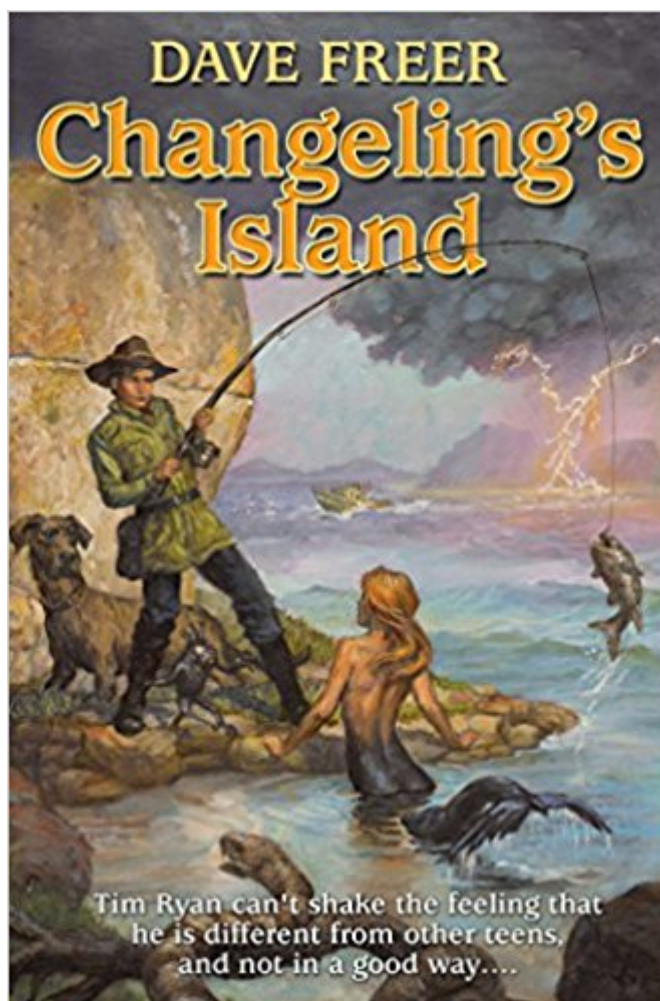


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# Changeling's Island (Baen)



## Synopsis

Teenager Tim Ryan comes into his own as he faces danger on a remote Australia island where magic lurks in land and sea. Dragon Award Nominee for Best Young Adult Novel and for Best Fantasy Novel! Tim Ryan can't shake the feeling that he is different from other teens, and not in a good way. For one thing, he seems to have his own personal poltergeist that causes fires and sets him up to be arrested for shoplifting. As a result Tim has been sent to live on a rundown farm on a remote island off the coast of Australia with his crazy grandmother, a woman who seems to talk to the local spirits, and who refuses to cushion Tim from facing his difficulties. To make matters worse, Tim is expected to milk cows, chase sheep, and hunt fish with a spear. But he's been exiled to an island alive with ancient magic—land magic that Tim can feel in his bones, and sea magic that runs in his blood. If Tim can face down the danger from drug-runners, sea storms, and the deadly threat of a seal woman who wishes to steal him away for a lingering death in the land of Faery, he may be able to claim the mysterious changeling heritage that is his birthright, and take hold of a legacy of power beyond any he has ever imagined.

About Changeling's Island: "Tim finds the islanders accept him . . . with real friendships. He needs these connections because he soon discovers himself entangled in a centuries-old family feud with a selkie, seeking something Tim inherited from his Irish ancestors. . . . Changeling's Island is a delightful book." —Daily News of Galveston County

About Dave Freer: "Dave Freer always delivers compelling, fast-moving and addictive fantasy adventures." —Garth Nix, New York Times best-selling author of The Keys to the Kingdom series "Dave Freer's stories are always well-plotted, fast-paced and most of all a lot of fun to read." —Eric Flint, New York Times best-selling creator of the Ring of Fire series

About A Mankind Witch, by Dave Freer: "Good characterization, ripsnorting action and an ingenious plot make this a feast." —Publishers Weekly (Starred Review)

## Book Information

Series: Baen (Book 1)

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Baen (April 5, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1476781206

ISBN-13: 978-1476781204

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.7 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 51 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,176,876 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #68 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Paranormal & Urban > Mermaids #82 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Mermaids #657 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Contemporary

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 6 and up

## Customer Reviews

Dave Freer is an ichthyologist turned author who lives on Flinders Island (between mainland Australia and Tasmania) with his wife, four dogs and four cats, and two sons. He has coauthored a range of novels with Eric Flint (Rats, Bats and Vats, The Rats, the Bats and the Ugly, Pyramid Scheme, Pyramid Power, and Slow Train to Arcturus), with Mercedes Lackey and Eric Flint (The Shadow of the Lion, This Rough Magic, The Wizard of Karres, Much Fall of Blood, Burdens of the Dead, and Freer's solo entry in the series, A Mankind Witch) as well as writing the Dragon's Ring fantasy novels Dragon's Ring and Dog and Dragon.

Changeling's Island Very nicely done! This is a classic "coming of age" tale set in a small community. As anyone from a small community knows, everyone knows everyone, and that feel is well translated into the story. One of the best things I liked about this book is that it talks about magic, Fae and fairy tales without making the entire book's focus upon it. The magic merely provides a background, a causa belli for many of the ways the story twists and turns. And the greatest part about this tale? It's relatability. The characters seem more real, because in your mind, you know, without a doubt, that you've met someone just like them. Readership should not be limited to just the young adult crowd, as I found it to be a gripping tale, even though I've left adolescence far behind. Will be sending this to my 12 year old son to read. He should like it!

Wonderful story. The magical threads that run through this very real story of a boy finding himself (pun intended) on a lonely island, enrich what is really a story of people. Tim Ryan makes a doozie of a mistake when he shoplifts something to impress a girl. His magical helper makes it all worse, and he is sent away by his feckless mother. His adventures with his new life, the danger he encounters with the wicked messenger from Faerie, and his friendship with a very different kind of

girl than the one he liked at the outset, are all well told. It was very hard to put down, and if there is ever a sequel I will be snapping it up. I highly recommend this one. It's fabulous.

I came upon this book because it had been disparaged by the Guardian. But the first paragraph, quoted in the Guardian article, was so intriguing, it made me want to read the book. And the promise of the first paragraph proved true! This book is a perfect example of the kind of book I loved best as a child--books like *The Secret Garden* and *The Children of Green Knowe*--where a child arrives at a place they don't want to be, hates it, gets involved in some adventure, and comes to love the place and the people. Like *Green Knowe*, *Changeling's Island* has just a touch of magic. Enough to make the story eerie and wonderful without it being the main issue of the tale. Unlike *Green Knowe*, Tim doesn't just learn his way around, he discovers a strong talent for understanding the sea that was truly fascinating. The passage where the book discussed what Tim saw about the sea, how to sail and fish, that an cheerful but inexperienced adult did not see was one of the most wonderful bits of the book, as it gave me a new appreciation for the sea and fishing and the things that one could know about them. (Things which I, a terrible fisher, definitely don't know!) The story follows a reluctant city boy who is exiled to the country for bad behavior. In this case, the "country" is a remote Australian island where life moves a bit more slowly than the mainland. Tim's grandmother doesn't even have Internet. Waking up early every day to milk the cow is not Tim's idea of a good time, but the friendship of a girl named Molly and her huge Irish Wolfhound/Great Dane starts helping him thaw to his new life. Soon Tim is developing new skills and discovering new talents. Now, if he can only survive the mysterious seal woman--whom only his grandmother can see--who seems to have some ancient claim against Tim's family.

I haven't had this much fun getting immersed in a story in ages. The shifting POV was a bit off-putting at first, but Freer is excellent at making the transitions, and the story is richer from having so many different sets of eyes. The Celtic elements are also well meshed, though I think I would have liked to know more about the Aboriginal ties to the land as well. I was able to read and savor the book slowly, up until the last 100 pages or so. The pace picked up, and the last fifty pages kept me up way too late. Totally worth it. Well done, Mr. Freer. I'd ask for a sequel, but I don't think I have the time to wander about on Flinder's Island again, even with such an entertaining guide.

I thoroughly enjoyed this story of a young lad growing up and discovering who he was on Flinders Island. It was a refreshing tale where all the characters had good - or at least rational - motives to themselves.

- reasons for their actions. The story is like a spiral slowly building up until the very exciting climax. The response of the adults to the lad's actions were actually adult and mature and rational - not irrational like so many contemporary movies and tales. No plot giveaways in this review other than it involves young people discovering their connections to the land and meddling (good and bad) faerie folk. Now I will read it aloud to the family and see if I can not get too excited and make them all end up having a bedtime much later because I must read one more chapter.

I have now lost half a day to Dave Freer's new book. It's marketed as a YA, but this is a book for anyone who's ever made the rough move from one culture to another, or of parents splitting up, and everyone who's ever loved a fierce old battleaxe of a grandmother...And for everyone else, it's an awesome blend of action, adventure, and exotic locations, as Celtic mythology gets imported to the edges of Australia, whether it wants to or not, and the Australian mythology doesn't welcome it.

I grew up reading stories like this in the 60s 70s. Juveniles they were called. Not kids nor adult fiction but something in between. I have enjoyed the author for several years and never heard of several stories available, apparently, only as eBooks. Good plot, well written, hard to put down.

Freer is one of the best fantasy writers out there. Although the story is 'wrapped up' I would gladly read a sequel!

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