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An apocalyptic spell has been cast, an ancient evil banished, and now the land of Balaia, still riven by war, must live with the consequences. The spell has torn a rip in the sky, a pathway to the dragon dimension.

Noonshade Details

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From Reader Review Noonshade for online ebook

Strega Del Crepuscolo says

Un buon seguito...

Il problema principale di questa saga che si porta dietro dal libro uno è la mancanza totale di background dei personaggi.

La storia prosegue da dove si era interrotta e la situazione per il mio gruppo di mercenari preferito (Il Corvo), non è affatto rosea. I terribili lord stregoni sono stati sconfitti MA, a causa del Ruba Aurora, si è aperto uno squarcio interdimensionale che collega Balaia con la Terra dei Draghi.

Il mondo dei draghi viene approfondito molto bene: ci sono diverse stirpi di draghi in lotta tra loro per la supremazia. I Kaan vogliono proteggere Balaia mentre i loro nemici vogliono attraversare lo squarcio nel cielo e distruggere Balaia.

Quindi i problemi presenti nel romanzo sono due: 1) richiudere lo squarcio dimensionale

2) fermare gli occadi.

Anche se i lord Stregoni sono morti, gli occadi sono vivi e vegeti (anche se privi di magia e quindi meno letali). Insomma non è che, quanto fatto nel primo libro, si sia rivelato inutile ma ha solo rallentato l'avanzata degli invasori.

Il punto di vista diventa quintuplo mostrando tutte le parti in causa nella guerra e nelle vicende di Balaia.

Da un lato c'è Darrick che guida la cavalleria dei College, i baroni Gresse e Blacktornhe da me chiamati "la strana coppia" e dal lato degli occadi Tessaya e Senedai.

I nemici non sono certo benevoli e si lasciano terra bruciata intorno. Senedai tuttavia è molto meno lungimirante di Tessaya.

Nel libro viene evidenziata molto bene la differenza tra i due schieramenti. Gli occadi sono molto numerosi ma divisi tra loro, mentre i balaiani sono in netta inferiorità ma uniti contro un nemico comune.

Anche questa volta tocca ai maghi del corvo: Erienne, Ilkar e Denser sistemare le cose, usare la magia per richiudere lo squarcio e trovare l'incantesimo giusto si rivela più difficile del previsto. La morte di Will mi ha lasciato abbastanza indifferente mi è spiaciuto di più per Thraun anche se, verso la fine, era evidente che si sarebbe lasciato dominare dal lupo.

Mi sono piaciuti tutti i capitoli dedicati a Julatsa e al manto demoniaco. L'assedio è descritto molto bene come anche la situazione degli ostaggi e dei maghi del consiglio. L'idea stessa del manto è geniale.

Il viaggio nella terra dei draghi l'ho apprezzato moltissimo, anche se non posso dire lo stesso della brusca fine di Styliann.

Sui personaggi: amo Denser e il suo sconforto iniziale per l'esito del ruba aurora mi pare perfettamente plausibile. In effetti, forse gli altri membri del Corvo potevano essere più comprensivi...

Ilkar, Erienne e Hiram vengono subito dopo e l'ignoto ... mah! Lo apprezzo come personaggio ma non è "facile" comprendere la sua situazione così a metà tra la sua condizione precedente di Protettore e la nuova "vita" che ha adesso.

Nel complesso il libro mi è piaciuto e prenderò sicuramente il terzo volume della saga.

Brian Turner says

Follows on directly from Dawnthief.

It doesn't spend any time on a refresher, so if it's been a while since reading that book then it might be an idea to re-read that first.

Even saying that, you soon get up to speed on who's who, and what their roles re.

Following the casting of the Dawnthief spell, there is now a rip to the dragon dimension in the sky above Balaia. The Raven (a mixed group of fighters and wizards) have to travel there to fix it, or else the land will be invaded by dragons. The only problem is the various Wesmen armies between them and where they need to be.

Lots of action, and interesting characters. Well written and the pace keeps everything moving along.

Mairi says

Ikka veel äärmiselt meeldiv lugemisvara. Epic fantasy on ilmselgelt üsna eepiline magamisaja röövija ning ma ei kahetse seda grammigi.

J.P. Ashman says

Entertaining fantasy read as I remember it. Great, quirky characters and lots of action.
(Read this years ago).

Jennifer says

This was an absolutely wonderful follow up to Dawnthief. It's filled with plenty of fast paced, steel flying, blood spewing, magic slinging battles to keep the pages turning.

I wanted to give this book five stars, but I could only give it four. While The Raven are the central point in the story, I found the other characters and their situations much more interesting: *The Barrons Greese and Blackthorne*; *Stillian and the Protectors*; *General Darrick*; and *the Wesman Army*. Don't get me wrong, I love the Raven mercenaries. It's a great story line, but they just seemed to take a back seat on this one for me.

But all in all, it was a damn good read. Two thumbs up!

A third time: The one thing I love most about the Raven serial is character uniformity. From book one of the Chronicles of the Ravens and throughout the Legacy of the Ravens the characters stayed true. The author never falters in the personalities and distinctive qualities of each of the characters, whether they be the Raven mercenaries themselves or other important figures in the epic tale: no matter what the time was span between each book. A few authors could take a lesson in consistency from Barclay.

Timothy Boyd says

Very nice, fast paced fantasy novel. Good action and plot throughout. I am very impressed with the writer's interpretation and detailed description of the magic used by the characters. If you are looking for a new fantasy read then I think this could be in for you. Very recommended.

Fabiano says

3.5

Janelle Lanthrum says

This story picks up right where Dawnthief left off. The great Eldritch Evil has been defeated, but the war is far from won. And now there is a whole in the sky to boot, one that happens to link directly to a dimension full of dragons.

Compared to its predecessor, Noonshade feels...lacking. Where in Dawnthief, the Raven had to kill the Witch Lords to cut off the Wesman from their magic and save their own world, in Noonshade the urgency feels artificial. The Raven must find a way to close the rip that Dawnthief has left in the sky. They have eight days. But it is the dragons, the Kaan, who suck any feel of importance from this task. Because they flatly refuse to help in anyway, and at times are actively harmful to the process, while saying that their own lives depend on the outcome.

There seems to be some history, where a dragon who carries a human is a great shame. But this issue should have been addressed far earlier in the story. Not even the Raven, who have every reason to make such a request, never broach the topic until the very end. And it is a practical solution, and a one I kept looking to come up. Now I recognize that throwing a dragon at this problem would solve it easily and undermine the story. But you cannot leave that large of an elephant in the room, and not address it in some way.

As for the dragon's deminsion, I have to wonder, what do they eat? There are apparently thousands of dragons, many over 100 feet long, living in a world that they have all but burned to the ground. They eat lots of flamegrass (again, why?), and I think one ate a goat at one point. But how does that sustain a dragon?

As a whole, the world does feel more fleshed out, with the characters visiting new areas. It was interesting to see how the Colleges worked. The battles were great, and it is clear a lot of research was done to keep them realistic with the technological level of the world. The only question I have is in the magic system, for a four College system that does not like the share, all the mages share no more than five offensive spells, regardless of their College of study.

Overall, not as exciting as Dawntheif, but still a good book.

Katie says

Good, but not as good as the first book. There were a couple parts in this one where the plot seemed to slow down (the first one was action-packed the whole way through), and the author seemed more prone to ending the chapters and such with overly dramatic phrases and exclamations by the characters (sometimes I caught myself mockingly thinking "dun dun dun..." in my head after reading those lines).

However, the plot was still amazing, and if you can get past the graphic, gory, and violent descriptions in the book, its great. While we're on the topic of descriptions, I feel that I should add that I was really impressed with the author's ability to really bring scenes, people, and emotions to life with amazing word imagery that make the scenes very memorable. He would take little things and just bring them to life to make you feel the emotions felt by the people in various situations. The one I found particularly memorable was the toddler screaming in terror as he and the other Julatsan prisoners were rescued by the Raven while under attack. I mean its all well and good to imagine fleeing through the street while under attack after recently being freed (yeah, thats scary, right?), but you never stop to think how utterly terrifying it would be to be fleeing for your life while your friends and family are falling all around you. Somehow, the author managed to bring that abject terror home with the image of that screaming/crying child. It was impressive, and artfully done so as to not be like "hey i'm using imagery to improve the story" it simply augmented the story without disrupting the flow. The more I'm reading by this author, the more impressed I find myself with his writing style.

Looking forward to the next book.

Michael Everest says

Will review in full when I get around to it - sorry for the delay.

Joey O'Donnell says

While I'm not always one for "fighting" fantasy, I have enjoyed both of the Barclay books I've read. They're very action-heavy. It's been some time since I'd read Dawnthief, and this may have hurt my read of Noonshade just a bit. The characters were in no way fresh in my mind, and Noonshade picks up exactly where Dawnthief left off, with very little in the way of refresher. It took me a good third of the book to piece together some of who these people were and what had happened in the previous book.

It's possible to say the characters were a little thin, but I think they were given more depth in the first book. It's not the author's fault I read it so far back as to forget a lot of detail.

All in all, this one is full of fun maneuverings. It's in no way political, which I would usually count as a minus, but in this case it works. Lots of battles, hacking at people with swords, and shooting them in the face with fireballs.

In some ways the peripheral characters worked better for me, particularly the mages in their individual college struggles and the struggle on the dragon homeworld. They somehow ended up being slightly more

interesting to me than the sections with The Raven, but, again, that could come back to my not recalling too much of who the individual members really were.

Tyrone says

It took me an absolute age to read this. Not because i struggled with it, but because while i did enjoy Dawnthief, it didn't blow me away, and other books that i have been waiting for kept coming along.

Noonshade was an enjoyable read and i did want to find out what happened to the Raven. Not that was necessary because although each book is in a series and Noonshade follows on immediately from Dawnthief, each book does come to a satisfactory conclusion. It shows perhaps that Barclay is confident enough with his characters and storytelling that he doesn't need a cliff-hanger to pull people back for more.

In some ways these books are fairly typical 'party of heroes with a magical quest' fodder but it is the way that Barclay writes, the attention to his characters and his original way of dealing with his action scenes that sets these books apart from much in the marketplace.

Where this differs from many fantasy books i have read is that it would be immediately recognisable to anybody that is or was a gamer. The way his characters are set up with their back stories reminded me very much of evening sat around a table doing character generation. Also the magic system is described and the way spells are utilised is very reminiscent of the magic systems used by many of the major fantasy games i played in my teens, right down to the spell names and the way spells are learned and deployed. Where Barclay really comes into his own are in the battles. I've never yet seen magic used i such a way in other works. Magicians are deployed in units or defensive (armour) and offensive (artillery) units working in conjunction with standard cavalry and infantry units is refreshing and somehow completely realistic.

I have the 3rd in the series and will read it. I've not been compelled by the series but i have certainly enjoyed what i have read. At least enough to finish the trilogy.

Ettelëa says

No, možná i o n?co m?í než 3*. Není to úpln? špatná kniha, ale m? prost? nesedl styl, jakým je napsaná. ?asté nezázivné popisy, ne moc vyda?ené dialogy, systém a popisy kouzlení p?ipomínali RPG hry...

Nemohla jsem ji do?íst, pozd?ji jsem p?eskakovala stránky, až jsem dosp?la k tomu, že jsem v?ždycky dvojstránku jenom prolet?la o?íma, jestli se tam stalo n?co zajímavého. Prost? m? to nechtlo a to p?itom zápletka nebyla nijak špatná. Na scén? se objevili draci (moje oblíbené bytosti), takže d?j byl i zajímav?jš než u prvního dílu. Ale nevím, n?co na tom stylu bylo, co mi hrozn? vadilo, ješt? si budu muset promyslet, co to vlastn? bylo... Taky mi hrozn? vadily dialogy, které v?bec nep?sbily p?írozen?, naopak. Autor se rozhodl s jejich pomocí ?tená?i všechno vysv?tlovat a to i v?ci, které p?írozen? vyplývají z p?íb?hu a to mi dost vadilo. Ty dialogy pak byly nep?írozené a nucené. Ale Havrany mám ráda, to zase jo - p?íjemná a sympatická parti?ka :) Ovšem zda sáhnu po pokračování si nejsem v?bec jistá.

Emelia says

RTC after reading the series....so awesome !

Suzanne (Under the Covers Book blog) says

In the second installment of the Chronicles of the Raven, it shows the mercenaries mending the rip in their dimension caused from casting Dawnthief. This rip leads to the Dragon dimension, and if the Raven don't mend the rip in time the whole Balaia will be overrun with dragons intent on their dimensions destruction. Mean while the Wesman are still on their mission to conquer the East, and bring down the Mage Colleges, with their numbers so vast, even without the Wytch Lords help victory seems certain, but the forces of Balaia will not give up their homes without a fight.

I really enjoyed this book it was a great continuation from Dawnthief, and take off from where Dawnthief ended. The story bounces mainly from The Raven to General Darrick, the Barons and the key figures in the Wesman army as well as a few others. I found that cut to other POV's less intrusive this time, even though he did it just as much in this book as he did in the previous one, maybe I was used to it and didn't notice it so much, but regardless I found this a much easier read.

What I really like about these books is the characters particularly those of the Raven, and I am glad to see the continuing build of their characters, each member of the Raven distinct from the other and I look forward to reading further to see if this remains the same. The story itself was epic and it kept me gripped and involved with what was going on, and although I enjoyed the Raven part of the story I found that I was more interested in other parts of the story, and other characters, which is both good as it means that I liked all parts, not just one segment and bad in the sense that these are the Chronicles of the Raven, not of other people. However, I did enjoy this book and I look forward to reading on to the next.
