



Final Gate

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In the hands of an elf high-mage, the fabled mythals are Faerun's most potent sources of magical power. But in the hands of a demon princess from a forgotten epoch, they're the most powerful weapons imaginable.

Final Gate Details

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From Reader Review Final Gate for online ebook

Antoine Guillaud says

Solid conclusion to the trilogy.

OK, I admit to a fondness for elves. Some people rather like dwarves, other tieflings, well, me it is elves... Hence, I was pretty happy to see The Last Mythal trilogy and to read it. Lots of combat, everything solidly based on Realms Lore. An enjoyable journey, a good plot, solid antagonists.

Richard Baker brings the Realms to life and does it good. One of the better authors in the Realms pool, alongside Paul Kemp, Early Salvatore (Salvatore now is not so good) and Elaine Cunningham (albeit she doesn't dwell in the Realms anymore, more the pity. :())

Travis says

Final Gate by Richard Baker

Final Gate is the last book in The Last Mythal trilogy. The first book is titled Forsaken House and the second book is titled Farthest Reach. The Last Mythal trilogy is set in the Forgotten Realms setting of Dungeons and Dragons. Richard Baker has written a number of books, most of which are set in the Forgotten Realms. His Forgotten Realms works include; the eighth book in the Double Diamond Triangle saga titled Easy Betrayals, a stand-alone book titled The Shadow Stone, a book in The Cities series titled The City of Ravens, the third book in R. A. Salvatore's War of the Spider Queen series titled Condemnation, and the Blades of the Moonsea trilogy which includes Swordmage, Corsair, and Avenger. He has written another book outside of the Forgotten Realms for the Star*Drive series of novels titled Zero Point. Final Gate was released June 2006 and was published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

The elves of Evermeet continue their crusade against the daemonfey and prepare to take back their ancient home of Myth Drannor from its evil occupants. However, the army of the nation of Sembia, battling both the elves and the daemonfey, stands in the elves way. Ilsevele Miritar wants to try to make peace with the Sembians and ask them to help in defeating the daemonfey. She convinces the leader of the Crusade, her father Seiveril Miritar, to make peace with the Sembians. Along with the elven warrior Starbrow, Ilsevele sets off to offer a treaty to the Sembian leaders. However, there are spies that would rather seem them killed. Araevin Teshurr finds himself changed after what he encountered in the hidden elf land of Sildëyuir. After all he went through, he is blessed with immense power and knowledge, but also finds himself cursed. With his companions; Maresa, Donner, Jorin, and Nesterin, he decides to set out to find and recover the shards of the Gatekeeper Crystal, in hopes that it may destroy the wards surrounding Myth Drannor. The group find themselves in lands unknown with peril and death at every corner. The daemonfey queen Sarya Dlardrageth, finds enemies at every side. After coming to terms with an arch-devil named Malkizid, he gives Sarya immense power and enough devils to finally crush the elven crusade once and for all. But is the price worth it?

Criticisms:

1) Ilsevele. Before I start, I understand that love does come and go, and that things do happen that could change a relationship. However, the sudden relationship that somehow bloomed between Starbrow and Ilsevele is poorly developed and cheap. Ilsevele turned into one of the worst characters I've ever read. There is no motivation behind her sudden change of heart. Ilsevele was engaged to Araevin for two decades. Did they never run into any issues during that time? It really seems like Ilsevele didn't really know Araevin and what he was like, which is highly unlikely. The reason behind Ilsevele breaking her engagement to Araevin is just pathetic and juvenile. Sure there were some conflicts that came up between the two in the previous books, but they were worked out and forgotten quickly. In fact, they were petty little problems and nothing really that would break a relationship. It just doesn't make sense. Did she even have a 'real' relationship with Araevin? Also, she only knew Starbrow for a few months and only accompanied him for maybe a week and a half before she 'fell' in love. During that time it just seemed that Starbrow was interested in her, but Ilsevele never seemed to not notice or didn't care. If we actually saw Ilsevele start to fall in love with Starbrow, this wouldn't have been a problem. But it just came out of nowhere. Her sudden change came off as pathetic. She goes as far as blaming Araevin for her change of heart due to the changes he underwent in *Farthest Reach*. That's just a cold, heartless move on her part. Sure, maybe Araevin did change into something more than an elf, but it shouldn't matter. His personality didn't change, just his appearance. Is Ilsevele just that shallow? Also, I don't buy into the whole 'elf' thing that is brought up out of left field. Apparently elves have this 'special' connection to each other and can feel each other's emotions. Not once to I ever remember this being brought up in any *Forgotten Realm* novel, nor in this story. It just seems like a cheap cop-out that was never brought up until this book. Finally, when Araevin finds out about Ilsevele's change in heart, the whole confrontation came across as a joke. It was poor excuse after poor excuse. Everything that was mentioned was never really brought up in the trilogy, so as a reader, we wouldn't know of these issues before hand. That makes what she does all the more disgusting. This is just the poorest and most disgraceful thing I've ever seen a character do. I found myself getting angrier and angrier whenever she popped up in the story. Ilsevele ruins this book to the point of being hard to read.

2) Dues Ex Machina. Another issue, and a smaller one at that, is poor use of dues ex machina. The daemonfey army seemed to be too strong in this trilogy, to the point of being almost invincible. Thankfully, odd events happen that shift the balance of war in favor of the elves. The problem with this is that these events and gifts just pop up. There are two things that come to mind. The first is a gift given by the queen of Evermeet to Seiveril called the Tree of Souls. Supposedly, the Tree of Souls prevents demons and devils from teleporting in the vicinity of the tree. What bothers me is the absolute randomness of the gift. It just happened. There was no build-up and no explanation to why the elf queen would give this to Seiveril. She just shows up one night and hands it to him. Now, it's never used and is only brought up a handful of times. Quite frankly, it didn't seem to matter that the Crusade had it. The other random event has a bigger impact on the story. Late in the story, the Crusade is getting badly beaten by the daemonfey army. The battle takes place close to an elven cemetery. Seiveril suddenly decides to go to the cemetery to talk the spirits into helping them win. It works. It's one of the most random and jarring thing I've ever read. To top it all off, it's extremely goofy. It was like Richard Baker wrote himself into a corner with the daemonfey army and had to resort to something ludicrous. This one event, dulls everything that has happened up until this point in the trilogy. It makes everything seem worthless and unnecessary. Basically, it's a cheap cop-out that ruins the stories impact and struggle that was going on. After this point on, it's hard to take the story seriously.

Praises:

1) Adventure. The adventure that Araevin and his friends go on was really good. It was a welcome relief from everything that was going on in the other half of the story. The adventure aspect was just more exciting and fun to read. The group travel to interesting locales, face unexpected dangers, and really grow as a group. There seemed to be a lot more put into this part of the story than the others. The best part of the adventure is when the group finds themselves underground in the dangers and deadly Underdark. It wasn't your usual

adventure in this part. It was more atmosphere based and you could feel what was happening to the characters in this section. It was really good and had a vastly different feeling than anything else in the story. All in all, the adventure added something unique that was needed in Final Gate.

2) Characters. The characters in Final Gate are actually surprisingly better and more developed than in the previous two books. It's not a massive change, but it's very noticeable. Instead of only one character having a personality, now most of the others finally get one. Some characters still are flat as a board, but they weren't as bad as before. Starbrow is the best example for this. You see him finally begin to understand why he came back from death. His feelings towards that harpy Ilsevele were touching and you are kind of rooting for him. I don't know what it is, but he suddenly became a likeable and interesting character. Also, you see the war and it's repercussions affecting Seiveril. You see him getting tired and depressed from all the bloodshed and death that surrounds him. With Araevin and his friends, nothing really changes. Maresa is still the best character in the trilogy, hands down. Araevin doesn't really have a personality until the bombshell of what Ilsevele did hits him, but it only affects him for a chapter. The others seem to actually have a presence, instead of blending in with the background. The characters aren't perfect, but I'm just glad that they end on a high note.

Side Notes:

1) Malkizid. I would like to read more about the arch-devil and how he got his brand. It really seems like an interesting story.

2) Tree of Souls. I don't quite understand the importance of something that was hardly mentioned. It may have prevented the fey'ri, demons, and devils from teleporting into an area, but it seemed to hardly matter in the long run.

3) Cover Art. Final Gate has to have one of the worst covers I've ever seen. Everything about this cover is just ugly. The yellow background has an ugly contrast to everything else in the picture. It just doesn't look appealing at all. The devils or demons in the background look pathetic. Throughout the book they come across as frightening, but on the cover they just look like stuffed animals. Finally, the two characters on the cover just look awful. Ilsevele is supposed to be attractive, she isn't. The hair billowing out behind her looks like the artist made an error and tried to cover it up with her hair. It doesn't mesh well with the yellow background either. It makes me kind of nauseous looking at it. Also what's with her legs? They are in such an awkward position that it must be uncomfortable and it looks like they are twice the size of her body. Finally we have the constipated face of Seiveril in the silliest pose I've ever seen. He's face is just awful. He looks dumbstruck. It's just not a good cover. It's supposed relate a touching and sad moment in the book, but it comes across as a joke. This cover art is one of the few that would drive a reader away.

Overall: 3/5

Final Thoughts:

Final Gate had a good premise, but has a lot of small problems combining to almost ruin it. First and foremost is the utter disgrace that is Ilsevele. She single-handedly brings down this story. Her motives and actions are disgraceful and uncharacteristic. The other thing that brings the story down is the amount of *ex machina* that's found. The daemonfey army is too strong and bringing in silly, pointless, and random things to help really hurts the enjoyment that would have been found in this book. However, the adventure that Araevin and friends go on almost saves the Final Gate. It has a lot of good qualities to it and gives the story an unique quality during the middle. Also, it's nice to see some of the other characters gain a personality. It may not have been much, but it was better than nothing. It also helps that Maresa is awesome during a certain scene close to the end. All in all, Final Gate is a disappointing and could have been better if it keep up the spirit of the previous two books. If you have read the trilogy up to this point, it wouldn't hurt to pick this one up to at least finish the story. Otherwise, you may just want to skip this trilogy altogether.

Jim Grogan says

very good end to the story

Umang says

Final Gate: The Last Mythal #3 had so much potential. I thought the pace and depth of part 2 could really take the final book of the series to another level, but in the end, it just fell flat.

Richard Baker is an excellent writer, but there are times when I find myself reading a book and wondering if I'm instead watching a movie. His descriptions are vivid, almost too much, as if he was directing us to see it in only one way and not give us any room for imagination.

His pacing and describing the environment was also a little confusing. During the moments of fast paced battles, or dark settings, I expected less descriptions of what was going on to either speed up the pace or create suspense, but instead, I still got detailed items of what was going on - it just felt like I was reading an Adventure module as a dungeon master getting ready to play an RPG.

The story is interesting, and is an important event that took place on Faerun.

Steve Brooker says

An enjoyable grand final  and lots of recognisable bits and bobs for the DnD aficionado. The series had me, unashamedly, reaching for my old Monster Manuals a few times.

Kimme Utsi says

In the hands of an elf high-mage, the fabled mythals are Faerun's most potent sources of magical power. But in the hands of a demon princess from a forgotten epoch, they're the most powerful weapons imaginable.

Michele says

Termina la trilogia dell'Ultimo Mythal, che racconta della Crociata di Evermeet indetta a eradicare la malvagia razza dei fey'ri dal Faerun, e pi  precisamente da Myth Drannor. Rispetto a molti altri libri della franchise di Forgotten Realms, la trilogia di Baker   scritta con criterio e tecnica ineffabile. Unico tasto dolente   la mancanza di reale profondit  dei personaggi. A parte la stereotipatissima genasi Maresa e un menage a tre tra il mago Araevin, la promessa consorte Ilsevele e il terzo incomodo, il neo-resuscitato campione Fflar Starbrow, non ci sono caratteri ben delineati o personaggi nei quali   possibile identificarsi nell'intera trilogia. Fortunatamente l'impronta dei romanzi   dichiaratamente

action-fantasy, caratteristica che combinata all'ottima cura nei dettagli e alla congruenza del racconto con la continuity del mondo in cui ? ambientato, lo rendono comunque una lettura ottima per un neofita della letteratura fantasy, e ancora migliore per coloro che conoscono gi? i Reami Dimenticati.

Tony says

I guess because I have been reading Forgotten Realms books for so long I expect a little bit more out of them. And the ones I have been reading recently have really been delivering. Again, the characters were super powerful and the storylines changed the world in which they were taking place. I recommend this whole series, especially if you are the kind of dork who eats these kinds of books up like I am.
