



Dangerous Women 2

George R.R. Martin (Editor) , Gardner Dozois (Editor/Introduction) , Lev Grossman (Contributor) , Sharon Kay Penman (Contributor) , S.M. Stirling (Contributor) , Caroline Spector (Contributor) , Sam Sykes (Contributor) , Nancy Kress (Contributor) , more... Diana Gabaldon (Contributor) ...less

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Dangerous Women Vol. 2 includes stories by Lev Grossman, Sharon Kay Penman, S. M. Stirling, Sam Sykes, Caroline Spector, and Nancy Kress, and features an entirely new 28,000-word "Outlander" novella by *New York Times* bestselling author Diana Gabaldon. All stories were first published in December 2013 Dangerous Women anthology.

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Dangerous Women 2 Details

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Author : George R.R. Martin (Editor) , Gardner Dozois (Editor/Introduction) , Lev Grossman (Contributor) , Sharon Kay Penman (Contributor) , S.M. Stirling (Contributor) , Caroline Spector (Contributor) , Sam Sykes (Contributor) , Nancy Kress (Contributor) , more... Diana Gabaldon (Contributor) ...less

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From Reader Review Dangerous Women 2 for online ebook

Maria Teresa says

A melhor coletânea até agora de George R.R. Martin. Desta vez "deu boleia" com o seu nome aos autores, para mim, certos. Muito bons os contos de Megan Lindholm/Robin Hobb e de Diana Gabaldon.

Brigitte Alouqua says

J'avais déjà aimé le premier tome qui renfermait des nouvelles écrites par des plumes masculine, j'étais curieuse de savoir quelles plumes féminines nous proposerait ce second tome. Cette fois encore, j'en connaissais certaines pour les avoir déjà découverte lors de précédentes lectures, d'autres je ne les connaissais que de nom, et pour les autres eh bien je ne les connaissais pas du tout. Ce second opus est pour moi une très belle découverte car je n'avais pas encore découvert la plupart des auteures présentes. Ce fut l'occasion pour moi de les découvrir et ainsi voir quelles auteures j'ai envie de retrouver prochainement.

Voici les auteurs de ce recueil :

Megan Abbott

Cecilia Holland

Melinda Snodgrass

Carrie Vaughn

Megan Lindholm

Sharon Kay Penman

Nancy Kress

Diana Rowland

Diana Gabaldon

Sherrilyn Kenyon

Pat Cadigan

Caroline Spector

Je ne vous cache pas que je n'en connaissais que deux via d'autres lectures que j'ai eu. Comme vous le constatez, deux parmi tant d'auteures cela fait peu ! Je peux vous dire que pour la plupart des auteures, eh bien j'ai aimé leurs styles, me voilà donc avec pas mal de livres à découvrir en prévisions. Je ne sais pas si vous de votre côté vous en connaissez plus que moi, mais si c'est le cas, je serai ravie de savoir ce que vous pensez de leurs livres pour me faire une idée plus précise de ce que je découvrirai dans le futur.

Si je dois donner mes préférences, les voici : Megan Abbott / Carrie Vaughn / Diana Gabaldon / Pat Cadigan.

Les autres nouvelles sont très bien également, je ne dirai pas le contraire, mais celles des quatre auteures que je viens de citer ont eu ma préférence. Leurs héroïnes m'ont plus touchée que les autres. Je ne sais pas pour vous, mais c'est justement ce que j'aime dans ce genre de livres, nous avons la possibilité de faire connaissance avec des univers que nous ne connaissons pas, des plumes qui nous sont inconnues, bon ok ce n'est pas bon pour nos PAL parce que du coup elle se voit rallongée avec les livres de ces auteurs, mais il faut avouer que en tant que lectrice totalement addict, nous avons toutes des PAL énormes et nous ne pouvons nous empêcher de les allonger encore et encore !

Pourquoi pas vous laisser tenter par ces deux recueils comme lectures de vacances ? Ce qui est certain, c'est que je vous les recommande sans hésiter, moi, je les ai dévoré !

Iris Schechter says

I had great hopes for this book. As I said in my review of book 1, I read it in French, and they rearranged the novels to have 1 book with only male writers, and 1 book with female writers (this one). So being a girl, a couldn't help but hope this second volume would be better. Well, some were really good, but there was also really bad work in there. I put the blame (partly) on selection, as for example I read three novels which were basically the same, so of course comparison was harder on the worst one.

Anyway, here's a quick word on each novel. Sorry for disorder.

My Heart is Either Broken - Megan Abbott - 4 ?

Uneasy story of a woman, who I couldn't make up my mind about. Is she heartless, mean, or just normal ? My feelings for her evolved along the short pages. It's definitely not the kind of novel I was looking for, not really the kind that I like, this unease clinging to me, but I have to recognize the mastery of the writer.

Nora's song - Cécilia Holland - 1 ?

This is the kind of "slice of life" story that I hate, because I just don't get it. Nothing really happens, there is no moral lesson (that I could detect). I was all the more so disappointed that the first few paragraphs had seduced me. But I reached the end with a sense of emptiness. This piece of work was closer to a chapter in a full book than a stand-alone story.

Also, who was the dangerous woman there ? All I could see was a sad queen, turned violent by desperation and fear, and a petulant child.

The Hands That Are Not There - Melinda Snodgrass - 5 ?

This one is the exact opposite of Nora's Song. The introduction didn't appeal much to me, and I took the story for a bad Star Trek or Star Wars rip off. It was not. As soon as the story started, I was drawn into it and couldn't close the book until I finished this novel. I might have knocked a few people on the street and in the subway on my way to work that morning...

Beside the appeal of the story, which is always subjective, I liked the writing and storytelling very much : light and precise, balanced, with enough strength in the words to convey the characters' emotions, but not so much that the sentence would become heavy and redundant (unlike that one...). I will look up this writer, I want more of her books !

Raisa Stepanova - Carrie Vaughn - 5 ?

That one took me by surprise. Considering the theme of the novel, I expected to be very detached, but ended up feeling very close to the heroine, her fight and her strength - purely through the skill of the writer, if that needed to be said.

I was once again impressed by the quality of writing and storytelling.

Neighbors - Megan Lindholm - 5 ?

Is magic real because you believe in it, or must you believe in it because it's real ? Make up your own mind in this well written fantastic story.

A Queen in Exile - Sharon Kay Penman - 3 ?

* mild SPOILERS considering this is based on Historical facts*

This novel is totally out of subject. This is the story, correctly written if a bit heavy, of a courageous woman, not a dangerous one.

The author herself says so in an after-note. She then goes on to say that years later, Constance conspired against her husband, evicting him at the profit of her son. In the anthology, I would rather have read about that later part of the story.

Second Arabesque, Very Slowly - Nancy Kress - 3 ?

First I didn't like the title much. It's too long, and even after finishing reading the story, I still didn't get it. Then I found the writing mediocre, and I didn't like the way people talked.

But the last few paragraphs somehow lift it all up. It's a good, sober story about hope and determination.

City Lazarus - Diana Rowland - 1 ?

spoilers

Absolutely terrible. First, the writing was appalling. Why do some authors think that the only way to convey a low-life mob character is to infuse the whole novel with vulgarity ?

But it was not only unnecessarily boorish, it was also plain badly written, which made it a drag to read, and totally impossible to immerse into the story.

I barely prevailed, and finally reached the last page, where the dangerous woman is unveiled. This end twist could have earned the novel an additional star, except for bad luck : I already read two similar stories in this anthology, and both were much better written ("I Know How to Pick 'Em" by Lawrence Block , and "The Hands That Are Not There" by Melinda Snodgrass).

Virgins - Diana Gabaldon - 3 ?

The writing is not highly qualitative, but comfortably easy to read, though sometimes the dialogues are a bit confusing. In any case, it's not a hindrance to getting into the story, which was quite catching.

Though I wouldn't say it was a great novel (mostly because of the writing - I realize I've become quite demanding on the matter), I did plunge into the story and went to sleep late because I wanted to finish it.

Hell Hath No Fury - Sherrilyn Kenyon - 3 ?

The writing is ok, though unfortunately hampered by a poor translation job.

The story being very short it's hard for me to judge... but I'll still do it ! : I found it way to moralizing. I don't know if that was the author's intent, or if she just wanted to stuff as many old sayings as she could in 20 pages (to show off all the research she did ?), but it annoyed me.

Also the end was way to vanilla for this type of story. But that goes with the moralization I guess.

Caretakers - Pat Cadigan - 3 ?

I don't see where the dangerous woman is, but apart from that the story is ok. the plot holds, it's not too obvious. The writing is not bad.

I prefer Sci-Fi/fantasy so I had little interest for this novel, but I can imagine the appeal others would find to it, which accounts for 1 of the 3 stars I give it.

Lies My Mother Told Me - Caroline Spector - 3 ?

That one also gets a star for the universe behind that I don't know, and which probably makes it more interesting for the fans.

As for me, I was once again put off by a writing that I came to define as slouched. It's not terrible, but it's not elegant either. Much like everyday talk rather than writing endeavour. This effect is reinforced by the intensive cursing of the protagonists. I understand that it is intentional, but as it leaks into the surrounding text it become less mastered, and more amateur writing.

Arun Divakar says

The second book in this collection featuring dangerous women turned out to be a chore to get through.

Neighbors by Megan Lindholm

Rating : 2/5

In Summary : The whole idea is to have stories of women who are dangerous. While it is really appreciated that we need to spare a thought for the old and feeble, this story really has no place in this anthology. It is a fact that Megan Lindholm captures the frailty of being old and senile and the utter tragedy of watching life fall apart around you. But my dear editors, the idea behind your book was not this ! A book with the title art of a knuckle knife does not do justice to this story of how unfair life is to people who are at the sunset of their lives. This is a criminally misplaced tale !The rating of 2 is for the story alone and not its place in this collection.

The Girl In The Mirror by Lev Grossman

Rating : 3/5

In Summary : A prank set in a centuries old school of magic that has some unforeseen consequences. Grossman's creation of atmosphere is brilliant and he captures all the charms of an ancient school and its quirky students. It is just that the ending is rather unsatisfying. Or I can rather put it is as the ending came a bit too fast for my liking. That said, this is one of the better stories in the whole collection.

A Queen In Exile by Sharon Kay Penman

Rating : 4/5

In Summary : The best of the lot. This is one of the two stories in the collection where the woman is a truly formidable one to behold. It tells the story of Constance de Hauteville of Florence, wife to Heinrich von Hohenstaufen, King of Germany and daughter-in-law of the legendary Fredrick Barbarossa. Trapped in an unhappy marriage, she goes through a lot many defining experiences that serves to make her stronger to face the life ahead. This little story is an ode to how much will power plays a part in forming a person's future. Constance truly is a dangerous woman !

Pronouncing Doom by S.M. Stirling

Rating : 2/5

In Summary : Yet another post-apocalyptic tale but this one is a matriarchal society where the cult of the goddess has returned to take root. The contention I had with this tale was that it was overwritten. There is too much prose cluttering an otherwise good tale.

Lies My Mother Told Me by Caroline Spector

Rating : 3/5

In Summary : A fun romp through the world of superheroes, zombies and creepy government agents. It's a comic book story written in a short story format. A fun read and this is also the only other story in the collection where the women are dangerous.

Name The Beast by Sam Sykes

Rating : WTF !/5

In Summary : I have no frigging idea what this story was supposed to mean !

Virgins by Diana Gabaldon

Rating : Unrated/5

In Summary : I gave up after ten pages. A group of mercenaries drink and joke and play war...do I care ? No, I certainly don't !

The collection as a whole was a let-down. There is one more book left in the collection but now I am wary.

Tim Hicks says

Didn't work for me.

Lev Grossman's *The Girl in the Mirror* - not bad, moderately entertaining school-of-magic story.

Sharon K. Penman's *A Queen in Exile* - boring history lesson, and I don't dislike history

S.M. Stirling's *Pronouncing Doom* - OK

Caroline Spector's *Lies My Mother Told Me* - a woman who fights by creating explosive fat bubbles - no, sorry, you lost me there. *A Joker Too Far*.

Sam Sykes' *Name the Beast* - classic example of baffle-the-reader-for-pages-then-just-stop.

Nancy Kress' *Second Arabesque, Very Slowly* - a post-apocalyptic world I couldn't believe in. It seemed to

have been created solely to set up the unsubtle politics of the story.

Diana Gabaldon's Virgins - Ah cannae stand the Outlanders series, an' Ah didnae read it.

Alexander says

So, I finished the second installment of the Dangerous Women anthology! And I'll review every short story individually again, and then take the final rating out of the average of all the ratings. Here we go!

Megan Lindholm - Neighbors - 3/5

I've never read a Robin Hobb-story before, so this was certainly an interesting start. Sadly, I wasn't super impressed. As the story progressed, I had a harder and harder time understanding what was going on exactly and I don't understand the ending one bit. Also, I don't really understand what this story was doing in the anthology - the main character's a woman, but she doesn't really fit the picture of a 'dangerous woman' to me. Shame.

Lev Grossman - Girl in the Mirror - 4/5

I have also never read a Lev Grossman-story before, but this story has made me see the error of my ways. The whole thing was a lot of fun to read and the characters were believable. It was nice to have a fun story in between the rest. The only thing that bothered me was that the dangerous woman felt a bit shoehorned in the story. Otherwise it was good.

Sharon Kay Penman - A Queen in Exile - 2/5

I can't say I ever really cared much for politics in fiction and this story felt rife with it - and historical fiction wasn't really my thing either. However, my biggest qualm with this story was how the dangerous woman was very dangerous... off-screen. On-screen, there was nothing convincing me of the danger. The author added a note telling me exactly why the protagonist was dangerous and her needing that note explains my rating sufficiently, I hope.

S.M. Stirling - Pronouncing Doom - 3/5

I had troubles seeing the point of this story. Where was the dangerous woman? There was a dangerous man standing on trial, certainly. But what about the woman? What was this story doing here? I had a lot of fun seeing the world built and the Celtic rituals this story was based on, but it felt unfinished, and when it was done, all I could do was shrug.

Caroline Spector - Lies My Mother Told Me - 4/5

This was a fun story to read! The dangerous woman was crystal clear, the idea was a lot of fun and it was just nice in general. However, it was clear that Spector tried to fit a superhero story the length of a novel into a short story, as it moved at a breakneck speed, and I didn't really like the antagonist. He felt like a stereotype of gamers, a really bad one, and as a gamer myself it was hard not to take offence. Nonetheless, this was fun.

Sam Sykes - Name The Beast - 2/5

I would really like to leave a comprehensive review for this, but in order to do that, I'd have to comprehend the story and to be really honest, I had no idea what was going on while I read it. Maybe because of the steep learning curve, maybe because of something else, I don't know. I liked the scary mood, though, which is why it doesn't have one star.

Diana Gabaldon - *Virgins* - 5/5

This was also a fun story to read! Again, I don't care much for historical fiction, but this was a pleasant read all the way. The friendship between Jamie and Ian was heartwarming and the dangerous woman was clearly there. There was enough in there for a novel, but the pacing never bothered me. Certainly one of the best of the anthology yet.

All these little ratings average to a rating of 3.2, aka three stars.

I do want to say that I really like how wide this anthology is, there was stuff pulled from all genres - but the concept of dangerous women, so far, has been so wide that basically all women apply to it if you stretch it enough, and I feel it's been really stretched in this anthology and used as an excuse for some writers to finally get that short story they had lying around somewhere published. I'm all for feminism, but I expected *more* so far. Maybe I'll get that in part three.

But I'll be honest, I doubt it. Nonetheless, I'll see you guys there :)

katnick says

I expected to feel empowered by this anthology - or at least less pissed off about the portrayal of women in speculative fiction - but I was underwhelmed. Like all anthologies, it was a mixed bag. All of the stories were at least decent, but none of them really struck me as anything special.

Lev Grossman's **The Girl in the Mirror** follows the leader of a secret club at a magic university as she pulls an elaborate prank on the school's wine steward. It's part of a larger series, though not in an obvious way. It's good, except for the part where the female protagonist is rescued by a male teacher. This story comes directly after an introduction that claims women in modern spec fic don't need to be rescued anymore, which I consider a major failure of editing. 2.5 stars.

Sharon K. Penman's **A Queen in Exile** is a historical tale of a Sicilian queen in the 1100s who tries to win her kingdom back from a bastard usurper and her jerk husband by birthing a male heir. It's well written and researched but the queen's obsession with having a boy is annoying and she doesn't do anything that I would really call 'dangerous' until the postscript. Why wasn't the bulk of the story about *that* part of her life? 2.5 stars.

S.M. Stirling's **Pronouncing Doom** features a Scottish-revival clan chieftain who passes judgement on a rapist in a post-apocalyptic American farming community. This story is really interesting. It delves into the inadequacy of the modern legal system in a feudal world and how human rights and the roles/responsibilities of community members have to adapt. The only drawback is that it's obviously part of a larger story universe and some of the references to said universe are confusing. 3.5 stars.

Caroline Spector's **Lies My Mother Told Me** is a superhero universe story about a woman who creates exploding fat bubbles, a zombie puppetmaster, and a telepathic insect-girl who fight back against a shadowy organization that can steal their powers. This story has a bit of everything – crazily inventive superpowers, character development, action, and not everybody is straight, white, and thin. It does drop hints about the larger Wild Card universe, but not so many that it gets confusing. My favourite of the bunch. 4 stars.

Sam Sykes' **Name the Beast** follows a hunter who is forced to take her unwanted daughter along on a ritual hunt. I just didn't *get* this one. I had so many unanswered questions that I couldn't enjoy it. Who are these beings? What do they look like? Are they representative of their species? What's up with her husband?

What's up with her daughter? Why are they hunting the beasts? What makes her change her mind? And so on. 2 stars.

Nancy Kress' **Second Arabesque, Very Slowly** is another post-apocalyptic tale. An infertile nurse in a nomadic, male-dominated society tries to crush the dreams of two pack members who discover music and dancing in order to protect them from the leader's wrath. I liked it, even though the main character doesn't really seem to be driving the plot and the world was what I think of as the 'post-apocalypse standard.' 3 stars.

Diana Gabaldon's **Virgins** is an add-on tale to her *Outlander* historical series, though even people who haven't read the books should be able to follow the story. An outlaw Scot joins a band of French mercenaries with his childhood friend and is hired to escort the daughter of a prosperous Jew to Paris. While there's no doubt the woman they cross is dangerous, the story isn't really about her. It's about the two guys and their struggles with trauma and doing the right thing. An engaging read, but not what I was looking for from this anthology. 3.5 stars.

Frank says

Read the first two stories and did not like either. Started the third and it was much the same so I gave up on it. Glad I borrowed it from the library instead of buying it.

Susie says

Overall rating: ★★★?? - *Sort of liked/OK*. Each story is reviewed individually below.

1/7: The Girl in the Mirror by Lev Grossman

★★★★? - *Really liked*

Now this one was right up my alley and I really liked it! I've since read that The Magicians series (of which this was a tale taken out of that world) has been likened to Harry Potter, so a more adult-orientated version, but based on this story I wouldn't necessarily agree (although it does have some direct HP references nestled inside it). You have all the magical goings on, done, perhaps, in a more "grown-up" style, yet I wouldn't directly liken it to any other series I've read. It's done in a very individual way. The writer's style is quite unique too, which takes a little bit of getting used to. In some ways I would say it was more like the writing of Tom Holt or Terry Pratchett, but not completely so. I guess, in a way, you could say it's more realistic, by using "everyday" language. But however anyone else would like to describe it, I'd just describe it as this: "fun"! It is definitely enough for me to want to check out the main works from The Magicians series.

2/7: A Queen in Exile by Sharon Kay Penman

★★★★★ - *Loved it/couldn't put it down*

What a wonderful story! It is the first I've read of any of SKP's works, but I had already added a couple of her works to my eventual "to read" list. I can say that, based on reading this story, that it is unlikely that I

will be disappointed.

The story focusses around a point in history that I am not familiar with, the battle for the throne of Sicily and the daring of Constance de Hauteville, an aging woman married to the heir to the Holy Roman Empire who's yet to fall pregnant in a time that's not at all friendly for women. Her bravery and courage turn circumstances that could have been disastrous for her into ones that help to secure both her future and the future of her beloved Sicily itself.

Whilst slow to start, it gradually gathered pace into a tremendous finish, by which time I had full sympathy for Constance and her plight. Thus it wins the first full five stars of any of the DW stories I've read so far.

3/7: Pronouncing Doom by S.M. Stirling

★★★?? - *Sort of liked/OK*

Now I must admit that my opinion of Mr. Stirling is a bit coloured thanks to a collaboration I read of his with Raymond E. Feist, Jimmy the Hand. Now the story felt lose and I felt it could have been a lot better, but apparently Stirling messed up, had written something else than what had been agreed upon and handed it all in late with only two weeks to finalise (see this review for info). So therefore not the best introduction to Stirling, albeit from the part of a collaboration.

So I went into reading this story a bit sceptically, expecting it to not be up to par, especially after the wonderful stories I'd read before this one. And, I have to say... Well, it didn't fall short of my expectations, but failed to fully impress me and change my already dented opinion of the author's work.

Overall I would say that it wasn't a bad story, but there are some fluffed-up bits that irritated me somewhat, so I feel that it's unlikely I'll be able to fully enjoy the main works from this universe. Some of the ideas certainly good ones, and gave a suggestion how man would adapt to survive in a sort of post-apocalyptic world. But the way he draws in the characters and presents them is a bit too ridiculous. And one thing I can't stand in books that are trying to be serious is overly written-out pronunciations. No doubt written for an American audience to describe how the one English guy in the book, of West Country descent, would sound like. Just makes reading it even more ridiculous.

The only thing that keeps it at three stars rather than lower is the fact that the whole seemed to hold together and, once the story was moving, it wasn't hard to imagine or get a feel for the characters.

4/7: Lies My Mother Told Me by Caroline Spector

★???? - *Really disliked/hated/DNF*

Eurgh. After my first five star out of all the DW stories, here comes the first one star.

Well, first of all, it's hard to pack a story with multiple POVs into a few pages. But that's what Spector tried to do. And failed. I mean, when you've got less than a page spent on one viewpoint, unless you yourself are a superhero, it makes it incredibly hard to follow.

What probably doesn't help me is that I've never read any of the Wild Cards books. So it may have helped me gain a sympathy for the universe if I had. Yet the way Spector writes her heroes, it just wasn't that believable at all. It made it all sound stupid and ridiculous. It's fantasy, so of course there will be parts that

would be unbelievable to our world. Yet the nature of fantasy writing is to make these fantastical ideas believable to the world they're set in. I just didn't get that at all.

As for sympathy for the characters... Well, that was extremely hard to achieve with the too-quick perspective shifting. Plus there wasn't enough in each perspective to really build the characters up into anything more than one-dimensional penny pieces.

And lastly, that ending... I deliberately kept reading, despite my anger and distaste throughout, hoping something that would come along that would redeem the author and the story for me. But with the poor editing, revealing more grammatical errors than any other story I've read thus far, then the pretty stupid ending, I was just glad to have gotten it over and done with.(view spoiler)

So, I did my part, I tried my best, I gave the story every chance I could. But ultimately I feel stupid for having carried on with the story when I could have skipped. The only positive is that I now know to avoid this author's works.

5/7: Name the Beast by Sam Sykes

★★★?? - *Sort of liked/OK*

This was a bizarre story and I wasn't too sure what to make of it. There were two viewpoints that were like two sides of a coin, slowly coming together to complete the story, one side learning from the other. That in and of itself was obvious in parts, each side calling the other "beast" in their fervour to be done with the other.

Yet I guess the bizarreness was to do with the "foreign" nature of the unknown creature's thinking, the species described so individually well yet with so little time to expand upon it.

Overall not a bad story with a warm ending. I guess, once I get used to Syke's style, I could come to like his writing. This story certainly hasn't put me off of trying out this young author's other works.

6/7: Second Arabesque, Very Slowly by Nancy Kress

★★★?? - *Sort of liked/OK*

Another post-apocalyptic story, except with completely different reasons and consequences. It was interesting, but at the same time quite frustrating.

For one thing, she spends far too much time describing what things were like or why they happened or why things are as they are. The most complicated part about this is that there's a section where she slips from her past-tense narrative into present tense. It makes that section feel awkward and out of place.

The story itself was vaguely interesting. There were times when I was happily following along. But it just could have been written so much better.

7/7: Virgins by Diana Gabaldon

★★★?? - *Sort of liked/OK*

So, here we go, the final story, the story which many people only picked up this second book part to read...

I have read varying reviews about Gabaldon in the past, mostly scathing, via friends whose opinion I trust. But, I decided, here was my chance to give the author a go, try it all out for myself, being as I was in the process of reading all the other Dangerous Women stories (and, to my credit, I haven't yet skipped one).

And what confronted me was a mixed bag. First of all, you have a historical adventure story, of which I have no idea how accurate it is. The French were allied to Scotland, so perhaps it's not so surprising to see our Scottish "heroes" wind up there. But here's the bit that bothers me - it is one thing, writing out how they are pronouncing words when they are speaking in English. It's quite another when they are speaking in French or even Hebrew or their own tongue. Jamie is supposed to be able to speak French with a flawless Parisian accent. Now, assuming when he speaks to these people time and again, after it already having been noted that he'd spoken to them in French the first time around, what the hell is he doing further along the line speaking French with a Scottish brogue?!

The violence seemed par for the course and not quite to the levels I've heard it appears in some of her other stories. The story itself was readable, made sense, to a degree (view spoiler), and it wasn't too hard to gain sympathy for our "heroes". I can understand why many fall for their charms. But, hmmm... I somewhat enjoyed it, but nowhere near enough.

Nuno Ferreira says

Nada Enfurece Mais Uma Mulher e Outros Contos de Mulheres Perigosas é mais um excelente adendo ao catálogo da Coleção Bang!. Confesso que esperava gostar menos desta segunda parte que da primeira, uma vez que conhecia melhor os autores que a compuseram. Falo de nomes como Brandon Sanderson, Joe Abercrombie ou o próprio George R. R. Martin, mas também de autores que me surpreenderam pela positiva, como Sam Sykes.

Acabei por gostar de igual modo desta segunda metade. Os contos são bem diversos e é difícil que alguém goste de todos eles de igual forma, uma vez que eles permeiam vários géneros e gostos literários, mas após um início bem frustrante, acabou por me agradar bastante. Alguns contos, como aquele que escreveu a nossa bem conhecida e estimada Megan Lindholm, valem pelo todo.

A antologia começa com A Canção de Nora de Cecelia Holland. É um conto de pendor histórico que nos apresenta a uma jovem frágil e sonhadora chamada Nora. Holland convida-nos a mapear aqueles personagens na história de Inglaterra, e assim que identificamos os Plantageneta, percebemos que a mulher perigosa do conto não é mais que Eleanor da Aquitânia. O conto começa bastante lento, e apesar de observar uma guinada importante a meio, acabei por não gostar da história.

Bombas de Jim Butcher é uma viagem ao mundo de Harry Dresden. O autor é famoso pela sua série Dresden Files, uma série de fantasia de grande sucesso. Confesso que tinha curiosidade em conhecer Dresden, mas ela estampou-se de encontro a uma parede ao ler este conto. Não só pelo SPOILER colossal que encontramos logo na introdução ao autor, como pela própria história. O conto protagonizado por Molly é ágil, bem humorado e bem executado, mas decididamente não faz o meu estilo e foi o único que me "obrigou" a saltar páginas.

Joe R. Landsdale traz-nos uma história perfeita para os amantes de Karate Kid ou Rocky Balboa. O título,

Luta Livre com Jesus, fez-me imaginar um Jesus Cristo com um cinturão de wrestling à cintura, mas o conto fala de um jovem carente de uma figura paterna, cansado de ser humilhado nas ruas. O pintor que namora com a mãe está longe de ser o pai que almeja, mas tudo muda quando se torna amigo de um velho, que vem a descobrir ter sido X-Man, um lutador de wrestling. A mulher perigosa do conto apareceu apenas nos últimos parágrafos e a escrita de Landsdale é demasiado frívola, à americana, para o meu gosto.

Vizinhos é um dos melhores contos desta antologia. A mulher incrível que conhecemos como Robin Hobb, Megan Lindholm, traz-nos uma história tocante sobre os problemas da velhice e os dilemas morais que pais e filhos, quando não netos, sentem na altura de perceber que está na hora de mudar de vida. Sarah Wilkins é uma senhora bastante independente, que não consegue lidar com as limitações cada vez mais graves da sua mente e se recusa determinadamente a ir para o lar.

Comecei por não gostar muito do conto, porque estava à espera de ler um conto de fantasia, uma vez que a capa “vende” uma história de Robin Hobb, o pseudónimo de fantasia da escritora, e porque a escrita dela aqui não me pareceu tão delicada e elegante quanto o habitual. Ainda assim, a narrativa em si ganhou-me. Megan consegue ser um doce e tocante em tudo o quanto põe as mãos, e aquele final deixou-me com um sorriso no rosto. E vontade de ler mais.

Ao mesmo nível esteve Segundo Arabesco, Muito Devagar. Nunca tinha ouvido falar sequer de Nancy Kress e parece ser uma autora já de renome. Gostei imenso da escrita e ainda mais da história. Trata-se de um conto pós-apocalíptico passado nas ruínas do mundo moderno, após se ter espalhado um vírus que tornou 95% das mulheres inférteis. Interessante, não? Como seria de esperar, as outras 5% tornaram-se preciosidades, e as mulheres são usadas numa espécie de haréns para os senhores das gangues.

O conto é protagonizado por uma idosa, com a função de Enfermeira de um destes grupos, que faz aquilo que é preciso para proteger as suas meninas, acompanhando-as desde a infância até à menstruação, altura em que começam a ser usadas para fins sexuais. Tudo vai bem por ali, até que um rapaz e uma rapariga descobrem o seu amor... pelo ballet. Um conto cuja aura faz lembrar Mad Max: Fury Road, e que retrata a superficialidade e a importância das pequenas coisas que temos de uma forma mais profunda do que parece à primeira vista.

Diana Rowland apresenta Cidade Lázaro. É um conto escuro, com toques de policial e de noir, num mundo pós-apocalíptico. A cidade está entregue aos corruptos e à delinquência, e o protagonista é um exemplo disso mesmo. Ele é a mão que faz o trabalho sujo a um dos homens mais poderosos da cidade, atando pontas soltas e eliminando ervas daninhas. A sua consciência parece repentinamente mais sensível quando esse seu empregador se mostra interessado na stripper por quem está apaixonado. Mas se não fosse o rio que “fugiu” do sítio, ninguém diria que seria uma história futurista.

Virgens é uma noveleta de Diana Gabaldon. A autora é sobejamente famosa pela sua série literária Outlander, que deu origem à série televisiva da Starz. Esta história é passada no universo literário de Outlander, mostrando uma versão mais jovem do seu protagonista, Jamie Fraser. Não é uma história que tenha muito de original, levando-nos a acompanhar dois jovens escoceses por uma França suja e promíscua na tentativa honesta de perderem a virgindade, mas é a minha história preferida da antologia.

Diana soube explorar bem a temática da mulher perigosa, embora ela não apareça de início. E apesar de ser a maior história do livro (grande mesmo!) acabou por ser a que li com maior voracidade, para o que contribuiu a escrita ágil da autora, os vários momentos de bom humor e a leveza dos diálogos. Perseguições, confusões em bordéis e a questão do judaísmo foram tópicos bem desenvolvidos pela autora. Nunca tinha lido nada de Diana Gabaldon e gostei imenso.

O conto de Sherrilyn Kenyon chama-se Nada Enfurece Mais Uma Mulher e é a história que dá título à antologia, embora não tenha compreendido o que este título tem a ver com o conto. Sherrilyn é considerada a rainha do paranormal, com vários grandes sucessos dentro do género, mas certamente que este conto não espelha a sua proficiência. Ele traz uma história cliché: a típica adolescente medium de ascendência indígena que, num passeio com os seus amigos arquetípicos, é obrigada a enfrentar o fantasma de um antepassado maléfico com desejo de vingança. E a escrita é fraca, chegando a ser extremamente infantil nos diálogos.

O Pronunciar da Desgraça é o conto de S. M. Stirling. Achei-o bastante interessante, introduzindo um mundo pós-apocalíptico que regrediu aos costumes celtas. Gostei muito da escrita, das personagens e da história em si, porém achei que perdeu demasiado tempo a “apresentar-nos ao mundo” e quase não saiu do mesmo sítio. Para além disso, acabei por não compreender onde estava a mulher perigosa do conto. Juro que não percebi!

Pat Cadigan trouxe-nos Cuidadoras, um thriller de contornos bem interessantes. Ele apresenta-nos duas irmãs com 15 anos de diferença, habituadas uma à outra, de quem cuidam o melhor que podem. Assistem sempre aos mesmos filmes e aos mesmos programas policiais, que começam a trazer pesadelos à mais nova. Assim como começam a perguntar-se se a sua mãe, entregue a um lar, estará verdadeiramente em segurança. Destaco o conto pela escrita, apesar de a história também me ter agradado.

Nada Enfurece Mais Uma Mulher e Outros Contos de Mulheres Perigosas é mais uma excelente antologia trazida até nós pela Saída de Emergência. São dez contos bem diferentes em proposta e em execução, mas que acabam por nos fazer chegar o trabalho de autores que pouco ou nada conhecemos, ao mesmo tempo que nos brindam com mais uns pozinhos dos nossos autores de eleição.

Esta segunda parte de Dangerous Women destacou-se exatamente por me fazer conhecer nomes do meio que não conhecia. Destaco a noveleta “Virgens” de Diana Gabaldon e os contos “Vizinhos” de Megan Lindholm e “Segundo Arabesco, Muito Devagar” de Nancy Kress, como os meus preferidos. Espero ler no próximo ano mais antologias deste género. Sim, Saída de Emergência, estou a pensar em Book of Swords. Sabem que sim.

<http://noticiasdezallar.wordpress.com>

Nikki says

This volume had more fantasy/SF than the first one, with just one story that wasn't — and that was historical fiction, which often has the same sort of social structures and so on, and thus feels somewhat akin to fantasy. It's a bit of a stronger collection than the first part, to my mind; I enjoyed it a bit more.

‘Neighbours’, by Megan Lindholm — Quite fun; I kinda called it before the end, but it still worked. I found the stuff with the elderly woman and her kids a bit harrowing, honestly; the trouble is, when someone gets to that point where everything seems to be going wrong, they're no longer making clear decisions... what do you do? The kids in this book didn't handle it great, of course, but they're not wrong that at some point you need to take responsibility.

‘The Girl in the Mirror’, by Lev Grossman — I hoped this was unrelated to The Magicians and its sequels; I didn't enjoy the first book that much, and didn't read the others. Unfortunately it was, and given that Quentin appeared, I'm guessing it had some relevance to those stories? Eh.

'A Queen in Exile', by Sharon Kay Penman — Felt a little bit like a summary or a historical biography at times, but I enjoyed it; it's nice to see a dangerous woman of history celebrated.

'Pronouncing Doom', by S.M. Stirling — Honestly... I get that modern Wicca is a thing, but the tangle of Irish words and Welsh mythology and modern Earth Mother stuff left me pretty cold.

'Lies My Mother Told Me', by Caroline Spector — This is from G.R.R. Martin's Wildcards 'verse, if I'm not mistaken; it's pretty clear what's going on, even if you haven't read those. I liked it; weird powers and all.

'Name the Beast', by Sam Sykes — I'm... honestly not sure what was going on through half of this. Not a fan.

I didn't read 'Virgins', by Diana Gabaldon; it's set in her Outlander world, in which I have no interest.

Reviewed for The Bibliophibian.

Ioana says

4.5*

Înfrâng r?ul sau întruchipeaz? r?ul. Pot fi îngerii sau demonii. ?i îngerii ?i demonii în acela?i timp. Vr?jitoare ori justi?iare ale drept?ii, ho?omane ?i criminale cu sânge rece, fete bune ori femei fatale. Femeile nu au fost niciodat? mai puternice, în nicio alt? carte nu ve?i întâlni atât de multe femei dispuse s? dea totul pe o carte, s? tr?iasc? ?i s? moar? asumat.

Recenzia completa: <http://twistinmysobriety-alexa.blogspot...>

Jarezal says

Otra buena selección de relatos aunque hay que tener cuidado y no mezclar ediciones ya que no son equivalentes y el volumen 2 de Tor tiene uno de los relatos del volumen 1 de Harper.

The Girl in the Mirror – Lev Grossman: Uno de los dos más entretenidos del volumen para mi gusto. Un colegio de magos muy a lo Hogwarts pero con estudiantes más cercanos a lo que podrías encontrarte en la vida real. Un grupo secreto compuesto únicamente de chicas decide planear una broma pesada para vengarse por un motivo completamente justificado. No les sirven suficiente vino en las comidas.

A Queen in Exile – Sharon Kay Penman: Relato histórico acerca de una reina de Sicilia y su lucha por los derechos que le corresponden.

Pronouncing Doom – S. M. Stirling: En un mundo postapocalíptico las antiguas leyes y juicios no tienen cabida. Ante una ofensa imperdonable, ¿cómo decidimos si alguien es culpable y administramos el castigo?

Lies My Mother Told Me – Carolina Spector: Una historia ambientada en la saga Wild Cards. No es necesario conocerla para disfrutar del relato ya que básicamente son historias de personas con poderes. Una

protagonista absolutamente genial y mucho humor. Uno de los dos mejores relatos del volumen.

Name the Beast – Sam Sykes: Relato confuso para mi gusto. Típico de los que están escritos de tal forma que no te quede muy claro lo que está pasando, si esto fue antes o después o ni siquiera qué son los protagonistas. Va sobre lobos, o gente que se comporta como lobos o algo así. El que menos me ha gustado de la colección.

Second Arabesque, Very Slowly – Nancy Kress: Un mundo postapocalíptico con pequeños grupos sobreviviendo por su cuenta y un problema de fertilidad. Las mujeres en cuanto llegan a la pubertad son probadas a ver si pueden tener hijos pero... ¿quizás no todas quieran que ese sea su único objetivo en la vida? Historia ya incluida en el primer volumen de la edición Harper.

Virgins – Diana Gabaldon: Una historia ambientada en el universo de Outlander que se disfruta más si conoces a los personajes. Protagonizada por Jamie y su amigo Ian poco después de que el primero recibiera los famosos latigazos. Dos pipiolos inexpertos en busca de aventuras. El único pero es que no me encaja muy bien con el tono de la colección ya que está protagonizado por dos hombres, todo el peso de la trama la llevan ellos, y varias veces sus entrepiernas, y por mucho que salga una mujer que tiene iniciativa no recibe la atención suficiente en la historia.

Jaden-marie says

3.5

I found all of them at least of an okay quality, some of the ones I liked best were-

A Queen in Exile

Lies My Mother Told Me

Virgins

I would probably give the others a pass, Neighbors better but still not highest quality.

Roxana Chiril? says

I've read this in Romanian, but I'm too tired to write a review in Ro. This volume contained 9 stories.

"Second Arabesque, Very Slowly" by Nancy Kress

A post-apocalyptic tale in which women are good for breeding and, maybe, medical stuff. It isn't badly written, but it was not my cup of tea. (Incidentally, it reminded me a lot of Huxley's "Ape and Essence", possibly because I've just read that one, and it's also post-apocalyptic, and women are mating material and reproduction is a Thing)

"City Lazarus" by Diana Rowland

The river in New Orleans moved, plunging the city into economic disaster and crime. It contains the usual corrupt city sort of setting, complete with strippers, whores and noir atmosphere. Not bad, but not particularly memorable.

"Pronouncing Doom" by S. M. Stirling

More post-apocalyptic stuff! This time, Wiccans create a society of their own after disaster struck. It's an interesting story, emphasizing characters and psychology in a world in which justice can't be as kind as it is now.

"Virgins" by Diana Gabaldon

I'm not a huge fan of "Outlander" (and this story is in that universe), but "Virgins" was alright. Pain-magnet Jamie, after getting whipped a lot in Scotland, goes to France to become a mercenary and get hurt some more. Complete with Jews who are healers. It's fun.

"Hell Hath No Fury" by Sherrilyn Kenyon

A bunch of people go into a territory haunted by a Native American who cursed white men for being horrid to her! Possibly the most cliched story of the volume. It really felt bad, man.

"Name the Beast" by Sam Sykes

A weird story about some sentient creatures hunting other sentient creatures. It felt odd and maybe there was something to it, but it was also confusing.

"Caretakers" by Pat Cadigan

Their mother has Alzheimer's and is now in an asylum, so the younger sister volunteers as a nurse there. Soon, she starts feeling there's something not quite right going on - but is it just her imagination? I kind of liked this one, although the ending confused me. I felt the final paragraphs were meant to be quite meaningful, but maybe something got lost in translation.

"Lies My Mother Told Me" by Caroline Spector

A fun story about not-quite-superheroes battling it out - among which a woman who controls zombies and one who makes bubbles that are kind of bombs. It's part of a larger universe and I really felt that (so many references to stuff!), but it was quite fun to read.

"The Princess and the Queen, or, the Blacks and the Greens" by George R. R. Martin

A story set some time before "A Game of Thrones", in which dragons still roamed the lands (mostly under Targaryen riders), and people fought bloodily for succession. It's written as if by a maester, and I kind of lost track of who's who (too many Aegons and Aemons and Daemons and Daerons or whatever), but it was enjoyable. Lots of blood and dragons, as you might expect.
