



Dangerous Games

Clayton Emery

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Mages' Games

Netheril, empire of magic, where wizards wield power far beyond the ken of mortal man.

Netheril, where citadels float, magic runs wild, and mages dabble in games better left for the gods.

Netheril, a place of dangerous games where the barbarian Sunbright Steelshanks soon finds himself an unwilling pawn in a lethal match of wits, wiles, and powers.

Dangerous Games Details

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From Reader Review Dangerous Games for online ebook

Scott Kirkland says

Even more meh. Time travel meh!

Jesse says

So,

This book was just as bad as the first one....but perhaps this one had a little bit of the history I was looking for in the first book, but didn't find...however disappointing..

Sunbright now lives in the flying city with fat wizard and Polaris. He has set his mind on reclaiming his chick's soul from the Hellish prison he lost her in. Fat wizard has promised to help him, but he is often too busy to devote much time to Sunbright's plight.

The barbarian soon becomes restless in the flying city and decides that he will return to the ground. For some reason, the fat wizard comes too.

When they get down there, they investigate a fallen star. Just as they get close to the star, they are wooshed away by some powerful magic.

Turns out they are taken 400 years into the future by a wizard named Karsus (later dubbed Karsus the mad). Karsus is the youngest wizard to ever become an archmage of Nethril. He is ruler of the largest of all the flying cities and he is quite crazy. Unfortunately, its not in a cool way, but in a real speedy and annoying way (in fact, I have yet to read about a crazy wizard in Forgotten Realms that was crazy in a good way...I'm still looking).

So, Karsus stole the fallen star from the past to work on a new kind of magic he calls "Heavy Magic", sounds groovy. Fat wizard becomes interested in learning what Karsus has to teach and quickly becomes one of the Archmage's lackies. He also has a stupid tryst with Karsus's aunt, and she eventually shows him that there is more to life than studies and magic, but then she chooses to die with her nephew instead of going back in time to be with Fatty...pretty lame plot twist.

Somehow Sunbright gets summoned by Polaris, the ruler of the flying city he left 400 years in the past. She no lives on Karsus (he named the city after himself) and has grown into a monstrous, overly paranoid, fatty that only eats and makes plans to defend against imaginary enemies. She wants Sunbright to do something for her, and when he refuses, she has him chased by her guards. He ends up hiding from the entirely over zealous gaurds who have turned him into a criminal 'cause he was in a market when a bunch of theives raided for food....it only gets worse...

Sunbright hooks up with the group of beggar/theives, but he doesn't understand all the magics of the city (apparently, everything is infused with magic), so he is constantly making mistakes and alerting the athourities to their whereabouts. He has a sorta love hate relationship with the leader of the band, a one-eyed chick with no shoes named, get this, knucklebones (she choose that name 'cause knucklebones are so hard that wild dogs can't eat themseriously...)

A bunch of stupid, unimportant stuff happens...like Karsus goes to war with another flying city because they are board. He developed his heavy magic into powerful weapons (it basically turns any spell 100 times more powerful, or something really creative like that), and they have a big battle that is pointless, because there is literally no point to it...they are just fighting 'cause they have the new magic...talk about anticlimactic.

Then, while the war is wageing all around them, Karsus decides to cast a spell that will turn him into the god of magic. I think he says, "Mystra, I'll have your power." Wow. But Karsus can't handle the awesome power of the Weave (the magic in Forgotten Realms), and suddenly all magic in the realms stops. All the flying cities fall to the ground, and Nethril is no more...dun dun duuuun....

Sunbright, Knucklebones, and fat wizard escape to the past...and we're back were we started and nothing is better...what a waste. While there is a famous scene that is talked about in alot of the books, the scene was ruined by the stupid chatacter....I'm so depressed.

Nigel says

Book 2 in my journey through all of the Forgotten Realms novels:

Firstly, I'd like to say that this is a MUCH BETTER BOOK than the first in the Trilogy. It's well paced, it doesn't have any weird parts that are just thrown in to set up the next book (I'm looking at you, phaerimm from book 1), and I think Emery learned how to develop characters and their interactions with each other. However, there is plenty in this book to nitpick...

Knucklebones

- Again, Emery is shit at naming is main characters.
- Why did she fall in love with Sunbright? I mean, I kind of see it, but it's just not entirely convincing. Other than that, she has really good characterization throughout the book.
- She seemed a little forgiving concerning her crew (friends?) considering the entire reason they died was Sunbright's fault. I mean, first he kills her lover, and then because he failed to kill the noble kid near the beginning, half of the rest of her crew (family?) dies. BTW, does she even remember her lover? She didn't mention him when thinking about her fallen comrades towards the end of the book.

Sunbright

- "Don't kick that gnome!" turns into the catalyst for half the book.
- His relation to magic is interesting; I would have liked to see more of it. Not just "BOOM and now he has shaman powers." However, I did really like how Emery presents Sunbright acquiring those powers.
- Did Sunbright forget about Greenwillow in the end when he is suddenly in love with Knucklebones? Emery makes it clear throughout the book that Sunbright sees a lot of Greenwillow in Knucks, but isn't he still searching for Greenwillow's soul or whatever? Is he willing to put that aside for Knucks, or has he moved on? Or does he acknowledge Knucks as a reincarnation of Greenwillow (considering it's some 300 years in the future of the previous book)? All I'm saying is I would have liked to see his rational here.
- The interactions between Sunbright and Candlemas are perfect. Great interplay between these characters.

Candlemas

- Huzzah! He develops a personality that I don't hate.
- Aquesita was a terrible plotline and an unconvincing character, but how Candlemas reacts to her is fantastic. Emery is really in his element when writing about idiot men trying to have a relationship with a

woman.

- Karsus is NOT how I imagined him. Emery paints him as petulant and truly insane. I would have liked to see more insightful arrogance. Someone who has his whits about him, but puts all aside in an effort to gain more power. I guess, I just REALLY wish Emery could have given him more depth. Instead he came across as two dimensional.

- Polaris... Why is she here? Just to show how bad stuff has gotten?

General

- The enclave of Karse and the arrogance of the people near the fall of the Netheril is very well fleshed out.

- I really would have liked to see the phaerimm have more of a role than what they had. I know that they were scheming against Karsus the whole time. I just thought Emery would have written them into the book a little bit more. Maybe given them some hands on time that was just at the very end for maybe two paragraphs.

- This book suffers from the "That didn't really affect much" line of time travel. Sure Sunbright got shaman abilities and brought Knucklebones back with him, but other than that, nothing changed between the beginning of the book and the end. This is fine; the characters go through plenty of changes internally to make up for it. But meh.... time travel and back.

- I kind of just want them all to go adventuring together at the end of the book, not split up.

Again, I REALLY liked this book more than the first. It was genuinely a enjoyable ride. Also, I'd recommend this one to anyone interested in the fall of the Netheril. I believe it does give some good insight to those events, even if Karsus is characterized differently than what I imagined.

Dubravko says

Enchanting.

David says

[just to show you what Karsus did, a rather lame and unjustified reason for Sunbright to "become a sham

Daniel Millard says

It took me a while to get through the second, equally brief entry in Clayton Emery's Netheril trilogy. You know the phenomenon where the middle entry in a trilogy travels in a circle and ends up accomplishing nothing? That's more or less what Dangerous Games ends up feeling like.

I very much appreciated a few things about this book. It does a fairly apt job of detailing the decline and eventual end of the Netherese Empire, has some interesting magical effects and descriptions, and Emery is as good as always with his fight scenes. Also on the upside, the fighting is not so overboard as in Sword Play. Sunbright's discovery of his shamanistic abilities was a good plot point, and I enjoyed the resulting encounter with the undead wizard lord who had taken him prisoner. Candlemas also develops nicely as a character throughout this book.

However, I have a pool of complaints as well. First of all, Karsus, the "greatest of the Neth", just seemed phenomenally silly. I understand that he's selfish, manic, sociopathic to some degree and all, but he was just quite uninteresting. Even though I'd say that I actually enjoyed the end of the book pretty well, his final attempt to ascend to godhood and seize Mystryl's power was just hokey and not well played-out.

Secondly, Knucklebones bothers me. Not her character so much as the sudden but inevitable romance with Sunbright (who seems to have the juvenile trait of falling in love with any woman he spends much time around...even while he's in the process of searching for his first love). I don't get it, and this whole plot line frustrated me, as if it was thought that the book couldn't be interesting without some kind of sexual tension.

Other random or silly things happen that seemed to have no bearing on the story and didn't make sense, like Polaris being around, but fat and slovenly, the complete vapidness of, apparently, every Netherese wizard and noble, and more. In all honesty, the world in this book is even less believable than in the prior.

David says

Book #2 of the Netheril series and book #2 in my chronological reading of Forgotten Realms. Sunbright and his pal a Netheril magic user learn more than they ever wanted to learn about Heavy Magic. Sunbright does earn his birth right to become a Sharman, but must continue his adventures and return to his tribe. I liked the book and the story and I'm looking forward to the last book in this series. I would recommend it as good fun fantasy.

Elizabeth says

Better than the first one.

Phlegm says

Felt too removed from the original story, but entertaining nevertheless.

Forgotten Realms Queen says

So here we have the second installment of the fall of the Netherese empire. We join Sunbright and Candlemas once again, still trying to find a cure for the grain blight that affected them in the first book. They are privy to the fall of a star from the heavens, and while investigating the star are whisked away to the future. They find themselves at the decadent end of the Netherese empire, where the Netheril have become so bloated and corrupt that their cities are rotting from the inside out.

During the course of the book are witness to the final end of the Netherese the insane but brilliant Archmage Karsus of Netheril attempts to chain Mystryl, the goddess of magic herself and first incarnation of Mystra. Mystryl severs the link with Karsus, destroying herself and all magic for a brief time, causing the Netheril floating cities all over Faerun to plummet to the ground, killing all aboard. Before this happens however,

Karsus sends Candlemas and Sunbright back to their own time, with Knuckle, a street wise half elf and Sunbright's lover at their side.

Classic Realms, and I love that we get a bit of a history lesson as to how Mystryl becomes Mystra. Looking forward to the last book in the series. Candlemas still needs to find a cure for the grain blight and Sunbright is still trying to return home to the tundra.

Isaac Martinez says

Just as good as the first. The crazy things that happen to Sunbright and Candlemas are almost as wild as going to hell in the first book! The addition of Knucklebones only makes it better :-)
