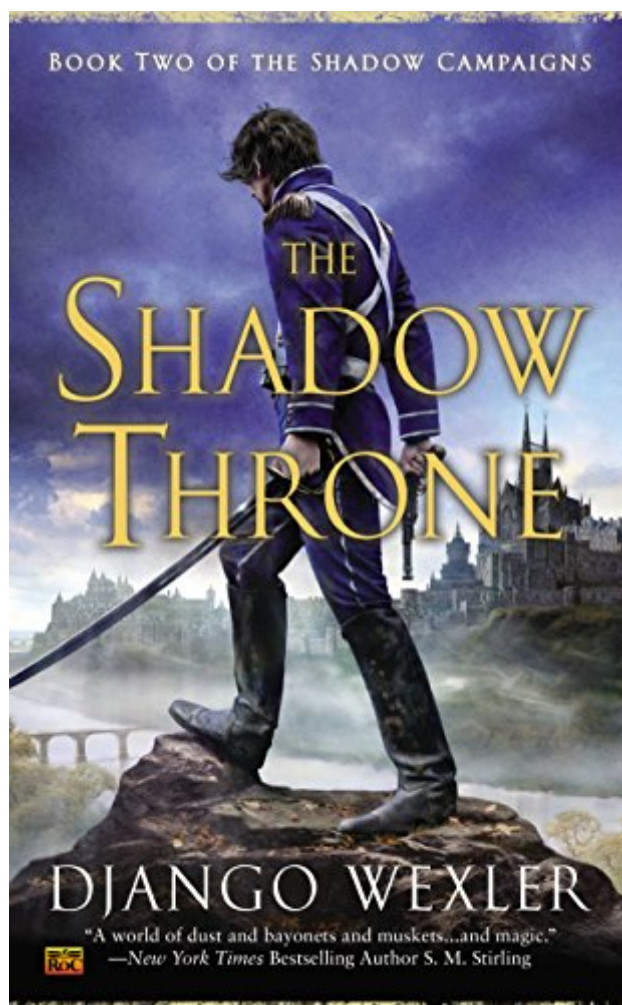


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The Shadow Throne: Book Two Of The Shadow Campaigns



Synopsis

Anyone can plot a coup or fire an assassin's bullet. But in a world of muskets and magic, it takes considerably more to seize the throne. The ailing King of the Vordan lies on his deathbed. When he dies, his daughter, Raesinia Orboan, will become the first Queen Regnant in centuries and a ripe target for the ambitious men who seek to control her. The most dangerous of these is Duke Orlanko, Minister of Information and master of the secret police. Having meticulously silenced his adversaries through intimidation, imprisonment, and execution, Orlanko is the most feared man in the kingdom. And he knows an arcane secret that puts Raesinia completely at his mercy. Exposure would mean ruin, but Raesinia is determined to find a way to break herself and her country out of Orlanko's iron grip. She finds unlikely allies in the returning war hero Janus bet Vhalnich, fresh from a brilliant campaign in the colony of Khandar, and his loyal deputies, Captain Marcus d'Ivoire and Lieutenant Winter Ihernglass. As Marcus and Winter struggle to find their places in the home they never thought they would see again, they help Janus and Raesinia set in motion events that could free Vordan from Orlanko's influence at the price of throwing the nation into chaos. But with the people suffering under the Duke's tyranny, they intend to protect the kingdom with every power they can command, earthly or otherwise.

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Customer Reviews

(Warning, contains spoilers) This book, as the one before it, holds a depth that is captivating. Perhaps not as extensive a world history as say A Story of Ice and Fire, but nonetheless detailed. The characters' thoughts are as they should be--much of the time they are concerned with what is before them but in the same thought, they often reminisce on the past or meditate on the future. For myself, this is what makes the characters human despite their superhuman capabilities. The character of Marcus is perhaps the barometer against which the other characters should be judged. He is not as clever (or ambitious) as his superior Janus, nor does he possess the sharp wit of Winter, while his personal demons are not at the magnitude of Raesinia's. Yet, due to his normalcy, his actions are likely what a normal person, tested by war, would do. He is not vengeful, he is dutiful, he is patriotic, and he takes his responsibilities seriously, making him very relatable. Winter, on the other hand, went through quite a bit of development in this latest work. Indeed, despite finding herself in the company of women, she struggles with a loneliness encapsulated by her literal transformation at the end of the last book. She comes back from war changed, and civilian life is as alien to her as the army was when she first enlisted. Even when reunited with the woman she asked Janus to find, she retains that sense of distance, which I think will culminate interestingly into the next book. Perhaps the most irritating part of the book is the carrot Wexler dangles in front of us in Count Colonel Janus bet Vhalnich. Although his past is somewhat explored, it is lacking in detail.

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