



# Dominion

*C.S. Friedman*

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## **Dominion** C.S. Friedman

Four hundred years after mankind's arrival on Erna, the undead sorcerer Gerald Tarrant travels north in search of a legend. For it is rumored there is a forest where the fae has become so powerful that it devours all who enter it, and he means to test its power.

This novella prequel to C.S. Friedman's bestselling *Coldfire Trilogy* (*Black Sun Rising*, *When True Night Falls*, *Crown of Shadows*) offers fans of the series a tale of Tarrant's secret history, while new readers will enjoy a chilling introduction to one of High Fantasy's most fascinating—and deadly—worlds.

## **Dominion Details**

Date : Published January 9th 2012 by Tridac Publishing (first published January 3rd 2012)

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Author : C.S. Friedman

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Genre : Fantasy, Fiction, Audiobook, Science Fiction



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# From Reader Review Dominion for online ebook

## Kat Hooper says

Originally posted at FanLit.

Ever since I read a few novels by C.S. Friedman last year (In Conquest Born, The Wilding, The Madness Season and This Alien Shore) I've been practically desperate to begin her more famous COLDFIRE SAGA. Friedman's stories are smart and creative and I can't wait to see what else she has to offer. The only thing that's so far kept me from picking up Black Sun Rising, the first COLDFIRE novel, is that I already have a huge stack (I mean hundreds) of audiobooks purchased and ready to read at Audible and on my bookshelves at home. Mostly I collect these when they're on sale or when publishers send me review copies, so I hoard my precious Audible credits and spend them like a miser.

But I just don't know how much longer I can hold out on COLDFIRE. I actually have Black Sun Rising in my Audible... Read More:

<http://www.fantasyliterature.com/revi...>

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## Gwen says

I would have given this book five stars, but it was a teaser. It really made me want to go back and re-read the Coldfire series. Gerald Tarrant is a fascinating character, and I would love it if C.S. Friedman would delve into his world with a new full-length book. This was waaaaaay too short for my tastes. That being said, I think fans of the Coldfire series will generally like this short little story.

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## Fantasy Literature says

Ever since I read a few novels by C.S. Friedman last year (In Conquest Born, The Wilding, The Madness Season and This Alien Shore) I've been practically desperate to begin her more famous COLDFIRE SAGA. Friedman's stories are smart and creative and I can't wait to see what else she has to offer. The only thing that's so far kept me from picking up Black Sun Rising, the first COLDFIRE novel, is that I already have a huge stack (I mean hundreds) of audiobooks purchased and ready to read at Audible and on my bookshelves at home. Mostly I collect these when they're on sale or when publishers send me review copies, so I hoard my precious Audible credits and spend them like a miser.

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## Darcy Conroy says

Warning! Vampires within.

I'd not heard of the author or her series, and the blurb suggested nothing about vampires, so I thought this would be a good way to see if I might want to read a story the 'fae' (a gaelic mythological world) Unfortunately I got a story about vampires and their universe simply tweaked a touch (though not enough to be unique in anyway) and titled 'fae'.

I did enjoy the narrator's timbre and performance - this particular piece was lacking in dialogue or audio variety and so might be soporific to some, but I don't think it was the fault of the narrator. The little opportunity the narrator had to "show his stuff" made me want to look for more books narrated by him - I hope he doesn't only do vampires!

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## **April Steenburgh says**

I carried battered, loved copies of the Coldfire Trilogy with me through multiple moves and a seemingly endless progression of life changes. After a devastating flood they were some of the first books I worked to replace. The characters of the trilogy are like old friends- every now and then I get the urge to check in on them, revisit scenes and passages I particularly liked. Occasionally I take a weekend and reread the series, and every time I wish there was just a bit more for me to dig into. My love of the antihero started with Gerald Tarrant.

So it was with unabashed glee that I stumbled upon Dominion and tossed aside all that I had planned for the evening to read. I had not expected a new Tarrant story, had not known one was in the works, and as a result reading was one of the most wonderful evenings I have had in quite some time. For fans of the original trilogy, it takes place well before the trilogy proper, detailing when Tarrant first enters the Forest and how he makes it his own. It is dark and beautiful and frightening and perfect. Dominion is true to the trilogy I love, while adding more meat for me to chew on. It is a novella- so it is short, but makes every word count.

It is only a matter of time before I give in and give the trilogy another read.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Coldfire Trilogy, it is a horrifying and satisfying look at human emotion and ambition all tucked in a science fiction/fantasy setting that is unsettling and different than anything I have come across since. I highly recommend giving it a read.

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## **Anna says**

I have spent a long time on finding a book with a main character as rich and dark as Gerald Tarrant. I sat crying towards the end of volume three of the Coldfire Trilogy and mentally shook C.S. Friedman's hand at the same time for going through with her characterisation of him to the bitter end where all other authors before have eventually strayed from their paths and shown that their dark 'hero' was not so deeply corrupted after all.

When I discovered yesterday that despite all her claims that the Coldfire Trilogy was finished and she did not like writing sequels (see the FAQ on her website) Ms Friedman had written – well – a prequel to the trilogy, my first reaction was quite like Baroness Jessie's: "Gimmegimmegimme"!

And then the doubts came (could a new story live up to the high expectations aroused by the first books?), and they were strengthened by the unenthusiastic reviews. Unfortunately, reading 'Dominion' confirmed them.

The Coldfire Trilogy thrive on the mystery surrounding Gerald Tarrant. It circled around him, slowly closing in on him, uncovering bits and pieces of his personality and of his past but never quite revealing enough to give the reader the impression of truly knowing him. You gained a feeling, an instinctive understanding for him and for the world surrounding him, quite as if you yourself tapped into the fae. The world building remained rather vague in places – Friedman described some things in great detail (the religion, the fae) yet others remained in the fog, and this added to the feeling of mystery and directed the readers' attention to the important pieces of the story: the characterisation(s) and the intriguing idea of a symbiosis of the human mind with the natural forces surrounding it.

The second aspect is well represented in Dominion: the story allows a glimpse into how the Neocount explores the symbiosis farther than anyone else ever dared to by binding the Forbidden Forest to himself. However, I find this description rather crude. Bending the natural forces of the forest to his own will, gaining a deep understanding of the workings of nature and balancing them so that he creates a perfect ecosystem suiting his purposes was – alongside the creation of true horses – the grand accomplishment that demonstrated the greatness of Tarrant's mind, the brilliance of his cold rationale. I cannot see this in this novella. There are many power struggles in this tale, struggles for dominion, yes, but I cannot find any displays of extraordinary intelligence.

As Nai said, the pace is off. There is no introduction into the world, we are dropped into the thoughts of Gerald Tarrant head on, and those thoughts are much less refined than one would expect. Has he truly spent 400 years idle, merely sating his thirst? This does not sound like the proud Neocount of Merentha that accomplished so much before he even reached his 30. birthday. In the first scene he expresses his weariness of the forest, that he needs to fight the urge to go there. In the second scene he mounts an un-horse to ride there. Why the change of mind? –No explanation. This I found to be a running theme: in the Coldfire Trilogy there was always a strong rationale behind Tarrant's deeds. In Dominion, I cannot identify it.

All in all, the new novella does not carry the spirit of previous volumes. The idea was good: the creation of the symbiosis of sorcerer and forest, the slow molding of Tarrant into the being he is when Damian encounters him, is a fascinating topic (and I agree with Nai also that I was expecting to be told how Tarrant learned to feed on fear). However, the author spent too few pages and too little heart blood on what could have been a brilliant treat for her fans.

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## **Marielle says**

A nice story but nothing more.

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## **Blind\_guardian says**

Friedman is great and creepy as always, as is Tarrant, her immortal pseudo-vampire sorcerer. This tells the tale of how he tamed the Dark Forest and made it his home.

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## Stefan Fergus says

Pretty good. Maybe it would have been better to read this after the trilogy, but never mind. Some interesting stuff, interesting characters. Enough to make me more interested in reading the novels. It was clear I was missing some context, though. Interesting magic system.

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## Jon Swanson says

Dominion will probably only take about an hour to read. I've read one of Friedman's other Coldfire books, but that was probably close to 20 years ago and only dimly remembered.

Recalling that book made Dominion more enjoyable, but it stands pretty well on its own and is a great place to get into the series if you're interested. A way to test the waters.

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## David says

This free Audible.com download is a prequel to the Coldfire series, which I have not read, and thus this short novella did little for me, I'm afraid. The writing is okay, but it's a stock dark fantasy story. The two main characters are an ancient vampire with vestiges of a conscience (turns out he helped create the Church that is now dedicated to his destruction) and a Church warrior woman who wounds a white wolf before facing the vampire. The white wolf is a minor secondary character.

Evidently, the vampire is a major character in the series, so I guess this story would be more meaningful to someone who has read it. For someone who has not, there is no reason to identify with the characters or the setting, no sense of recognition or investment.

Firmly 3 stars; nothing wrong with the story, but nothing enticing about it to anyone who hasn't read the Coldfire series.

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## Peter says

A powerful untold tale of Gerald Tarrant from Friedman's Coldfire trilogy. Serves well as an *amuse bouche* for new readers before diving into Friedman's work, or a dessert to those who loved Coldfire and want another taste.

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## ambyr says

Over-the-top and completely incapable of standing on its own from the series to which it's a prequel. But the Coldfire trilogy was one of the much-loved, much-read touchpoints of my adolescence, and it retains a fond

enough place in my heart that I was happy for a chance to revisit its world, if only for a brief while.

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## **Eric Allen says**

I'm not going to write out a full review of this book, because it's only like 70 pages long. This book takes place six hundred years before The Coldfire Trilogy and is mostly about how Terrant took control of the Forest, learned how to feed upon fear rather than blood, and found his albino sidekick. It's a fun little story that sheds some light on the murky backstory of one of the more interesting characters in the series. If you've got a free afternoon and want to read more about Terrant's past, pick it up, if you don't really care, you're not missing too terribly much. The book DOES lack the part that really made Terrant an interesting character, however. He's always had his two sides, the Hunter and the Prophet, and the interesting part has always been watching which one he will choose to act like in any given situation. It made him a pretty sympathetic, interesting and entertaining character to read about. Here, he hasn't really set himself up as the Hunter yet, and he doesn't really consider himself to be the Prophet anymore. He's just a monster driven by his thirst for blood and need to stay out of daylight. I can see where some people might not find him as interesting without the division that really sort of defined him as a character.

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## **Mihir says**

Full review originally at [Fantasy Book Critic](#)

ANALYSIS: Dominion is a novella by celebrated SFF writer Celia S. Friedman, it is a prequel to her seminal work that is "The Coldfire trilogy". The first book "Black Sun Rising" was released in 1991 and captured the interest and fascination of readers worldwide with its curious mix of science fiction and fantasy. Two sequels followed at a biennial rate and the author closed off the trilogy and the story of eclectic bunch of characters found within. Liviu is also a fan of this series as is Pat of Pat's Fantasy Hotlist and it's through both their efforts that I go to know about Dominion.

Before we start I would extoll readers to read this wonderful essay about the series and its motifs by a polish fan. It has a few mild spoilers but it remarkably demonstrates why it had such an impact amongst SFF readers nearly two decades ago and why it still holds a special position in their minds/hearts. I haven't read the trilogy but that is more due to laziness on my part rather than anything else. Also since this novella was a prequel, I thought of it as a perfect opportunity to begin my exploration of this evocative work.

The story has two protagonists namely Gerald Tarrant and Faith, the former is the first of a kind among mages, the latter the ultimate survivor of a hunting Knight force. They are polar opposites and are both drawn to a certain special forest that will test their fortitude. Gerald is drawn to it for the sole reason that it raises his curiosity by being a font of fae energy, which might have sentience. Faith on the other hand, doesn't have an exact clue about how she has landed there. Death however stalks both of them and one misstep will be all that it takes for the forest to claim dominion over both of them.

What is so good about this novella is that even though it is on the shorter side in matters of length, it does not waste any extra space in immersing the reader in the dark world of Erna. The setting and background information is quickly given to the reader without making it all too obvious and at the same time is the

introduction of the dual POV threads which fuel the story. The pace of the plot is of the express kind but it does not hamper the characterization in any way, which just shows the proficient prose utilized. Another point about the characterization is that readers will be thoroughly invested in both characters and of course it's almost impossible not to be enamored by the Neocount whose actions, intellect & power are visible only as the tip of the iceberg. I know who the readers will most likely be rooting to achieve dominion (as was I) and that is another highlight for the novella to entrance the reader in such a small timeframe.

The novella is structured in such a way that its not hard to guess where it will end up but here's the beauty you can't exactly predict how it will end for both the protagonists (Obviously veteran fans of the Coldfire trilogy will know more about the fate of one of the POV characters). The twist in the end as well as the origin story of another character in the middle will be very much appreciated by pervious fans as I'm lead to believe that both plot twists are pivotal for certain events in the future trilogy. Overall this novella stands out for making it easy for fans & non-fans to get acquainted with it easily, with out losing out on the surprise factor that is often the downfall seen in most prequels due to the nature of the stories.

I did not have any negative feedback for this story as it simply caught me off guard with its sheer excellence and it shames me to say that I haven't yet read the Coldfire trilogy in spite of owning all the three books.

**CONCLUSION:** C.S Friedman's Dominion is nothing short of a brilliant way to get new readers exposed to her seminal trilogy and other works. Do yourself a favor and read this novella if you are looking for dark fantasy and a protagonist who is quite simply the perfect embodiment of an antihero. Dominion is a must read for all fans of the darker turn of the fictional worlds, so go meet the Neocount and be prepared to amazed.

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