



Echoes of Betrayal

Elizabeth Moon

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The action continues fast and furious in this third installment of Elizabeth Moon's celebrated return to the fantasy world of the paladin Paksenarrion Dorthansdotter. This award-winning author has firsthand military experience and an imagination that knows no bounds. Combine those qualities with an ability to craft flesh-and-blood characters, and the result is the kind of speculative fiction that engages both heart and mind.

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Meanwhile, in Tsaia, the young king Mikeli must grapple with unrest among his own nobility over his controversial decision to grant the title and estates of a traitorous magelord to a Verrakaien who not only possesses the forbidden magic but is a woman besides: Dorrin, once one of Kieri's most trusted captains.

When renegade Verrakaien attack two of Dorrin's squires, suspicion and prejudice combine to place Dorrin's life at risk--and the king's claim to the throne in peril.

But even greater danger is looming. The wild offspring of a dragon are on the loose, sowing death and destruction and upsetting the ancient balance of power between dragonkind, humans, elves, and gnomes. A collision seems inevitable. Yet when it comes, it will be utterly unexpected--and all the more devastating for it.

Echoes of Betrayal Details

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Author : Elizabeth Moon

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From Reader Review Echoes of Betrayal for online ebook

Mitchell says

A continuation in the world of Pakseanarrion but not one of the better books. I really wish this had been the story of a single character - there are a lot of characters here worth concentrating on. Ah well - not bad enough not to read again the sequel the moment it is available. And buy in paperback at some point. But I was hoping for better. 3.5 of 5.

Catherine Ford says

No man... what is happening to this series! :(

Half this book was spent trying to make up for the disorganised structure of the last book and trying to finish the story from that book as well. The next half was...well nothing much happened, then everything happened in the last chapter! And the antagonist was someone who there were no clues what so ever about, so instead of it being a surprise it was just a "Huh, okay if you say so.". Then, it cut off, mid scene! No, this is not how it works! This is not how Elizabeth Moon books go. What is happening here. This is ridiculous! It better be fixed in the next book!

Hanne says

"Arian was not tempted to touch a woman so obviously turning into a pear tree."

peculiar. review to follow

Joshua Zucker says

This book definitely reminded me why I enjoy reading Elizabeth Moon - I really care what happens to these people, and even when I feel the characters are a little unrealistic in some ways (because they represent an archetype more than a real person would), I still want to know what happens next.

What annoyed me most of all about this book, though, is at the end I'm still pretty much left wanting to know what happens next. Very few of the plot threads get finished off, and there are a lot of them, with point-of-view switching between many characters spread out over several different nations. And the one main thread that does get finished seems to leave many mysteries surrounding it, rather than feeling cleanly done. We'll be seeing its consequences down the road, for sure; we don't understand them yet.

But its un-put-downable-ness still earns it 4 stars. I'll be really annoyed if I have to read another book in the series with so little payoff in terms of real conclusions, though.

Stephanie says

I like Elizabeth Moon's books a lot. I have read over a dozen in the various series and they are all good. In this the third in a 5 book series that continues the story of the world of Paksharrion, she advances a saga that has it all - intrigue, great action, dragons, elves, gnomes you name it. The great thing about this series so far is that in the last few chapters of each book Moon introduces a jaw-dropping element you don't see coming which sets up the next volume. It is this type of writing that keeps me coming back for more.

I look forward to reading the final two books in the series over the next few months and then it will be time to pick up a mother series by her and enjoy.

Karen says

In the prologue of this series, the author mentions that it is not necessary to the enjoyment and understanding of these books to have read The Deed of Paksharrion or The Legacy of Gird series. I strongly disagree. After having read those books many years ago, I decided to re-read The Deed but skipped The Legacy, and I don't think I could have made it past the first chapter of the first book without at least that background. I think a re-read of The Legacy would have helped explain a few other things I had to muddle through as well, and I wish I had done so. Moon's writing has vastly improved since The Deed. She is much better at expressing her character's unspoken thoughts and feelings than she was in the first two series. Still, there were times I wish she had finally learned to give readers a bit more credit for our ability to understand subtlety. It isn't necessary to describe a character as looking concerned, and then have a second character clarify "I see you are concerned", like we might have missed it the first time. We got it, I promise. Though I'm happy to report these statements of the obvious were fewer and farther between in this series. Despite the fact no significant brain strain occurred following the plot, this book and the previous two did keep me reading all the way through from beginning to end, and I do expect to read the next books in the series when they are released (though I was under the impression this was a trilogy when I started reading. It isn't.) This third book moved the story along with no huge developments or conclusions, though I do like that the characters are fleshing out a bit more emotionally, and though the plot isn't twisting, it has taken a significant turn or two. I went back and forth between 3 and 4 stars (3.5 would be more accurate) and finally settled on 4 partly for nostalgia, partly because I do plan on continuing the series, and partly because I have a 14 year old cat named Paks who would lick my eyelids in my sleep to get back at me if I gave it anything less. PS, this was a First Reads book.

Kat says

A dragon!

A DRAGON!

THERE WAS TOTALLY A DRAGON AND IT WAS AWESOME!

Sherwood Smith says

There is a short exchange near the end that perhaps sums up this new series' arc:

"Paladins," the Marshal said, "always cause trouble."

"What?" That was not what Arvid expected to hear.

"You could even say the gods always cause trouble—certainly Gird did, though se celebrate the trouble he caused. Paladins, though -- we don't really know how they started, but it's clear they come into the world to change it, and that's always trouble for someone."

Overall this series is sneaking up on me. Aside from some sharp, exciting sequences, it has moved at a stately pace, and I think part is due to Moon's depiction of every detail, especially with respect to the military characters' actions, but also because in the first two books, and in this one, there was a tendency to have the characters repeat conversations almost verbatim, or give long accounts of action we've already seen.

The first set of details I find fascinating. I like reading about the problems of supply, horse training, recruit training, the delineations of authority when captains get promoted, especially to the civilian side of government. But the second one makes me want to skim, which causes me to lose a sense of building tension.

That said, the characters are complex, the magic and mythology keep getting more interesting, and the sense of building trouble feels like the pressure changes in an impending thunderstorm. I will keep reading.

Mike (the Paladin) says

As you read this you probably picture me calmly sitting here at my keyboard preparing to tell you why I like this book and gave it my rare 5 star rating. No, no nothing could be further from the truth.

In actuality I'm screaming, throwing myself down on the floor kicking my heels against said floor and ripping at what little is left of my hair...

I hate cliffhangers.

Moon did this to us at the end of the second volume of the original Paksenarrion trilogy *Divided Allegiance*. Happily at that time I'd purchased the trilogy in a single volume *The Deed of Paksenarrion* and was able to go right on to the next novel without undue "overwroughtness" (I don't care what you grammarians say I'm using it as a word). Unhappily here the next book isn't due out till next JUNE!!!!!! (slams head against wall repeatedly).

(takes deep breath)

Okay, trying to be calm here. This is the third book in the Paladin's Legacy series...that's series NOT TRILOGY...you'd think someone might have mentioned that earlier. And it's as good as the others. I have read a few of Elizabeth Moon's space opera/science fiction books and they're pretty good. I liked them okay

but wouldn't list most among my favorites. When I read the 3 books of The Deed of Paksenarrion (as most of my friends here know) I was sold, hooked, branded or whatever. That trilogy is easily among my top 5 or so favorite novels. While the Paladin's Legacy books are a bit longer each and maybe not quite as high on my favorites list as the original trilogy they are on the list.

In this series we are following the characters we got to know in the original trilogy and answering all sorts of unanswered questions. This is a world that is fully imagined and has a magic system (systems or interrelated systems might express that better) that is coherent and yet is still growing and having details revealed. No one, it appears who's life was touched by Paksenarrion the Paladin remains unchanged. In fact it seems that she may have been...or still be a catalyst to change the entire world.

The plot seems to still be growing here and I have no idea how many volumes Ms. Moon has planned but as long as they continue to hold up and be this good I'm sold.

I recommend this...but if you haven't read the original trilogy I'd recommend you go back and start there...in fact I envy you a bit. You still those books to read.

Note:

The trilogy The Deed of Paksenarrion is now usually labeled "volumes 3 through 5". That can be misleading as what the publisher calls volumes 1 and 2 are really prequels and don't need to be read before the trilogy. The original Paksenarrion trilogy is made up of:

A. Sheepfarmer's Daughter

B. Divided Allegiance

C. Oath Of Gold

All are highly recommended.

But this one does end in a cliffhanger (runs from room screaming in frustration).

Althea Ann says

Reviewing 'Echoes of Betrayal' and 'Limits of Power' together, because I read them back-to-back, and there isn't any radical distinction between them.

Both books are very middle-y. Not really middling, just middle-of-series-y. You're expected to know the characters already (that's OK, because I do), and to be invested enough in their ongoing drama that you're not expecting each book to be its own individual story with clear rising-action-falling-action-conclusion plotting - they're not - but that's (mostly) OK. This series really does have enough engaging characters and interesting scenarios that I'm fine with just following all the characters around and seeing what happens next. It's good entertainment.

The content - well crafted, but fairly typical fantasy fare - kingdom-shaking issues regarding magic, royal marriages, human-elf interaction, evil wizards, dragons... all that good stuff.

I love Moon's strong female characters, and her realistic portrayals of warrior/military women.

The one small thing that annoyed me was how much everyone talks about Paksenarrion - with all that talk, I

feel like she should've made more of an appearance.

I'd recommend this series to anyone who's looking for a nice, solid, but non-genre-bending fantasy series with a large number of pages to get lost in - but I'd recommend starting at the beginning.

Benj says

Another excellent book in this excellent series.

The maps are a bit poor, though.

Isis says

The action continues fast and furious in this third installment of Elizabeth Moon's celebrated return to the fantasy world of the paladin Paksenarrion Dorthansdotter. This award-winning author has firsthand military experience and an imagination that knows no bounds. Combine those qualities with an ability to craft flesh-and-blood characters, and the result is the kind of speculative fiction that engages both heart and mind.

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A continuation of the stunning epic fantasy by Elizabeth Moon, *Echoes of Betrayal* moves the characters around like a chess-master, showing skill, cunning, and long laid plans - a great tactician ordering the layers of the story to the best effect. This time the focus is more prominently on the royal family of Tsaia and issues that arise with Duke Verrakai's job and her squires, as well as the new royal couple of Lyonya. However ample time is granted to Arcolin's story, Sergeant Stammel's latest adventures, and the changes that Arvid is struggling with.

Each story is fascinating and entertaining, showing character growth where necessary, as well as moving the plot forward at a steady pace. There are moments where the story picks up and speeds by, and others where it paces the life of the reader. Throughout all of the individual pieces the greater whole can be glimpsed, if not seen in its vast entirety that we are yet aware of.

None of the stories are near their conclusion, yet it is easy to feel everything gathering, getting ready for the grand finale. Clearly that will take at least two more books, if not more. But the energy continues to build, both with the individual characters and with the story overall. This series is a fine example of the epic fantasy genre.

trishtrash says

This has been the least satisfying read of the Paladin's Legacy – or Paksworld – series, so far, though I consider the largest flaw of *Echoes of Betrayal* to be that *Oath of Fealty* and *Kings of the North* were shaping up into such a solid, cohesive read that I thought things would end as well-resolved as they did at the end of the *The Deed of Paksennarion* trilogy. Instead, peril is described and directed, beaten back, lingers, forms somewhere else, and the book ends by ramping up more; not one of the growing threats to the kingdoms of Kieri or Mikeli has been put to bed, meanwhile. Characters that were satisfying to visit in the previous books become irritating in this one, as the shifts in character focus don't really seem to add up to anything, and unlike the previous books, none of the characters (except perhaps the King's Cousin, and Duke's Squire, Beclan) seem to evolve.

Elizabeth Moon writes wonderfully detailed fantasy fiction, but this book feels like a glitch in the story-arc at worst, a pin to hold it up, at best. No real cohesion or plot, no advance in any area, and the final attack was so removed from anything that the reader had encountered in the story thus far, that it felt contrived; and still the explanation is left for the next book.

Echoes of Betrayal wasn't bad enough for me to lose interest in the series; Dorrin Verraki remains a wonderfully interesting character, the Dragon is fascinating and frightening at the same time, just as a dragon should be, and I'm glad that Arcolin – and Stammel – are still given storylines, because writing the militia and its characters are where Moon really shines (er, sorry, that was awkward and unintentional punning); and the suggestion playing out that Paks, as Paladin, has changed the lives of everyone with whom she has come in contact, is an intriguing one. I just wish I could have picked up the next book with the same enthusiasm with which I grabbed this one.

Estara says

Well, if it had been clear from the start that this was a cliffhanger book, I might give more stars ^^. I still like most of the main threads of these books, mostly because I have known the main characters since the Paksenarion trilogy. It's fine that she herself is being phased out - Elizabeth Moon mentions she will return in the last book as part of a group in the afterword.

From what I gather this will be four to six books and with the lot of new information coming up - I enjoy getting more into the worldbuilding and seeing the other races more closely - this will be needed.

But I have to admit that now that Stammel is off with Wisdom, I don't really need Arcolin's thread at all. I think he was used little this time anyway - Fox Company is mostly in winter quarters, but I wonder if he couldn't have been cut altogether, hmm.

So the focus is mostly on Kieri Phelan and his country and to some extent on Dorrin Verrakai. After having a bit of trouble getting back into the story in the first 100 pages (I didn't reread the previous books) I got towed along quite well. Lots of action, lots of time passing off-screen.

If you've been reading this series, you'll enjoy the new addition, although the cliff-hanger might piss you off, too ^^.

Emily says

umm what happened in this book

- most interested in arvid and dorrin's plots
- was there good marshal-general stuff in this book or was it book 2? regardless, i like her
- kieri's romance is honestly not that interesting imo (but uh, Moon doesn't seem to write very much romance in general)
- DRAGONS
- all of the idiot boys getting into Bad Situations. MORE GWENNO, LESS IDIOT BOYS

bye

Jay Collins says

3.5 Stars but the series is worth 4 stars

Dan says

Another good read!

Patricia Litz says

The story continues. An apt name for this one. Everyone gets stabbed in the back. Now I guess that we find some answers in the next book. Some have met the dragon. Strange things are changing the society.

kvon says

Book three, still following a large cast of characters. There's still the question of who will end up the

descendent of the olden kings of Aare. Currently my money is on Arvid the ex-thief. The Pargun thread seems settled, as does the blind Stammel thread. Dorrin is still struggling for respect, and it's finally brought up that women dukes, being rare, are thought of differently from men, despite Gird's teachings. In the halfelven lands we get the official betrothal, pregnancy, wedding, and miscarriage. We get to see a bit more of the Kuakgan. The officers of the Fox company struggle with human resource issues, and Arcolin inherits a bunch of gnomes in the north. The elves are in big trouble, which leads us to the cliffhanger deaths.

A focus of this story is transformation of characters, people taking on roles they had not expected. Stammel turning into a dragonslayer, Arvid into a man of faith, Daryan gets a graft, Beclan becomes not only an adult but a mage, Arian into a queen.

Fast read, despite the multiple cast it paced quickly. There was a fair amount of repetition as people caught each other up on events, some you heard about three or four times, often from different points of view (but not different enough to justify the repetition). Some god magic (but no paladins), minimal regular magic, some evil magic.

Predictions: next book focuses on elven succession, and Beclan training to be a mage, leaving book five for sorting out Alured (not quite Dracula backwards, but close) and acceptance of Dorrin.

Lara says

Slow, steady plot buildup, then a wallop of an ending. Good thing I already have the next one in the series checked out!

And if one more character had muttered under their breath about Dorrin's Dukedom being improper or unseemly or not a good idea anymore, I was going to scream "BUT HER EMAILS!" at the book.
