



Whisper of Waves

Philip Athans

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The Wizard

Pledged to the Red Wizards of Thay from boyhood, he will do anything for anyone who can give him more power. In a twisted dimension outside the walls of time and space, he plots and plans.

The Senator

A genasi, he has fought his way up from the gutter and will never go back. Amid the tangled streets of Innarlith, he mixes ambition with thoughts of vengeance.

The Man

A master builder, he walks the coast of Faerûn, and the waves whisper to him of a mighty work, a task worthy of his talents.

Whisper of Waves Details

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From Reader Review Whisper of Waves for online ebook

The Shayne-Train says

This book surprised the hell out of me, and, to be frank, sort of blew me away.

Back in my formative years, I was a Forgotten Realms junkie, with my drug of choice being anything Drizzt Do'Urden or R.A. Salvatore related. Maaaaan, I ate that shit up. As an adult, I recently tried to go back and re-read the series. I won't say it "didn't hold up," because I think the only thing that had changed was my own sensibilities, but either way, I didn't love 'em like I used to.

I picked up this book, because I was doing a little Goodreads game I like to do (going to the page of a favorite book, and then hitting the "Readers Also Enjoyed," then hitting it on the next page, and the next, until something jumps out at me), and I found myself staring at Whisper of Waves.

'Twas the blurb that piqued my interest, and further down, there was a review stating it was odd that there was no "hero." And I was all like, Whaaat? No hero?? This is a fucking Forgotten Realms book! Who's gonna kill the owlbears or hook horrors or displacer beasts?

So I read it. And there ARE no heroes.

This book reads more like a TV series for me. It follows the sometimes-intersecting lives of a few people who choose to make the same town their home. Some of them are greedy and morally-bankrupt, others are just, well, flawed. But there's no "good guy" or "bad guy," just people doing what they need to, or want to, or need to want to.

Take the intrigue and maneuvering of a period-drama political show, throw in some Deadwood-easque brutality, and then add wizards and dragons and giant frogs and fire elementals.

If that sounds amazing to you, then you're right, it IS amazing. If it sounds like lunacy, the boring-people books are right over there, chief. I recommend something with ripped abs on the cover. Enjoy

William Miller says

The first novel in the Watercourse trilogy, I enjoyed the book fairly well, even though Philip Athans isn't my favorite author. I've played AD&D in the Forgotten Realms setting, and so have a soft spot in my heart for novels in the same setting. If you're a Forgotten Realms novels fan, you need to read it, of course, simply for the sake of completeness :)

Lestat Bancroft says

It's odd because I like the book, I like the setting, I like the writing for the most part, but for the most part I loathe the characters, not because they're poorly written but because they're all A\$\$holes, so it was an odd experience to read through it and constantly want the characters to die so I don't have to read from their

perspective anymore

Kagan Oztarakci says

"A mind isn't something to be left open...so that just anything might crawl and take up residence there"

"I have no more interest in gods than they do in me."

"Ever wonder what's on that parchment he carries around?" ... A shopping list from his wife"... "Milk, bread, tomatoes,"... "oregano, a real man."

Jesse says

This is one of the best realms books I've read in a long time!

I think that Phillip Athans is quickly becoming my favorite author in the forgotten realms genre.

I took place in a city I'd never read about before. He did an excellent job of filling it with realistic history and gave it a great, dark feel.

Every character was full of depth and mystery. And I was really impressed with the fact that there were no real "hero" characters. I mean, there is definitely a guy I was rooting for, but he is in no way the typical hero.

I can tell that these books are going to make a great series and change the face of "forgotten realms" (literaly) forever.

Kudos to Athans!

Jukka Särkijärvi says

I picked the book up fully expecting it to be the worst book I'd ever read. The omens were good. The same author's *Baldur's Gate* had held that position with distinction for over a decade, and this one was to be a retelling of Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*, which should take the work beyond mere clumsy prose, profound ignorance of source material and fight scenes that slipped in their own gore.

Alas, I was to be disappointed. I don't mean that *Whisper of Waves* was any good, but it somehow avoided being the perfect failure that I so fervently wished it to be.

It is in the nature of shared world fiction like Forgotten Realms that the authors are constrained by certain editorial diktats having to do with length and content. In some cases, they clearly hold the author back from writing a truly excellent novel, while in others they avert true disasters. In this case, Ayn Rand's pseudointellectual brick has been toned down into something that's not quite as offensive to the thinking population. The absence of long swathes of Objectivist ranting makes *Whisper of Waves* the better work. I cannot yet speak with authority as to whether this applies to the Watercourse trilogy as a whole, but we'll get there eventually.

However, I repeat, it is still not a good book and in not being a true Objectivist fantasy in the vein of Terry Goodkind it is left to fail on its own merits, which are many. The prose is uninspired and stilted, and the fight scenes, which in any Forgotten Realms novel comprise a good bit of the page count, are confused and messy, with an overemphasis on gore and entrails and when actual description occurs, it rarely makes sense, such as a dagger left "waving back and forth in [a man's] chest". If it's long enough to wave back and forth after you stabbed someone to death with it, it's not a dagger, it's a sword.

The characters, being as they are based on Rand's, are a sorry bunch of cardboard cutouts, with the exception of the main character, the genius architect Ivar Devorast, and his two dwarven companions, whose interaction with each other comprises the best parts of the book. Nevermind that elsewhere Devorast comes across mostly as a high-functioning sociopath, seeing as he is disconnected from the Objectivist underpinnings of Mr Roark in *The Fountainhead*. And seriously, what the hell possessed the man, self-avowedly not a Randroid nor particularly right-wing, to rewrite that turgid pile of drivel? Complete with the famous rape scene, no less?

Finally, being as this is a shared world fantasy novel, it does not stand entirely alone, and is subject to some extra considerations quite apart from its dismal performance as a novel. It is subject to the canon of the Forgotten Realms campaign setting, whose logo it bears, and it is judged in part by how well it meshes with the extant setting material. The following paragraph will be geeky and if this one made no sense, feel free to skip the next one since it'll make even less.

The book takes mostly place during the 1350s and early 1360s Dalereckoning, in the city of Innarlith. Innarlith lies on the shore of the Lake of Steam, an area that hasn't been detailed much, but the city does get a couple of paragraphs in the 2001 *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*, which describes the Realms as they stand in the year 1372 DR. Here, we discover that the city is ruled by Ransar Pristoleph, who's rising through the ranks in *Whisper of Waves*. Well, that's nice for him. Oh, but he's a devotee of Cyric, the god of evil? You don't say! It also says that Pristoleph rose to the position of ransar in 1371 DR, having driven out his rival Mandalax at the same time. Except that Mandalax isn't the Ransar of Innarlith in these books, it's Ransar Osorkon. Mandalax is the leader of a gang of street thugs that Pristoleph sees overthrown and castrated during his prologue chapter, three decades before the action starts.

There were two paragraphs of canon on the city before this trilogy, two paragraphs' worth of information that could be used to tell the story, and still the author finds a way to contradict them, and in the clumsiest and most ham-handed way possible.

At this point I'd like to declare that I give up, but there are still two more novels in the trilogy, whose sole, questionable virtue is that they're fast reads!

Kristie says

DNF.

Mathew Blackburn says

It's a very good book. However, it could be titled the fountainhead with wizards and sea monsters.

Jeremy Brown says

Whisper of Waves is the first book in a new trilogy set in Forgotten Realms. The entire story takes place in the city of Innarlith which is situated on the Lake of Steam and it revolves around four major characters and their dealings in the city. The Red Wizard Marek was sent to Innarlith to build up a store of magical items and to start and eliminate any potential rivals. However, Marek has other ideas and starts amassing an army of custom bred Firedrakes in preparation to make some major changes in Innarlith. The second involves a genasi (half human, half fire elemental) who is quickly rising up in the hierarchy of the city. The other two lead characters in the book are both from the realm of Cormyr and are expert building engineers. As they both arrive in the city it becomes obvious that the ambitions of both people lead them in different directions as they go on to pursue their desires.

check out my website to read the full review.

[<http://www.thefantasyreview.com/2007/...>]
