



Dungeon Lord

Hugo Huesca

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Dark forces have extended Edward Wright an offer of incredible power at a terrible cost...

...and Edward has chosen to make them regret it.

When Edward is swept into the world of Ivalis as a Dungeon Lord, the Dark's most powerful servant, he has no servitude in mind. He'll oppose the evil plans of the Dark god Murmur, whatever it takes.

Through only his wits and his guts to help him survive a weakened arrival, Edward must rise to power if he is to earn the right to live another day.

But in the battle between Dark and Light, what can Edward choose if both sides are cruel, uncaring monsters?

Cold gods laugh in the distant world of Ivalis. Heroes chase after power and experience, while Kings send their armies to their deaths in the name of the Dark and the Light.

But no one expects the rise of the Dungeon Lord... And in the world of Ivalis, maybe a single man can forge his own path.

Dungeon Lord Details

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Author : Hugo Huesca

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From Reader Review Dungeon Lord for online ebook

Sinisa Mikasinovic says

I took another stab at a LitRPG book. Bullseye!

This was a "let's have some action" from start to finish. When you're in "I'm stuck in this game!" situation you likely won't chill out by the river looking at the sunset, as many other games suggest. Sure, you've been kidnapped and brought to the magical world so let's relax with NPCs and drink with bards.

"I gotta get some XP, and get it fast!" would be a more proper response. Such is our young new hero, Edward.

There are plenty of things that go 'bump' in the dark here and the best way to beat them is by out-leveling them to irrelevance. At least, that's the idea ;)

But, before that, the beginning. Probably a better start.

When your boss is an asshole and you hate yourself every day for working there - beating the living shit out of him still may not be the best course of action. It is certainly awesome and will make you feel a whole lot better, agreed.

That is, until the boys in blue arrive. Then you're pretty much screwed.

Life of Ed is complicated.

Of course, it is not going to become simpler anytime soon as the Dark God Murmur will extend Edward an offer. An offer he really cannot afford to refuse.

Ed finds himself in a fantasy world. The same one his high-level character conquers every night. But he's a level 1 newbie now. And he may not really be on the side of good guys. Maybe.

It's complicated :-)

On an unusual note - There's a really unexpectedly graphic scene of sex present. Well, in a 15-hour long book it's hardly a surprise but the level of details was unusual.

Nevertheless, if you're not a Gods-fearing zealot who preaches the ban of nonmarital sex you're golden. Just thought I should point this out as it's not really commonly seen in LitRPG. It's not like Gods are watching from above and judging you ;-)

The great writing style of Huesca paired with awesome narration = success. Jeff introduced Annie Ellicott

here who added more awesomeness. I watched their live cast (check YouTube) before I even heard Queen of Spiders Amphiris in the book! I had loads of fun seeing them work together. Jump to mark 40:00 to see it all in action.

I really enjoy the magic Soundbooth Theater production brings. It's a reality that they can't do the impossible - if the story isn't there or it just plain sucks, no amount of good narrative skills will save it. But Jeff does seem to work with the winners only. Or is making them, not sure :-)

It was a great job by everyone involved, either way. I will enjoy the sequel for sure.

Dungeon Lord (The Wraith's Haunt #1)

by Hugo Huesca (Goodreads Author), Jeff Hays (Narrator), Annie Ellicott (Narrator)

Verdict: Loads of fun! Can't wait for the sequel!

Overall

Performance

Story

Soo says

3 Stars for Story, 3.7 Stars for Narration by Jeff Hays & Annie Ellicott

Mini-Review:

I really do enjoy Jeff Hays' voices for the characters but I am not a fan of his regular narrator voice. It just doesn't work for me. Oh wells. Overall, the narration was great. I am probably in the minority about it.

Dungeon Lord is a LitRPG adventure story. Edward Wright makes a deal with a "devil", the dark god Murmur. He is transported to another world and made into a dungeon lord. Ed's suppose to be Murmur's servant, but he isn't the type to be the bad guy. Nothing has prepared him to be a dungeon lord or how things work in Ivalis but ignorance won't stop him from figuring things out and fighting against evil.

This story starts off strong and really caught my interest. Then it gets bogged down. I've been spoiled by listening to several books with excellent story pacing and this one doesn't have it. I think a part of the issue is that this particular story does not translate well to an audiobook. I may like it more by just reading print. I will find out when I check out the sequel.

The story has promise but it may not work due to conflicts in the world rules that the author has in place. Everyone likes a story about a guy fighting against the system. Even if that system is an all powerful god that can yank you out of one world, transform you and throw you into another land. I have a hard time believing that Ed can be good just because he's a good guy.

Pieter says

Intriguing mix of the standard: portal, litRPG, and Faustian deals mixed into one whole.

Edward is a gamer who gets into trouble on Earth and is offered a job as a dungeon lord on another world in the service of Murmur the dark god of said world - a world he only knew as a massive online RPG. Edward accepts mostly because it offers him the opportunity to make his own fate and to proof that not all bosses are going to jerks. Of course, being thrown in a more or less unknown world right in the thick of things do not make things easy, but he manages to find allies, and not just survive but at least for now thrive. It does not come easy though and there is no save game or respawn in this 'game'. There is also a bit of a mystery on what is going on, which makes me very curious about future parts, but it is not a true cliffhanger end.

The game elements are relatively simple, you earn xp and spend it to buy talents and powers. Skills you learn by using them. Stats can be raised but only though actions and hard training. There is a bit of strategy to the character building, but not much, since you only see your options immediately available not the steps beyond. Descriptions are a bit vague as well. Then again, since it is not actually a game, that is not too bad. It just might not be what some fans of the genre expect. Intriguing, rather dark world, appears black-and-white and first, but becomes more gray the further in you go. I like it, especially since there is no pyric victory nor is the hero (and he is a hero, not an anti-hero, except for the deal there is nothing dark to his actions yet) agonizing over his decisions.

The story is told mostly from the point of view of Edward with the occasional temporary switch to others, but only for a few paragraphs. I have never been a big fan of switching, and while the number is not that high that it becomes irritating to me, it does not add much to the story in my opinion either (the exception is the switch to the girl, that helps setting the mood).

All in all, a solid addition to my litRPG library and looking forward to the next part.

Alice says

I got one of the wonderful new litrpg audiobooks and happy about it. It was great!

***** Everything below may contain SPOILERS *****

A Dungeon Lord book grips and holds attention from the first page till the very end.

In the beginning, we manage to get acquainted with Edward Wright, one man in group players in Ivalis-online. Next day after the attack and finishing the dungeon Lord Edward has problems on his work, half of them he does by himself. His life turns upside down, and then he receives an offer to become a new dungeon lord. Well... why not?

He doesn't know the rules. He doesn't have any support except his bard and witch. He doesn't have any clues what's going on and in what the hell he was dropped. These aren't much to start such an adventure, but he does, and he manages to do it well.

I like how all this happened. Even though this is a litrpg book, I forgot about it during listening. It looks like

100% fantasy novel. Magic and magic abilities, spells, dark creatures, inquisitions, corruption and many other things that are just so perfect in here! Only when Ed was activating his Eye and check talents, spells, and experience points, I remembered what book do I listen. The plot is gripping, fast-moving, with twists and unexpected scenes. Sometimes the POV changes, and it adds more driving to the story. The most valuable thing is everything happens in a logical way.

Edward is a good leader regardless he doesn't have enough experience in it. He learns to trust and changes in the person whom can other trust as well. What I like about him is a brave temper. He surrounds himself with different kind of characters, knowing their basic strength and weak sides. And here I want to mention that the author made it up very well and done a great job to connect his characters in a beautiful working team.

Even though this is a dark fantasy, I had a very light and clear vision of surrounding world. It has its beauty in fields and cities, and the more important our heroes don't walk somewhere far away from this living worlds.

This is a good book full of funny and interesting moments, strong characters, and twists. I want to know more and move forward this story, and for me, this is a signal that I really like the book.

Al Burke says

I got a free audiobook from the author, review was not an obligation. Or words to that effect.

This seems to be portraying itself as a litRPG, which isn't quite true, but the idea of an RPG player being transported to a dimension where his RPG is real is a nice twist. The story is pretty funny, with the MCs displaying a jaded sense of humour as he comes to terms with his new role as a dungeon lord in the new dimension. The big problem is, he's starting from scratch, and has to learn on the fly.

The narrator is easily the best part about this audio, capturing the humorous vein of the story, and providing a fun cast of voices. If I had to make one change, I'd cut out the constant stat readouts. I'm sure they're fine in the book where you can skim over them, but they disrupt the flow of the audio too much.

Still, if you like litRPGs or their derivatives, you should check this one out.

Jason says

At first glance, this book doesn't really sound like much - fairly standard "person who plays a lot of video games gets sucked into the video game world and has to survive." This one has an interesting twist, though, in that the main character is a dungeon lord, as in the bad guy. Sort of, at least - he doesn't really WANT to be evil, but in the world that is his new home, that's what everyone expects him to be, and he tends to be pushed to act at least evil-ish in order to survive.

Another positive aspect of the book is the writing, which is generally quite good and keeps things moving. The one exception there is the inclusion of "character sheets." In this world, everyone has a character sheet

outlining their stats and abilities, which the book occasionally winds up including. These aren't terribly interesting, and make it hard to take this world very seriously when everyone has an exact value for strength, endurance, charisma, dexterity and so on apparently hovering over their heads at all times.

The scenes with Kharon, servant of the dark god Murmur are written in a decently creepy way, and the setup for future installments (the almost robotic "heroes", which is to say players) makes me look forward to future installments.

E. Kahn says

This is escapist fantasy. This ain't high literature. It's not even escapist fantasy with pretensions (looking in your general direction, Game of Thrones). It's a fun way to kill a few hours.

Having said all that, it's a pretty fun way of killing a few hours.

I read some of the other reviews saying this is a LitRPG, a genre I wasn't even aware of, and from the description I don't think I agree. I think this is more an Americanized Isekai, a Japanese genre of light novels, manga and anime where the protagonist is transported to a fantasy world (think the old Dungeons and Dragons cartoon).

One oddity in the vocabulary is the use in several places of "carbon" for "coal." The words for both of these (and charcoal) is "carbon" in Spanish so that might be the reason.

Scott says

If you are a fan of the Literary Role-Playing Game (LitRPG) genre, you will enjoy listening to "Dungeon Lord" which is the first book in what appears to be a future series of books taking place in this new and unique fantasy world. Hugo Huesca does an exceptional job in crafting a world full of fresh, different, believable and multi-dimensional elements; both characters and environments. Add in the amazing production quality and narration from both Jeff Hays and Annie Ellicott of Soundbooth Theater and you are given the best of both worlds. Jeff and Annie do not overpower the story, but instead both story and narration come together to form an amazing fantasy tale that keep me entertained and surprised along the way.

What happens when a group of people from the same office are a part of an online guild where one's physical world boss takes out his gaming frustrations on the staff when they mess up? This is where one of our characters early on takes matters into his own hands and unbeknownst to him, he discovers he is given the option of working for the side of dark or potential long-term impressment. I do not want to spoil the story, so you will have to read of this sounds interesting. What complicates matters even more is that Ed (our main character) has always battled the dark and has been a hero of light in all his gaming. Once injected into this fantasy world, mimicking the game he was playing online, he need to make the right decisions as this is no longer simply a game, but truly a battle for both life and death. This new game Ed has been placed within only has the option of "perma death", so there is no return when you make the wrong choice. Will he continue to fight for the side of evil or will his light side win over the day?

For me the book's opening, world, and characters made it a listening pleasure. I'm not one for books that are

focused solely on the darker side of fantasy (I always played the Paladin), yet the author includes a fair amount of humor, light-hearted antics, and even some romance to break up the mood when needed. The book itself did not feel overly dark nor gloomy, but there was always the pull between the two forces upon our main character; think Luke Skywalker from StarWars. I enjoyed a few of the characters that are often classified as being more on the side of evil such as witches, but we are also given a few that are not including a bard; yes, a bard. When Edward begins to build his new party, one is reminded more of the island of misfit toys than a band of heroes; which is not a bad thing for this journey. Each of the characters needs to depend on the other strengths and weaknesses for them to survive. The author did a great job of integrating the various characters along with their many quips into this band waning to save the land from a much more powerful and menacing creature; the mindbrood. I often found myself laughing out loud observing the actions and interactions between the drone creatures and the other characters.

There is a fine-line one needs to walk when they have the desire to be both a hero and a instruments of the dark. Early on when you are trying your hardest to make friends and alliances while always being challenged by others for the podium of evil, the struggle is real for Ed. In this book, not only is the mindbrood one of the big encounters, but also the many encounters with hordes of spiders (I do not like spiders) and a few other evil classed monsters. For me the book set up the situation quite well and at times felt predictable, yet in the end, the author did a good job of surprising me with the unexpected. I very much enjoyed the premise and the view we are given into the birth and difficulties of establishing a new and power dungeon that will be able to hold off the forces of future adventurers and heroes. There was always this feeling of gloom throughout the story but is did not feel oppressive. One gets a good sense of changes occurring in the world and with the main character as the dark weighs on his heart and soul. The question of will he succumb to the dark or be able to overcome its pull and follow the light? This and much more is answered in the past of this book.

If you are at all familiar with Jeff Hays and/or Soundbooth Theater productons, you know what to expect from one of their releases. The audio is some of the best available and the team ensure that they only give the best to their listening customers. I liked the inclusion of some of the sound effects which were not overdone and helped make the book pop. It is the little subtly things that make Soundbooth Theater one of my favorite audiobook publishers, they focus on what is important to listeners and make sure everything to they do is right. I did not notice any audio artifacts and both characters narrated their parts very well. If I had one suggestion, it would have been to have the spider queen's voice a bit slower as it was more difficult to comprehend if you are one who listens to audiobook at more than their normal speed; like myself.

For parents and younger readers, this book includes a plethora of vulgar language. There are also scenes of sex and humor incorporating sexual innuendos. If you are easily offended by either of these, I would suggest you find a different series to listen too.

In summary, when I was done with this book, I wanted to jump right into the second one in the series to see where our main character would go next. However, at the time of this review, it does not yet exist in audiobook format. The book itself can be read as a standalone novel, yet at its end we are presented with many paths or directions the team could go in future releases. I look forward to more book in this series and highly recommend it to others who enjoy the LitRPG genre.

Disclaimer: I was voluntarily provided this review copy audiobook at no charge by the author, publisher and/or narrator.

Travis Hoselton says

Misleading

Not really a dungeon book or Litrpg tbh it may have some aspects ok it but I feel the author is just using the Litrpg tag to generate some interest

Russell Gray says

I greatly enjoyed this book and I think litrpg as a genre needs more stories of this caliber. The main character of this book is an everyman without being a whining beta male loser. Something that is very refreshing for me. I don't want to sound too negative...I really enjoy litrpg genre stories, but I honestly cannot stand at least 50% of the protagonists.

Maybe part of the glow I feel is a result of coming off of a mediocre book and into this one, but in addition to appreciating the general quality of the story and writing, I just straight up enjoyed this thing. The characters were varied and all had good distinction. The enemies were pretty unique and the way the main character interfaced with the "game" was also refreshing.

I am a big fan of portal fantasy as well as litrpg, so I felt like this was the best of both worlds. Most importantly, the MC was in game so to speak before the 10% mark on my kindle. The transition was well done and gave a pretty good justification for who Edward was and what his mindset might be as he leaves his old life behind. Few things bother me more than a story that wastes 20% or so of the story on pretext only to ignore all of it as soon as the person gets in game.

The game mechanics are a little more ambiguous than average at this stage, but the game world has a very deep sense of history. Rather than seeing a bunch of explicitly laid out game rules with a generic world and flat characters, this book provides various and interesting characters and a world that truly seems to exist with a history of its own. So I have no problem staying occupied while the game rules are uncovered over time.

This was the best book 1 of a new series that I've come across in months, so I'm very excited. I would recommend this to anyone who is after some fantasy litrpg action with some horror elements sprinkled in.

Isaios says

What is the point of having LitRPG details if it's not a game? It doesn't provide anything useful, except for translating game-limits.

Also, first 3/4ths of the book has no lording, nor dungeoning, then at the end of the book we learn that dungeon lords can destroy any city at a whim, but don't because reasons, and the wet paper towel of a MC we've been following suddenly becomes competent. Also, he thinks it's fine to cooperate with a religious genocidal fanatic, but a political genocidal fanatic is beyond the pale, as is a man-eating giant spider who he first spends some time crippling. ... morals, fuck yeah!

Again I am beset by the greatest horror a fantasy author can inflict on their audience: bad moral philosophy.

Vincent Archer says

Defeat Good by enlisting its own Champions is a winning strategy.

The interesting setup of a fantasy world where Good finally cheated: it brought MMORPG players to defeat the Lords of Evil from its opponent. There's no more seasoned hero than a high-end MMORPG character. And if they die, they come again at it; hard to beat that.

So the whole premise is that Evil decides to enlist one of the heroes from the other side thru the usual "offer you can't refuse". And it makes the protagonist into the heir of the dungeon lord he just defeated. Use your power, get corrupted because power corrupts, or die. It's a challenge that Edward thinks he will win. We'll see in the series, because, as usual for series like that, it's mainly a setup: find the base of operation, recruit a few henchmen, defeat a couple enemies, setup the next book.

Interesting enough, although the use of the RPG conventions for the people in the world feels a bit forced. Going to pick next book.

T.L. Branson says

Any time I finish a book in less than a week, it must be good. I know many of you think that's slow, but with my schedule, I'm happy to read a book a month, so to finish in 5 days is amazing. It means that I was thoroughly engaged and pushed off other more necessary projects to read.

Such is the case with Dungeon Lord. It was a bit choppy at first, and many times I felt like dialogue or things happened because the author was pushing us toward his program rather than letting things happen naturally.

I was also a bit disappointed that at the 50% mark, we still hadn't gotten to what I THOUGHT the book was about (building a dungeon, growing followers, and leveling up).

"But you gave it 5-stars, why are you talking about bad things?"

Well no book is perfect, and I'm just sharing my thoughts. BUT, and that's a big BUT, those things are petty and little once the full story unveiled itself.

This book was creative, flipped tropes on their heads, utilized an enemy I'd never seen before--one so dastardly and powerful that it could wipe out humanity if left unchecked.

The chapters were ultra engaging and had me saying "just one more" long into the night. 3 nights in a row I didn't sleep until 3 AM.

I can't wait to read the next one.

I do wish that there had been more Dungeon building as even the title seems to promise or that the author

would have brought his friends from the real world into play in this book (as I expected would happen), but again, that doesn't change the fact that I can't recommend this highly enough.

It's definitely a LitRPG, perfect for people who like skills and stats and leveling. But don't expect too much leveling, or even enough battles to warrant the ability to level. There are only 3 battle conflicts in the entire story, and one is over in a flash.

But I've sneaked a peak at the other two books covers and blurbs and it does seem to promise that our hero will be doing some leveling and becoming a powerful Dungeon Lord. At least I hope so.

Michael Gough says

I guess this genre isn't for me as I'm scratching my head why so many people give this book 5/5 . Is this really equal to the best book they have ever read?

Anyone who writes a book should be applauded but not everyone has the innate talent that takes a good idea and can bring it alive in words. Not every book can be a good book. This is certainly my feeling about this book. The descriptions to try and bring the world and characters alive are very weak and rudimentary. The action scenes are terribly described. However, kudos to the author for giving it a go.

Romanticfae says

Litrpg lite a fun quick read that is a nice intro to a new series can't wait for the next one
