



The Starfollowers of Coramonde

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Gil MacDonald, soldier and exile in an alternate reality, must find Yardiff Bey, master wizard and archvillain. Bey has abducted Gil's friend and threatens to destroy this world of mystery and magic that the American has made his home. Coramonde's Prince Springbuck sends him south to the accursed lands of Shardishku-Salama, where Yardiff Bey waits to capture and torture him. With the comet Trailingsword hanging in the sky above, Springbuck sets out with his army to save Gil from an enemy that cannot be slain.

The Starfollowers of Coramonde Details

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John says

grade D, no date listed

Bob says

Sequel to The Doomfarers of Coramonde. Whereas the first book had an interesting twist of bringing Vietnam War era soldiers and their armored personnel carrier into a fantasy realm, this sequel, despite the continued story of the previous books US Army protagonist, is more of a standard sword and sorcery yarn. As sword and sorcery yarns go, its pretty good and I enjoyed it.

Anthony Ragan says

One of the time-honored genres of science fiction and fantasy literature involves men from Earth who suddenly find themselves on other worlds, whether through super-science, magic, or mysticism, rather than visiting as, say, a “normal” space traveler. The most famous early example would be Edgar Rice Burroughs’ “John Carter of Mars” series, but among others are Lin Carter’s “Green Star” books and Andre Norton’s “Witch World” series. In the modern age, the popularity of games such as Dungeons and Dragons in the late 70s and 80s helped revive the genre, with books such as Norton’s “Quag Keep,” Joel Rosenberg’s “Guardians of the Flame” series (especially book 1), and Brian Daley’s “Coramonde” books.

“Starfollowers of Coramonde” is the second of two books, sequel to “Doomfarers of Coramonde,” which introduces us to Gil McDonald, an American soldier fighting in Vietnam. One moment, McDonald and his armored personnel carrier crew are fighting an enemy ambush, and the next they’re in combat with a dragon. (Spoiler: APCs beat dragons. Barely.) McDonald and his men learn they’ve been summoned by magic to Coramonde, a kingdom under grave threat from the evil wizard Yardiff Bey. McDonald chooses to remain behind in the world and helps to restore the rightful ruler, Prince Springbuck, to his throne, foiling Yardiff Bey’s plot. “Doomfarers” ends with Yardiff Bey escaping and taking with him as prisoner Dunstan the Berserker, Gil’s friend.

“Starfollowers” picks up soon thereafter, with Gil, Springbuck, and their friends and allies deciding to take the war to Yardiff Bey and his masters. McDonald and a small party head west to return a magic sword and an infant heir to the land of Vegana, currently under siege by the enemy, as well as to investigate what it is that Yardiff Bey seeks in a long-dead wizard’s writings. Meanwhile, Prince Springbuck forgoes responding to the attacks on his own land and instead leads an army to the lands of the enemy and the city of Shardisku-Salama, wherein reside Yardiff Bey’s masters.

And therein lies the problem with “Starfollowers of Coramonde.” After that set up, the book becomes one long pursuit and series of battles leading to a climactic confrontation in front of the city, itself. The large cast of new characters is thinly drawn, and it is assumed that the reader has all the background information he needs on existing characters from reading the first book. Thus there is little to capture one’s interest and give

one a reason to care if one is reading “Starfollowers” first. Without the ground laid in “Doomfarers,” this becomes a rather standard fantasy quest.

But it is well done and enjoyable nonetheless. Mr. Daley showed promise as a writer, even with the occasional tendency toward a Gygaxian abuse of the thesaurus, and it’s a shame he died relatively early in his career. His setting in Coramonde is interesting, and I would like to have seen it developed further. And, similar to other books of that time, I have to wonder if this was the author’s home D&D setting. If so, I would have enjoyed playing there.

I read the book in Kindle format and was disappointed in the quality of the file. There are simply too many typos that could have been fixed with decent proofreading. Not enough to spoil the book or make it impossible to read, but enough to be an annoyance. The publisher should issued a copy-edited revision.

On a scale of one to five, I give “Starfollowers of Coramonde” a straight three: enjoyable, but best read if one reads “Doomfarers” first. However, I recommend just that: buy both, and sit back for a good late-summer’s read.

Bernard says

I should have read this book more closely in time to when I read the first installment of the Coramonde duology. By the time I picked up Starfollowers I had forgotten who a lot of the characters were apart from Gil and Springbuck. There are so many 'principle' characters among the various peoples of Coramonde who join the epic army marching south against Bey that some of them got jumbled in my old brain. Also, while I appreciate Daley's mastery of the English language from a conversational point of view, from an actually reading the book point of view, good grief, what delicious, and unknown, goodies await the reader! At first I was writing down new (to me) words for look up later but that exercise got tedious and I just rolled with each new vocabulary lesson, typically one per page or two pages! Mechanics aside, the book did seem more disjointed than the first. Interesting to me was that the true villains (behind the known villains) are merely introduced in the first chapter and then not seen again until the very end, yet the pawns (both good and evil) end up being the ones having to duke it out. I suppose there's nothing wrong with that but the 5 gods ended up being more of an "eh" at the end rather than something truly feared.

I read this book and the 1st installment out of a sense of morbid loyalty to Daley, may he rest in peace, from my absolute love of his writing of the scripts of the Star Wars radio dramatizations. I picked these two up on a whim when I realized Daley had written them. I'm glad I tried out his epic fantasy experiment but I'm also relieved there were only two of these, as the characters were so varied and scattered and shared so much page-time (especially in 2nd book) that I never really became attached to any of them. I'm glad I tried this series but given it took me 6 months to motivate myself to finish reading the second one I think it is safe to say I'm glad there's not a third in the series!

Dave says

This one could have been drawn out a little longer, the ending seemed rushed. Still it was pretty damn good.

And if it wasn't based on somebody's D&D campaign, I'd be really surprised.

Bob says

This really isn't well written. The whole book seems to be a bunch of dialogue exercises loosely connected by backstory or exposition. It's too bad because I had quite a bit of nostalgia for this and the previous of the pair. Like the first book, this one would have benefitted from a more solid outline and thoughts about causes and effect.

Christopher says

I read the first part this this book several times as it one of my all-time favorite fantasy books. This book, while not quite as fast paced as the first one, was a pretty good read. It even could stand on its own if one had not read Doomfarers of Coramonde.

Troy says

Been a long time since I finished the book, but remember it fondly.

Jim says

I enjoyed this as much as the first volume, but was dismayed that the author never wrote any more in this series.

Jim Kennedy says

I came across this in a hotel room, and surprised myself by reading it straight through :)

A thoroughly *fun* fantasy novel. It is actually the second of two books - I haven't read the first, though I'll have to keep an eye out for it. In the first a US soldier ends up in the alternate reality of these books. It is primarily his story. I won't even attempt to describe what is going on, but the characters are likeable, the plot fairly straightforward, the magic totally ridiculous and fun, a couple of battle scenes thrown in for good measure. A fast paced, well written, short enough (in a world of insanely long fantasy books) book that grabbed my attention and held it throughout.

Geneva says

I liked this better than the first one, though I read the first one last year sometime and my memory of it is fuzzy. This one seemed to have more strong women characters, which I appreciated. Daley kept a lot of narrative balls in the air with this one, and it worked out for him. I was skeptical of how much ammo Gil had, but eh.

Timothy Boyd says

An incredible fantasy series. My only regret is that it was only 2 books long. I loved all the awesome characters. Highly recommended
