



The Spoils of War

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The Weave was on the verge of winning a decisive victory after a millennia of war, thanks to their new allies from earth. But then the birdlike Wais scholar Lalelang found evidence that Humans might not adapt well to peace. Researching further, she uncovered a secret group of telepathic Humans called the Core, who were on the verge of starting another war, and then eliminating Lalelang. At the last moment, she was saved by a lone Core commander. He took a chance on her intelligence and compassion, and gambled the fate of Humanity on the possibility that together, they could find an alternative to a galaxy-wide bloodbath....

The Spoils of War Details

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From Reader Review The Spoils of War for online ebook

Mike (the Paladin) says

This is still a good read, but we had to come up with a way to tie the story up and I found it a little less than what it might have been. Still, it's enjoyable.

The story here seems almost a little "hurried" to me. he got to the end, he knew what the end was how the plot was going to be tied up and got it down. Don't get me wrong, it's not a bad book, it's still based on a good idea, a good read and to use the word I used for the others, "fun". It just slid a bit and as the second wasn't quite as good as the first, this one isn't quite up to the second. It's still good and the trilogy is worth the read.

Another good thing...Foster managed to hold his "trilogy", to three books. :)

Jeff Miller says

A very satisfying trilogy. Each book builds on the story while being different stories and different character focuses.

Tomas says

What happens when you win a war? What do you do with soldiers acclimated to violence when the rest of your society is not? In his concluding volume of the series, Alan Dean Foster's focus is *not* on the climactic march to victory over the Amplitur, as you would ordinarily expect to be the case in a trilogy focused on an interstellar war.

It is instead on the problem of re-integrating the veterans of the war - and the "too-primitive" violent humans - into a society that is at best uneasy with them. Can the diverse confederation of species that make up the "good guys" overcome the forces of racism, violence, and the danger of a possible human coup?

It's a gripping finale to a series that stays interesting from page one to the conclusion, and while it provides an emotionally satisfactory conclusion, it doesn't do so the easy way, by just saying "Yay! The good guys win and everybody lives happily ever after!"

It's been a decade or so since I last read through this series; and in spite of that, I remember a great deal of it quite vividly, which is unusual given the number of books I've read. Ordinarily, I have trouble remembering whether or not I read a book, let alone what was in it; this is a memorable work.

Jack says

I finished the series and felt about this book the way I felt about the other two. I keep wishing for better, or

for more.

I can really only recommend this series if you're looking for something very different and specifically, where humanity just kicks the snot out of everything else. The scenario is a fun one and I've yet to find anything that explores it better.

But it is lacking. Characters are paper thin and there's a lot of plot twists that come from nowhere. I don't mind a plot twist or two, but it's better when I can see that it was hinted at all along and not just a deus ex machina device to pull the heroes out of an unwinnable situation.

I'll say this much, I'm looking for more books that explore this type of story, but I'm not looking for any more Dean Alan Foster books.

Indy Kochte says

Warning: spoilers embedded in the review.

Well...it was an okay book, not a bad read, but...there were issues. Note that this is the third book of a series, of which at this writing I have not yet read (much less have found) the first two.

It starts out all nice and good as we are introduced to Lalelelang, a researcher of the bird-like Wais, who are members of a collection of interstellarly connected races called The Weave. Her specialty: humans. Now, for the Weave, combat, violence, etc, is pretty foreign to them and for many races simply *seeing* acts of violence – much less committing them, even in time of war – has debilitating effects (Lalelelang, specializing in humans for study, has developed mental and physiological techniques). For humans, not so much. So when the Weave was being set upon by another race called the Amplitur, who have the telepathic power of 'suggestion', able to just utter some words at members of another race and basically 'take them over', the Weave recruit the humans to do their fighting for them, to beat off the Amplitur. At which the humans, along with one or two of the Weave who can (barely) stomach violence, manage to do after centuries of war.

Now, it turns out that the humans are immune to the suggestive powers of the Amplitur (no one* of the Weave has telepathic abilities, which is why they were collectively afraid of the Amplitur; * - see below on the Lepar). And making a long side story short, have acquired the capability to suggest as well, due to a mis-adventure the Amplitur attempted with humans early on. This sets up the secret Core group, a society of humans who have telepathic powers (they can communicate with one another and can suggest to other races – such as "you should jump off a very tall cliff with a rocky landing" suggestion, and the member of the race so 'suggested' will attempt to do just that post haste). The humans keep their telepathic capabilities secret from the Weave, but ultimately Lalelelang discovers it, and the Core.

That's where our human Core commander, so noted in the story background, comes in. Nevan Straat-ien enters the story a few chapters in, after we've established Lalelelang's character and role in the story. He is a commander in the human forces, and does battle with 'slave' races of the Amplitur. He is also, as we find out later, very highly ranked in the Core, and a strong telepath with strong suggestive powers. He uses them infrequently, and at least once to save his and Lalelelang's life (to the detriment of the being who was about to kill them). Parts of his character are reasonably developed, but other parts of it are....flat, 1-dimensional, lacking. There is a girl, but his interactions with her seem so very contrived in the story it would have been

far better if Foster had just left that facet of Nevan out of the story. Nothing would have been lost.

The background story basically has the humans kicking the tar out of the Amplitur and their subjugated races, and suddenly the war is over by the middle of the book. The rest of the background story is the fallout and aftermath of the war and how the different races handle it.

We are introduced to a number of other characters along the way, who seem to have some import to the storyline then suddenly vanish. Kinda disconcerting. So the bulk of the book centers around Nevan and Lalelelang. However, suddenly near the end Nevan becomes a secondary character casualty, as he is killed 'off camera' by one of the lowliest of the Weave races after he, Nevan, averts an Amplitur plot to subvert the humans to the Amplitur cause. This lowliest of creatures, a Lepar, is the menial immigrant-style laborer of the Weave – but they are apparently immune to suggestion, and can actually 'SEE' telepathic energies, particularly when they are being used. They still abhor violence themselves and get incapacitatingly sick when they have to resort to it, but somehow one of these little Lepars manages to get the drop on combat veteran officer and battle-tested Nevan after Nevan has taken care of the Amplitur (to which the Lepar witnessed, and Nevan belatedly realized). And then Lalelelang is able to 'get the drop' on the same Lepar. Seemed a LEETLE bit of a stretch for me to hold.

In the end more Lepars attempt to assassinate Lalelelang, but Lalelelang has brought members of the Core to her side, and manages to broker a deal between the humans (well, the Core) and the Lepars so the two sides can watch over humanity and the Weave (and the Amplitur) in the decades/centuries to come. And Lalelelang goes back to her research and the story ends.

I would have liked to have seen/read more about Nevan and his exploits, and read more directly the accounting of his death rather than have it told second hand by the Lepar who killed him. I would have liked to have learned more of some of the other characters we were introduced to during the course of events of the story, but every one of them who proved to be potentially interesting was dropped from the storyline like a hot potato. It was....unsatisfying.

All THAT said, it wasn't a bad read otherwise. I enjoyed it, despite my misgivings noted above.

Bryan457 says

Poor ending to the series.

Silyara says

An intriguing conclusion where people often pay consequences for racism/assumptions about those of other races. Not everything is tied up in a bow, but it's a nice realistic place to end it.

Erica says

Finally, I discovered the elusive "Nevan".

Serena says

I enjoyed the characters, and their world and hope I get the chance to read the story again and/or to read more within the series.

My Rating System:

* couldn't finish, ** wouldn't recommend, *** would recommend, **** would read again, ***** have read again.

Jason says

This was the last book in the series and I enjoyed it. There are some contrived twists that I think weren't baked well. I appreciate a twist when an author has laid the groundwork all through the story, but if the twist is thrown in to finish a story, and then explained with awkward ties to the story that are technically possible but nonsensical, then I resent it. Other than that, the story is interesting told from an alien's view, which is uncommon in sci-fi, and the story line is a plausible and entertaining conclusion of the story of Humans brought in to fight an alien conflict.

Brett says

Science Fiction

Simone says

I'm not even sure how to feel having finished the series. I feel like there could be so many more stories in here, so many more things to tell, and yet...there are not. Truly I enjoyed every step through this series and hope that others enjoy it as much as I did.

William Webb says

Book three of The Damned, it's more complex, somewhat slower but more ambitious than its two predecessors. A truly preachy paragraph on the next to last page wrecks the ending, but the rest is good enough to keep the pages turning. Recommended. A

Thoth Harris says

I found this book is a very conclusive close to the captivating series that will have you hanging on to the edge of your seats through the whole book. It will make you ask yourself about how humanity acts to others of their species and the world around them.

J. Boo says

The best of the series. Here, a pacifistic bird-like alien sociologist embeds herself with a human regiment in a galactic war. In this universe, humans are the only naturally warlike species; all others are variously inept at fighting for reasons of authorial convenience. (This was the a terrible stumbling block for me throughout the entire series.)

The action sequences are well done, the broader plot elements were clever, the people were interesting, the penultimate section was terrific... and the ending had an element that didn't make logical sense, leavened with hippy-dippy crap. I'll just pretend the last chapter was a dream sequence, and give this a 3.6/5.
