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Ancient Ruins (Ancient Dreams Book 1)



Synopsis

Sistina awakened after millennia of dormancy, her memories in tatters and born anew. Residing in the ruins of an ancient city, she finds herself drawn into a war between two elven nations and the slaver kingdom of Kelvanis when she rescues a princess from slavery. With her domain containing hints of forgotten knowledge, Sistina becomes a dungeon, stronghold, and source of hope all at once. And perhaps, just perhaps, she could finally find love in her new life. This is a dark fantasy lesbian romance, with a focus on the dark fantasy.

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Customer Reviews

I do recommend you give this book a try; it's a quick read with a great premise, interesting and complex characters, and good prose. I could barely put it down and am very much looking forward to the sequels. I want to put that out front first, because there are big themes to this book that I think need to be mentioned and that I don't see in anyone else's reviews. First, slavery is everywhere in this book. In the world created within the novel, slavery takes the form of a brand/sigil put on people that makes them obey the spoken commands of whomever holds the "key" unconditionally. And, seriously, there is a lot of slavery in

this book since it takes place in the country taking slaves and most of the protagonists (save the main protagonist) have been branded as slaves. Though it's implied in the text that there are human slaves, all the slaves seen in the book are elves, and the clear majority of those are female elves. Which leads to the next major theme: Rape and attempted rape are common occurrences throughout this novel. It's never graphically depicted and we rarely see the actual act, but every single point-of-view protagonist, excepting the main character and an "Adventurer" or "troop", either reveal they've been raped, are raped, or have someone attempt to rape them. Of the two primary point-of-view antagonists one is a serial rapist while the other enslaves women and delivers them to the aforementioned rapist. The author cuts away from the rape scenes, letting us know they are going to happen and then cutting to afterwards so we know they have happened. Furthermore, the women treat the rape as an appropriately horrible event that they either will deal with or need to endure if they don't have the power to stop it. There's some questionable language around how some characters would be nice if they weren't slavers and rapists, but this is a world with mind-altering magic so I personally could forgive some of the internal dialogue in hindsight. I think one of the big reasons I need to go into so much detail is I absolutely was not expecting it when I started this book. Other books in the LitRPG and Dungeon subgenres that I've read have generally avoided even mentioning sexual assault and when they have they often have mechanics around why it isn't possible. This book takes as a central plot point both attempted rape and the emotional reactions to it, so that was quite different. I still think it's worth reading and, as I said at the beginning, I'm looking forward to the sequel if only to see aforementioned rapists and rape culture get annihilated.

I found having the main character be a conscious dungeon to be an interesting choice that made me want to buy the book when I read it in the sample I downloaded. Unfortunately that was the last part of this book that had any originality in it. I found myself flipping through the parts that didn't feature the main character in it. Still, it only cost 99 cents so I didn't feel like I got ripped off.

The main character of this Dungeons-and-Dragons-inspired book is a dungeon. It's an unusual perspective. Also unusual is the decision to use the D&D aspect unvarnished: The adventurers guild really does send parties to clear dungeons, one room at a time, in search of treasure and experience. The author makes an honest attempt to make this make sense. The book has silly and

weak foundations, but is an entertaining read. The best parts focus on Sistina - who wakes from the remnants of her old life, after thousands of years, and decides to go into the dungeon business, as a dungeon.

Quite a few points of view in this story. Some I truly loved while others I skimmed over. Overall I do want to see how this adventure takes place and I am looking forward to reading this trilogy when it is completed. It was a little like a roller-coaster ride, but the parts I loved outweighed the parts I skipped. Interested in finding out what happens next.....

The book is a new and entertaining read. I especially liked the character of the tree named Sistina. She is fun, interesting and shows much depth for someone who says so little. I recommend this book and hope others will think so too.

In the face of similar books with dungeons as characters it is a brilliantly written book, possibly the best in this class. Will be waiting eagerly for the next one.

I read a lot of sci fi and fantasy, and am a prolific writer of various science fiction and fantasy roleplays, and this book comes across a lot like some of the game sessions I've had with some of my old game masters. The way that the genius loci grows her dungeon and changes things is rather impressive and quite organic to me. I've read the book at least 3 times now, and it's one that I highly recommend that others get and read for themselves.

Benjamin Medrano is on to something! Goodman n character in Sistina, for me a great story includes good support characters, there's a start here, hopefully this trend will continue. The story got better throughout the book, the next book has potential.

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