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CLARION REVIEW ★★★★☆ FANTASY

Breaking Point

C. D. Dean
AuthorHouse
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> *No, your past sucks. What has taken place is no longer in your life; it is no more and can never be again.*

Throughout *Breaking Point*, Lee offers a steady stream of insights to Butterfly. The two characters often discuss the difficulties of overcoming the tough hands that life has dealt them.

Breaking Point follows Lee, a fighter with unique skills, and Butterfly, a woman who is rebuilding her life from nothing. They learn from one another and develop a deep friendship even as they are drawn into a complex battle with evil beings.

Throughout the novel, we get to see how Lee and Butterfly bond with one another and develop trust—something they both have issues with due to the traumatic experiences they've overcome. While the scenes are well written and help you invest in the characters emotionally, many are excessively lengthy. The book is 708 pages long, and there are times when the plot slows or stalls with scenes that are overly similar to one another, such as when the two main characters reveal secrets from their pasts.

The book contains many action-filled fight scenes, which illustrate the rough career and serious threats that face Lee. While this does make for suspenseful reading, it may be too graphic for younger readers or those who are squeamish. For example, the following scene in an arranged fight between Lee and Jason. While they subsequently become good friends, Jason recalls the end of the fight this way, "It sent him flying out the ring, and I mean flying, straight over the 3' barrier…I tell you, made me feel real sick when I saw and heard him hit the ground."

Dean uses vivid imagery and strong emotions to move the story along. In one scene Butterfly is meditating and, "A huge dark figure drifted before her, its full form and features impossible to lock onto as it was like swirling smoke, save for the pair of golden eyes gazing so fixedly down upon her…"

Although Lee insists to Butterfly that the past is no more and can never be again, both of their pasts manage to follow and influence them throughout the book. As for *Breaking Point* itself, it is a great book that you will enjoy reading in the present, and you will remember fondly as it becomes part of your past.

Due to its graphic depiction of violence and sexual matters, this book may not be suitable for readers younger than their middle teens. The book has a few typos, but is otherwise well written and produced. A first-time novelist, C. D. Dean lives and writes in Bristol, England, with her husband.

LAURA MUNION (November 9, 2011)

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