



Catlorian II: Temples

R. L. Pool

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Ultimately a story of good versus evil, Temples is excellent at testing the boundaries of just what makes one good.

Gripping, bold, and filled with unforgettable action sequences, *Catlorian II: Temples* by R. L. Pool is a well-paced, character-driven work of fantasy.

Though the nation has recently been reunited, Savon'el is in a time of great unease. A villain, Lord Banshe'e, is on a concerted quest for world domination. He violently scours the land in search of priceless, powerful artifacts, killing many along the way, driven by his pursuit of power.

Alongside a trusted, highly skilled faction of warriors, including Lord Commander Dekion DeLough and Lilith the Sorceress, heroine Morgan DeVilleforte strives to protect the peaceful integrity of her homeland. This valiant and diverse group will stop at nothing to wrest power from the evil Lord Banshe'e and his henchmen.

Transcending typical fantasy genre expectations, the book seamlessly blends elements of mystery, action, and character-based drama. The novel will appeal to a wide audience, thanks to the rewarding challenge of trying to determine where character allegiances lie, as well as the sweeping, beautifully crafted action sequences.

Much like its predecessor, *Temples* is epic in scope. Pool creates a fascinating world for the characters to inhabit. A host of beings, including clerics, elves, mages, and mercenaries, are expertly introduced; they are made both dimensional and believably motivated. Sharp dialogue helps maintain the book's atmosphere and credibility, with characters who are especially crucial to the advancement of story expounding on tricky war tactics or the different cultural mores of the region.

Though it features multiple story lines, all of the book's seemingly loose ends come together to tell one singular tale. Ultimately a story of good versus evil, *Temples* is excellent at testing the boundaries of what "goodness" truly means. Characters on both sides harbor dark secrets, some of which, DeVilleforte explains, "should never find the light of day."

The lengthy work moves at a quick pace, but the plot maintains momentum, unveiling exciting new twists and turns as DeVilleforte and company fight their way across the countryside. Its rapid movement is in keeping with the exhilarating nature of the adventurers' task, though some scenes run on too long or reestablish already-disclosed plot points during lengthy dialogues.

Temples transcends genre expectations, seamlessly blending elements of mystery, action, and character-based drama. It is an exciting, dynamic work of fantasy.

AMANDA ADAMS (October 23, 2017)

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