ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

GENERAL

The Exodus of Spiders and Falcons
Jason R. Jones
AuthorHouse
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Three Stars (out of Five)

The fantasy genre has a loyal entourage of followers who seek out strange worlds where reality isn't defined by accepted standards. The protagonists in these farfetched tales fight for territory, relics, and lovers. This is literature that writers like to develop into series, ongoing sagas with complicated plotlines and casts too weird for Ripley's Believe It or Not. Following one of these stories may require a glossary, a map, and a compass. *The Exodus of Spiders and Falcons* is a complex first novel in a proposed series of eighteen. It contains an extensive glossary and a detailed map, but no compass for anyone who gets lost easily.

Spiders and Falcons features a large cast of characters, but is centered on five heroic beings that fight lethal villains and crooked organizations on the mythical continent of Agara, located in the middle of another solar system. A knight, a dwarf, an elf, a minotaur, and a mystic work together in this physical and spiritual exodus as they clash with evil forces to possess an ancient artifact with special power. They must remove a scroll from the kingdom to examine it in the safety of a wizard's tower.

Jason R. Jones is a strong writer with excellent command of the English language. He knows how to create ambiance, and his pages are filled with powerful descriptions as his heroes and heroines are pursued by the assassins of the White Spider. Though the story is riveting in places, Jones tends to linger on brutal action and jumps from character to character. Most readers will not be able to follow the storyline without consulting the glossary frequently. It shouldn't be necessary to study in order to enjoy a novel, but unfortunately, this is the case here. Spiders and Falcons introduces too many ogres, trolls, and doppelgangers in quick succession without allowing the reader to get acquainted with the swordsmen, knights, and magical creatures that have already overwhelmed the text.

Jones is an honorable veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and resides in Naples, Florida. The next installment in this series will be *The Exodus of Dragons and Crowns*. Diehard fans of dark fantasy may find *The Exodus of Spiders and Falcons* a challenging read compared to the

simpler tales that occupy bookstore shelves. The series shows promise, but preliminary scrutiny of the glossary is recommended.

Julia Ann Charpentier