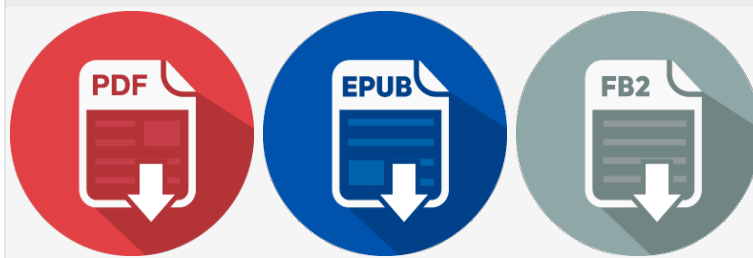


Deathstalker Rebellion *by* Simon R. Green



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***New York Times* bestselling author Simon R. Green continues his compelling space opera with the second novel in the Deathstalker series.** Owen Deathstalker—outlawed, with a price on his head and the blood of a mighty warrior lineage in his veins—had no choice but to embrace a dangerous destiny. With nothing to lose, only he had the courage to take up arms against Queen Lionstone XIV. Now as he gathers his unlikely allies—the legendary washed-up hero Jack Random, the beautiful pirate Hazel d’Arc, the original Deathstalker long since presumed dead, and the alien Hadenmen whose purposes no human can discern—the eyes of the downtrodden are upon him while the freedom of a galaxy hangs in the balance...



Reviews of the **Deathstalker Rebellion** *by* Simon R. Green

godlike

While this second entry in the life and times of Owen Deathstalker retains all of the action and fun of the first novel, an element of camp seems to have set in to make the series less fulfilling. Greene, every so often, seems to set the story aside momentarily in an effort to be funny, and the introduction of characters such as Half a Man indicates to me that Greene has decided to embrace some of the campiness of space opera and just run with it. Perhaps the most interesting thing about Deathstalker Rebellion is the fact that Owen Deathstalker, the main character by default, is the least interesting person in this entire drama. Outlawed by Lionstone XIV, this historian and aristocrat turned reluctant hero has set the rebellion against the Empire in motion, but - at least at this early stage of the game - he has become all but irrelevant. His close comrades - legendary rebel Jack Random, pirate and clonelegger Helen D'Ark, and bounty hunter Ruby Journey - are much more prominent and intriguing than he is.

The first real blow Deathstalker delivers to the Empire is an assault on the Income Tax and Tithe Headquarters on Golgotha, seat of the imperial government. He succeeds in throwing the Empire's finances into disarray, but the resulting blow to the planet's defenses allows an unknown alien ship to pop in and lay waste to the starport and other prominent facilities. This poses a problem, as the underground of rebels (including a number of fascinating aristocrats alongside hackers, clones, and individuals with esp abilities) already plotting their own rebellion on Golgotha itself aren't exactly happy about staging a rebellion that promises to just open up the way for their own annihilation by aliens. In the aftermath, however, all the rebel groups throughout the Empire come together for the first time in order to make plans to work together. Lionstone XIV, meanwhile, has to lay plans for a threat from within as well as without. Captain Silence and Investigator Frost (my favorite characters) somehow manage to avoid execution for their failures once again and end up out on the Rim shoring up planetary support. While there, they encounter a lost ship from two centuries earlier which turns out to be full of Ghost Warriors; these are animated, computer-enhanced corpses controlled by the dastardly AI from the planet Shub, known enemies who now bear watching - along with the Hadenmen, or Enemies of Humanity, who have joined up with Owen's forces after the Deathstalker freed them from their Tomb on the lost planet Haden.

The main action in this novel, though, focuses on the inhospitable planet Technos III, where the Wolfe Family is in charge of producing new stardrives for the imperial navy. Family clans are very complicated in this imperial universe, with each Family conspiring for greater power while individual Family members constantly plot against one another. Thus it is that several groups, not just the rebels, do not want to see the Wolfes produce a single new stardrive. Random and Ruby travel to the harsh environment to lead the rebel forces fighting for their planet, but the biggest surprises are laid by folks ostensibly loyal to the empire - it all comes together to make the ultimate climax quite interesting, to say the least.

Deathstalker Rebellion seems much longer than its 500+ pages. There are some redundancies built in to the story, characters have a knack for somehow managing to engage in pages of private dialogue in the midst of frantic activity going on all around them, and there are some real "oh, come on" moments in the story. You've got one character who returned 200 years ago from alien capture with only one side of his body - his other half is some sort of alien energy field. You've got heroes capable of doing all kinds of miracles thanks to an earlier trip through a mysterious maze of unknown alien origins, and that sometimes provides an easy out for Greene when characters find themselves in real trouble (sort of an alien ex machina). You have a civilization that has manufactured a weapon capable of wiping out a galaxy of worlds instantaneously, yet no one can invent a blaster that doesn't require two minutes to recharge between shots. Perhaps the biggest problem is the fact that events and characters are spread quite thin across the novel - you can go 100 pages without encountering the protagonist, for example. As the rebel efforts begin to coalesce in the future, though, I would expect this problem to diminish.

Despite the negatives, Deathstalker Rebellion is a fun, action-packed, sometimes slightly wacky, read; it's pure space opera and seemingly proud of it. The encounter with the Ghost Warriors is an especially intriguing, momentarily creepy, episode. I wouldn't recommend starting this series with this or any other sequel, though; there is just far too much going on in too many different places. If you enjoy space opera, you should enjoy the Deathstalker series; if you can take it or leave it when it comes to space opera, you may find yourself frustrated by the seemingly slow progression of events in these pages.

Cointrius

The Deathstalker series is seriously one of the genre's best! Action, adventure, mischief and mayhem are all included in the sweeping space opera that reads like a tv soap. Recently discovered the books were now available via Kindle and couldn't wait to reconnect with the series that I read long ago. Definitely worth the investment, go on and pick up every book in this series.

Envias

It's a space opera but with more moral questions, like how does a rebellion against an evil empire get it's funds?

A lot of double crossing.

Taur

This is not a well-written book. I'll start with the negatives.

1 - The typos that were rife in my copy of Deathstalker also appear here - it's somewhat mitigated, so I haven't noticed any characters being misnamed, but the little grammatical errors that filled up the first book are still present. Not nearly as confusing or as common as they were in the last book, but they remain distracting.

2 - Green is not a good writer of dialogue, and has a tendency to tell rather than to show. This is particularly the case with his "Court" scenes which are extremely long, make little sense - why are you plotting in the open? EVERYONE YOU ARE PLOTTING AGAINST CAN SEE AND HEAR YOU! - and it really drags the books down. Why/how does a hologram walk out of a room?

3 - Things don't make sense. This was kind of a problem in the first book, but I accepted it. Now, he's directly contradicting the events of the first book - Owen has "experience and contacts" on Mistworld? HE WAS THERE FOR LIKE 6 HOURS AND SPENT MOST OF THAT TIME STABBING PEOPLE. Do you think I didn't read the book or can't remember it? Further, he contradicts claims within this same book - a character thinks that a mission assigned to him will take years... but it turns out to only take a few weeks.

4 - If it can have a solution that comes out of nowhere - literally - it happens. Impossible escape? Alien invasion. Teleporter on the far side of the galaxy? Madness Maze powers. Hive Queen with millions of insect slaves? Mind powers. This book would be SO MUCH BETTER if his characters weren't given those stupid Madness Maze Powers at the end of the first book - why give everyone a deus ex machina?

5 - Character motivations are nonsensical. When has Owen ever seen the dark side of the Empire? Answer: he hasn't. He went to the one human world outside of Imperial control (for six hours) and it was a wretched hive of scum and villainy (although not really... there was a spa that Jack Random worked at, a working government, and some rather helpful people). Wouldn't that re-inforce his thinking the Empire was a good thing? Why are all these extremely privileged, powerful, connected people with EVERYTHING IMAGINABLE TO LOSE plotting against the Empire? It doesn't make any sense. Why is everyone stupid?

6 - Things that happened have no bearing on how things are now. At the end of the first book, the Underground won a pyrrhic victory and lost almost all of its front-line forces and its major supporters... now? It's all good. Previous events are mentioned, but seem to have no bearing on what is going on. The Hadenmen got stomped by the Empire in the first go-around centuries back, yet their technology is unimaginably superior... what?

These are the big problems with the book. The good parts:

1 - Green is really good at writing stabbing scenes. There's fewer of them in this book, but they are cool.

2 - Green has an extremely fertile, pulp-driven imagination. This is basically Burroughs turned into a space opera (rather than Sword and Planet) and there's some excellent stuff here - the Enemies of Humanity (former and current) are particular standouts.

3 - The world building is pretty interesting, and there are some pretty awesome little moments, mostly with Capt. Silence and Investigator Frost.

Okay, in writing this review I get it now - this is Dune meets Dragon Ball Z. Lots of really strong guys punching and stabbing each other in a space empire, but with the problems mentioned above.

All in all, this was NOT a book that I would recommend, and while I may continue with the series, it will be at the library.

Dangerous

The book is nice indeed, but shorter than the last at least it felt shorter.

I also wish there was more Owen in it as he is my favorite character but no matter the next one seems to be all about him.

all in all worth the money

Green seems to like too much the phrase

and if he/she did "something something", no one noticed.

But the writing is still great.

Altad

Mr. Greene keeps the pages sizzling through, front to back. His creative "Out of this World" vision is #1. Would be hard pressed to make it to the 'Big Silver Screen', but hope it can be realized. I We will luv it!..

Steelcaster

It's so very dense... lots of characters and usually I really enjoy that. But I've stopped halfway through this book and no longer find myself wanting to continue. I wish I could sing it's praise... but I just can't connect with the characters in any meaningful way.

Never just more of the same! Rather, ...Green goes exponential. Space opera twisted full of complex excitement, razor sharp edges, and hyper-rich characters. Not a "page turner"...it's a "page shredder"!

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