



Dark Legion

Paul Kleynhans

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The Empire made him a slave. They should have killed him.

Saul and his allies plot to steal the crown of Ubrain from the Emperor's vault. In the crown, he sees the means to unify his enslaved people and bring them to freedom. But their road is not a straight one, and they soon find themselves facing the Inquisition, and are caught in the middle of an unseen war as older powers work to twist the world to their own design. Saul has never been one to set easy tasks for himself, but he is determined to break the Empire's grip on his people, no matter how much blood must be spilled along the way. They should have killed him when they had the chance, for he will not be so lenient.

Dark Legion Details

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Author : Paul Kleynhans

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From Reader Review Dark Legion for online ebook

JM says

A good read with a not so good hero

Excellent read well worth the time to set down and read the series word word word word word word word

Andrew Rose says

How to free a nation? When Prince Saul is made a slave and taught to be an assassin he is stripped of his nation, his freedom and even his name. But after years of searching he has finally located an object that can help him restore his lost brother to the throne and nothing and no one will stop him. This was a fun read that was full of adventure and ale-making. The world is different enough from everything else I've read to make it satisfying and the characterization was engaging. It was a world full of people with faults that seem to keep their objectives just out of reach while also spurring them on to greater achievements. If you liked Robin Hobb's Farseer series or the Brent Weeks' Night Angel you'll be thrilled with this series.

Jonathan says

I received a free copy from Story Cartel. To be honest this year I have not been as active in reading as others. I really loved this book and all of its characters. A bit darker than I am used to but still enjoyable. I always love to find new authors and I hope to read more from Paul in future. I do agree that parts of the book are slow paced.

Hari says

Disclaimer: I received this book from a first-read giveaway.

Though I had to put this book down at the very beginning for work reasons, I finished the bulk of it in one sitting. Paul's writing is immersive and compelling, and you really feel for the characters as the story progresses.

At times, due to the complexity of some scenes, it can be hard to follow what everyone is doing (I had to go back and reread a few passages to make sure I was following it correctly), but overall it was a smooth read.

Jolien says

Review on my blog, The Fictional Reader

I want to start by stating that I didn't expect to enjoy it as much as I did. I don't really know why. When I first started reading, I was surprised to see this book is written in first person. I just had a look around my

shelves and noticed that while the YA fantasy books are sometimes/often written in first person, the adult fantasy book are almost all written in third person? That's really interesting to me, maybe I'll write a post on that soon. Anyway, this is an adult fantasy I'd say, written in first person.

WORLD

First of all, I want to say that I very much liked the different kingdoms (well, previous kingdoms) and their different climate. For example, the main character Saul comes from Ubrain. From the novel, you can gather that the people are darker-skinned there, there is a lot of sun and a desert-like climate. He frequently mentioned the warmth, the fact that his people are always looking for water sources and so on. So that's really interesting!

However, I have to admit that this aspect of the novel was lacking a bit, in my opinion. I would've really enjoyed a map, for example. And more description of the different places, where they are, their climate and people and so on. But especially a map. Maybe I didn't pay enough attention, but I can't really picture how the major cities are placed: Morwynne, Castralava, Sagemont... I don't know how they relate to each other.

PLOT

This was my favorite aspect I think. I didn't expect to be so intrigued by the story. So the main line throughout the story is that Saul is looking to free his people, the citizens of Ubrain, from the emperor. His people were enslaved when the empire conquered Ubrain, and he wants to right that wrong. To do so, he must first find two artifacts that the royal house of Ubrain has to wear/use to be considered as the rightful king.

So this story is certainly captivating. I wanted to keep reading, even though I was supposed to be studying. I was intrigued, and wanted to find out how Saul would end up. Would he achieve what he set out to do? If so, how? Those are the kind of questions that kept going through my head. When I put it down, I found myself thinking: "where will this story go from here?".

I found the story to be interesting, because Saul didn't really go about freeing his people in the way you think he would? He has very unique methods to get where he wants. I mean: ale? Never would've thought of that. I highly enjoyed that part.

I do have to admit that at times, I found certain things to be a bit too convenient? Mostly, everything that has to do with Malakai, the character. I don't know what purpose he serves really, other than helping the characters get where they need to be... Maybe that'll be clearer in the second book?

By the way, I loved that some words in this book were (I believe) South-African! The author is from South-Africa, and he mentions an ale called "oud bruin", which means "old brown" in Dutch (and I assume South-African). And there was Oos (which is very close to Oost, the Dutch word for East). I find it interesting he incorporated his language in these little ways!

Lastly, I found it a bit hard to deduce how much time had passed at certain points? For example, it takes him a year to achieve a certain part of the plan, but when I was reading it felt more like days? I barely realized a year had passed already...

CHARACTERS

So, let's take a look at Saul. He's very much a grey character. And no, I don't mean that he's dull. During the entire book, it's hard to figure out whether he's actually a good person or not. It seems to be a "the end justifies the means" situation. It's very interesting, and it leads to me not knowing how I feel about him. I'm

sympathetic towards him, because of everything he went through. But then he made decisions, which he KNEW were horrible. But he went through with them anyway. It's a very interesting situation really.

I do have one question. I don't understand WHY the emperor Solas would choose to train Saul, who he turned into a slave, as a torturer and assassin. In my opinion, he is the LAST PERSON I would train that way. Because of his heritage. I just don't get it?

Then there are other characters such as Marcus. I can't really say much, but I feel like I didn't get a chance to truly know the person. A certain situation prevented me from seeing what was really him, and what wasn't. I can't really explain more, because I feel like it's a spoiler? But just read this! And Neysa, who I liked but feel like I don't really know.

I highly enjoyed this book. Like I said, the plot really captivated me. I liked the fact that the main character was neither a hero nor a villain. I would recommend this book if you like fantasy, because it's a fun read. I do have some questions about the timeline of the story, and the world building. I do think I'll read the second book, to find out how the story ends.

Rob Cooke says

"A dark gripping story!"

This book is a dark story that drops you in at the deep end and starts expanding and explaining as it goes leaving you scratching your head at times but keeps you reading as you learn more.

The characters develop slowly but it is worth the wait as the story unfolds. The main characters become full bodied and you find yourself torn as to how to feel about them overall.

The performance is fantastic and the narrator gives gravitas to the situation and helps you connect further with the story.

In summation this is a great fantasy book with elements of magic and political intrigue. I look forward to seeing the next instalment of this series.

This book was given to me free at my request and I provided this voluntary review.

Amanda Crawford says

An entertaining and amusing story that draws you in then makes you want to keep on reading. Good characters and plot. On the whole the story gets straight to the point and there is not a whole lot of excess fluff to pad it out. Liked how the authors obvious like of beer and coffee shine through in the story line.

Shymsal says

3.75. The story of the youngest Ubraian prince, enslaved as a boy and forced to become the plaything of the Emperor's Head Torturer is unlikely to start well. And it doesn't. It starts with an act of bloody revenge as Saul, the prince, who has managed to work his way up to his "Master"'s apprentice, slaughters the torturer

and manages to slip out of the Palace and make good his escape. He is working with Marcus, the leader of a rebellion who himself had been captured and sent to the dungeon for torture and execution. The two men's friendship is difficult, but one that Saul treasures. As does Marcus... Sometimes.

Saul has set himself the rather gargantuan tasks of finding the Royal Regalia of his conquered kingdom (by long-standing tradition necessary to legitimize any ruler), freeing his equally enslaved people, and finding his older brother, the rightful King and a great fighter -- which Saul is not. Afterwards, he and his brother will fight to reclaim their land. He has no intention of sitting on Ubraian's throne as he sees himself as blood drenched monster and assassin. Though he is trying not to be one anymore.

Naturally there's a girl, adventure, possible old gods, secrets to be uncovered and strange magic and critters.

An interesting and powerful read, that sometimes wanders into swashbuckling and even a bit of social commentary.

Thanks to Netgalley for providing me a copy in exchange for an honest review.

Charles Ray says

Prince Saul Baz Sharmin, an Ubrain, has been a slave assigned duties as an apprentice executioner for a decade, until he meets Marcus, a Prylean, leader of a group of revolutionaries against the evil empire of King Solas. When Saul kills his master, the chief executioner Angus, and he and Marcus escape, instead of freedom, they find their troubles only beginning.

In the port town of Sagemont, in search of the Crown of Ubrain that will help him restore his brother to the throne and free his people from Solas' clutches, Saul finds himself alternating between using the healing skills from his former life as a physician and having to apply his executioner's talents on more than one occasion. To further complicate his life, he gets caught up with an enigmatic and angry young magician and ensnared by the demi-god, Malakai, who has his own agenda.

As complication piles atop complication, Saul finds himself fighting as much just to stay alive as to free his people.

I received a free copy of Dark Legion, book one in the Blood of Blood series by Paul Kleynhans, in exchange for my review.

The author masterfully keeps the action moving at an almost breakneck pace, while interspersing bits of rip-roaring humor. While the use of modern slang and profanity in the book is a bit strange at first, as you get to know the characters, it seems to be . . . well, in character. This left me looking forward to reading the next book in the series.

C.P. Cabaniss says

I received a free copy of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Let me begin by saying that three stars is NOT a bad rating. I really enjoyed this book.

Saul, our main character and first person narrator, is a Prince/surgeon who was made a slave over a decade ago when his kingdom was conquered and his parents killed. In that time Saul has been turned into a torturer/assassin for Emperor Solas (the man who killed his family). But he's been plotting and planning his

revenge the entire time. Now he's free and on a mission to restore his kingdom.

There were several things I really liked about this novel and the characters were one of them. Saul, Marcus, and Neysa are the main characters, but there are other memorable ones as well. These three are complex, conflicted, and overall interesting. They also make a great team because they each bring something different to the group.

The magic in this novel was quite fascinating as well. There are several different ways that magic is used within this novel. They are related, but distinct. True Names play a role (which I love because I've always found the concept of true names fascinating), and can be used to control people and elements when spoken correctly by the correct people. There is also more a general use of magic that relates more to witchcraft. It all blends together very well and I found the magic, while not drastically different than that presented in many other fantasy novels, had its own variations that gave it its own feel.

The main reason this novel is only getting a three star rating from me is the flow of the writing. While I think the novel is well written, there was too much detail in many parts. Particularly toward the beginning of the novel it felt like every mundane detail of Saul's life was getting attention when some of that could have easily been condensed. There was also some rushing and abrupt transitions that threw me off at times. Again, most of this was toward the beginning of the novel. The last half of the novel didn't have many of these problems.

There was some slight romance in the novel, but it wasn't overly done which was nice. Saul was a good narrator because he was so conflicted over the things he had done and was doing and had to come to terms with his actions. There is still plenty of development for him, but his progression was very well done.

Overall I thought this was a really fun and interesting story. I am already looking forward to book two which will come out later this year. There are definitely some questions I would like to have answered in that installment of the story. A nice beginning to this new fantasy series.

Holly Newhouse says

This book was amazing! It drew me right in from the start and kept me there until the last page and then left me wanting for so much more! My favorite kind of book!

Doug Cookson says

A cracking novel. Can't wait for the next in the series.

Claire says

Saul makes for an interesting man character because he's often making choices that show him to be someone that I wouldn't want to meet. He's often in situations where he has to make hard choices and sometime those choices show just how ruthless he can be. But since his choices aren't made out of self interest, but rather they are made so that he can free his people from slavery, and it's hard to know what you wouldn't do if you were having to make those choices. So in the end I'm left with a main character I'm not sure I like but that I find I

can respect.

This story contains great world building and characters, both come alive on the page, leaving me almost able to smell, taste, and see everything that is happening.

I loved the creativity of the story, I never knew what was going to happen next.

Excellent narration, the character voices were distinct and recognizable and seemed to match the personalities of the characters. The delivery was well paced and matched the tone of the book.

I received a free copy of this book from the author and/or narrator and/or publisher and I voluntarily wrote this honest review.

Teri says

I received this book in exchange for an honest review. I really enjoyed this book and watching the struggles and the fight to overcome slavery and reuniting a kingdom which had been destroyed. I loved the characters and storyline and felt drawn into the story. I can't wait to read book 2.

Jamie Pancake says

This book is set in what seems like medieval times, Saul is a slave who used to be a part of the royalty in his city. He was kidnapped and tortured and made to be a slave. While he suffers, he plots his revenge on those who stand in the way between him and the riches of his city. He wants to unite his people and bring back the glory of his city, but first he has to escape and get back to his city. This story was very fascinating, and I liked that it was told from Saul's point of view, it gave me a better point of view of his pain and how he has suffered. It also gives insight on his feelings of anger and getting revenge on those responsible for the suffering of his people.
