



The Drowning Eyes

Emily Foster

Download now

Read Online →

The Drowning Eyes

Emily Foster

The Drowning Eyes Emily Foster

When the Dragon Ships began to tear through the trade lanes and ravage coastal towns, the hopes of the archipelago turned to the Windspeakers on Tash. The solemn weather-shapers with their eyes of stone can steal the breeze from raiders' sails and save the islands from their wrath. But the Windspeakers' magic has been stolen, and only their young apprentice Shina can bring their power back and save her people.

Tazir has seen more than her share of storms and pirates in her many years as captain, and she's not much interested in getting involved in the affairs of Windspeakers and Dragon Ships. Shina's caught her eye, but that might not be enough to convince the grizzled sailor to risk her ship, her crew, and her neck.

"The Drowning Eyes is a magic- and wind-filled adventure, peopled with excellent and strong characters. The story made me want to sail the coastline on a boat of my own and see if I could call up a storm. In Emily Foster's debut novella, apprentice Windspeaker Shina must return her people's power to them before the Dragon Ships destroy everything . . . unless Shina destroys it by accident first. So vividly rendered, you'll be tempted to wash the salt-spray from your clothing after reading *The Drowning Eyes*." - Fran Wilde, author of *Updraft*

The Drowning Eyes Details

Date : Published January 12th 2016 by Tor.com

ISBN : 9780765387684

Author : Emily Foster

Format : Paperback 134 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Novella, Lgbt, Short Stories, Adventure, Pirates, Fiction

 [Download The Drowning Eyes ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Drowning Eyes ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Drowning Eyes Emily Foster

From Reader Review The Drowning Eyes for online ebook

Saphana says

I feel, I have to explain my rating.

I'm tumblr-damaged, insofar as American citizens seem to insist on PoC, female writers with PoC female lead characters. I know, you'd insist on giving this the highest rating, based on those two facts alone. Bonus points for the captain being a lesbian.

If that's all you require, then CHECK. This should have been a five star review.

To me, it's not. This novella started out so fine, so perfect. Yes, female pirates. Yes, PoC pirates. But most of all, the fine line between power and the cost of it. The prose was as rough as the storms called, and I related it to the theme and thought, it was most fitting.

Then I reached the 70+ percent mark and the story was hacked off. I got there, perfectly sure to have one or two thoughts about what this story was intended to do and - with the hack, all my thoughts were gone.

I have thought about this for more than a day now and I really, really can't tell you, what this thing was about. I fell for the words "Stormcaller" and "Windspeaker". I blame Brandon Sanderson.

In the end, this story provides no suspense, no thought-inducing new revelations - nothing. It just drives you out with that cut and after that, it's just enduring until you reach the end.

Amanda says

Another terrific novella from the TOR series. This one has a fantastic list of very diverse characters that really shine. The story is engaging and the ending was unexpected.

Karishma says

Superb and gripping for the first 4 chapters, with excellent worldbuilding which has you hungry for more - okayish for the next 2.5 and then the end leaves you completely dissatisfied.

But this is the author's debut and I'm looking forward to get refining her craft in her future novels!

Eon ?Windrunner? says

This one started out slow and then got really interesting and I was hooked and then the climax and the aftermath just kinda didn't do it for me at all.

Still, I will check out the author's future books.

The Shayne-Train says

This was an entertaining story about hip-dialogue sailors and weather witches running from vaguely Viking guys....I guess? The magic system in this world was pretty harsh, which is a plus. And, like I said, the dialogue was pretty snappy, a little Mamet-meets-Whedon. But I didn't really get into it, and the characters didn't really end up giving two shits about each other, so I didn't end up giving two shits about *them*.

One huge plus though: the main character is LGBT, and.....who cares? There's no "I have to hide who/what I like cuz OPRESS'D" or "we have to feature kinky sex every other paragraph cuz SEX0RZ." She just liked who she liked, and it wasn't a big deal. VERY refreshing, and kinda my favorite part of the book.

Naz (Read Diverse Books) says

Full review can be found in my blog: <http://wp.me/p7a9pe-7q>

Strongly recommended for fans of Fantasy. The characters are interesting and diverse, the adventures are dangerous, and the magic is awesome, as in literally awe-inspiring.

Nikki says

There's a lot about this novella that's fascinating — the image of the Windspeakers having to sacrifice their eyes and receiving stones instead is just, wow; I'm pretty sure that's going to stick with me. The crew are cool, too; crabby and sympathetic and brave and practical. A mixture, like real people, and able to really get on each other's nerves like real people, too. There are some awesome descriptions of weather magic, too: of the way the protagonist feels it in her body.

The flipside of that is that that there feels like there's too much going on. There's the whole magic system, then there's the pirate crew, and it doesn't fit that well together, because all of a sudden the pirates are really invested in something that is, well, above their pay grade. From transporting a runaway to saving a group of people that they don't even necessarily sympathise with... And the Dragon Ships; that whole plot thread isn't really resolved, because it's implied there's a lot more going on with them and yet the story more or less ends with a minor confrontation.

It doesn't feel complete, like there's just too much still up in the air. It's not bad as a story, but it feels rushed and inconclusive.

Originally posted here.

Rachel (Kalanadi) says

3.5 stars, now that I've had more time to think on it. I liked the ending the most (unexpected!). Solid writing. Distinct, engaging characters. Running from the nameless invaders' ships...? That was the only weaker part,

but the rest of the story was stronger than that one detail.

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

3.5 of 5 stars at The BiblioSanctum <http://bibliosanctum.com/2016/01/26/n...>

Tor.com kicks off the year with another irresistible lineup of novellas in early 2016, and leading the charge is Emily Foster's debut release *The Drowning Eyes*. In this slim little volume, a lone survivor sets off on an adventure in a wind-swept coastal fantasy to retrieve what was stolen from her and her people. With the Windspeakers' island enclave pillaged and destroyed by the Dragon Ships, villages along the coastline are left unprotected and open to attacks. Now it's up to Shina, a young apprentice, to reclaim the weather-shaping magic of the Windspeakers in order to save the villagers and drive back the raiders.

Determined and resourceful, Shina manages to find a captain desperate for funds and bargains for passage on her ship. Tazir and her crew are unhappy at the prospect of transporting their new guest at first, but they soon come around when everyone realizes the importance of Shina's quest.

I know I can be a harsh judge of novellas, often with my main complaint being a wish for them to be longer or feel more complete. I'm afraid this is once again the case with *The Drowning Eyes*, which feels a lot like a too large idea trying to fit into too small a package. This admittedly weakens the story somewhat. But be that as it may, I want to underscore a few things I thought this novella did amazingly well and other areas that might have been limited by the short fiction format but shone through nonetheless.

First, the characters. I might not have spent enough time with them to call them truly memorable, but they were delightful to get to know. I have a soft spot for roguish sailor types, and the crew endeared themselves to me for the brief time I got to read about them. Their personalities were all wonderfully unique, and I enjoyed the interplay between them and the way they gradually accepted Shina into the fold and decided to throw their support behind her.

Second, the magic. Before you go thinking that this sounds like your typical feel-good quest narrative-type adventure story, you should get a load of the Windspeaker's powers. Weather magic, the kind that is central to the plot in *The Drowning Eyes*, is a strictly guarded medium. Apprentices are brought to the enclave at a young age, and when they are deemed ready to don the mantle of a full Windspeaker, their eyes are gouged from their sockets and replaced by stones. It's true that I may not remember the names of all the characters in this novella a year, three years, or five years from now, but I can pretty much guarantee I'll remember this gruesome little detail about Windspeaker tradition for the rest of my life. Also, seeing as this is the third book I've read in as many weeks about ships and characters with weather-based magic that can control winds, it's refreshing to see a new twist on a familiar idea, even if it is kind of disturbing.

Lastly, the world-building. I certainly liked what I saw, even if this story merely gave me a limited view through a tiny window. The rich descriptions paint a very lively picture of coastlines and the cultures of their inhabitants. The place feels very much alive, and even a small setting like life aboard a ship seems to have its own atmosphere.

And it was all over way too soon. I wish I could have held off the ending, but it came upon me like one of the story's magical storms, and after a whirlwind of confused and sudden events, the book was finished. This is rather unfortunate, because a satisfying ending might have left me liking this book even more, but as it is, I felt the conclusion felt too incomplete—jarringly so.

However, as you can see from the many positives I talked about, *The Drowning Eyes* was still a book I really enjoyed. I think this would have made an excellent full-length novel with a more fleshed out plot and developed characters, but if given the chance to read more stories set in this world, I certainly wouldn't say no. An impressive debut novella.

Thomas Wagner says

Full review coming.

Lis Carey says

Tazir has been plying the sealanes in her trade ship for many years, and is facing the same challenges all her competitors are, in these hard days when the Dragonships have started ravaging those some sealanes and the communities near them. She has no interest in anything other than keeping her ship and crew afloat and profitable--even if only barely--and no interest in challenging the Dragonships.

Shina is a young woman fleeing something, probably an unwanted marriage, but she has the money to hire the ship to make an unlikely journey, and that's what Tazir and her crew care about. That's the business they're in. It's no fault of theirs that they don't know what her real purpose is, or that they start to like her quite a bit.

Shina is an apprentice Windspeaker.

A major source of the Windspeakers' power has been stolen, and for reasons that gradually become clear, only an apprentice can recover it for them. Shina is leading Tazir and her shipmates into the heart of what they want to avoid.

Foter unfolds her world and her characters in measured layers, making it and them fascinating and compelling. I hope there's more in this world. Highly recommended.

Anya says

Fantastic story full of weather magic and swashbuckling! And a whole lot of characters with dark skin *gasp* and women who like other women *double gasp*. The pacing was fantastic though a couple of times I got confused about a time jump. The magic of the world is very cool but has some serious consequences that will leave you wondering if it is worth it. I love fantasy that makes me think!

Mark says

This book was a really pleasant surprise. I didn't know much about it in advance; in fact, I randomly picked it from a list of fantasy novellas (I'm in a novella-reading mood lately) and only skimmed quickly through the synopsis.

For a short book, the characters felt realistic, and I *loved* the always-grumpy Captain Tazir...she made for a great lead, and her interactions with the rest of the cast were one of the highlights of this book.

I'm not a reader who is typically concerned with magic systems, but I thought this one was unique and essential to the plot. I won't give the details here, because part of the discovery is what makes it fun.

One minor complaint is that the Dragon Ship raiders, the ominous villains of the tale, weren't really that well-developed. There was so much more we could have learned about them, but we were mostly left in the dark. Then again, this wasn't truly a story about them; it was a story about the ship's crew being placed in a difficult situation, and how their relationships with one another drove their decisions. And in the character of Shina, it was the story of how one young woman struggles with her sense of duty.

The short length was both a blessing and a curse. I really like the concept of a "one and done" novella, but this book is just *begging* to be part of a larger series (or even expanded into a full-length novel itself). There was a great deal of world-building packed into a small number of pages, and past events in the lives of the characters just hinted upon.

Unfortunately, I can't find much information about the author online. This book was published in 2016, and I'm curious to know if she's writing anything else. I would definitely read more of her work.

Robyn says

My only real complaint here is that I wanted more - I felt like this could have been incredible in novel length! Interesting world, strong characters.

Tammy says

The nitty-gritty: A compact story with big ideas, featuring a fascinating magic system and fierce and determined female characters.

I was immediately drawn to this novella by the cover: a beautiful and fierce-looking woman in the middle of a stormy sea. What was happening to her? It is book covers like this that make me want to read a book, and I dove in, hoping to find adventure, danger and an answer to my question. And I was not disappointed. ***The Drowning Eyes*** packs a lot of story into such a small page count, and introduces readers to some very unique characters. Foster takes the idea of a group of women who can control the wind and bring forth storms through magic, and tells the story of a girl who has been given a difficult task to complete before she is considered a full-fledged "Windspeaker."

Tazir is the captain of the *Giggling Goat*, and along with her small crew, she sails among the Tahiri Islands, transporting travelers from island to island, assuring them safe passage through choppy waves and storm-prone skies. As they wait in a port, looking for their next customer, they are approached by a young girl named Shina, who offers them a huge amount of money to get to a distant island. She says her parents are forcing her to marry against her will, but Tazir knows she's hiding something. But, unwilling to turn down such a huge fare, Tazir takes the job.

Shina *is* hiding a secret, a big one: she's a Windspeaker, someone who can bring forth storms with magic. She's on a quest to find and bring back an icon that is sacred to her people. With Shina's help, the ship is able to evade a dangerous enemy, but how long can they possibly hide from them?

I love stories that take place at sea, and much of the action happens on the *Giggling Goat*, as Tazir and her crew get to know Shina, who is clearly not the innocent rich girl she appears to be. Foster did a great job with the atmosphere of the story, and she literally made me feel the sea spray on my skin, and I could clearly imagine the rocking of the ship as the winds kicked up.

Foster's magic system is strange and disturbing. I don't want to give away too much, but I will tell you that Windspeakers have a tradition that when they come of age and are ready, their eyes are exchanged for rocks. I'm usually not the squeamish type, but this one story element made me cringe each time it was brought up. But still, I loved the idea of weather-related magic. This certainly isn't the first story to use this idea, but I've never seen it done quite this way before.

The Drowning Eyes not only features multi-ethnic characters, but gay and bisexual ones as well, so for those looking for more diversity in your stories, this one has it all. Throw in a mostly female cast and you have a short but powerful story that delivers on many levels.

I think Tor.com is off to a great start in 2016 with their first published novella of the year!

This review originally appeared on The Speculative Herald. This review originally appeared on Books, Bones & Buffy
