



The Best of the Realms: The Stories of Elaine Cunningham

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Enter the Realms of Elaine Cunningham!

For the first time in one volume, the classic Forgotten Realms tales of Elaine Cunningham are joined by three all new stories!

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The Best of the Realms: The Stories of Elaine Cunningham Details

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Author : Elaine Cunningham

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From Reader Review The Best of the Realms: The Stories of Elaine Cunningham for online ebook

Andreas says

Somewhat disappointing. Most of the stories I had already read, of those new to me, only one was really enjoyable.

Jesse says

This book of shortstories was a lot of fun for anyone who is a fan of Elaine Cunningham.

She includes great introductions to each tale, setting the premis or reminding the reader of each story's conection to other novels.

You can really see her progression in her stories as you go through the book, from her oldest to her newest stuff. I can honestly say that I think she has really improved (don't get me wrong, I like her old books too!) and I think she is one of the most talented writers that Wizards of the Coast have on their payroll.

John Dixon says

I like that they had Elaine do all of the stories for this one. It seemed less disjointed. I like her writing and there were several twists throughout in the short stories themselves. However, it's hard to get any sort of rhythm just in a short story. If you're looking for more Forgotten Realms, go for this one of the "Best of", this one is probably the best.

Snail in Danger (Sid) Nicolaides says

Nothing really awesome here, though there were a few interesting glimpses of Elaith.

Sarah says

Great collection of Elaine Cunningham's stories of the Forgotten Realms. She writes such engaging characters! Her short stories/novellas give us a chance to catch up with our favorite characters before, in between, and after her novels of their adventures.

Richard Rouillard says

Stefan says

I was cleaning and rearranging my bookshelves last night when I came across this book and several hours later (no further cleaning of bookshelves occurred) I put it back on the shelf, gently read once more. Re-reading a book is like visiting an old friend, you are happy to see them again but a little sadder when they leave.

The Best of the Realms: The Stories of Elaine Cunningham is a collection of 15 short stories Ms. Cunningham has produced over the years. Three of them are published here for the first time and the others have been published in various "Realms of" anthologies and Dragon magazine. I found this to be a very enjoyable collection and highly recommend it to anyone who enjoys the Forgotten Realms series. One caveat, while these are all wonderful tales it does help if the reader is familiar with the Forgotten Realms, especially Ms. Cunningham's works. Here is a listing of each of the stories in the anthology and a little bit about what I thought of each.

#1 - The Knights of Samalar - This story helps to give some closure to the events of the final Harpers novel "Thornhold". This was an excellent story with an intriguing cast of characters. While "Thornhold" is one of the few books by Ms. Cunningham that I have not read, it stood well on its own.

#2 - The Bargain - This story takes place following the events in "Elfshadow". Danilo Thann and Arilyn Moonblade are great characters because they both have such intriguing histories. I enjoy Danilo's and Arilyn's banter, it makes for a very enjoyable read.

#3 - Elminster's Jest - While this is not a short story, but a ballad, it is still very entertaining. It kept me giggling for quite some time.

#4 - The More Things Change - This story gives a little history on my favorite of Ms. Cunningham's characters, the moon elf, Elaith Craulnober. It goes back and gives the reader a little insight into how Elaith came to be who he is today, think "Batman Begins" in a very condensed form.

#5 - The Direct Approach - This story centers around Lirel, the drow from the "Starlight and Shadows" series. I am not as familiar with this series as I am the rest of Ms. Cunningham's work but it was entertaining none the less and I really enjoyed the ending. Word to the wise, never under estimate a scantily clad barbarian with a really big sword.

#6 - Secrets of the Blood, Spirits of the Sea - I have always enjoyed "origin" tale and this one gives the origin of the sahuagin. I found myself really caught up in the story and thought the ending, while sad, was fantastic.

#7 - The Great Hunt - This is another story featuring Elaith and Arilyn. This time Danilo is absent and you get to witness the interaction between Arilyn and Elaith. On the surface they seem polar opposites but they have more in common than they care to admit.

#8 - Speaking with the Dead - This is another entertaining story involving Danilo, Arilyn, and Elaith. This time Danilo comes to Elaith's rescue. I enjoyed the scene where you get to see a little of Elaith's persona

behind the cool facade.

#9 - Stolen Dreams - This the same story as "Speaking with the Dead", but from another characters point of view. You get some interesting back story on some the nobles of Tethyr.

#10 - Fire is Fire - This was the darkest story in the anthology. I love first person narration and from what I have heard it can be difficult to pull off, but Ms. Cunningham does a stellar job. The story is told from the point of view of two combatants in the siege of WaterDeep (for those of who have not read The City of Splendors, I highly recommend it) that are battling each other. The ending left me speechless for a few moments. Tales of war are not as glorious as they might seem.

#11 - Possessions - Ms. Cunningham penned this as her first and only ghost story to date. It is certainly dark and rather depressing. I enjoy stories where the ghost doesn't realize he or she is a ghost until later. This is also a story of actions and their consequences with a nice spell battle to boot!

#12 - A Little Knowledge -What would you do if you knew the potential outcomes to every situation? These characters are from the counselors and Kings series. Again, I am not as familiar with these characters as I am with others but that did not detract from the story whatsoever.

#13 - Games of Chance - This story features Elaith again. Aside from "The More Things Change", this is my second favorite Elaith tale. You get a little taste of the rage that Elaith keeps chained away inside him. He releases a little in this story with deadly effect.

#14 - Tribute - This story takes place long before WaterDeep was established. It was a great story with the "maiden dragon sacrifice" theme but with a twist. Scenes from the movie "DragonSlayer" came to mind while I was reading this story.

#15 - Answered Prayers - This is another story featuring Lirel and her companions. I enjoy stories where characters grow. I am definitely going to finish the Starlight and Shadows trilogy get more back story on these characters.
