



The Stone Light

Kai Meyer, Elizabeth D. Crawford (Translator)

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Evil forces have invaded Venice - the city that Merle and Serafin call home. Luckily, the two friends hold secrets that just might stop the pharaoh from destroying their ancient city.

Merle has within her spirit of the Flowing Queen, a mysterious legendary force who serves as her guide. Indeed, the Queen's voice has led Merle to Vermithrax, a winged stone lion. And together they are on a mission to Hell to enlist help from Lord Light.

Meanwhile, Serafin remains in Venice. He's joined a group of rebel boys who are plotting to assassinate the pharaoh. But can a group so small really kill the biggest, most powerful man on earth?

Though they follow separate courses, Merle and Serafin will both encounter unexpected betrayals and startling revelations. And together they learn that evil takes many shapes in the world of Dark Reflections.

The Stone Light Details

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From Reader Review The Stone Light for online ebook

The King of the Groovy (I'm SO groovalicious~) says

Not done with it yet...

Asghar Abbas says

Disappointing follow up

Lindsey says

As the second book in the trilogy it's only natural that more of the story and the world will continue to unfold. Unlike some series where each book is its own story, this is one large story spread over 3 different books. This iteration, as it takes the reader deeper into the history and the titans that are clashing, becomes darker than its predecessor, which will mean that the third book will progress even further.

The action in the book is faster as the stakes are higher, but overall, this story has all of the same issues as the first book. I feel like Meyer is rushing the reader through the plot and leaving out necessary details in description, motivation, and inner character qualities that would make this more than simply another adventure story. There's often not enough detail to create a clear understanding of the picture he's painting, but more so than that, another 100 pages or so would add so much color to the novel if they were dedicated to helping the reader understand more about the two main characters and their worlds. I want to know more about the Thieves' Guild to which Serafin once belonged, how he was able to get into it at such a young age, and more about his past and what motivates him. The same goes for Merle and the orphanage.

-Lindsey Miller, www.lindseyslibrary.com

Evelyn says

Awesome book. I read the first book in middle school, so I'd forgotten practically everything about the world of this series, but it was easy to get back into the swing of things. One of my favorite things about these books is the juxtaposition of cultures that don't historically mesh - Czarist kingdom and Egyptians and Venice (and Hell!), with the twist of magitech and myth. Definitely doesn't have the same feeling as steampunk, but it has the same mix of the fantastic into a certain milieu's flavor. Makes me want to write something like it, only mine. Vermithrax is far and away my favorite character, though Merle and Serafin are empathetic viewpoint characters.

Some legitimately scary parts: (view spoiler)

Nic says

Much like the first of the trilogy, this book was strong on creativity and cool worldbuilding, pretty good with tension, and startlingly good at creepiness.

I wonder if the vividness had something to do with its being translated into English, which seemed to give it some unusual word and phrase choices. Occasionally, this didn't work so well, or was just kind of weird - for example, it kept using "from one moment to the next" to mean "suddenly" or "instantly," and only context really told me that was what it meant. Occasionally, too, there were weird editing things, like characters mentioning things as if we'd seen them before when I'm pretty sure we haven't, and can't find them when I flip back. (Someone ducks behind "the rock wall," and I'm like, "Wait, there was a rock wall in the middle of the field? Since when?") Also, some occasional repetitiveness.

Pop quiz: How many legs do the Lilim have?

- A. More than humans
- B. More than is natural
- C. "Too many"

Vermithrax is awesome, in a not-very-characterized way. I liked Merle better in this book than the last one, because she stands up to the Flowing Queen, who is sometimes downright obnoxious. Also, because I was afraid that she (Merle) was going to give herself up to Lord Light to save Junipa at the end, and I'm sorry, I know Junipa's your best buddy, but she's possessed by evil and I NEVER LIKED HER ANYWAY. (Though the way she's possessed is one of those "startlingly creepy" moments; well done.) But then Merle's all, "Screw this, I'll just knock my possessed friend unconscious and we can carry her with us! And by the way, STFU Flowing Queen!" Go Merle. Have an Awesomeness Cookie.

Lalapeya kinda drove me a little nuts. Not too much, because she isn't around for long, but she's all, "I'm ancient and secretive, and I count on my bewitching smile to get my way, yet still want your sympathy because wahhh, no one wants to be my friend!" I like her - relationship? - with Merle, though, and I'm curious to learn more about it. I'm also curious about Winter, who kind of skips randomly through the middle of the book, but does seem to be up to something at the end.

It's definitely interesting that we have so many ancient, even godlike characters (the Flowing Queen, Lalapeya), who are to various degrees helpless, but still manipulate our human protagonists and even Vermithrax, though he himself is old and powerful. I like him partly because it's refreshing to have a character who seems to be loyal and straightforward, a character we can count on.

Please please can we please visit the Czarist country in the last book please I can has Russians?

Oh, also, Science is Eeevil. Didn't you know? ~~Especially when it's actually magic~~ It is not magic, it's totally SCIENCE!

Aleshanee says

4.5 Sterne für eine tolle Fortsetzung - ich liebe die Ideenvielfalt und die spannenden Abenteuer :)

Nur noch das Zarenreich widersteht den Heeren des Pharaos, der mit Mumienkriegern und Skarabäusschwärmen die Welt überschwemmt und allerorts nur noch Ödnis hinterlässt. Und Venedig, die letzte Hochburg, widerstand mit der Hilfe der Fließenden Königin den Ägyptischen Hohepriestern, doch auch sie droht nun dem Pharao in die Hände zu fallen.

Merle ist allerdings auf dem steinernen Löwen Vermithrax auf dem direkten Weg in die Hölle, wo sie sich von keinem geringerem als Lord Licht Hilfe erhofft, während Serafin dem Geheimnis des Spiegelmachers auf den Grund gekommen ist - und in den Gassen der Lagunenstadt regt sich der Widerstand.

Viel ist geschehen und auch im zweiten Band geht es abenteuerlich weiter. Merle und Serafin erzählen im Wechsel und tauchen dabei immer mehr ab in den Mythen und alten Aberglauben noch älterer Geschichten. Unglaublich wie Kai Meyer immer wieder bekannte Details aus Märchen und Legenden einstreut, wie Sphixe, Nixen oder sogar gefallene Engel, und daraus etwas ganz neues kreiert. Er verwandelt unsere Welt in eine Landschaft aus Traum, Magie und Wirklichkeit und ich war wieder begeistert, wie wunderbar er das alles in eine perfekt aufgebaute Geschichte verwandeln kann.

Es gibt immer wieder große Spannungsmomente, dazwischen kleine Verschnaufpausen und vor allem das große Staunen, mit welchen Ideen und Widrigkeiten die Protagonisten zu kämpfen haben. Obwohl es recht einfach geschrieben und flüssig zu lesen ist, kann man sehr schön abtauchen und mitfeiern und erlebt alles bildlich vor sich. Das kann er wirklich super und genau deshalb liebe ich seine Bücher auch sehr!

Nichts ist so wie es scheint und weder Merle, noch Serafin oder Junipa hätten geahnt, welche Fallen auf sie warten, wer welche Interessen vertritt und wer sie am Ende doch noch verrät. Ein abwechslungsreiches Abenteuer mit vielen phantastischen Elementen und großartigen Charakteren, die über sich hinauswachsen! Freu mich sehr auf den dritten Band und bin froh, diese Reihe endlich nochmal zu lesen :)

© Aleshanee
Weltenwanderer

Jaemi says

Funnily enough, this book is the one that made me want to read this series, because it looked good, and I hate to start things in the middle. But when I picked it up the first time a few weeks ago, I couldn't get into it. Which might be because it does start things in the middle. Picking up right where Water Mirror left off. Merle and the Flowing Queen are still trying to escape the Egyptians on the back of Vermithrax, and Serafin, left behind, is desolate.

An attack by mummy soldiers and a surprise rescue change things for Serafin pretty quickly. Especially once he realizes just who rescued him. Truly, he can't believe it. Honestly, he's quite impressed. So when asked to join up in the resistance movement, he agrees to be taken to the enclave, if for nothing else than to find out who's running this show.

Merle, meanwhile, has some pretty close calls with the Egyptians. Much closer than she liked, to tell the truth. And she really could have gone without ever seeing a collector up close and personal. Still. They need

to get to Hell, to ask Lord Light's help in saving Venice. Without the Flowing Queen, there's nothing now to stop the Empire from moving in.

Back in Venice, Serafin is rather shocked (and that's an understatement) to learn the rebellion is being led by a Sphinx. The Sphinxes work for the Pharaoh. But...this is a very convincing Sphinx...so when she asks his help, for Merle, he agrees. Breaking into the Doge's palace to assassinate the Pharaoh doesn't seem like the best idea to him, but he'll do it. Really, what else can he do?

Merle, having found the entrance to Hell, is not much enjoying her trip. There are some pretty nasty beasties in Hell, as you can well imagine. And even a flying stone lion isn't a match for all of them. Plus, they don't actually know where they're going. Although they did manage to hitch a ride in a flying stone head, which they took for some sort of herald, leaving the odds at 50/50 that it would deliver them precisely where they wished to be.

Serafin's luck isn't going much better. The entire break-in, as it so happens, was a ruse. Although it beats a crazy little man wanting to cut out your heart and replace it with one made of stone.

Although hard to get into at first, once you're in, the action definitely never lets up in this installment of the Dark Reflections trilogy.

Mona says

Book two of the Dark Reflections series, set in an alternative reality, where Egypt has raised a Pharaoh from the dead and conquered much of the world with the help of priests and sphinxes. Hell is a real place and one of the few places not yet conquered. An orphan girl, Merle, rides one of the flying stone lions of Venice to hell to try and enlist Lord Light's help, as Venice falls to the Egyptians.

Erin Reilly-Sanders says

I don't really have much to say about this except that I found it rather mediocre. The first book in the series, The Water Mirror, seemed a lot more exciting, perhaps because at that point a fantasy set in a dark, "other" Venice seemed more original but also perhaps because I was actually traveling in and near Venice while listening to the book on CD. The Stone Light was not really bad, but I had trouble coming up with things about it which would recommend it to readers. With the departure from Venice, a lot of the mystery and interesting correlation to our Venice disappeared. Hell was odd, but really not all that interesting. In many ways, the fantastic elements of the plot sadly seemed too far fetched to be believable however much I like the idea of a world ruled by mythological forces from our own history. I think that keeping Merle and Seraphim apart lost a lot of the momentum of the book, at least for me and while I can now see the connections to myth in hindsight, they were uninteresting during the reading process, losing a lot of the potential of the book.

Susanne says

A good bridge that makes me super curious for the next part. Though for me there were so many questions

opened and nothing was answered. So my quest for answers so to say was not satisfied. I hope for a lot of answers in the next part.

Shari Mulluane says

What I Liked. This is purely an adventure story. In addition to the unique creatures we encountered in The Water Mirror, this time around mighty sphinx are added to the mix. And like the lions, some are winged and some are not. Meanwhile, one group of characters stays in Venice while the other group flies off to explore the environs of Hell.

Now this is not Dante's Inferno. This hell has massive talking stone heads flying through the air, mad scientists, mysterious technology and alien like creatures. Oh and did I mention the 500 yard high stone warriors who guard the entrance? In terms of creativity, this book was flat out amazing. I can easily see an imaginative 12 year old thinking that this version of Hell is way too cool. (No pun intended.) I also, to my delight, I got a few of those answers I was looking for in terms of backstory. Not a lot of them mind you, but enough to keep my appetite whetted for more.

What I didn't like. When I read book one, I assumed this was an alternate history. There are valid reasons for that. First off was unwanted orphans being apprenticed to merchant craftsmen, a common enough practice in the 1200s though one that continued through the 1800s. Secondly was the making of crafts, like glass and mirrors, all by hand. Glass was not commercially manufactured until the middle 1800s. Thirdly was that while they had flying ships, those ships were kept aloft by magic, not technology. Actually there was no modern technology that I could discern, aside from rifles. Swords were the predominant weapon, and rifles themselves date back to the 1400s. Add in a ruling Pharaoh, (Cleopatra was the last ruling Pharaoh and she died in 30 BC), ancient Egyptian gods, sword wielding zombies, guards patrolling on stone lions and I honestly had no idea what era this was but surely no later than the 1400s

This book however had very different overtones. Hell contains machines, steel gears, pipes, steam engines and suddenly a reference is made to steam factories in Venice itself. The presence of steel alone bumps the timeline up to the 1700s. The whole thing had me scratching my head.

To cap my confusion, the main protagonist, when describing somebody she met on her journey, said "He has lost his marbles." A phrase that has its origins in the late 1800s. Such a small thing I know but one that startled me. Now all of a sudden I am not sure if this is alternate reality or still alternate history but not nearly as far back as I first assumed. It is also possible the marbles phrase was simply a bad translation. In any case, not having a sense of when I was thrown off my immersion in the story. Granted your typical 12 year old would not know much of this, much less care, so maybe I was just too old for the story to be believable.

Conclusion. My advice? Go into this book expecting a wonderful, imaginative and amazingly creative adventure with a few truly priceless revelations pertaining to the backstory. Expect a deepening mystery surrounding the main characters but don't expect any plot progression. Not yet. Evidently that is being saved for book three.

For more detail please read full review @ [Dragons, Heroes and Wizards](#).

Brina says

Da Hörbücher bei mir in der letzten Zeit viel zu kurz gekommen sind, wurde es nun mal wieder Zeit, mich mit ihnen ausführlicher zu beschäftigen. Den Anfang macht der zweite Band der "Merle"-Trilogie von Kai Meyer. Der erste Band hat mir im letzten Jahr schon sehr gut gefallen und ich war sehr gespannt, wie es bei der Geschichte weiter geht.

Kai Meyer hat es mal wieder geschafft, mich an seine Geschichte zu fesseln. Er schreibt das Buch sehr flüssig, spannend, unterhaltsam und trotz so manch unheimlichen Moment ist die Geschichte noch sehr kinderfreundlich, sodass auch jüngere Zuhörer ihren Spaß an der Reihe haben. Die Geschichte wird sehr detailliert erzählt, stellenweise hatte ich selbst das Gefühl, mit Merle und der Königin unterwegs zu sein. Sie sind sehr liebevoll beschrieben und entwickeln sich stets weiter, sodass es keine einzige Minute langweilig oder holprig erschien, ganz im Gegenteil: Der Autor hat es geschafft, die Geschichte von Minute zu Minute reifen zu lassen, sodass es schwer fiel, es selbst für kurze Zeit zu unterbrechen.

Mit dem Pharao hat man einen interessanten Bösewicht erschaffen, der trotz seiner Absichten oftmals auch unterhalten konnte. Er möchte die komplette Welt beherrschen, allerdings wehren sich Venedig und das Zarenreich gegen seine Macht und wollen unter keinen Umständen von ihm regiert werden. Merle und die fließende Königin versuchen dabei Hilfe zu ordern, die sie in Lord Licht finden möchten. Allerdings lauern dabei auch einige Gefahren, denn Lord Licht ist der Herrscher über die Hölle.

Merle entwickelt sich während der Reihe enorm gut. Im ersten Band empfand ich sie schon als sehr angenehm, nun kommt auch noch ihr Mut hinzu, der mir im ersten Band an einigen Stellen noch gefehlt hat. Ich wünsche mir, dass sie auch im dritten Band noch so liebenswert und mutig ist.

Wie auch schon beim ersten Teil wird das Hörbuch von Katharina Thalbach und Nina Petri gesprochen. Sie erzählen die Geschichte weiterhin sehr spannend und unterhaltsam, außerdem wird an genau den richtigen Stellen alles perfekt betont. Bei einer Länge von 6 Stunden und 27 Minuten handelt es sich um die gekürzte Hörbuchfassung.

Die Covergestaltung passt sich dem ersten Band an. Der Raum ist fast identisch, lediglich die Fliesen und die Farben unterscheiden sich. Die Kurzbeschreibung ist ebenfalls gelungen und verrät nicht zu viel, sodass man sich noch ordentlich überraschen lassen kann.

Insgesamt hat mir auch der zweite Band der "Merle"-Trilogie gefallen. Kai Meyer ist einfach ein großartiger Autor, der es immer wieder aufs Neue schafft, mich an seine Geschichten zu fesseln. Der dritte Band "Das gläserne Wort" wird definitiv gelesen, bzw. gehört. Kaufen!

Michelle says

This is the second book in the Dark Reflections series and is the sequel to The Water Mirror. Merle travels with Vermithrax, the stone lion on a mission to visit Lord Light in Hell while her companion, the thief Serafin, joins a group intent on resisting the Egyptians occupation of Venice. The group is led by a sphinx who can appear as a woman. They plan to assassinate the pharaoh and it is unclear if the sphinx can be trusted or if she has her own agenda. On their trip to hell, the group finds all sorts of unusual stone-like creatures, the Lilim who menace them and a man who claims to be Winter, in search of his love, Summer. In hell, Lord

Light is surprising to them and brings back Junipa to the story. While the worlds and creatures portrayed are very imaginative, the translation seemed a little stilted and I missed the emotional connection that I had with the characters in the first book. The book ends in a cliffhanger on both stories, so I would recommend having the sequel at hand. On the whole, it was a good, but not a great book.

Kai says

The Stone Light was even better than the first book in this trilogy, *The Flowing Queen*. Much better actually. It took everything that happened in the prequel and put it on a whole new level. The events in *The Stone Light* are much more exciting and dangerous, the creatures and characters more wondrous and bizarre. It gets more and more dramatic with every page, without becoming ridiculous. This might be a middle grade novel, but it doesn't read like one, which is another big improvement, compared to *The Flowing Queen*.

I'm quite proud that Kai Meyer, a German author, got an English translation for his entire series, even though it's still highly underrated.

I think I might jump into the third and last part of this series right away.

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Miss Bookiverse says

Leider fand ich den zweiten Teil der Merle-Trilogie bei Weitem nicht so gut wie den ersten. Zwei bis drei Sterne wären das, aber halbe Sterne hat ja immer noch keiner GR beigebracht.

Was mich an diesem Buch nicht angesprochen hat, war das ganze Kriegsszenario, ich finde Kämpfe generell nicht so spannend und denke, dass Kai Meyer das Thema eh schon mehr als ausgelutscht hat (das sehe ich jetzt so, weil ich viele seiner späteren Bücher vor der Merle-Trilogie gelesen habe), der ganze Serafin-Erzählstrang war daher nicht allzu erquickend für mich, obwohl die neue Figur Lalapeja durchaus interessant war und auch die spätere Reise, die etwas mehr über Umkes Vergangenheit an die Oberfläche bringt. Viel spannender fand ich aber Merles Reise in die Hölle und was sie dort alles erlebt, obwohl auch hier der Anfang schleppend verlief. Der neue Charakter Winter hat mich reichlich wenig interessiert, dafür fand ich die Idee der Lillen sehr cool. Das steinerne Licht an sich hat mich nicht so überzeugt, aber das Herzhaus fand ich eine tolle Erfindung und sehr gruselig.

Teil 3 der Trilogie werde ich mir trotzdem anhören, weil ich ja wissen will wie alles ausgeht und hoffe, dass Kai Meyer die Kurve storytechnisch noch kriegt. Allzu große Hoffnungen habe ich da allerdings nicht. Der Autor hat eine großartige Welt mit tollen Kreaturen erschaffen, aber ich hätte wohl lieber eine andere Geschichte aus diesem Universum erzählt bekommen.

Kimi says

I waited a really, really long time to read this because I loved *The Water Mirror* so much and I was afraid this book wouldn't be able to live up to my expectations. The problem with that is that the book starts right back in the middle of the action where the first book left off, and I couldn't remember much about what was

happening in the story. It took quite a long time to figure everything out again and really get into the book.

The Stone Light also suffers from some of the usual problems with middle books in a trilogy. It feels like it's mostly there to link the beginning and the end, without actually being a complete story in itself. It didn't seem like the characters accomplished very much in this part of the story (they don't appear to be any better or worse off than they were at the start) and there was absolutely no interaction between Serafin and Merle which was a disappointment for me; I was looking forward to seeing how their relationship developed.

Still, this was a great chapter in the series and I'm looking forward to the third book, but I probably shouldn't wait quite as long to read it.

Angelique Sa says

Der steinerne Löwe Vermithrax, Merle und die fließende Königin schaffen die Flucht aus Venedig und machen sich auf den waghalsigen Weg zu Lord Licht. Sie wollen ihn um Hilfe bitten, für sich und den Bewohnern von Venedig. In der Hölle treffen sie auf ungewöhnliche Kreaturen, sie erleben spannende Abenteuer und erkennen, dass nichts ist, wie es scheint.

Zur gleichen Zeit versuchen Serafin, sein Erzfeind Dario und dessen Freunde eine Rebellengruppe in Venedig aufzubauen. Anführer dieser Gruppe ist die Sphinx Lalapeja, sie plant ein Attentat auf den Pharao und benötigt Serafins Hilfe.

Kai Meyer schafft es mich mit dem zweiten Band der Merle Trilogie "Das Steinerne Licht" wieder zu faszinieren. Der Leser wird in eine phantastische Welt entführt und erlebt die spannendsten Abenteuer. Am Anfang hatte ich ein paar Probleme in die Geschichte hineinzukommen, aber spätestens als Vermithrax und Merle in der Hölle angekommen sind, nimmt die Geschichte mich gefangen.

Der Schreibstil ist fesselnd und spannend, phantasiereich und sehr anschaulich. Die Figuren, die ich in Band 1 kennengelernt habe, sind hier weiterentwickelt worden. Neue Charaktere sind hinzugekommen und mit Lalapeja sogar eine sehr interessante. Kai Meyer beschreibt die Welt um das steinerne Licht sehr bildlich und faszinierend. Mein Kopfkino ist losgegangen und ich bin in eine fantasievolle Welt eingetaucht. Das Buch hört mit einem Cliffhanger auf und ich bin gespannt, ob Serafin und Merle wieder zusammenfinden.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Carrie Spellman for TeensReadToo.com

WARNING: This book is the second in a trilogy.

Okay, so maybe I'm the only one who missed that. When I finally figured it out (the words "Book Two" on the cover were a good clue), I had to run out and buy the first one, **THE WATER MIRROR**. I read that one as fast as possible, so I could get to this one. The first book was fantastic and ended with a huge cliffhanger. If I hadn't already had this second book in my possession, I probably would have been quite frustrated. My point being, read **THE WATER MIRROR** first! There is a certain amount of knowledge that is assumed in **THE STONE LIGHT**. You might be okay without it, but the story certainly makes more sense with it. Also,

if you haven't read THE WATER MIRROR yet, but intend to do so, you might want to stop reading this now.

Vermithrax, the flying stone lion, Merle, the orphan girl, and the Flowing Queen, who rather defies description, have escaped from Venice and the Egyptian army. Their troubles are far from behind them, though. If they want to save Venice, they'll have to locate the only possible ally they can think of, Lord Light. After the things the people of Venice did to Lord Light's messenger, though, he might not be so willing to help. Even if he does, what will be the cost? Before they can even really worry about all of that, they'll have to get to him. He makes his home at the bottom of Hell.

Back in Venice there is a small but strong rebellion growing. The kind of rebellion that could make enemies into friends, and even, just maybe, succeed. Provided the leader of the rebellion doesn't turn out to be the biggest enemy of all.

This is a good book, but I really wanted it to be a great book, like I thought the first one was. The characters are wonderfully, fully realized, the adventures are adventurous, the story progresses... It's just a very typical second book. There are more new questions than there are answers to the original questions and it feels like everything is just being set up for book three. Perhaps after the next book I can give you a different opinion of the trilogy as a whole. It's kind of like Star Wars, the old ones; everyone has an opinion of the separate movies, which is different from the whole.

Blythe says

Some interesting but not unforeseeable twists. Like the first book, I love the world building but there are several things that are a bit too unbelievable plot-wise. For some reason it honestly didn't bother me as much as it normally would. The story was all so adventurous and fantastical. At 11 or 12 I would have adored these books, so maybe it was the younger me coming out. Overall a pretty good book, a great choice for middle graders. I do also have to mention I love Vermithrax, the talking, flying stone lion—the stone lions are one of the most captivating concepts in this series to me.

Renee says

Second in The Dark Reflections Trilogy, Meyer paints a world filled with mermaids, magic mirrors, invading mummies, and obsidian lions. The Stone Light centers on Merle, who with her friend Vermithrax (an obsidian lion), saved The Flowing Queen (a deity). However, The Flowing Queen entered Merle's mind and now they are on a quest to ask for help from Lord Light, ruler of Hell. Back in Venice, Merle's friend Serafin, a thief, joins forces with a rebel group trying to assassinate the invading Pharaoh and his mummy army. It is difficult to read the second book without knowing the background of the first. Voice alternates between Merle and Serafin, which keeps the pace moving quickly. This volume ends on a cliffhanger and leaves the reader wanting to read the third and final installment. The audience is those interested in magic and adventure. Because this is a paperback edition, it may quickly show wear.
