



## Rising Tide

*Mel Odom*

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In the first book of a sweeping new "Forgotten Realms" series, an evil warlord from the depths of the Trackless Sea rallies the undersea races of Toril in a surprise attack on the Sword Coast. This novel shares a setting with the "Sea of Fallen Stars" adventure boxed set.

## Rising Tide Details

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Author : Mel Odom

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## From Reader Review Rising Tide for online ebook

### Kevin says

What can I say? This is pretty basic fantasy based on sea creatures (for the most part). This story jumps right into it without much in the way of background or history of the world it is set in and that is okay. It is written so that you really don't need to know anything about the Forgotten Realms in order to enjoy this although I get a sense there is quite a bit of connection to other series. I never felt like I was missing anything important and was able to just flow along with the story. The characters were interesting and the whole thing moved along at a good pace. I enjoyed this very much for what it is and will be continuing the series.

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### Ken says

Sold to Lewis White on eBay on 7-Jun-11:

<http://www.ebay.com/itm/ws/eBayISAPI....>

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### dVicko says

I read it long ago and looking back on it, it really wasn't a good reading... even compared to the other Forgotten Realms books.

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### Tobias Cooper says

Well, this is a curious book. It's quite an interesting story, although the characterization is a bit thin, there are some nice descriptive passages.

My major criticism of this book is that not enough happens, there is enough incident in the book for the 'part 1' of a traditional fantasy doorstop however it's rather unsatisfying when this is spread over a whole book. I'll give book two a go eventually but I'm not going to rush.

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### Jeff Jellets says

#### **Mer-monsters versus men in world of *Dungeons & Dragons*!**

I'm enjoying a bit of a *Dungeons & Dragons* renaissance of late, scoffing up the fantasy game's old books and rulebooks wherever I can find them -- either digitally or at second-hand bookstores. I recently found all three of Mel Odom's *The Threat From The Sea* trilogy at a 2nd & Charles bookstore (love that place!) and dug into book one of the series, *The Rising Tide*, which offers a credible beginning to the war between the surface civilizations of the *Forgotten Realms* and the dark denizens of the underwater deep.

Odom does a great job selling the maritime setting, and some of the strongest scenes of the book take place aboard ship (the encounter with a half-sunken merchantman is particularly tense and unnerving) or under the waves. His heroes are well-drawn and likable -- though for having been around the waterfront a bit, their near total naïveté is a bit of a stretch -- and there's a pretty good battle royale in the city of Waterdeep. Odom does a good job sticking to the D&D mythos, crafting compelling action sequences and spell-casts, though admittedly some of this stuff -- such as cameos of the *Forgotten Realms*' glitterati (which was probably pretty cool when more kids were actually playing more D&D than video games) -- go right past my old head.

*The negative?* Though the monsters and the setting have changed, there is a formula being followed here. Reluctant hero with a dark secret? Check! Evil antagonist, imprisoned for centuries, now released and scheming to conquer the world? Check! Darth Vader-esque 'daddy' issues? Check! It's essentially the same set-up you get in many a fantasy book -- though well enough crafted that you don't mind so much. What I think is the biggest miss is that the original D&D game was all about teamwork -- a diverse group of adventures coming together to embark on a common quest. The first *Dragonlance* book, which kicked off the D&D novel craze, captured that dynamic and wonderfully exploited the ensemble cast. In *Rising Tide*, our protagonist, Jherek, is very much a lone wolf and that isolation keeps this one from truly channeling the main strength of the game that inspired the story.

However, Odom does put all pieces into play by the end of the novel, and here's hoping that -- now that groundwork has been laid -- the plot will offer a few new twists and turns that go beyond the typical fantasy tropes. I'm intrigued enough to give the second book in trilogy, *Under Fallen Stars*, a shot.

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### **Stuart Schneider says**

This was a very surprisingly good book. You have to grind your way through the first 75 pages and then it gets good. I originally bought this series on the fact that Odom was the writer of the series, but because of the sea theme plus the fact that the Realms short stories were lousy, this series sat on my shelf forever. However, because I needed a very short break in the Dresden novels, this looked like a quick snack and so far, surprisingly well written. Looking forward to the next two.

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### **christopher larue says**

Finished reading. Its a good story. I like the descriptions of the sea creatures. Looked in my monster manual a few times to get a good idea about them. Now on book 2 and its still keeping me interested.

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### **Jonathan Lovelace says**

I loved this series as a kid; I was a stupid kid. Now, re-reading it brought a lot of laughs unintended by the author.

The main character is pretentiously pure-hearted. We're introduced to him with a beautiful, powerful older woman offering him money for sex, but he believes in Love. Then he's randomly victimized. As a kid, that was totally my jam, but now I'm like, "Dude, hit that."

I haven't read a book where an innocent young man is approached by so many sexually aggressive women since the last time I gave literary fiction a try.

The writing is clunky.

But IDK. It's got a decent amount of 'potato chip' factor. It's a very easy read. If it weren't for how much I loved this when I was 12 or so, I probably wouldn't have bothered finishing it just now, but as it is, I'll probably read the next one.

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### **Zuany says**

I could have given it 4 stars but I couldn't shake the feeling that the first book was incomplete. I felt like I was reading a really long prologue.

I understand there's a second book but I would have liked something more in this.

On the positive side, it has a great plot and I like this form of narration. Every chapter makes you want to read the next one to see what happens.

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### **Mandrake says**

Hard to put down this book.

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### **Kurt Vosper says**

Well, I honestly didn't know what to expect out of this series. I had thought about reading it for quite a few years, being a Forgotten Realms fan and just never got around to it.

So I powered through this book over the weekend and I find that Mel Odom is a pretty decent writer. He has made some interesting characters and a plot that I am interested in seeing played out.

On to book 2.

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### **Scott Schmidt says**

I cut my teeth on Forgotten Realms books back in high school and credit those books for turning me into a fervent reader. While I have good memories of many of those books, I've moved on from the shared world-style books. I took a chance on this one now because I found it cheap and Mel Odom is an author whose work on Forgotten Realms and Shadowrun I've always enjoyed. I was hoping to be surprised by this one, but

at the end of day, I'm just too old for these books. My younger self would've liked it, but there's just a generic feel to the fantasy that left me uninterested. Not to say others won't enjoy it, but for myself, I now know that I won't be diving back into the Forgotten Realms.

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### **David Bill says**

I really enjoyed this one, it felt new and not at all like any other Forgotten Realms novels I've read to date. I enjoyed the sea setting and both the above and below water characters are developed enough to keep you invested in them and discovering their fate. The main characters are interesting enough, but our "hero" is a bit much sometimes. I'm hoping his character will grow more interesting in the next book.

I can say it's an easy read that keeps you turning the pages without effort. The story will keep you intrigued enough to enthusiastically move on to book 2.

This one gets a 4 out of 5.

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### **Audrey says**

Her face took on a more somber look. "Know too, that there are those who would stop you in your journey," she said. "They fear you, fear what you will become, and with good cause because your life will touch the lives of many. There is a darkness out there, greater than any darkness you've known. Should you live, understanding and more will be yours."

"And should I die, lady?"

She looked at him, gave him a small smile and said simply, "Don't."

**Synopsis:** The fish people get pissed and get magic and go whup on some land-dwellers, finding them crunchy and good with ketchup. Also there's a subplot about the world's wieniest secret pirate.

The sahuagin are kind of sea goblins, and one of their princesses gets it into her head to track down a mysterious and forgotten manuscript. Because that always goes so well. And indeed she follows the manuscripts directions to the undersea tomb of a dessicated naked dude, which a) is reason number one never to go on forgotten manuscript adventures and b) results in two fellow princesses getting immediately eaten, because the dessicated naked dude is secretly a great white shark. And boy is he annoyed.

Of course he wasn't a good great white shark, he was an evil one, and that's how he got imprisoned in an underwater tomb without any trousers. I guess whoever stuck him there thought a lack of pants would totally stop this dude. Who's a shark. Anyway, Iakhovas the Sharkshifter decides to wreak his revenge on basically everyone he can get his hand-fins on, including the sea goblins. He launches an amphibious attack on Waterdeep and uses the full kitchen sink: water dragons, giant turtles, sea serpents, bloodworms, were-rats, aboleths (which I had to go look up in the sourcebooks), sahuagins, marine scrags (which I'm still kind of unclear on), more sahuagins, jellyfish, just everything he could lay his hands on. And yet, all of them pale in significance before the scariest monster in the book, and indeed in any Forgotten Realms book I've read, the

raggamoffyn.

The raggamoffyn are a race of sentient scraps of cloth. Cloth. Apparently there are good raggamoffyns and evil ones, but the one in this book was supposed to be good and it full-on mummified a nine-year-old boy:

Before anyone could react, the raggamoffyn exploded into hundreds of wet fabric pieces that flew through the air. They hovered around the boy like a bee swarm, twisting and turning like gulls gliding through storm weather. The fabric pieces covered every inch of the boy's body, including his eyes, nose and mouth, slamming into place with wet splashes ... The raggamoffyn held fast, following every movement with its shape. The boy clawed at the fabric pieces, trying to rip them free.

...BAD DEADLY BLANKET! Bad bad blanket!

Its name is Skeins, btw.

Also, pro-tip: if you watch Venture Brothers, then go back and read 90s swords and sorcery books, you WILL wind up picturing Brock Sampson as the dude who rolls up on horseback all, "Let's do this." And saves the city. With help from the city mage. As played by Dr Orpheus. And when that city mage is described as being in a hissy bitchfight with the other city mage you'll wind up picturing Dr Orpheus' monk friend.

"I am Piergeiron!" he roared in a loud voice that echoed from the buildings and over the water. "Called Paladin and Known Lord of Waterdeep." He drew his great sword Halcyon and held it aloft so it gleamed. "As long as I can fight, this city will remain standing and be free!" He lifted the sword, and as if in answer, a salvo of flaming rock seared across the sky from Castle Waterdeep's catapults. They splashed down in the harbor around the bloodworms and dragon turtles.

Take your pick from the smorgasbord of awesomeness. Do you want the sharkshifter, the rat shifters, the city mage slapfight, the 70-foot-long sea serpents or the DEADLY BLANKET?

There's also a subplot about the world's wieniest secret pirate (Who's not a pirate! Honest! He's just terrified of his father! Who IS a pirate! And his pirate tattoo won't come off! And he gets kicked out of the house! And people see his tattoo and realize he's a pirate even though he worked so hard not to be a pirate! Life is so UNFAIR.) who is basically milquetoast in a leather apron (Yes, that's all he wears. It gets so hot working on ships! And running away from girls! And being a secret pirate!).

Anyway, his subplot has like, zero bloodworms or firedrakes. It has pirates, but they're mainly just him hiding in a crow's nest reading romance novels (not making this up) and being sad about being a secret pirate.

But back to Waterdeep and the live-action Iron Maiden album unfolding there:

Maskar Wands [city mage numero uno] stood in a flying chariot drawn by a pair of red firedrakes whose claws struck sparks from the sky as they ran. The wizard's hairline had receded over the years to reveal his broad forehead, but silver hair still flowed in the wind. He wore the robes of a wizard. ...Maskar gestured at the chariot and firedrakes and they disappeared. The wizard gazed blackly at the snake hanging from the huge hand he'd conjured. "Now," he said sternly, "now we show these invaders that Waterdeep will *never* bend, much less break."

Oh yeah. The city mage saves Waterdeep from the 70-foot-long sea serpent by wizarding up a giant hand that chokes the snake. And there is exactly zero irony present in any of the snake-choking scene. None.

IT'S. AWESOME.

The prose is, in case you have not guessed, a little stilted, like how someone feels a rabid mouse "coiling in his guts" when he gets scared (three guesses who) and that thing with the severed foot in the title never really gets explained, but takes four full pages to not be explained in. And you either love this kind of epic nonsense or you already know it's not really your kind of thing.

But really, how can you say no to a book where the SHARKSHIFTER is one of the least notable things about it?

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