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Debra Doyle , James D. Macdonald

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Freebooter at heart, spacer by trade, Beka Rosselin-Metadi doesn't want to hear about how her father whose rugged generalship held back the Mageworlds -- or her highborn mother whose leadership has held the galaxy together since. Beka pilots spacecraft -- as far from her famous family as possible. Then Beka's mother is assassinated on the Senate floor, and her father offers her the title to Warhammer, prize ship from his own freebooting youth -- if she agrees to deliver the assassins to him "off the books."

Looking for assassins has a tendency to make assassins look for you. In doing so, Beka's arranged her own very public death and adopted a new identity; now all she has to do is leave a trail of kidnappings and corpses across five star systems, and blow the roof off the strongest private fortress in the galaxy.

The Price of the Stars Details

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From Reader Review The Price of the Stars for online ebook

Margaret says

So far, this is a series of seven (with, I think, a possibility of more). I would strongly recommend reading them in order, even though publication order doesn't match the internal chronological order; many secrets will be spoiled if you read out of publication order. This is a loose review of the series to date.

The first three -- *The Price of the Stars*, *Starpilot's Grave*, and *By Honor Betray'd* -- go together to tell the story of Beka Rosselin-Metadi, estranged from her family until her powerful mother is assassinated and Beka's father gives her the task of tracking down the assassin; the plot opens up in the second book, when the Mageworlds start to threaten the Republic, and we spend more time with Beka's family, her father and two brothers (all introduced in the first volume, but given more time here).

The fourth book, *The Gathering Flame*, goes back in time a little to explore Beka's parents' past, while the fifth, *The Long Hunt* goes forward to the next generation. Finally, *The Stars Asunder* and *A Working of Stars* are set in the more distant past, five hundred years before the events of the first three, exploring the universe more deeply and resolving some plot threads introduced in the earlier books (so again, you really don't want to read these first, even though they're chronologically first).

The setting is excellent, particularly in the clash between the two systems: the loose confederation of planets which are the home of the Rosselin-Metadi family and their allies, and the Mageworlds, which threaten the other worlds with their magical powers. What with the fast pace, the vivid characters, and the intricate plot, I was sometimes almost breathless while reading these; I almost had an Unpleasant Incident when I finished *Starpilot's Grave* on an airplane and didn't have the next book in my carry-on luggage to start reading immediately.

Laura says

The opening paragraphs to this book are amazing.

I first read this book in the 1990s, not too long after it came out. It is one of my favorites and it remains so. Remarkable how lightly it wears its years.

Paul says

I read a very enthusiastic review of this series on a popular web site. Something in the review gave me the impression Debra Doyle was breaking new ground with these Mageworlds stories. Much of the science fiction I've read lately has been derivative, so I thought I'd try *The Price of the Stars*, the first book of the Mageworlds series. I'm disappointed to say there's nothing new here. What I read is essentially a Star Wars knockoff, a swashbuckling pirate story set in space. Only with less sex and flatter characters.

Apart from the ritual incantation of meaningless words like "hyperspace" and "cloaking devices" and "healing pods," there's no science at all. The characters, including the one gratuitous alien, a member of a

saurian race of grumpy hunter-killers, are relentlessly human. Minus the interplanetary backdrop, there's nothing futuristic here ... people, society, and governments haven't changed a bit from the present day (even the communications devices seem little more advanced than cell phones).

The heroes waltz through interlacing beams of death rays with scarcely an injury (which in any case they can cure by hopping into the nearest healing pod), but of course every bad guy they point their blasters at dies instantly. Oh, and there are Jedis, only here they are called Adepts. The evil empire our heroes do battle with, the Mageworlds, turn out not to be alien at all, just some planets populated with other humans, only these humans have embraced the Dark Side. And they too go down before our merry band of space pirates.

Debra Doyle loves short chapters. The book is divided into brief chapters of four to five pages each, frequently when there's no structural reason for one chapter to end and another to start. Over and over, new chapters merely continue action started in previous chapters: the same characters in the same location doing the same things. It's mildly irritating, because you get to the middle of a blaster battle and suddenly there's a new chapter and you're expecting a change of scene or shift in perspective, but no, you're still in the middle of the same blaster battle. Debra, this is not why we have chapters.

I will give *The Price of the Stars* this: it's readable and there is a lot of action. It's rip-roaring space opera aimed at a young adult audience. But I was looking for something new, something a bit more adult, something to engage my imagination. There wasn't anything here for me.

Leslie says

After reading the reviews for this book, I went to my local used bookstore and found it sitting on a shelf. I decided then and there to give it a try and bought it. I was pleasantly surprised and found myself immersed in Debra Doyle's futuristic world from the first page.

(I made sure to go to the bookshop the next week and I was lucky to find the rest of the series. Yay me!)

Great sci-fi! Very recommended.

Sherwood Smith says

Then strap me again in my cockpit

And toast me in faraway bars.

Just let me fire off into hyper,

I'll make my own way to the stars.

A little over forty years ago, I sat with another teenage friend in the funky front room of their Manhattan beach cottage—for her parents were bohemians, and in those days beach real estate was still achievable by anyone. We looked out the front windows at the constant drum and hiss of the sea, talking of this and that.

I don't remember how the subject came up, but her mother had joined us, and said in her slow southern drawl (she'd left home at fifteen to get married, many years before, but never lost her accent) "Just once I was standing on a ridge. And the wind was on my face, and in my hair, and the light was just right, so I could see and see, right beyond the world. And for just that moment I felt so big and so vast I knew everything."

The closest I come to that is the beyond-the-horizon satisfaction of big idea, vast-reach, unabashedly heroic space opera.

Here are the basic elements that appeal to me in space opera:

- * Interesting aliens, weird cultures and larger than life characters.
- * Space ships in action
- * Emotional complexity
- * Big ideas—including glimpses of the numinous—without anything being dogmatic
- * Layered or polysemous surprises

*An interesting blend of real science and the handwavium that allows for FTL and Psi, but examines the consequences of both.

This first entry into the Mageworld series can stand alone. It's probably the most easily cinematic, and would in fact adapt instantly into a killer action movie, as Beka Rosselin-Metadi dons the dangerous disguise of Tarnekep Portree (a young Mandeynan dandy with a taste for violence and low company) to solve the mystery of her famous mother's murder. Her father can't solve it. He's too well-known (as well as notorious), but he promises his ship to her if she finds out, and she leaves the bad guys of three worlds in shambles in the process.

It's got everything--action, humor, twists you see coming and look forward to, then there are the twists that you don't see coming, that cause you to go back and reread the series with a drastic change of perspective. There is even time travel, beautifully handled--so much so that when you've read the entire series and go back to the beginning, everything reads differently.

Cindy says

I really enjoyed reading this adventure/science fiction story. This is the type of book that I lived for in high school and college. Nowadays I'm more about the romance. There was some of that but not til almost the end. Beka, also known as Captain Tarnekep Portree, is one tough woman. Her brothers are amazingly tough too. It makes sense that they are all so talented since their parents are world leaders. They are not typical royalty, that's for sure.

The story takes place in many worlds with many different types of humanoids. I liked the Salvaurs best. They are noble and strong. Ari, Jessan, and Llannat grew up with them. Beka was supposed to take her mother's place as Domina but instead she left to be a Captain. Lastly, Owen grew up to be an Adept.

The story takes place after the Mage Wars. The mages were horrible people who tried to keep the worlds in tyranny. With the help of the Professor, as Beka calls him, they were able to defeat the Mages. However, they aren't completely gone.

Ron says

Think soap opera of manners. The Searchers in Space. A daughter seeks justice—or is it revenge?—for the murderers of her mother. Not epic space battles, but up-close-and-personal action. Well plotted and well told. Satisfying climax. See? It can be done. While the first of a series, this book gives the reader closure and hooks to further adventure.

Considering this book was first published in 1992, before microcircuits pervaded our society, Doyle wrote—as many SF authors failed—in a way which was largely technology neutral, therefore not making her stories instantly obsolete. Further, she got enough of the basic science right that the reader can stay in the story, not be jolted out by scientific non sequiturs.

Was on the verge of awarding a four star rating but was dissuaded by the number and intrusiveness of typographical errors in the manuscript. Odd periods dot the text. Enough homophones that one suspects the proofreader didn't speak English as his first language.

Still a fun read. Enjoy.

Linn Browning says

Sadly, some books do not survive the rosy glow of first reading. I read this series when I was in high school and recently asked my mother to send them to me so I could re-read them. I can recognize what I enjoyed about them, but reading them now, I didn't find them nearly as compelling as I did then. I found the story one-dimensional and the characters wooden. Hopefully the rest of the series adds some dimension to the characters, but I'm disappointed that I'm disappointed.

Admittedly, I finished this book feeling better about it and then picked up a masterwork by one of my favorite authors. This paled in comparison. I feel like I might have short-changed Price of the Stars because of it.

Li says

A version originally posted at my blog: <http://bookdaze.wordpress.com/2013/07...>

Firstly, it's space opera. It's a sub-genre I love (and I kind of feel that it's seen as the non-trendy thing nowadays with very few new releases) so I'm thrilled that I discovered this series. There's full-on adventure and non-stop action as Beka, her siblings, and their companions race around the galaxy and try to stay alive

while figuring out who the bad guys are and getting their revenge. There's a bit of romance, lots of derring-do, and even some old-fashioned sword and staff fights amidst the starship battles. And it's not pure SF – there's equal action there on the magic front with some rather sneaky Adepts.

It's very much a ensemble cast-type of story – there are multiple POVs and subplots, but I was never lost. I didn't really have a particular favourite amongst the many characters, so I was perfectly happy just going with the flow and jumping between the different storylines. Maybe that was a weakness, in the sense that no one character completely won my heart, but this style worked for me.

It's not perfect writing, but the story's immensely fun and doesn't take itself too seriously. It is satisfying story-telling, and if certain things stand out as being too obvious, there are also some out-of-nowhere twists that left me blinking – and needing to know more. Having finished the final book of the trilogy, I love the way the authors set up certain things in the first book to come to fruition in the third. **THE PRICE OF THE STARS** works rather well as a standalone, but there is some good payoff if you stick with the series.

Linda says

"Hello. My name is Beka 'Inigo Montoya' Rosselin-Metadi. You killed my mother. Prepare to die."

Beka has spent the past several years piloting around the galaxy and escaping her royal family obligations. But when her mother, the Domina, is assassinated, technically leaving her as the new Domina, she accepts a ship and an assignment from her general father to track down those responsible. She takes to the assignment with gusto, gathering help along the way that includes a mage, an adept, her brother(s), and a potential love interest.

There is plenty of swashbuckling action and a variety of worlds visited while Beka and her crew trace what happened to her mother, why, and who was responsible. She does get her culprits, but the ending leaves her with a continuation of her quest. I look forward to seeing what happens next.

Mary JL says

Beka Rosselin-Metadi did not want the Iron Crown of Lost Entibor to be placed on her head, ever. She had seen the burdens politics placed on her mother. So, she fled her home in Galcen to enjoy the free life of a spaceship pilot.

But now, she is seeking those who hired the killers who assassinated her mother, The Domina, on the Senate floor. Her father will be searching , too, of course--but he is very well known due to his exploits in the MageWars. Beka is relatively unknown--so hopefully it will be easier for her to work undercover.

When Beka starts searching around, an attempt on her life is foiled by an enigmatic stranger, who gives his name as "The Professor". One of the most fascinating characters in Book I, he becomes her first ally. She soon enlists the help of her brothers, Ari and Owen; and two friends of Ari's from the space force--Nyls Jessan and Llannat Hyfid.

And we're off! Space battles; intrigues; alien worlds; blaster battles; exploding buildings and more! Fast,

exciting action; well paced and a decent plot. The characterization is also a bit above average for an action-driven novel.

At the end of book one, one of the persons responsible for Beka's mother's murder has been captured. But the other--D'Caer--has disappeared. and evidence shows that he has taken refuge in the MageWorlds!

The Galcen forces, led by Beks's father, had crushed the MageWorld's thoroughly thirty years ago. The Mages had been decimated by Galcen's Adept Guild. So why would anyone seek refuge in the war-ravaged MageWorlds?

So Beka is going undercover as a (somewhat disreputable) merchant captain. She will seek her enemy and try to gain intelligence on the intentions of the Mages'. And this sets the stage for Book II of the trilogy.....

Fast , exciting well written space adventure.Good plot; good characterization and a few new twists. Highly recommended for the Sf adventure fans among readers.

Ksenia says

I liked the book and will surely continue with the series. And yet, I have to admit that it had quite a few limitations...

First of all, it relies too much on Star Wars archetypes and narrative tropes. It was the same with the early Fantasy writers, who felt they have to base their work on Lord of the Rings format; otherwise there will not be enough interest.

The book was first published in '92 and it feels like that. The technology a bit too basic, but it could be easily overlooked, if not for the pace problems. The pace was so out of balance in the first half of the book: it skipped over weeks and months and places, without even flashbacks to cover the gaps. It became more logical at the second half, but at the same time the narrative got too slow and somewhat dragging.

Also the sudden change of POVs drove me crazy and at least 2 of the POVs were unnecessary for the plot and were dropped later. In the end I got used to the switches, but I wish it was formatted better.

The plot was nice as an opening for the series, I'm interested enough to read on. I do hope it gets more original as it goes. I liked the characters, but I wish they were developed better. Again I have much hope for the next book... The romance-lover in me wishes the relationships were placed in a bit more spot lights, because the pairings are so cute. Both couples are adorable.

In overall - enjoyable Classic Space Opera with great cover art.

Gökçe says

Macera dolu bir roman ar?yorsan?z do?ru kitaba ba?lad?n?z. Karakterler kolay tahmin edilebilir olsalar da macera h?zl? ve ak?c?. Tek y?ld?z k?r?yor olmam?n iki sebebi var.

Birincisi al??t???m bilim kurgular gibi de?il. Yani Y?ld?z Sava?lar? sizin için bilim kurguya bu da bilim kurgu, yok Y?ld?z Sava?lar? pek de bilim kurgu de?ilse bu da de?il.

?kincisi de olaylar aras?nda kopukluklar var. Sanki öykülerin toplanmas?yla yaz?lm?? gibi. Bu da hikayeden kopmaya sebep oluyor. Birden çok bak?? aç?s? olmas? ve aralar?nda ge?i?lerin çok da belirgin olmamas? kopu?u kolayla?t?ran sebeplerden biri.

Genel olarak 4 yıldızdan da anlaşılmaca üzere bendenim. Ama TSR romanları havası olduğunu için devam mı okuyamam pek yok.

Sunny says

3.5 stars

Lots of great action and I enjoyed the world-building. It is what I would expect from a great sci-fi. Having said that, I really wanted to see more depth in all the relationships. I would expect further exploration into the connections in the next books.

Jim says

this is the first book in a fun space adventure that is now up to 6 or 7 books, several of which are prequels. Two civilizations are at war & the heroine is the rebellious daughter of the leaders of one civilization. A little corny, but a lot of interesting ideas & non stop action.
