



Demons of the Flame Sea

Jean Johnson

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The second thrilling Flame Sea novel from the national bestselling author known as “a must-read for those who enjoy fantasy and romance” (The Best Reviews).

Raised to understand and control advanced magics, the Fae Rii know they must be careful with the wild, abundant energies of their new desert homeland. They must also downplay the awe they inspire in the Bronze Age humans around them. Still, they have managed to create some equilibrium between the two factions, primitive versus advanced—at least, until new outworlders arrive, tipping the scales out of balance.

Strict and power-hungry, the ruthless Efrijt take the phrase “deal with the devil” to a new level. A treaty may be possible; however, the solution proposed will in turn give birth to a new problem: A chaos that will dance its way through all three races trying to survive in the burning heat of the Flame Sea...

Includes an exclusive preview of the next Flame Sea novel, Gods of the Flame Sea

Demons of the Flame Sea Details

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From Reader Review Demons of the Flame Sea for online ebook

Darcy says

I found this one to be interesting, mostly because of the Efrijt. They seem like a species of users and not nice, unlike the Fae group that we have met so far. The way the Fae reacted when they first learned about them was telling. I feel like the Fae expecting these people to play by the rules, when you can tell they are already looking for loopholes. That does not bode well for all involved.

Ban was an interesting player in this one. I loved how it seems like he has softened and gotten more of a personality.

Julie (Manga Maniac Cafe) says

3.25 stars

This installment felt sluggish. The plot was slow to develop, and the ending was not satisfying. I do enjoy the characters, though, and the world building, while at times painfully detailed, is fascinating. I'll read the next novella in the series, in hopes that the ending will feel more complete. Unlike the first book, I didn't feel that this was a standalone; the ending was too rushed and unfinished.

Tricia says

Didn't finish the book. Got to page 68 almost halfway thru and just wasn't feeling it.

Marlene says

Originally published at Reading Reality

This is the book that Dawn of the Flame Sea should have been. When my friend Lou and I reviewed Dawn of the Flame Sea over at The Book Pushers, we complained that the book was all set up and no delivery – meaning that although there was lots, plenty, positively oodles of worldbuilding – not a damn thing happened. We both like solid worldbuilding in our fantasy and SF romance, but there also needs to be some there, well, there. All that worldbuilding needs to lead to some world unbuilding, in one way or another.

In Demons of the Flame Sea, we finally get to experience what happens on that world that was so solidly (and occasionally stolidly) built. And now it all begins to make sense. And feel worthwhile.

The set up in Dawn of the Flame Sea showed us an advanced civilization from somewhere “out there”, the Fae Rii, literally Fair Traders, who come through an interplanetary gateway to start a settlement on the planet of the Flame Sea. Instead of having the chance to sit back and observe the local Bronze Age natives, they are witnessed the minute they come through the gate, and the cat is out of the bag.

The Fae Rii, led by the Healer Jintaya, settle in the Flame Sea. They bring peace and prosperity, as well as a

certain amount of enhanced technology, to the local tribes and clans. They also interbreed with the locals – the Fae Rii find the local humans quite attractive, and very much vice versa. There are lots of children, all raised cooperatively. It seems like a little bit of paradise.

Demons of the Flame Sea takes place 40 years after the end of Dawn. The Fae Rii are very long-lived, so they have not changed much physically. Nor has the one outworlder they brought with them, the man called Ban, a word that means Death in the local languages. Ban's name is both fitting and ironic. He is a warrior without peer, and very efficiently brings death to any enemies of the Fae Rii, especially anyone who thinks of attacking Jintaya. But Ban is also immortal, so while he deals death to others, he comes back from it himself, over and over and over.

At the beginning of Demons, Ban has been on walkabout for many years, surveying the lands around the Flame Sea. On his way back, he discovers that another group of outworlders has opened a gateway onto this planet. The Efrijit are the opposite of the Fae Rii. Where the Fae Rii trade fairly with their friends and neighbors, the Efrijit always observe the letter of any contracts strictly, and make sure those contracts are written in their favor. Where the Fae Rii are benevolent, the Efrijit are self-serving. They are not particularly warlike, but they are very exploitative. The difference in philosophy between the two cultures is extreme.

The conflict in Demons of the Flame Sea is about both the conflict between these opposing forces and the negotiating of contracts and the jockeying for position between them, with all of the local humans in both spheres of influence caught very much in the middle. Those negotiations are protracted, legalistic, and still fascinating, as the two philosophies battle not with force of arms, but with force of words. It will make readers remember the famous Shakespeare quote, "The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers."

Escape Rating B+: I liked this one SO MUCH better than Dawn, it's almost impossible to believe it's the same series from the same author. Demons reads like the Jean Johnson I know and love, where Dawn was completely and atypically meh.

So, while the worldbuilding is important in Dawn, there's a rather large glossary at the beginning of Demons. Read the glossary and skip Dawn, unless you are a compulsive completist or a glutton for punishment. There was so little significant action in Dawn that what there is is easily recapped within the pages of Demons.

While there isn't a whole lot of action in the action/adventure sense in Demons, there is plenty of conflict. The tension between the Fae Rii and the Efrijit is integral to the plot. Their philosophies are so opposed, it is kind of amazing that both sides try very hard not to come to actual blows.

The ways that the Fae Rii explain to their own adherents just how damaging the nature of the Efrijit can be make for a fascinating and still very readable philosophical discussion, and there aren't many of those in SF and fantasy.

We also see the slow warming of what will eventually become a romance between Ban and Jintaya. Ban is immortal and Jintaya is extremely long-lived. They have all the time in the universe to work their way towards an emotional and physical partnership, and it looks like they plan to take it. It's a very different way of writing a romance, but it works well in this instance.

The story ends on multiple cliffhangers. The Fae Rii and the Efrijit have worked out a means of coexisting, and are essentially kicking the can of who will control the planet down the road. I expect the continuation of that story and their conflict to be resolved in book 3 in this series, Gods of the Flame Sea.

TinaMarie says

Introducing a new race to the planet the Fae have staked a claim. This takes place 45 years from the first book and shows Ban's growth and healing. New Fae are brought in to deal with the Efrijt, support the settlement and to test and educate the half-breeds. Lots of detail and back up, kept my interest but the ending felt like a beginning. This is a spoiler but there is no clear resolution at the end of this story.

Wendy says

My review originally published on my Blog, Musings of a Bookish Kitty:
<https://www.literaryfeline.com/2018/0...>

Barb Lie says

Demons of the Flame Sea by Jean Johnson is the 2nd book in her Flame Seas Fantasy series. Demons of the Flame Sea picks up years after the first book ended. Here is a brief refresher of this series: a group of Fae's known as Fae Rii, who are Fair Traders, live in peace with a human tribe, making life habitual for them. Over the years the land now called Flame Sea has advanced into a wonderful community for all, including many fae/human inter species children.

Ban, the Fae Rii leader's warrior, has been travelling around this world to gather information from various tribes, as well as bring back needed minerals for them. Near his last stop, he visits a small tribe and learns about another species that is living nearby. The Efrijt pay the tribe money to pull out mercury, which the Efrijt's need to help them survive, but the mercury makes the humans sick.

Ban will bring this information home to Jintaya (the leader), and they will ask for help from the Fae council to send them more people. We get to meet some more characters in this story, some who will be instrumental to negotiate a deal with the Efrijts, who the humans now call Demons.

What follows is an interesting storyline giving us a look at three different species (Fae, Humans & Efrijts). Jean Johnson has written a very nice story that continues the flow of this world building, and has created some great characters.

This is fantasy and world building that is very well done. However, if you are looking for an exciting, action filled story, you will not find it in this book. It a slow build, but enjoyable story of meeting all the characters; learning how they survive together; and how they will handle a new species that could be dangerous. The negotiations between the Fae and Efrijt has just begun, with the Fae looking out for themselves and the local humans who are suffering; the Efrijt, are willing to agree to terms, as long as they get what they want and to stay in this world. I expect Jean Johnson will be pulling some surprises as we head toward the final book in this trilogy. I look forward to seeing how this ends.

Barb
The Reading Cafe

Theresa says

2d in the series. Takes place 45 years after the first book.

On a trip home, Ban comes across another tribe that's being 'cared for' by outsiders, the Efrijt. The same Efrijt that abandoned him to a netherhell in his early life. When he reports this to the Fae Rii a legal battle for control of the world begins.

I like having more Fae Rii arrive. It allows more 'mixing' and new story threads. And Jinji is very intelligent and clever. She makes a wonderful negotiator. I love how she handles the Efrijt.

Footnote: 1) This is a good example on how a little kindness goes a long way.

Fave scenes: the snake story, the new Fae's arrival, Ban sifting sand and Efan's 'demonstration' when meeting the Efrijt council.
