



Age of Myth

Michael J. Sullivan

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Age of Myth inaugurates another six-book series set in Elan.

Since time immemorial, humans have worshipped the gods they call Fhrey, truly a race apart: invincible in battle, masters of magic, and seemingly immortal. But when a god falls to a human blade, the balance of power between humans and those they thought were gods changes forever.

Now only a few stand between humankind and annihilation: Raithe, reluctant to embrace his destiny as the God Killer; Suri, a young seer burdened by signs of impending doom; and Persephone, who must overcome personal tragedy to lead her people. The Age of Myth is over. The time of rebellion has begun.

Age of Myth Details

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Author : Michael J. Sullivan

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From Reader Review Age of Myth for online ebook

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

Update: \$1.99 on US Kindle today 9-13-17

I freaking loved this book and I now have new favorite author! I can't wait to read more of his books!

In the days of darkness before the war, men were called Rhunes. We lived in Rhuneland or Rhulyn as it was once known. We had little to eat and much to fear. What we feared most were the gods across the Bern River, where we were not allowed. Most people believe our conflict with the Fhrey started at the Battleground of Grandford, but it actually began on a day in early spring when two men crossed the river.

-THE BOOK OF BRIN

Raithe and his father crossed the river to hunt for food. Their village was starving and Raithe's dad thought it would be okay. BUT, it was not. And Raithe's father was killed. And a god was killed somewhat by the hand of Raithe.

After this little incident, Raithe ends up with a sidekick named Malcolm. He was a slave to the god that was killed. Or.... was he? Anyway, Raithe and Malcolm are wonderful characters. I loved their banter, I loved every thing about them really. They went on a journey together. Raithe to find somewhere to find a home of his own and Malcolm, just because.

Meanwhile over in Dahl Rhen, Persephone finds out her husband, the chieftan, Reglan has been killed by the fearsome bear - Grin the Brown.

She is always there. I see The Great Bear every night in the star-filled sky. To most people, it's just a group of stars. But to those who lived during that terrible time, they will always represent Grin the Brown. Even though I never personally saw her, stories of that beast scared me to death.

-THE BOOK OF BRIN

It turns out a few people were killed or harmed that day. Well, Grin seems to have killed many people in her time. Since Persephone's husband was killed, she had to step down after 20 years of running things. The idiot (Konniger) and idiot wife (Tressa) that took Persephone and Reglan's place were stupid and Konniger got what was coming to him anyway.

Persephone is such a wonderful character. I just loved her and I was so happy when Raithe and Malcolm came into her life. Well, they saved her from being killed but that's all I'm going to say. Oh and Raithe is known country wide as the God Killer.

There is also a little girl in the village that came to Persephone and her name is Suri. She told Persephone that she was a mystic and that the old mystic that took her in was dead. Suri also has a beautiful white wolf named Minna. I loved them so much. All of these people and wolf come together to try to help each other.

Suri had a wolf named Minna. They were the best of friends and roamed the forest together. She had tattoos, was always filthy, afraid of nothing, and could do magic. From the first time I met her, I wanted to be Suri . . . I still do.

-THE BOOK OF BRIN

As you can imagine, after the killing of the god, there are other gods and what not sent out to kill all of the humans. But there are some Fhrey that end up at the village and want to side with the humans and help them. The leader of that little group is called Nyphron. I liked them too. They had a cool giant named, Grygor and it was a totally lovely moment when he was asking one of the ladies how she was cooking a chicken and gave her some herbs to add to it. That was all it took for me, him being a bad @ssed giant that could cook. lol

Suri could see all kinds of things. She saw many future events and talked to nature and the trees. It was so cool. She saved them many times. And she was saved herself. Oh and the revelations of certain things made me cry. YES DAMN IT! I CRIED IN THIS BOOK TOO!

There are other people in the book that I just didn't care about at all. But one of them changed my mind and her name was Arion. She had many powers and some things happened when she ended up at the village trying to take the other gods back. Then some other stuff happened later on and she turned out to be a great person along with the rest of them that I loved.

I won't say anything else because I will get off on a spoiler review and I don't want to do that. I want everyone to enjoy this wonderful book for themselves! Oh happy day =)

If I spelled anything wrong then I apologize because I scribbled so many notes I can hardly read my writing! 0_o

I'm sooooooooooooooooooooo glad I saw my friends reading this book at one time and I decided to get it from the overdrive library. But now, the hardback is going to be added my beautiful bookcases in due time ♥

MY BLOG: [Melissa Martin's Reading List](#)

Helen 2.0 says

Let me concur with all my friends' five star reviews and tell you that this world, these characters, this story, is **friggin awesome**.

As a prequel that requires no prior knowledge of the setting, the Legends of the First Empire series plays in the same world as the Riyria Chronicles, only many centuries before when ordinary humans ("Rhunes") lived in fear of their long-lived cousins, the Fhrey. In this age, the Rhunes have always seen the Fhrey as

divine immortal overlords - until the day ordinary Raithe kills a Fhrey and starts a war. Age of Myth follows the paths of several characters, human and Fhrey, as they witness and choose their sides in the brewing conflict. **This is a highly entertaining introduction to an epic fantasy series.**

MJS does an amazing job at keeping the book readable even for those who generally stay away from high fantasy by throwing in humor, light romance, mystery and deep emotion. **There's something for everyone.** He also avoided complicated explanations and info-dumps so as not to drag down the fast-paced plot.

But where I believe MJS shines best is when writing strong, three dimensional characters - especially women. **The way an author approaches modern issues in a fantasy world is always a good indicator of writing skill;** Sullivan really hit the ball out of the court with his take on feminist icons in the man's world he has created. Arion, Persephone, Suri - all of them make their own way, working harder than anyone else because of all the prejudices standing against them.

The woman who takes the cake here is **Mora**; she's beautiful, brave, and fights against those in power trying to force her into an unwanted marriage.

This was a BR with the BBB folks, we'll be doing Age of Swords on its release date, **July 25th**, in case anyone needs a heads-up.

Petrik says

3.5/5 Stars

It's always a great feeling when you start a new series from an author and to find out that he/she has improved his storytelling skill. Well done Michael J Sullivan, a job well done.

After reading that opening sentence, you'll probably think "**what's this dude talking about when he rated the book only 3.5/5 stars?**", let me enlighten you a bit on why and to do this, I'll have to compare my experience on Age of Myth with The Crown Conspiracy (*the first book in 'Riyria Revelations' series*) because the differences in experience are like heaven and hell.

Coming into Age of Myth, I realized I will always be on the odd side of the fan base where I can't bring myself to thoroughly love the first book of a series by Sullivan. Don't get me wrong, this is a good book, I do have some problems with it that made me rolled my eyes but overall I really enjoyed my experience with it. One of the reasons for this is because of this time, I started the book with the right expectation compared to when I started Riyria Revelations.

Back when I started Theft of Swords omnibus, everyone I know told me something like "Riyria Revelations is the most epic fantasy series with the best bromance ever". I strongly disagree with that notion on both accounts. First, there's nothing epic about it, you won't see any kind of huge war to save the world kind of events. Second, Royce and Hadrian do have as a great friendship; I wouldn't go so far as calling them the best because although I love Hadrian, my feeling towards Royce is just okay. The thing is, no one told me that the start of the series would be so underwhelming, unoriginal, boring and weak. I started Riyria Revelations with very high and wrong expectation, The Crown Conspiracy is, in fact, the worst first book to a series I've ever read. I've never rated the first book of a series with 2/5 stars except for it. However, enough about that, I'm not here to talk about Riyria Revelations, all you have to know is that I dislike Theft of Swords and yet, the last book of the series, Heir of Novron remained in my favorite shelves.

My point is, if you're new to Sullivan's work, I'm going to be an asshole and say, do not trust the fan base blindly, just come to this one with zero expectation. I'm sorry to say this but the fans love towards Royce and Hadrian is way too strong, if Sullivan writes something about Royce and Hadrian learning how to make Sushi, it will still receive a five stars rating from most of the fans I guarantee it. My experience towards this book has increased significantly because I truly know what I'm getting into, and you should too, or even better, be completely oblivious to it. Honestly speaking though, I bought this book just because the cover was done by one of my favorite cover artist, Marc Simonetti, I mean.. look at it, it's freaking gorgeous.

Anyway, on to the review itself (*Yes, I'm just getting started.*)

Age of Myth is the first book out of six on Sullivan's newest series, The Legends of the First Empire, and judging from the first book only, this series already has the potential to be even better than Riyria Revelations. For those of you who don't know, Sullivan's publishing method is different to most authors. He wrote the entire series first before releasing it periodically, that way you don't have to be scared of the series not being completed even if Sullivan himself were teleported to another dimension. For more details on this, just read the author's note or just ask Sullivan himself, he will be happy to tell you why in detail. This method, however also means that the first book has the tendency to be the weakest out of the entire series, like the case with Riyria Revelations. The great thing is if this series follows the same sense of progression in quality, then yes, this could be even better by Riyria Revelations by the end of it judging from how superior the first book is in comparison.

The plot started when Raithe, a Rhune (human) killed a Fhrey (Elf), which were worshiped as Gods during this era. This sparks the flame of rebellions and basically, Age of Myth revolves only around introducing the main characters and how the human gathered their army for the upcoming war. There aren't a lot of things happening in the first book, the plot is super predictable, the villain in this book is laughable at best but that's okay because the plot this time flows really well. I finished reading the book within two days, it was addictive to read despite not a lot of things happening, the main reason for this is due to the lovable characters and prose.

Although I personally don't care about Raithe, imo he's really bland and unlikeable as the main character, Malcolm and as Sullivan's trademark, the female characters are highly lovable. Sullivan's main strength is writing realistic and compelling female characters without them being mega strong with swords or martial arts, it's one of the things I will always praise him for. Age of Myth showed a major improvement in Sullivan's characterization, Riyria Revelations required four books to make me care about the characters, this time Sullivan did it in one. Malcolm, Persephone, Suri, and Minna (a white wolf) are definitely my favorite characters of the book so far. I don't know if this is a coincidence or not but the resemblance between Suri and Minna with Princess Mononoke is uncanny, which is a plus because I love that anime.

Picture: How I envisioned Suri (*Princess Mononoke* fanart by *muju on deviantArt*)

Sullivan is really great at providing his series with lore and histories that lasted thousands of years; this series is, in fact, the dissection of legends told in Riyria Revelations, if you have read the series, you'll find a lot of Easter Eggs to the series here. However, do know that if this is your first time diving into Sullivan's work, it's okay for you to start from here and do know that you won't find anything new in the world-building. It's classic fantasy, with dwarfs, elves, and many more elements that have been done repeatedly. Sullivan,

however, made up for this lack of originality with his prose, which in my opinion has increased significantly in quality. I was never bored reading through the book, it's easy to read, simple, vivid and highly addictive.

The rest of the problems I had with the book mostly lie within its convenience factor. The climax of this book, for instance, it lasted a full chapter of battle but ended within two paragraphs after a character (*you can probably guess who*) which were there since the beginning of the climax section, decided to join. Not to mention that it was won so easily, I don't think this character received more than a scratch throughout the whole book. Although the characters are lovable, Suri and Minna aside, the characters seemed to be a carbon copy from Riyria Revelations with different names, specifically Raithe, Malcolm and Persephone. This, of course, have the potential to change when I progressed further into the series. Lastly, I may be being nit picky here but I find some of the characters naming here to be completely out of place. There are some modern contemporary names like Sarah and Jason for example, this would be okay if everyone is named the same way but it's not. It took my immersion away every time some modern names were mentioned in high fantasy books. Can you imagine if Legolas were named Kevin? Or Aragorn was named Jim? Frodo named Daniel? Exactly.

Overall, I truly enjoyed reading Age of Myth despite the problems I had with it. It's really well written that it made me overlook some problems that made me rolled my eyes. Considering that this is only the first book out of six, and written by Michael Sullivan, I have high hopes that the last book of the series will again be included in my favorite shelves. Recommended for anyone who loves classic fantasy or looking into starting adult high fantasy for the first time.

You can find this and the rest of my Adult Epic/High Fantasy & Sci-Fi reviews at BookNest

Emily May says

This is why I no longer read much epic fantasy.

The genre is so... familiar. Perhaps its unfair to blame Age of Myth for that. Perhaps the real culprit is the limitations of this genre (or the perceived limitations at least) because all epic fantasy series contain the same or similar elements, they blend into one, they all start to look the same after a while, and they all start to look like *A Song of Ice and Fire*.

Sullivan is a competent writer with a flowing style that doesn't suffer from the same density employed by many other fantasy writers. There is intricate world-building, developed characters and bloody battles - and yet, I don't know about you, but I've seen this all before. This world feels like a mash-up of several others, the characters remind me of other fantasy characters, and the action cannot make up for the lack of emotional stimulation.

It is too neat, too safe, too recycled. "What will happen?" is a thought that never crossed my mind. It seemed I already knew.

Age of Myth opens with Raithe killing one of the Fhrey - a strong race of creatures deemed "godlike" and believed, until now, to be immortal. He earns himself the title of "God Killer", yet another addition to the Kingslayer, Kingkiller (etc.) trope. But, of course, this changes everything. Not only is Raithe wanted by the Fhrey, but he has also uncovered a dark truth - the Gods can be killed.

The story also focuses on a seer called Suri, and Persephone, a widow destined to become the first female chieftain. This in itself calls for comparisons to Daenerys Targaryen, but it is the word "dahl" - so similar to Martin's "Khal" title - that makes one wonder if the similarities can really be coincidental.

Gods, warriors, giants, seers, goblins, clans reminiscent of Westeros' houses, wolf companions reminiscent of the Stark direwolves - **I can't pinpoint anything original or standout here**. Granted, originality is hard to come by in the narrow confines of genre, but that is why authors need to step it up with a sparkling writing style, memorable characters, or just some charm and narrative charisma.

Unfortunately, *Age of Myth* is simply forgettable in the vast sea of the fantasy genre.

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Michael says

As I'm sure everyone here knows, this is my own book so I'm not going to be reviewing/rating it. But I do think people might be interested in its progression so here goes.

Update 03/08/17: There is just three days left to get *Age of Myth* at 66% off its regular list price.

And thanks to the thousands of people who have already given the book a try!

Update 05/06/17: I'm please to announce that *Age of Myth* is the **Audible Daily Deal**. You can pickup a copy of the audio for less than \$6 and that's a savings of 82% from the regular price and 75% from the member price. With book 2 (*Age of Swords*) coming out in just a few months, this is an excellent time to get in on the series.

Update 4/30/2017: This actually happened awhile ago, but I've been busy and haven't updated. *Age of Myth* has crossed the 100,000 books sold milestone. This number is only for English language editions and includes ebooks, hardcovers, paperbacks, and audio downloads. That's a huge milestone to reach - and it's done so faster than any of my other titles. Thanks all for the amazing support

Update 3/22/2017: Well, I think Suri might just have met her match in Unbound World's CageMatch 2017 competition. Still a few days from the **close of voting on round 3**, but the gap between her and Georgia Mason is widening. Still, she had a good run, and made a fine showing. She and Minna have nothing to be ashamed of.

Update 3/19/2017: *Age of Myth* is on sale! Just \$1.99 (an 80% savings over the \$9.99 price). It's listed as a Goodreads Deal and is also a Kindle Daily Deal - but you have to be quick. Ends in just 12 hours. Oh, it's also hitting the Amazon Top 100 list at #36! I think that's the highest one of my books has ever been.

Update 3/7/2017 Suri and Minna are in Unbound Worlds Cage Match 2017. Down, but not yet out. There's a little over a day left to **vote** to have her move onto Round 2.

Update 12/26/2016: Proud to be included on Bookworm Blues' Best of 2016 list! Here's the full list of 17.

Check it out, and maybe you'll find something new to fall in love with.

Update 12/4/2016: I have another best-of list to report on for Age of Myth. Amazon's editors created their Best Science Fiction and Fantasy of 2016 and I'm honored to have *Age of Myth* included! Here's the full list of 20. Check it out, and maybe you'll find something new to fall in love with.

Update 11/5/2016 I can't believe I didn't update my status/review post with this amazing news! Age of Myth is a Goodreads Choice Award Nominee for fantasy!! I'm so honored, especially with the amazing group I'm included with. Here's the 15 novels in round 1:

I'm not going to campaign for a vote for my title, but please do checkout the whole list of nominated books and vote for the one you think should win. There's already been more than 1,000,000 votes cast!

Update: 10/05/16 - Release Date +3 months - Well it's been just over three months and the release has gone very well. Between ebook, print and audio more than 47,000 copies have been sold - that's a much faster debut than any of my other novels so I'm really quite happy about that. I should note that print "sales" are books that left the warehouse and may not have sold through to consumers, but I'm watching the "returns" and they have been very small so far.

But the really exciting thing is the reviews and how positive they have been. Right now between Amazon US, Audible, and Goodreads there have been 6,700 reviews and the breakdown is: 90.4% rated a 4 or 5 | 7.4% at a 3 | 1.7% 1 or 2. But the most exciting thing is the number of comments I've seen about people reading me for the first time and now are delving into Riyria. That's always the hope, of course, but glad to see it's turning out to be true.

Update: 07/01/16 - Release Date +3 - Well the book is finally out. I started it in February 2013 so it's been a long time in the making. I'm really pleased with how the first few days have gone. Sales have been brisk (can tell because my position on Amazon's Top 100 Fantasy Authors improved significantly. I usually hang out around 50 - 100, and I got as high as 8 and am now in the teens. Audible featured Age of Myth of their home page - that's an AMAZING vote of confidence in the title. Given how many books are vying for that position I'm pretty proud they feel strongly enough about AoM to give it that prime real estate. Let's see what else. Oh, AoM made Goodreads' Most Popular Books of the Summer list. There are only 21 selected (3 from my genre) so nice to make it on that. B&N featured it in their weekly release post, gave a nice quote, too. And Fantasy Book Critic has it listed as a "Noteworthy Release." Can't complain about any of these things, early reviews seem positive. Hoping the book is a big success, I don't want to let down my readers, publisher, or others in the industry who are doing and saying such nice things on its behalf.

Update: 06/07/16 - Preorder Bonus Material - My publisher (Del Rey), and I have teamed together to offer a number of perks for people who pre-order *Age of Myth*. You can sign up here if you pre-ordered an audio, ebook, or print edition before June 28th you are eligible to receive:

* First Five Chapters to read now

- * Access to a high-resolution map
- * Character Profiles
- * Wall paper with Marc Simonetta's artwork
- * 7 free short stories
- * Author Q&A
- * Signed bookmarks & book plates (Free to US, optional small shipping fee for overseas)

Update: 04/24/16 Argh!! I found out I had two reviews going with updates in both so I attempted to merge them. In doing so I lost a whole bunch of updates - more than a years worth!! Oh well. Here's the current update. I'm currently listening to the full recording for the audio book to proof it. Yes, you can all be jealous that I get to hear Tim's wonderful narration 2 months ahead of time. A perk of being the author! ;-)

Update: 3/17/2015

Four chapters to go in #5 - Probably 10,000 - 15,000 words and I'll be done. Both betas have finished up on book #1. A few changes, but not too bad. We're getting there!

Update as of 2/28/2015

I'm about 80% through book #5 which has to be finished as a pre-requisite of releasing the first book. The second beta read is over, and Robin has input compiled and waiting for me. But the most exciting news is....

It's officially announced that the books will be released by Random House's Del Rey imprint and as I mentioned in the last update the first book is scheduled for the Summer of 2016. Now, I know that sounds like a **really** long time, but that means I'll have a runway to get a Riyria Chronicles book out this year.

Update as of 2/8/2015

I'm about 50% through book #5 which has to be finished as a pre-requisite of releasing the first book. I already have a few minor changes based on that book - but they are minor and will be easy to implement.

We have selected a publisher and hope to make an "official announcement" soon. I couldn't be happier about this, and they are as excited as I am about the project (always a good thing). Tentative release date is Summer 2016, which is reasonable since they don't have the "official manuscript yet.

The second beta is winding to a close. It went very well...definitely fewer changes than during the first beta, and again easy to implement. So once I get done with book #5 (still hoping for April - May 2015) I'll be starting the changes and hope to have an "official" version to them - whereby their editing will start, fairly soon.

Update: 1/9/2015

The book was written from mid February to mid July 2013. Since that time I've finished the next three books in the series, and I hope to finish the last book by April or May 2015.

The book went through it's first beta in December 2014, and it's going through another right now in January. It's also been submitted to publishers.

I know a lot of people are waiting for this series, and I plan on rolling it out with some cool stuff (bookmarks, signed postcards, bookplates, etc) So if you are interested in any pre-release perks or would like to be a beta reader here is a form where you can sign up for such things.

Also I'll update progress here as time goes on.

Mischenko says

To see this review and others, please visit www.readrantrockandroll.com

Age of Myth by Michael J. Sullivan is the first book in the Legends of the First Empire series. I've been wanting to read Michael Sullivan's books for some time and decided I'd start with *Age of Myth* after learning that it was the first book in a new series and in the Riyria world 3,000 years prior. I went into the book completely blind, not having a clue what to expect.

I'll start by saying I enjoyed this fantasy world. I loved all the characters including Raithe (God Killer), Malcolm, Suri & Minna, and Persephone. I knew in the first part of the book that Raithe would be a favorite. There's something great about an author that can make me feel connected to characters and that's exactly how I felt when reading this book. I loved how the three main characters and plots come together, the interaction, development and twists -all of it. I felt like I had a good visual of the characters in my mind as well. I was pleased with every part of the book and happy with the ending too. It was an easy and surprisingly fast read. The glossary of terms and names in the back were helpful.

I'm really excited to see what's going to happen in the next book and I'm astonished that the author has already written all of the other five books for this series. Getting a sneak peak into *Age of Swords* was unexpected. How awesome is that!

I'm not a fantasy expert, but I think anyone who enjoys fantasy will like this book.

4*****

Haïfa says

Age of Myth is the first book of Michael J. Sullivan newest series, the Legends of the First Empire. Set 3000 years before the timeline of Riyria Revelations, **the series aspires to set the record straight and tell the truth behind the myths shrouding the First Empire's creation !**

Age of Myth's stunning cover, designed by Marc Simonetti

Being a huge fan of the Riyria Revelations and Chronicles, it was pretty obvious for me that I would seek to read every story Michael J. Sullivan would write in the world of Elan (or anything written by him, really)!! **And I had so much fun reading Age of Myth !! It was so exciting to know more about the early foundations of the Empire, to meet the people behind the myths and to collect the hints and links to the original series :** Avempartha, Horn of Gylindora, Cenzlyor and much much more ! ;) Funny, however, how even the true events taking place in this book are already misquoted and twisted, often to serve political or ideological purposes ! The series aims to reveal the truth, but the first seeds of the Myths are already planted ! :D

Remember, it's easier to believe an outlandish lie confirming what you suspect than the most

obvious truth that denies it.

In Age of Myth, the world is dominated by the mighty Fhrey (elves), viewed by the humans as gods. While Fhreys thrive in the beautiful cities of Erivan, men are divided into clans, live simple and primitive lives, worship different gods and believe in spirits. And while the Fhrey despise the Rhunes (humans), the latter fear the Fhrey and both races are utterly ignorant of each other's characteristics, traditions and abilities !

We're ants to them, and if an ant bites you, do you seek out that one ant? Or do you set fire to the whole colony to make sure you're not bitten again?

Besides the references to Riyria, Age of Myth's true strength resides in its characters for me ! **Michael introduced us to a unique cast of so many compelling characters** : a determined and brave chieftain's widow, a hilarious, out-of-sync, clever Mystic and her wolf, a trained fighter seeking his place in the world, a powerful Fhrey Artist, a rebel and arrogant Fhrey and a myriad of lively and realistic secondary characters. One of Michael's strengths is definitely his characterization in my opinion, and he delivered, once again ! With a special mention to his amazing female characters, who refuse to sit idly and watch men write (a mediocre) History !

"Live with it long enough and the prison stops being the walls or the guards. Instead, it's the fear you can't survive on your own, the belief you aren't as capable, or as worthy, as others."

Since I rated this book 4 stars, I feel it's important to mention that though I enjoyed the read and had a lot of fun diving into old Elan, **both the plot and the writing were pretty simple**. The feeling was probably amplified by the fact that having already read the Riyria Revelations, I already roughly knew or guessed where the main plot was going. And true, the simplicity of the book made it very easy to go through but I was left hoping for more poignant twists and more epic actions and fights ! That being said, knowing MJS and having experienced the same feeling with his first book Theft of Swords, I know we'll have plenty development and surprises coming our way in the sequels and I'm confident the books will only grow in quality, scope and "epicness" !

Lastly, guys, make sure you read the Author's note ! You'll find a detailed explanation of MJS about his writing process and his choice to write a series entirely before publishing it !

You can find this review and more at Booksprens .

Michael says

A reader pointed out to me that I had multiple reviews/updates threads going - Doh! I've merged them so No future updates to this. To see the updates you can go to this link.

Choko says

*** 4.75 ***

A buddy read with the Fantasy lovers at BB&B!

07-23-17... Just a quick re-read before the next book comes out:):):)

First re-read rating *** 5 +++++***

What was I thinking the first time, holding off with 0.25 points???? This is a pure delight and so well told, our generation is lucky to have such a wonderful, natural storyteller!!!! It was better the second time around!

When I bought this book I thought it was a safe bet for a solid read, since I have read other books by this author and already knew he was a very talented storyteller. He writes a Classic Fantasy with easy humor and a brighter outlook, which is a breath of fresh air in a heavily populated by Grim-Dark genre. Not that I mind my dark and gloomy Grim reads. On the contrary - I like beheadings, torture, and hopelessly flawed shady characters as much as the next guy, but after a steady diet of tragic endings, a book that laughs at its misfortune and offers some blue skies and sunshine at the end of the tunnel is a very welcome change!!!! We need some hope, something good to look forward to, not only in real life, but in our fictional lives as well. What is the point of everything otherwise? I am a strong believer in mixing it up!!! Variety is the spice of life, even when it comes to our favorite things:-)

So, I ordered the book knowing I will be satisfied with the results one way or another. Then I began reading and could not put it down!!!! MJS has gotten even better since releasing the previous series!!! It is subtle, but his story flows in a most a fluid but deliberate way. The author leads us by the hand into the primitive world of Elan, 3000 years before the Riyria Chronicles, a time when humans consider the Fhrey as gods. At the same time, the regular Fhrey pale in comparison with the ones who possess Magic, the Miraliyth, perfecting its mastery to the elevation of an Art form. Some Magical Artists feel that they have transcended into true gods, finding the rest of the world, including other tribes of Fhrey, mundane and vastly inferior.

A young man finds himself in the horrifying position of killing one of the "gods" and the startling revelation that such thing is at all possible, turns the world on its ears.

The book introduces a myriad of characters of all ilks and creeds, all social layers, political and magic power, as well as some very humanized trees and animals. We get a great explanation about the influence of

Weeping Willows on distraught individuals, as well as the rules of the game of pointing the obvious... As always, MJS creates some of the most compelling female characters in the genre, period!!! I was in love with some of the ladies at first read, while the mystic girl child Suri stole my heart at her first appearance on page, arising all sorts of maternal instincts in me, and believe me, I don't really have those!!! The old lady who hung out with the women and showed them how to pluck a chicken reminded me so much of my grandma, that I rushed to the phone to call and say hi:-) The guys were good too, but we are going to need more from them in the future in order to live up to their female counterparts!

With the characters being so colorful and multilayered, the story took a bit of a secondary place, but the natural banter, the depth created by small details and context, rather than grand descriptions and emotional angst, and the core of humor running through every page, made for an enthralling read!! I could not have asked for a better gift than the giddiness and joy this first book in a 5 or 6 book arc brought me!!! There were moments I called my best friend just so I can share with her the mastery of wordsmithship and storytelling!!! It tickled that part of my soul which basks in the glory of poetry and lush prose!!!! Call me weird, but the way words can be strung in a variety of unique melodies, that is a language that speaks to my heart!!!

I will not discuss the plot, since I always like for people to discover it the way it is meant to be discovered, but I will say that it is an introduction book and more time is given to making us familiar with the world and its rules than plot advancement. The last 20% of the book were full of action and I am sure, they got the ball rolling for the rest of the ark.

I will recommend this book to all fans of Fantasy and Adventure. It is strongly reminiscent of the traditional High Fantasy genre, but it has a very fresh, humorous, and innovative outlook!!! I believe it would find a way to satisfy the requirements of the traditionalists as well as those who are looking for a more updated look of our beloved Fantasy field. So what are you waiting for??? Go read it!!!!

I wish you all Happy Reading and may your imagination reach ever higher on the pages of Fantasy!!!

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

4.5 of 5 stars at The BiblioSanctum <https://bibliosanctum.com/2016/06/23/...>

Any new Michael J. Sullivan novel automatically becomes a must-read for me, and Age of Myth was certainly no exception. It hardly mattered that this story actually takes place thousands of years before the Riyria Revelations and the Riyria Chronicles, well before the beloved characters of Hadrian and Royce even existed; I just couldn't wait to revisit the world of Elan again.

For readers new to Sullivan's work, this would also be an excellent starting point. Age of Myth is the first novel of new series of five books called The Legends of the First Empire, set in the same world of Riyria, but you need no prior knowledge of any of Sullivan's books to jump right in. In fact, this world has a fresh and young vibe to it, exuding a sense new beginnings. Humans, known as Rhunes, live in tribal clans scattered across the wild landscape, primitive compared to the Fhrey, a race of long-lived beings that are more technologically advanced and capable of the Art, or magic. The vast differences between them have led humans to regard Fhrey as gods—powerful creatures that can call down lightning or control the elements, and it is a known fact that they do not age and cannot be killed.

That all changes one day, when a young human named Raithe and his father encounter a Fhrey with his

slaves while hunting in a forbidden part of the forest. The ensuing dispute ends with Raithe's father dead, and Raithe avenging him by slaying the Fhrey, thus disproving everything the Rhunes thought they knew about their "gods"—that they can be killed after all. Raithe is forced to go on the run with one of the Fhrey's escaped slaves named Malcolm, and together they end up at Dahl Rhen, home to a chieftain's widow named Persephone. In the wake of her husband's recent death, Persephone has been trying to keep her clan together through the confusion of changing leadership. Already, news of a human killing a god has also reached their dahl, and fear of the Fhrey's retaliation is making everyone feel on edge. Imagine Persephone's surprise then, when the "God Killer" himself shows up on her doorstep, followed right behind by a Fhrey warrior contingent.

Age of Myth was a real treat. Sullivan's novels always are. If you want fun, action-filled adventures, you really can't go wrong with his books. While not always groundbreaking, they do frequently offer fresh twists on the old-school heroic fantasy tradition. They have this straightforward and down-to-earth feel to them, much like comfort food. And like comfort food, I also find these kinds of stories incredibly satisfying.

That said, I won't pretend I didn't have any reservations going into this. When I first met the characters, for instance, I couldn't help but wonder if Raithe and Malcolm were simply about to turn into another Royce and Hadrian, or that Persephone would be another Aristia Essendon but in a new form. As much as I adore Riyria, it obviously wouldn't do for this new series to be a rehash of some of the same ideas and people, and I had a brief moment where I worried this would be the case. Turns out, I should have trusted in Sullivan. As the story unfolded, it became clear that Age of Myth had everything it needed to stand out on its own, and the characters are all delightfully exceptional. Persephone became a quick favorite, as did the young mystic Suri and her wolf companion Minna. There's no doubt about it; the strong and capable women of this novel helped make it great.

As well, the world-building was fantastic. New readers will love taking it all in, and for Riyria fans, I think it will feel doubly rewarding. This was an extraordinary opportunity to step back into history of one of my favorite series and relive what really happened. I wouldn't have missed it for anything. Millennia before humans started building castles and forging steel, they lived in the wilderness worshiping nature spirits. They feared the Fhrey, who will one day be known and reviled as the elves, but right now they are a powerful race that regarded the Rhune as nothing more than animals. Already, the Fhrey have driven the Dherg (the precursor to dwarves) underground after literally crushing them in a great war. It's a completely different atmosphere and way of life. But at the same time, there were elements that I immediately recognized, like the names and places that I've always associated with being old or in the past, but are actually considered contemporary in this book. Two examples that immediately come to mind are Nyphron and Avempartha. Even without the help of the handy glossary at the end of this book though, it was so easy to just slip into this world and become fully immersed in its beauty and magic.

From the very beginning, this book had my full attention. It follows at least three threads, moving along at a quick pace until they converge to result in an unforgettable finale. No one builds a story like Sullivan, who loves to drop plenty of clues along the way, teasing that moment when everything finally falls into place. This has become his signature touch, which can also be seen in Age of Myth. The scene of the final showdown was unquestionably the crowning glory of this marvelously entertaining novel.

If you enjoy epic fantasy, and are perhaps hungering for something with timeless appeal, then I highly recommend picking up Age of Myth. Newcomers to Michael J. Sullivan's work will find this to be a perfect place to jump on board, and if you're already a fan, there's absolutely no excuse—you must read this book! It's exciting to know that the entire series has already been written, but also vexing that I can't get my hands on the sequel until next year. I'm just so thrilled and delighted by this promising new adventure.

Melanie says

ARC provided by the publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Age of Myth is set 3,000 years before the the Riyria Revelations, but don't be scared because this series is meant to be read separately and there will be no spoilers if you haven't completed it or even started it.

This book also kind of gave me a Mistborn vibe, because each chapter starts out with a passage from *The book of Brin*. But unlike Mistborn, there isn't much of a mystery, because we are quickly introduced to Brin and we know she is an apprentice to one day become the keeper of ways in her village. That basically means she is supposed to remember and tell all of the stories that have happened before and during her time, thus this story unravels.

I actually haven't read anything by Michael J. Sullivan before, but after reading this I will quickly remedy that. This book was a delight that completely immersed me into this world of gods, men (Rhunes), and men who everyone thinks are gods (Fhrey).

This book has very many characters and very many points of view, but all are inferior to my beloved Suri. She is my newest beautiful little cinnamon roll that is too good for this world, too pure. Suri is an amazing fourteen-ish year old with an equally adorable pet wolf, Minna. She is also a mystic, which means she has some magic and has many means in which to predict the future. One day she gets a premonition in the form of a vision (I did not mean to make that rhyme, but now I'm just thinking about *Hamilton*) that is going to be disastrous for the whole world. Her old trainer and the woman that raised her, a well respected Augur named Tura, told Suri that if she ever got a vision like this, she had to tell it to the Chieftain of Clan Rhen.

Then we have Persephone, who Suri tells her ill-fated premonition to, because she is the Chieftain's wife and he is out on a revenge mission to kill a bear that has caused a lot of pain in their village. Persephone is a great female lead, as well, and shows how strong she is time and time again throughout this book. I truly came to love Persephone by the end of this book, and she showed exponential characters growth.

“Welcome the gods,
Heal the injured,
Follow the wolf.”

Even though I said this book has very many points of view, it is first told with three distinct events in mind. That is, until the three story-lines that spring from these three events meet towards the middle and the end of this book. The next story line, and first perspective we actually get to see, is Raithe's. Raithe only has his father left in his world, and desperate times makes them make a desperate decision to trespass in lands that mere men are not allowed to venture to. After a grave decision that soon changes everyone's world, Raithe is forced to flee with a slave named Malcom, who has quite an affinity for rocks.

“A wise man once told me no man can escape death, but it's how we run that defines us. And if

I have to run, I think I'd like to go where she's going."

The last most important view is from a 2,000 year old woman named Arion. Arion is from the Miralyith tribe, which is the tribe that thinks they are pretty much gods or at least the closest thing to it. Arion does not completely share this view, but still holds a very high place of honor in this society and is the tutor to the crown prince. Miralyiths pretty much rule the Instarya tribe, because even though Instaryas have very strong warrior skills, Miralyiths have more powerful magic, which they call the arts. Arion is incredibly skilled in the arts, yet is still somewhat forced to go on a mission to bring back an Instarya captain that has broken rank violently and then went rogue with some of his men.

What happens when these three paths cross is magical and has become one of my favorite reads of 2016. I truly fell in love with this start of what is sure to be an epic series. I literally couldn't put down the last 20% of this book, I was so enthralled. Michael J. Sullivan did say he wrote the entirety of this series before releasing this first installment, so thank the Lord for that, because I'm not sure I could wait too long to see what happens, especially with that jaw dropping ending twist that I never saw coming.

If you like epic fantasies with high adventure and multiple points of view, I really think you'll enjoy this. I went into this book not expecting much, mostly because I haven't read the Riyria Revelations, yet, but I came out incredible happy with all my five star needs met. The world building was outstanding, the character development was fantastic, and the overall story completely captivated me. If you're on the fence about this book, I say it is definitely worth the gamble and that you will most likely be very satisfied.

Oh, and did I mention the trees talk? Be still, my Raven Boy heart.

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Robin (Bridge Four) says

Audible 4th of July Deal Sale until 07Jul18 \$5.95

4.75 We're all going to Die Stars

Read with some of my fellow MJS lovers at Buddies Books and Baubles

? Why Should You Give A Book By Michael J Sullivan A Try??? ?

You might be saying *There are a million good and even great fantasy series out there so what makes this one worthwhile Robin?*

Well I'll tell you *potential MJS converts* a few of the things I love about MJS's writing in general and this book specifically.

① - Even though this is book one of his series **the entire series is already written.** *gasp*

You're shocked right.....I was too. But this is awesome for a few reasons. You know going in that there is a plan and everything is going to make sense in the long run. You know that there will be little tidbits to catch in book one that will come full circle in book 5/6. And you KNOW that you will make it to the end of the series. You will not be waiting on the author to get his crap together and finish out the last book(s) *cough*Patrick Rothfuss *cough*George RR Martin *cough* because they are done and will be published in a timely manner. For me that is HUGE. Even as much as I love Branson Sanderson (who is a writing machine) his Stormlight Archives series is going to be 10 books long AND he is writing other series in between. If something happens to him I'm totally screwed.

② - **He is great!** He does it all....Fantastic Characters, Foreshadowing, Worldbuilding, Lore, Storytelling, Plot Lines, Humor, Dialogue, Emotions, Buildup, Depth and Delivery. His world and characters are rich and deep and even when you think you know the story....you don't.

③ - There is something for everyone. Sword fighting, mystery, danger, magical battles, plots and sub plots, a smidgen of romance and a story that draws you in and makes you feel like you are there.

④ - You don't have to be completely versed in fantasy to get into the story. I've found that fantasy kind of has a learning curve. One does not simply walk into Mordor and you don't just start with the Wheel of Time, Malazan or The Stormlight Archives. They are huge and daunting fantasies and more for someone well versed in that genre. I would say that Michael J Sullivan's books are really for the Beginner and Intermediate level fantasy readers. There is so much going on that the story is enjoyable but you don't have 100 pages of just traveling to read through to get to nowhere close to where you are going and the cast of characters is a manageable number. Don't let that fool you Pro Fantasy readers there is a lot in there for you too.

⑤ - **SURI!!!** For this books specifically but really MJS has characters that stay with you. Royce and Hadrian from Riyria will have one of my favorite bromances of all time. Suri I can already tell will be a favorite character for me from any book. But if you don't read this book you will never meet her and know all the awesome she holds.

? The Premise: ?

Perception is everything. **Raithe grew up believing in Gods until the day he killed one that is.**

"I want to know how long we have before he rises. If I cut off his head, will he stay down longer?"

The servant rolled his eyes. "He's not getting up! You killed him."

"My Tetlin ass! That's a god. Gods don't die. They're immortal."

"Really not so much," the servant said, and to Raithe's shock he kicked the god's body,

The Fhrey are one of the five races and have built themselves to be the greatest of all. So much so that many of the humans think they are gods. Raithe had no idea he could kill one until it happened and set into motion what became the beginning of a war between humankind and the Fhrey that's history will span the ages.

? What Was Awesome: ?

Since this is the start of a series it is an introduction into new characters and new beginnings. That is always really exciting for me when I pick up a new book and immediately know that it has characters I will carry away with me forever.

Take Suri for example

Suri had a wolf named Minna. They were the best of friends and roamed the forest together. She had tattoos, was always filthy, afraid of nothing, and could do magic. From the first time I met her, I wanted to be Suri... I still do.

She is wild, innocent and charming. She talks to trees, has a wolf for a sister and grew up in the forest. She is also a mystic and has come to tell the clan that everyone is going to die. I loved every moment she was on page and most of the time she had my giggling at her perception of everyone else.

Persephone was not at all what I expected. Since I've read the Riyria Revelations and hear the lore about her I was expecting something different. But that is the point isn't it. Three Thousand years is a long time for history to write and rewrite itself and who is to say what is true and what isn't. I can already tell she is going to be one of those strong women that MJS is great at writing and I can't wait to see how her story really played out. Something tells me it will be epic to be sure and I think Suri gives us a little hint of that here.

"Do you see the butterfly?" Suri grinned with enthusiasm.

"Yes, I see it, but—"

"So stunning and delicate; it's marvelous. No one can see a butterfly and not stop to admire it. I'd love to be one. To go to sleep and wake up a season later with such beautiful wings and the ability to flutter about. That's the most wonderful sort of magic, don't you think? To change, to grow, to fly. But..." She paused. "I wonder what the cost would be." The smile diminished once more. "There's always a cost when it comes to magic. I suspect there is a great price to go from lowly caterpillar to glorious butterfly."

And **let's not forget our reluctant hero and god killer Raithe** The last thing he wanted to be was a hero. He had simple dreams and wonderful aspirations for a peaceful life. But I think after you kill a god no matter how much you try peace is the last thing you will find in your life. Especially when it seems all the gods are looking for you.

While I really like Raithe as a reluctant hero both Suri and Persephone really stole the show character wise. Raithe does get a few great moments most of them involving his new friend Malcolm who seems to get him into a lot of trouble, in the funniest ways possible though.

The Galantians Or Fhrey/Elvish warriors.

Enter Nyphron a warrior god. Like Persephone he ended up being different than I expected. I'm not sure what to think of him other than I can't wait to learn more. The same goes for all the Fhrey. Some are warriors, some have magic and some are growers of food. They are as diverse and complex as any culture and there seem to be some mysteries and plots afoot surrounding the new Fane. I am intrigued by the main players in the Fhrey cast and can't wait to see how their story unfolds as well.

There are also a lot of other great characters that have so much potential. We don't get a lot of time with them but I'm already shipping a certain couple because they could be totally adorable together and I totally

love the women in Persephone's life. Roan the former slave and brilliant inventor, Moya a beauty with a sharp tongue and Brin who it appears will eventually have a book filled with great information since each chapter starts with a quote from the BOOK OF BRIN my favorite being

It was like waiting for the sunrise and a chicken to hatch— if the sun marked the end of the world and the chicken was an all-devouring demon.
—THE BOOK OF BRIN

Plus many, many more I wish I had time to list them all. I haven't even talked about Arion (who might be someone we actually saw in The Riyria Chronicles) a Fhrey with the gift, the mysterious door or Trilos who I have no idea what his game is or how many pieces he is controlling in it.

? Overall ?

This is such a great introductory story. We got to know all the main players. Some better than others and there were quite a few surprises and reveals throughout the story. I have a great beginning understanding of the cultures and the driving force behind the war to come...because a war is brewing but it doesn't all start in a day.

I was left wanting more. More time with Suri and Persephone, more information on the mysterious door and what might be behind it along with who and the heck Trilos is. I wanted much more Nyphron and the Galantians along with Malcolm and Raithe.

I can't wait to see what is in store for us in the next book.

Audio Note Tim Gerard Reynolds nailed it and performed the story fantastically as always.

Bookwraiths says

Originally reviewed at Bookwraiths.

Michael J. Sullivan is an author for whom I have the utmost respect. Not only is he a gentleman in dealing with fans and detractors alike, but his ability to pen entertaining fantasy in the classic mold has been a real breath of fresh air for a genre lacking that traditional flavor. Indeed, I will proudly tell anyone who asks that Hadrian Balckwater and Royce Melborn from *The Riyria Revelations* and *The Riyria Chronicles* are two of my favorite fantasy duos ever. So, needless to say, I was highly anticipating the release of Mr. Sullivan's newest series, *The Legends of the First Empire*, which promised new characters, new revelations, and a look at the ancient past of the *Riyria* world.

Thousands of years before Hadrian and Royce exist, Elan is a far different place. The land itself is the same with many familiar names present, but Rhunes (humans), Fhrey (Elves), and Dhereg (Dwarfs) share it. The Fhrey are supreme at this time, having fought a huge war and driven the Dhereg underground, while the Rhunes are far beneath either of the other races, living in primitive clans, having short lives, and lacking the affinity for the Art (magic). These deficiencies in the Rhunes causing them to be little more than subject people of the Fhrey, whom the scattered clans view as not just overlords but as immortal, omnipotent, invulnerable gods. The equilibrium of the world built upon the false belief of Fhrey divinity.

One day, the god myth is forever shattered by a young Rhune named Raithe and his father. These two having an unfortunate encounter with a Fhrey on the wrong side of the river which divides Rhune country from Fhrey land. This dispute escalating from a verbal misunderstanding into a physical struggle, one which ends with Raithe killing a god.

At the same time, in another part of the Rhune lands, Persephone is dealing with the death of her son then her husband to a seemingly crazed animal. These untimely deaths resulting in her leaving her role as wife to the chieftain of her town, or “dahl” as the Rhune call it. Soon, she finds herself at odds with the new chieftain and his cohorts as well as dealing with unexpected trouble and surprising mysteries when a young mystic named Suri and her wolf companion Minna show up with puzzling prophecies of coming doom.

Inevitably, the fugitive Raithe (and an escaped Fhrey slave named Malcolm) find their way to Persephone’s home of Dahl Rhen. Already, stories of a Rhune killing one of the gods has reached this out-of-the-way hamlet, and rumors of the Fhrey’s retaliation has put fear into everyone. So, when the “God Killer” himself shows up, followed soon after by a contingent of Fhrey warriors, things take a decidedly unexpected turn. The world of Elan never to be the same again.

Like all Michael Sullivan novels, *Age of Myth* is a fast paced, easy to digest affair, filled with action, fun, and some unexpected twists. While the author doesn’t reinvent the fantasy wheel, he continues his trend of crafting intriguing narratives, where Easter eggs litter the landscape and encourage you to keep careful eyes on the pages, because you know some small tidbit of information there will surprise you later on.

One of the highlights of this story (especially for fans of Riyria) will be in visiting the ancient past of Elan. We have all read so many tidbits of legends about this time and place in the prior books that experiencing those legends first hand is a joy. And, overall, Michael Sullivan does an excellent job crafting a past which is comfortably familiar but also different enough from the supposed history of Elan presented as fact in *Revelations* and *Chronicles* to be uniquely compelling. Simply put, Michael Sullivan turns the ancient history of this place on its head, presenting these legendary figures and events in a more realistic way: the heroes’ personalities, their motives, and their actions not nearly as mythical or epic as the *Riyria* stories suggested. And our close-up look at the Fhrey doesn’t disappoint, as these beings are filled with magical majesty; so much so, in fact, that their unabashed arrogance nearly seems warranted, especially in comparison to the primitive, clannish Rhune.

As for the characters themselves, this novel is filled with a large cast of them from Raithe, Malcolm, Persephone, and Suri to several of the Fhrey themselves. Now, none of these guys break any classic fantasy molds, but they are relatable, likable (or unlikable) and entertaining. Their actions true to their motives and past. Their exchanges or interactions with one another realistically portrayed. The personal journeys they are on mingling together quite well to form a complex, cogent narrative. In fact, they also remind one clearly of past Sullivan characters in the *Riyria* novels. A fact which makes it much easier to quickly establish a comfort level with these new guys and gain an empathy for their circumstances.

Unfortunately, all these positive traits of *Age of Myth* had a decidedly negative side for me personally, which I will attempt to succinct express with my sincerest apologies to other fans of Michael J. Sullivan. Honestly, I hate to say anything negative about the book at all, because I admire the author, so please keep that in mind as you read my criticisms.

First, I was very concerned when I picked up this novel that the “new” characters would be too much like the leads in *Riyria*. I mean, Hadrian, Royce, Arista and the rest were great, but I wanted something uniquely different here, not the same people with different names. And while Mr. Sullivan attempted to give Raith,

Malcolm, and Persephone their own unique personality, our new cast tended to sound, behave, and make decisions just like their *Riyria* predecessors. Honestly, Raithe and Malcolm do a flawless impersonation of Hadrian and Royce in their bickering, while Persephone takes charge as well as Arista ever dreamed of. That may or may not bother you according to your personal expectations for this novel, but it was a major issue for me personally.

Second, the main antagonist here was a huge letdown. He is a cookie cutter villain who is so obviously the “bad guy” that you sit there wondering how everyone else doesn’t see it. When I added that to his rather lackluster scheme to take control of everything, he became very difficult for me to swallow as an intimidating antagonist. Perhaps I’ve read too much grimdark or watched too many episodes of *Game of Thrones*, but this individual did not scare me or mesmerize me with his wicked genius in the least. The exact opposite is how I felt. Truly, every one of his scenes was just painful to get through.

Lastly, the pacing. The first half of the book was slow. I’m not one to enjoy fantasy with endless traveling anyway (Other than *The Lord of the Rings* that is.), but the beginning of this story was just too much traveling by everyone. Raithe and Malcolm running away from the Fhrey. Persephone taking trips into the forest. Fhrey characters taking journeys to the Rhune lands. Every time I turned the page there was more traveling; none of it tense or exciting, just fairly meh type journeys that didn’t keep me on the edge of my seat. I totally admit the last part of the book accelerated non-stop to a great ending, but even it could not make up for the glacial slow feeling of the rest of the narrative.

If you are a fan of Michael J. Sullivan’s prior work or merely a lover of classic epic fantasy, then *Age of Myths* is certainly a novel you should pick up and give a try. It combines timeless themes with comfortable characters to provide ideal escapism, and if you don’t expect too much besides fun, action, and adventure then you will find yourself having the time of your life. I personally wish I had enjoyed the novel more than I did, but it won’t keep me from picking up book two, because I have enough faith in Mr. Sullivan’s writing ability to know the ultimate payoff in this series will be at the end when I’m mesmerized by how I never saw it coming.

I received this book from the publisher in exchange for a fair and honest review. I’d like to thank them for allowing me to receive this review copy and inform everyone that the review you have read is my opinion alone.

Tadiana ☆Night Owl? says

\$2.99 Kindle sale, March 2, 2018. Great epic fantasy series!

4.5 stars! Final review, first posted on Fantasy Literature:

With *Age of Myth*, Michael J. Sullivan begins a prequel series to his RYRIA CHRONICLES and RYRIA REVELATIONS series. The good news for newcomers to his books is that, since this series takes place about 3,000 years earlier, you don’t need to be familiar with either of those series or the world of Elan to enjoy this new LEGENDS OF THE FIRST EMPIRE series, so I was in good shape. I know pretty much zero about the other Ryria books, except that many epic fantasy fans are very enthusiastic about them, but I really enjoyed *Age of Myth* and am anxious to start the next book in this series, *Age of Swords*, which will be published July 25, 2017.

In *Elan* there are five major races, but *Age of Myth* focuses on just two of those races. Humans are known as the Rhune, and their society is at primitive, pre-Iron Age stage (a copper sword is a Very Big Deal), living in clans in villages. The lives of the Rhune people have similarities to early Celtic society during the Neolithic period (4300 – 2000 BC). The Rhune live near but entirely separate from the Fhrey race, who the humans think of as immortal gods. In actuality, the Fhrey are an extremely long-lived (and pointy-eared, hint, hint) race ? reaching 3000 years of age is not unusual ? with highly advanced technology, and some of them, the Miralyith tribe, have the gift of tapping natural forces to perform immensely powerful magic, which they call the Art.

The status quo is upended one day when a human father and son, caught on the wrong side of a river defining the borders of human land, clash with a Fhrey. The Fhrey swiftly kills the father, but is then killed in turn by the son, Raithe (with a little help from one of the Fhrey's slaves, Malcolm, who's been chafing at his bondage). Raithe and Malcolm take off to hide themselves in human lands, while the Fhrey mobilize to revenge the death of one of their own, and perhaps also to try to quash the humans' knowledge that the Fhrey are in fact mortal beings who can be killed. And now all bets are off, though the humans are at a terrible disadvantage technologically and magically.

Raithe, who has now garnered the appellation of the God Killer, eventually joins up with the Dahl Rhen village, which is undergoing its own internal upheaval. Reglan, the chieftain of Dahl Rhen, has just been killed in a conflict with Grin the Brown, an immense bear with an unfortunate taste for human flesh. Reglan's widow Persephone, who participated equally with her husband in governing Dahl Rhen, is having a hard time taking a back seat in clan matters, particularly when the new chieftain, Konniger, clearly needs her advice ... but is flatly unwilling to accept it. Perhaps as a result, Persephone's life is threatened by some of the villagers. The arrival of Raithe and other strangers at Dahl Rhen may affect both the internal conflict and the larger one looming with the Fhrey.

Age of Myth is epic fantasy based on familiar European culture and folklore, though from an earlier era than most fantasy novels. But the folklore created here has some unexpected twists, and Sullivan tells a compelling tale, weaving together several different plot threads as the storm of war coalesces and the cast of characters assembles and begins to touch one another's lives. Sullivan's writing style is for the most part straightforward, with occasional deeper insights and dashes of humor. Using details of characters and their lives, he immerses the reader in this clannish world, where life is difficult and precarious. The plot is complex and layered without tipping over into confusion and opacity. Though magic plays a role, it can be an elusive one: some events that at first appear to be magical are eventually revealed to have a more mundane explanation, and vice versa.

The characters in *Age of Myth* are well-rounded, not always what you might expect, with human flaws, and there are several great woman characters. One of the main characters is Persephone, an attractive 37 year old widow with a gift for leadership. Her Fhrey counterpart is Arion, a strong-willed wielder of magic who is navigating the treacherous political scene in Fhrey society and teach the spoiled young son of the fane, the Fhrey ruler, to be a better magic practitioner and a better person. Suri is a young teenager, with mystical abilities that are apparently unique among the Rhune and with a dislike for human society, preferring her white wolf Minna and the company of friendly trees. Raithe is one of the best human warriors, but is leery of his new fame as the God Killer and longs for a more peaceful life with a family (he has his eye on Persephone, even though she's ten years older than he is). The antagonists in the story ? Konniger the Rhune chieftain, Gryndal the Fhrey First Minister, the young Fhrey prince, and others ? tend to be more one-dimensional, though that may change as the series progresses.

Age of Myth begins a five-novel arc, but it ends with a natural break (i.e., it's not a frustrating cliffhanger),

though there are several mysteries left to be answered and conflicts to be resolved in future volumes of this series. I found it absorbing reading, and jumped straight into *Age of Swords*, the next volume, as soon as I was done with this one.

Eon ?Windrunner? says

Aug 2017 - Reread is done and it was great. Looking forward to *Age of Swords*.

~~Book review.~~ Author review.

You know how you sometimes don't feel like reading a specific genre? Maybe you are just tired of it and need a break, or maybe it's just a plain ol' book funky. Regardless, it happens. And it sucks.

Luckily, once in a while an author comes along with juuuuuust the right remedy for your ailment. That does not always happen though. Chance plays a part, and more often than not, such a miserable feeling can drag on book, by book, by book.

But do not despair. Sometimes the light at the end of the tunnel is not a hallucination or a train, but an author whose writing is effortlessly evergreen. *Where can I find such an author you say?*

Muahahahaha! **rubs hands with undisguised glee.*

You've come to the right place my friends. I present to you: Michael J. Sullivan

Scientifically known as *Authorus Magnificus* or in layman's terms, an auto-buy author, MJS has got what you need to banish that listlessness and slay that funk. This guy, he's a wordsmith and he won't let you down. If you have any doubts though, pick up *Theft of Swords* the next time you feel that horrific little book funk curse sneaking up on you and see for yourself. (This one works too, but *Riyria* is just such a fantastic introduction to his work.)

PS:

Book review: As for his latest, MJS has once again written a book that is classical, fun fantasy and does not disappoint. Read it. Yesterday.
