



Sands of the Solar Empire

Ren Garcia

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GET THE BRANDY TO BAZZ...

That's all Paymaster Stenstrom, the Lord of Belmont-South Tyrol, has to do and the old warbird Seeker is his. He has dreamed of captaining a Fleet ship his entire life. Little does Paymaster Stenstrom realize that he is in the grip of an old Vendetta and the short trip to Bazz might very well be his last. Faced with a dead ship and a lost crew, Paymaster Stenstrom finds help in the strangest places: the thief Marine and the milquetoast young man from the Admiral's office, and, though he just became acquainted with these two strangers, he discovers they have been influencing each other's lives for a very long time. Something sinister hovers over Paymaster Stenstrom and his two new friends, something they are only now becoming aware of. The SANDS OF THE SOLAR EMPIRE stretch out before them in an endless gulf brimming with the unknown. Can a masked Paymaster, a thief, a coward and a once great warbird face what awaits them?

Sands of the Solar Empire Details

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From Reader Review Sands of the Solar Empire for online ebook

Jay says

After I won The Shadow tech Goddess as part of Goodreads Giveaways & First Reads, Ren Garcia was kind enough to send me a copy of this and its continuation/sequel, Against the Drurries. I really enjoyed The Shadow tech Goddess, so I was more than happy to read and review these books, too.

I read The Shadow tech Goddess shortly before and after surgery, but I found the story so easy to follow that I only missed a few details due to the anesthesia-and-painkiller-induced fog I was in. I love fantasy and sci-fi, but I often find some stories are almost impossible for me to read. Furthermore, as The Shadow tech Goddess is part of a series, I was worried I'd not be able to understand the characters relationships with one another. This wasn't the case at all, and I fell in love with the characters and their stories- Taara and A-Ram were my favourites.

Getting the chance to read these characters from the start was fantastic. I already knew the characters, but getting to see them meet for the first time was a joy. While they've matured come The Shadow tech Goddess, I can still see their youth now, looking back.

The importance of the HRN coat, the MARZABLEs, Holystones and NTH all make sense now. I knew they were important on some level, but getting to read about how Belmont came to own these items and learn to wield them was good. It was a little unusual to have a 180-page back story in the middle of a 280-page novel, and I think this could have been laid out a little better, but on the other hand, it didn't particularly detract from the story at hand. Knowing this book leads directly into Against the Drurries makes it easier to understand, and reading some of the reviews, I think this may be where people struggled. The book *does* end at an unusual spot for a standalone novel.

Normally I would keep another book in the series at close hand when reading part of a saga (it's a habit- I love to cross reference), but as I recently moved, my copy of Shadow tech Goddess is... *somewhere*. So that did detract my usual cross referencing joy, but I'm not willingly to swim in a pile of cardboard boxes and books and risk getting nipped by a spider.

Again, I really love the illustrations. There weren't as many in this as there were in the later book. I really liked the detail, though, and as I'm a little obsessed with reading comic books/graphic novels at the moment (I may have bought seven the other day... and I'm still reading Runaways and I'm in the middle of Black Hole in addition), this did get a kick out of me.

I'll be hitting up Against the Drurries shortly, and with much enthusiasm.

Lauren Stoolfire says

Absolutely brilliant! I had not read any previous installments of The League of Elder series before I purchased a copy of the *Sands of the Solar Empire* from the author himself at a local event and I'm glad I didn't miss my opportunity to jump into his magnificent Belmont Saga! Thank you very much, Mr. Garcia, for taking the time to discuss your work with me! I can't wait to follow Lord Stenstrom and his motley crew to Bazz and discover the mystery behind Lilly. I'm hooked and I can't wait until I have the opportunity to

read *Against the Druries* and further explore the League of Elder.

Kristi says

I enjoy this book a whole lot more because I had read "The Temple of the Exploding Head" series first. It has great, subtle connections of events and characters.

Portrait illustrations scattered throughout the book are beautiful and gives a great attention grabbing feature to the story.

It is interesting how the story is told out of the chronological sequence of time. While it is fascinating to learn of a character's history, my mind was still thrilled with the present day story that had been introduced at the beginning then put on the back-burner. It was too distracting for me and I kept wanting to speed read through the back story (which was too bad because it is a great back story, just not as thrilling at the present day story).

The only thing that really bothered me the most is the constant change of sexual partners. I know it is popular in today's society, but I am old fashioned and think it is reckless, cruel, and dumb to sleep with anyone and everyone. Of course emotional attachments will form one sided and when the liaison ends, someone will get hurt. Also, why are they so flippant about possible posterity they will never know about? It bothers me.

Although I only liked this book, I simply loved book two. So don't stop here. Try the next book and you won't regret it!

Chantal Boudreau says

I don't think Ren Garcia will ever write anything I don't like. I'm a big fan. But I felt like he was toying with me a little with this book. The reader is provided with a great space fantasy adventure, with plenty of dead-ends for our heroes and seemingly impossible situations (at first). It is a fun, quirky, fast-paced tale with his typical larger-than-life heroic characters. And then...

Before I continue, I'll have to tell you, I have a very linear brain. I like stories, unless they involve time-travel, to follow a definitive path. Any criticism I have about the non-linear qualities of this story are no commentary on the quality of this book – it is a wonderful read – but rather on my peculiar preferences. I still loved this book, but it drove me crazy reading it.

The story jumps back to events preceding the front-end action, following Belmont (or Bel as his friends call him), our hero, right back to the time prior to his birth. His adventures are thrilling. He's a very sexy character with womanizing ways and a highly unusual family. Description of his household, his sisters, his encounters with demons and the ladies he interacts with are colourful and vividly detailed. The plot is just as intricate as his earlier novels and his world-building just as sublime.

As much as I liked this "reminiscing", the opening storyline niggled at the back of my brain, a constant distraction while I followed the rest of the book. I wanted to know what happened to the folks he had left in the lurch, to the point where I was practically chewing my nails down to the nubs out of the frustration of

having to wait.

It was worth the wait, but in the end I was left with enough loose ends that now I'm going to have to deal with more waiting for the next book. Nevertheless, I'd definitely recommend picking up this book, another addition to a fantastic series.

Cheryl says

Ren Garcia is an imaginative and prolific writer. I truly got lost in his world and can't wait to read more of his work, including his forthcoming release, which is the concluding part of Sands of The Solar Empire.

William Bentrim says

Sands of the Solar Empire by Ren Garcia

This book does a nice job intertwining the occult and scifi. It appears to be the fourth book in the League of Elder series. Bel Stenstrom is the protagonist whose life is wound back from his current ship difficulties to look at what events in his childhood have created the man as he stands.

Flash backs from current to past are not that unusual. Bel's childhood with his seemingly less than stable mother, Lady Jubilee, is rather interesting. Combining talents, sorcery and science in one volume that holds your interest would seem to be a daunting task. Mr. Garcia does it well.

Bel's development into manhood and developing as a man are the focus of the story. Mystery abounds as to his "haunted" ship and his mysterious lady love. The story is entertaining.

I recommend the book.

Ron says

This was weird. A hundred pages of story almost lost among almost three hundred pages of back story. Typical fantasy-SF mash-up with dribs of both scattered indiscriminately about. Good voice and interesting characters. Totally unbelievable plot, but it was that kind of story.

"That kind of story." Therein lies the rub. There really wasn't a story. It was a hundred page lead-in to the next volume, which hopefully contains more story.

Usually I give this type one star, but Garcia has a good voice and the setup has great potential.

Friends of Garcia will continue to be entertained. Serious readers beware.

Melissa D says

Loved this book. The characters were very detailed and had much growth throughout the book. The series is a combination of fantasy steampunk and science fiction space opera. A good combination for me as I love them both. I will definately be looking for the other books.

I got this book free from a Kindle newsletter..

Dan The Spooky Horse says

I was really enjoyed the beginning of this book. It was a fun opening to what promised to be a romping good space opera with a little magic thrown in. Bel and his newly appointed crew had stuck it to the admiralty and were all set to deliver the brandy and then the author pulls the rug out from under the reader and spends three quarters of the book telling us all about Bel's overbearing mother and upbringing.

When the story finally wound its way back to the present day we are left with a rushed climax and a cliffhanger. The tale that the blurb for this book advertises is never even concluded. (view spoiler)

Sands of the Solar Empire reads like half a book. I liked the writing, characters and the story. I even liked the character portraits and other visual elements placed throughout the novel, although they threw me at first. I did not like having to read a short novel's worth of history in the middle of the adventure I was actually there to read. It didn't work here, but I could have forgiven it had the author got around to finishing what he started. That said, I did enjoy the story and would have picked up the sequel if it had been available. With the back story out of the way I think the author could have a fun story on his hands. I suggest any potential readers way for the next book before starting this one.

Jessica Billings says

I can tell when I'm really enjoying a book when I think about it during the day and anxiously look forward to the long train ride home, when I can sit back and read some more. Although it wasn't the story I expected (it begins with Bel's adventure to secure his new ship and deliver a package against the odds, but the majority of the story is actually about Bel's past and how he came to be in his peculiar position), it was riveting nonetheless, and I loved the new characters and their stories. Much of the story is about who can be trusted, and what secrets they hold. I constantly switched back and forth between trusting and suspecting one character in particular, and I can't wait to read more about Bel's adventures. Highly recommended!
