



Orchestra of Treacheries

J.C. Kang

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Alternate cover and title edition for The Dragon Charmer

Kaiya's voice could charm a dragon.

It's been two years since she put down a rebellion with the magic of the Dragon Scale Lute. With the instrument destroyed, her musical talents are inconsequential compared to her value as the last unmarried child of the ailing emperor.

Potential suitors see her as a stepping stone. One ruthless cousin would rather step on her gravestone. Not one to get walked over or buried, Kaiya is holding out for the exiled foreign prince who inspired her to sing. The only one who appreciates her abilities more is the world's last dragon, Avarax, and it's not because he enjoys a good song.

Conspiracies eat away at the empire from the inside, while aggressive neighbors wait to consume what's left. Raw and unproven, Kaiya faces tasks worthy of an imperial princess: defuse escalating conflicts between rival lords. Negotiate peace with foreign powers. Vanquish a dragon.

The magic of her voice is untrained. However, as crisis jolts her from a pampered palace life into an adventure of court intrigue and international diplomacy, Kaiya finds mentors in unlikely places. An elf courtier. An ancient healer. A martial arts master. And an evil sorcerer. She'll need their guidance to survive the final showdown between a girl finding her voice, and a dragon who has no intention of being fooled a second time.

Orchestra of Treacheries Details

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From Reader Review Orchestra of Treacheries for online ebook

Deborah says

Picking up two years after the events of the Dragon Scale Lute, this book wastes no time plunging you right back into the intricacies and intrigues of court life in this wonderfully realised oriental setting.

Princess Kaiya has grown up, though she's still open to emotional manipulation, despite being incredibly astute about her world and its politics. She's also blossomed into a beauty that men now desire, quite apart from wanting her for her status. But is magic responsible for her 'ugly duckling' transformation, and does that mean someone unknown is meddling in her life again?

The language used in this book is flowery – in a really good way. Such beautiful descriptions, you can almost smell the gardens, see the blossom, and partake of the ceremonies right along with the characters. Each and every individual is so well developed, they leap right off the page, and they all continue to grow and change as the book (and the plots) progress. It was fascinating to watch individual plans clash, augment, and often derail each other, twisting the story in unexpected directions.

The political manoeuvring and more deadly deceit is breathtaking in its abundance and complexity – spies and assassins, wheels within wheels, plots within plots, and every character with their own agenda – fabulous!

And finally, despite setting out on another mission altogether, Kaiya ends up pitting her wits against the dragon, Avarax – but you'll have to read the book to find out what happens.

I can't tell you how much I enjoyed this book. I thoroughly resented having to put it down each evening when sleep became essential.

Disclaimer: I received this book in return for an unbiased review, which in absolutely no way influenced my opinions – I can't wait to read the next one!

Georganne says

Betrayal, conspiracy and a young princess gains confidence. The treachery and conspiracy continues. Princess Kaiya continues her belief that she can help the poor through alliances between the countries. She believes that she can accomplish the feat through diplomacy. She is naive but determined. She works through obstacles with the assistance of those who are loyal to her and those with special powers. All of the lessons she has learned over the years come together to as she learns to use her own magic. Follow the story to get the details and to follow the exciting adventures.

Gianna says

****Originally posted here on my blog. May contain spoilers.*****

Dragon Charmer was a great follow up to *Dragon Scale Lute*. Picking up two years after book one, the readers find themselves getting to know a wiser, maturer and even slightly coy Princess Kaiya who works to keep peace in the city of Hua as well as other neighboring cities against the threatening promise of war following several—sometimes fatal—attacks.

All the signs and evidence continues to point to outside forces, but Kaiya sticks to her gut and lets her intuition to confirm the true, or expose the lie lead her through the journey she takes in Dragon Charmer.

I think what I loved most about this book was that we get to see how much Kaiya has grown and changed since the first book in regards to her ability speak on political matters and the greater influence and liberties she now has when it comes to her father, Wang Zhishen, the Tianzi of Cathay/Hua.

Moreover, I enjoyed getting to see Kaiya learn more about her abilities and discover a few new tricks along the way as the presence of dark magic and the fate written prophecy that says her destiny is to cross paths with Avarax, (the last dragon) continue to steadily loom in the shadows.

Not to mention the almost shell-like game to keep up with all of the spies, back stabbers, plotters, assassins and assassination attempts that happens. If I were around any one like Kaiya's cousin Peng Kai-Long or Minister Hong Jianbin, I honestly do not think I would be able to sleep let alone dare to take my eyes off of them for even a second.

I will say this, I commend them for their dedication to the "cause" throughout the book as each of their plans represented the very essence of the waiting game; plotting and planning for years for everything to fall into place. And with every new character, I found myself going, *"Okay, so who are you really working for?" or "Alright, who are you meant to stab in the back?"*

(view spoiler)

Least I forget the awesomeness and giddy effect every scene between or with Jie and Kaiya had on me. I am so, so happy that Jie not only returned but that she and Kaiya's worlds collided (officially, anyway). I like how Kaiya came to trust Jie's instincts and skills and how Jie's objective perspective on Kaiya and the world she lived in added a bit of humor and at times humility to both the narrative and Kaiya's perspective as well.

All in all, a really good, in depth read. ^__^

Shomeret says

In the first book, I thought that the protagonist Princess Kaiya was too inexperienced to have good judgment. Her impulsiveness moved the plot in unexpected directions. The author assured me that this would change in Dragon Charmer. So I looked forward to learning how Kaiya would develop. I received this book from the author in return for an honest review.

In Dragon Charmer, the people and situations that Kaiya encounters often aren't what they seem to be. They are the unpredictable factors that drive the plot rather than Kaiya's behavior. She didn't let these revelations unhinge her. She took them in stride. She acted decisively as a leader and a hero must act in a crisis. I was favorably impressed with Kaiya's growth.

For my complete review see <http://shomeretmasked.blogspot.com/20...>

Lana says

This the second book in the series is even better than the first book which I had so thoroughly enjoyed, maybe this is because we already know the characters now! This book is very aptly named as it is full of backstabbing, treacherous princes, lords, enemies and so called friends alike so much so that there was no one who could really be trusted. Kaiya is the only character, who without fail, tries to do what is right, her moral compass never wavers not even in the face of so much adversity. She is tested beyond measure on numerous occasions but in this book she is no longer the young girl lacking confidence in herself that we knew in book 1. She is now a woman, beautiful and talented with a voice which is able to wield magic and that can do anything she sets out to do and she uses her voice to the max! She is now capturing every man's heart with her beauty but none of them are capturing hers! This book takes us out of Cathay to distant lands in the North of Tevala across the sea on a great adventure where we meet Oracles, the Paladins, the evil sorcerer and the great dragon Avarex himself. This is a beautifully written book with poetic descriptions which describe the beauty of nature, the noise and commotion of the cities and market places and the hustle and bustle at the docks, everything just comes to life in front of our very eyes almost like a painting. Well done for another great book in this magnificent saga, can't wait to start reading the 3rd book!

Sarah says

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

The saying goes that the first book in a major fantasy series is normally the worst because it has to set the stage. I was brutal in my review of the first and I had my issues with it, but the author accepted my review and offered a copy of the second book in hopes that everything the first book worked up to would be worth the time I spent reading and I would enjoy it.

And I honestly was blown away by how marvelously everything came together for this book.

Complaints I had from the first book were swiftly silenced with the second. The development I wanted and answers to loose ends left me overwhelmingly satisfied and happy to read more. This book managed to catch me off guard, prove my predictions wrong, make me smile, feel the stress the characters were feeling, and made me happy I read it. It is boiling over with conspiracy and people with their own motives to take the throne. Secret deals and backstabbing galore with a new twist at every corner.

Our two main leads have developed into addicting characters who balance each other well. I made mention that their habits were kinda annoying to constantly read (hair twirling and lip biting for examples), however, I was greatly amused that they noticed each other's constant habits and mentally make fun of it in a way. The supporting cast is one that I could not imagine I would have adored so much. How every character is placed in the plot just keeps propelling it forward at a good pace. Yes, it is a bit to keep track of (especially if you are unfamiliar with Asian naming practices, Chinese in this case I believe) so I highly recommend printing out the character guide provided from the ebook version or bookmarking in physical copies to refer to if you get lost.

I immensely enjoyed the fact that we got to see more of the world JC Kang has created and I look forward to

seeing more in the future installments.

Overall if you enjoyed the first book (or stuck with it in hopes the sequel will bring it together), you will not be disappointed.

Rabid Reader says

The intrigue, betrayal and excitement ramp up in this second book in the Dragon Song Saga. Plots inside plots are revealed but never truly uncloaking who the mastermind behind all of the subterfuge is and you are never sure that is a person is really who they say they are, the twists in this story are amazing, making for an exhilarating, gripping tale that is really hard to put down. Kaiya is a target from all sides, naively unaware of her precarious position or that she is being subtly manipulated by various factions. She slowly gains political incite as her magical talents continue to grow, while still managing to remain pure of heart. She is brave, intelligent but still a little naive, especially where trust and romance is concerned; her growth as this book progresses is staggering. Jie is also one of my favourite characters and I suspect she will have more importance in futures novels, one cannot help but speculate as to who her father is. I loved the subtle political wrangling, the treachery, plots and intrigue in this story. The author keeps your mind whirling as you try to guess who is masterminding the interweaving, complex plots. The new characters introduced in this book add even more excitement, intrigue, a touch of humour and dash of romance to the story and up to almost the end you are wondering what Avatax had been up to while stuck in his human form; never really knowing what he actually looks like. Betrayal, magic, dark secrets and unexpected twists all make for a captivating storyline that will keep you on the edge of your seat and leave you dying for the next book. I received this book at no cost and under no obligation to review.

Hugs says

How will I make it until September to find out what happens next? I have LOVED the books in this series and hope many more will follow. I am so impressed with how knowledgeable the author is on 1,000 subjects~it shines through his writing! ~just can't get enough~

Jackie says

Kaiya 's voice could charm a dragon and its two years since she put down the rebellion. Unfortunately she's seen as a steppingstone instead of just herself. Another great in this continuation.

Cal says

Much better than the 1st book in the series.

Tabitha Ormiston-Smith says

I am in awe of the worldbuild behind this series. It's one of the most finely detailed I have seen. Similar enough to Old China and India to be recognisable, yet each nation is distinctively itself. The fantasy elements are well integrated and are not overdone.

It may seem odd to use the word 'restraint' of a book so rich, so complex and so teeming with ornate detail, yet it is restraint that distinguishes this writer for me. He is at all times in control of his story, and the result is a beautifully balanced work.

I hope this series continues for a long, long time. I've become addicted to the scheming courtiers, the brave and beautiful heroine, her wisecracking sidekick and just the whole thing. It's like Monkey Magic crossed with Yes, Minister. I love, love, love it.

Rebecca says

J.C. Kang brings Princess Kaiya and all her retinue back in this stunning second installment! The plot thickens incredibly in this next chapter, as Kaiya must continue to follow her destiny and hone her singing if she is to face the dragon, Avarax. As the fates may have it, her time is taken up by many a suitor, but one in particular will show his face once more, bringing with him a revelation that will shock Kaiya to her roots. Setting out as a girl, Kaiya begins her journey to womanhood and learns the intricacies of the realm's politics. Will she realize the power she holds, though?

Fans of the first novel will thoroughly enjoy this second one! I couldn't wait to see what would happen to the entire cast of characters and I'm anxious still to see what happens in book 3! Check out J.C. Kang's series for a great fantasy ride with as many twists and turns as a serpent's body!

Destine Williams says

Oh boy, where to begin with this book...

I liked it. I liked the friendly development between Kaiya and Jie. I loved the twists and turns that the plot took. Some book series stretch unnecessarily into extra sequels to me, and this, thankfully, was not one of those. It doesn't have that middle book feel at all. I also loved how much JC Kang knows how to get into others heads convincingly.

Something that I did get confused about in this book and the last book was where exactly the intros fit into the story. I understood that they were connected, but I had trouble at times trying to piece a timeline together in my head.

But the thing that I had to take a star off for is the way villains are portrayed. Yes, I understand that they are bad, but there were times when I didn't quite understand why people wanted what they wanted. Why is it worth throwing people into war and chaos? Because sometimes, it feels like the 'I want the throne/government position/war' trope is used so much that it seems like we're expected to believe it just because it's there. Yeah, power is good, but power is also a whole lot of work. And so is war and maneuvering your way through a political system.

But overall, I still liked this book and would definitely recommend it if you've read the first and are on the fence about getting to the second.

Hannah West says

Just when you thought JC Kang's storytelling couldn't get any better. Dragon Charmer returns to Princess Kaiya two years after the first book in the series 'Dragon Scale Lute' ends. No longer an awkward, plain girl, Kaiya has blossomed into a graceful beauty that has every eligible lord vying for her hand in marriage. But she's more than just a princess or a pretty wife. For, not only has she blossomed in beauty but also in magical talents.

But will it be enough to save her people from the dragon Avarax?

JC Kang has created a world steeped in magic, wrapped in a political power struggle and sprinkled with an eclectic mixture of beings and legends that will make your inner fantasy geek squeal with glee.

I loved the infusion of different cultures and how they represent separate states, yet when mixed together form something beautiful. Sort of how a Renoir painting is made of thousands of tiny dots up close, but when you step back it morphs into something breathtaking. That's the world JC Kang has built. You don't see how all of the intricate plots weave to form the ending, until it gets there and, yes, it is a very beautiful thing to behold.

I'm hooked on this universe and CANNOT WAIT for the next book. If you love fantasy, brilliantly written characters and a mesmerising filagree of interwoven intrigues; treason, murder, betrayal, heroism, loyalty, friendship, love and so much more, you will LOVE Dragon Charmer.

I received a free copy of this book for an honest review.

Fiona Andrew says

ORCHESTRA OF TREACHERIES. Kaiya is still pinning for her exiled Lord, even though two years have passed since she'd seen him. Her beloved cousin acts as go between and passes along letters from him and vice versa. In the meantime she is viewed as a stepping stone to greatness but her numerous suitors, all of which she turns down. Her father's health is failing and her brother have still been unable to produce an heir. She uses her voice to help calm the Lords from declaring war. Her next adventure is totally dragonian in its scale. Highly recommend.
