



Enchanters' End Game

David Eddings

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THE DRIVE OF PROPHECY

The quest was over. The Orb of Aldur was restored. And once again, with the crowning of Garion, there was a descendant of Riva Iron-grip to rule as Overlord of the West.

But the Prophecy was unfulfilled. In the east, the evil God Torak was about to awaken and seek dominion. Somehow, Garion had to face the God, to kill or be killed. On the outcome of that dread duel rested the destiny of the world. Now, accompanied by his grandfather, the ancient sorcerer Belgarath, Garion headed toward the City of Endless Night, where Torak awaited him.

To the south, his fiancée, the princess Ce'Nedra, led the armies of the West in a desperate effort to divert the forces of Torak's followers from the man she loved.

The Prophecy drove Garion on. But it gave no answer to the question that haunted him: How does a man kill an immortal God?

Enchanters' End Game Details

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From Reader Review Enchanters' End Game for online ebook

Richard Clark says

Although I believe it could have been 100 pages shorter, David Eddings ties everything together so well. That ending is so satisfying and properly wraps up this extended journey of the Belgaraid.

Emiliya says

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Jane Jago says

All five reviewed.

This is a grand story that rattles along at a good pace.

I liked: Garion and most of his chums. The story. The writing.

I didn't like: Polgara. How sweet tempered Garion is.

But all in all I'd say read this quintet it's worth your time.

Lauren O'Farrell says

I'd write a review but I'm so grateful to have finished this book and never have to read anything in the series again that I'm just going to run away. I'M FREE! FREE I TELL YOU!

M.J. says

The fifth and final book in Edding's Belgariad series has a distinctly "Return of the King" flavour, but it is dogged by many of the same problems found in the earlier books. While the bulk of the fellowship is leading the armies of the west into battle with the assembled army of the forces of evil, a smaller part of the fellowship ventures into the dark city where the sleeping god waits to be reawoken as an object of great and terrible power that he desires is brought ever closer. The two competing prophecies finally come to their point of divergence as the kingdoms of the west battle the assembled forces of the evil god Torak, while the young wizard Garion will determine the very existence of the world as he ventures further east. It is a satisfying enough story, but it is hard to shake how derivative the whole thing feels.

As with past outings in the series, End Game is written in a competent fashion that keeps the action moving

forward and makes the book a fairly swift read. The potential for introspection and deeper prose is largely forgotten in this book, as the focus is placed firmly on events rather than people. As before, Eddings' story is plagued with too many points of view, with each of a dozen characters that happened to take part in the main quest story are given his/her time to shine in a book that is less than 400 pages. It is no surprise then that these cutaway moments to other parts of the battlefield are too short to convey much to the reader. In fact, these events do not generally provide greater depth to the characters, but are merely action scenes to give one his beloved tropes 'something cool to do' during the pivotal sequence of events.

The story is also marred by a few obvious plot contrivances scattered throughout for the sake of the prophecy that has been running through the series. The largest is one that involves a number of main characters being whisked away to bear witness to the oft-promised final battle.

This brings me to the underlying flaw of the whole series: an over-reliance on pre-destination. If all the main events are pre-ordained, as they are in *The Belgariad*, then there is no sense of tension or uncertainty in the narrative. That there is a prophecy and it has already been largely (and accurately) figured out by the sage, old wizard Belgarath effectively deflates all the action in the book. The thought of two competing prophecies with mutually exclusive ends is interesting and might have been an excellent subplot if it had been well executed, but even that would have required some sense of mystery. In Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, Gandalf provides much of the exposition on the secret knowledge of the world, but the future and fate of the world are uncertain (I doubt he foresaw the failure of his ring-bearer, for example). Not so with Belgarath, Eddings' more relaxed Gandalf counterpart, who is so confident in the prophecy that the challenges along the way always seem to be more inconveniences than actual threats.

The experience might have been much more satisfying if the reader had even the smallest sense of doubt or if the way in which the inevitability was conveyed was somehow unusual and took some risks, but—as I've noted before—Eddings' writing is safe and accessible, not what is needed to offset the straight line of plot. With the plot effectively on track from early on, the book becomes a travelogue. As I noted in an earlier review, I can't escape the sense that the author wrote a story to fit a world he built, rather than created a world to fit a story he had in mind. However, this world lacks the otherworldly quality of Tolkien's imagination to make the journey itself magical, as it involves traipsing through a fantasy world of kingdoms populated with people that are effectively described as "X is from Y, so his dominant characteristic is Z".

I sound harsh, but I don't really intend to be. *The Belgariad* is a middle-of-the-road fantasy series. It has an ending that will satisfy the reader and the writer possesses enough technical gifts that it can be an enjoyable read. It's a good gateway series for the less initiated, but it shouldn't necessarily be in the canon of absolute fantasy must-reads.

Muffin Adorable says

¡Las Crónicas de Belgarath releídas! Es una de esas sagas a las que les viene muy bien una relectura. No solo por cosillas que haya podido saltarme durante la primera lectura (mea culpa, que no es mi género), sino por que los personajes e incluso los acontecimientos ganan más sustancia.

Seda va a seguir siendo mi personaje favorito, por mucho que Mandorallen se esfuerce (y es una lástima, porque de no haber desaparecido por completo en los dos últimos libros, habría sido una lucha muy encarnizada). Eso no quita de que todos los personajes crezcan de una forma o de otra, el viaje del héroe los

cambia a todos, y siempre para bien. Desde Garion hasta Relg o Taiba. La magia toca hasta a los secundarios (véase Adara, o Meren), y te caigan bien o no, por mucho baile de nombres que haya, te quedas con todos porque a todos les coges cariño.

Eso no quita de que vea algunos fallos en su construcción, y el ejemplo que más claro tengo es Garion. Los tres primeros libros se nota que quiere crecer, que quiere viajar. Pone de su parte. A mediados del tercero... se lo piensa mejor. Es el que considero el personaje más plano de todos, porque creo que el autor pretende darnos la sensación de que tenemos un "de cero a héroe" con él, aunque sea en contra de su voluntad. Es el que más plano me resulta, y a veces antinatural. Pero alegráos, que no es tan grave.

En otro orden de cosas, la trama, y vista desde mi falta de títulos de fantasía épica, esta muy bien hilada, y para mi es novedoso como complica la existencia de una profecía (este detalle es spoiler, así que no me adentraré más en él. Baste decir que le da una vuelta de tuerca). El viaje esta plagado de obstáculos que las diferentes habilidades de los personajes (y a veces ninguna sirve) pueden sortear. Y eso me lleva al segundo fallo que le he visto al libro:

¿Qué felices todos, no? Hasta los "malos" dan la sensación de que acaban bien. Siento que esta saga de libros es la antítesis total y completa de Juego de Tronos. Que sufrimiento hay, claro que lo hay. Como las bajas en una guerra. Pero en su conjunto, es una saga de libros que acaban bien en todos sus extremos. Se me ha hecho raro que nadie sacase pifia...nunca.

En resumidas cuentas, es una saga de libros de obligatoria lectura, y si no se ha leído mucho de fantasía épica, o has leído Juego de Tronos y quieres salvar tu alma, es una saga muy a tener en cuenta. Recomendadísima no, lo siguiente.

Jim says

I devoured this & the previous book in a day. I'm trying to baby a bad back & this was a perfect excuse to do so. It was a good ending to a fun series - sort of. There are some loose ends & it is clearly stated that the prophecy doesn't end here, but I can easily & will. The Mallorean, another 5 book series, picks up where this leaves off & isn't quite as good. It's more of the same - too much so - so it's a let down. The flaws in this series & Eddings' writing become more apparent. Where this one sweeps me along, it drags me too often since it's fairly obvious what has to happen. Eddings repeats this when he writes the Elenium trilogy & then follows it with the Tamuli. The first is great fun, the second more of the same, not done quite as well.

Anyway, this was a fun little series to revisit.

Wanda says

For me, this was the most enjoyable book of the whole Belgariad series, and that despite all of the "happily-ever-afters" that occur by book's end. Those of you who know me, know that I much prefer "Lady or the Tiger?" type endings that leave things more to my imagination.

Garion finally comes into his own during this installment and *his elders and the Prophecy actually help him*. He and Ce'Nedra start communicating, instead of guessing what the other is thinking or feeling. And even

Hettar, the implacable horse-lord, finds a mate and mellows a bit, although it takes an altercation for that to happen (it kind of reminded me of Zane Grey's *The Last Trail*, where Lou Wetzel meets his match).

Garion naturally approaches his prophesied mission with trepidation—how does a mere mortal battle a god like Torak? The answer is a bit slick, but believable in the world that Eddings has created. There are still a couple of bad guys left, but that's for other series. By the end of *End Game*, one has the feeling that the party is over—the leftover food has been put away, the dishes have been washed, the floor swept and everything has been returned to its place.

Life is short and the number of books I want to read is huge, so I don't know that I will pursue any more of Eddings' writing, but I did enjoy this series.

Book 192 of my Science Fiction & Fantasy Reading Project.

Valyssia Leigh says

David Eddings constant harping on traditional gender roles finally ruined my enjoyment of this story. Few of his female characters appear as more than amusing idiot children, a point belabored by piles of pejorative terms, pointless tantrums, fickle mood swings, manipulative girlish smiles, and so on... The few bold moves of significance made by these women were marginalized under the heading: 'she can get away with it because she's too ignorant to know any better.'

One living woman is powerful enough in magic to be exempt from these antiquated attitudes: Lady Polgara. (view spoiler)

Wilma says

This is a review of the whole series, as I've read all of them recently and what I have to say pretty much applies to all the books in the series.

I almost loved these books as much as I do Robin Hobb's. The characters in these novels are rather diverse as everybody has their own strengths and failings. Moreover, almost all of the characters go through some kind of transformation, either smaller changes, like the less important characters, or bigger ones, when the character is more important to the story. This ensured that none of the characters felt flat to me. The changes in one's character were portrayed as gradual, and sometimes a character would fall back into old habits, adding to the sense that these were real persons, rather than flat characters.

The story and the world were well built, because, yes, it takes some getting into as to who is who and which

people fought whom when, but it was so well explained within the story, that it wasn't hard to understand or get into. I also liked the fact that every nation in the land has stereotypes about other nations and their peoples, which were often waylaid when people actually took the effort to have more than superficial contact, like trading, with someone from another country.

The only thing I didn't like about these novels, is the fact that all the problems or unfriendly encounters/fights were resolved far too quickly. At one point I was pretty sure that one of my favourite characters would die. However, within 5 pages or so, he was rescued. Granted, every character in the company uses his or her talent to solve certain problems, but there would have been more suspense, and it would have felt more like real-world problems, if they hadn't been resolved so quickly or easily. Another example (SPOILER ALERT) is that an evil mage who has been practising magic for quite awhile, forgets the most basic rule of magic, leading to his instantaneous demise, and the victory for the main characters. I was expecting a bit more from this fight, because the whole novel was building up to it, but, sadly, it was a bit of an anticlimax.

Overall though, the series was very entertaining and I really loved the characters, the world, and the story.

Amber says

I hadn't intended on giving this 5 stars, but seriously, the ending was pretty cool. It was so Harry Potter-esque that I couldn't help but think Rowling must have read the series before she wrote hers. I just didn't see the battle between Torak and Garion going the way it did, and it impressed me. Plus, I was glad it tied up all the loose ends. Looking forward to reading The Mallorean series, which is an extension off this I guess. This series played it safe a bit, but nice wrap up.

Raquel Evans says

I quite enjoyed this series, and the wide array of characters that were woven together to make the whole adventure work.

Nicole says

I think the Belgariad series is one of the best fantasy stories about a boy's coming of age. It predates this crazy onslaught of market-driven writers who hope to make a quick name, a huge splash, and a lot of money all in the name of the written word. In fact, if you compare the quality of Eddings' writing with that of many of the big names in young adult fantasy today (though I believe it's not intended for a young adult audience specifically), you'll see that the scales will tip quite heavily in David Eddings' favor. It's almost unfair to compare any current writer of fantasy to his works, particularly the Belgariad.

Anyway, the point is that I enjoyed it, again. The first time I read it I was in high school or junior high. Garion is a very well-drawn character, as are all the characters in this series. David Eddings' was very good at managing a group of characters and all their interactions, their banter, their roles, and illustrating them with realistic attributes. I will miss them, though, luckily, in a few years I will have forgotten enough of it that I'll be able to read it again and enjoy Garion's journey from naive farm-boy to well-traveled sorcerer

with great responsibilities. Unlike other fantasy heroes, like, for example, Rand al'Thor (who I also love), Garion is a bit more easy for me to respect because he's less whiny about what he was born to do.

One thing I really love about the series overall is that Garion learns through trial and error. I remember a particular lesson he's taught by Belgarath, in which Garion gets a little puffed up in his power and needlessly disciplines the little colt that loves him. It was this telling moment where you can see Garion's potential to become evil -- to be merciless and cruel -- but he has his mentors around to guide him. Every person has those possibilities -- to be kind and merciful, patient and long-suffering, or quick to anger, cruel, and drunk on power over the weak -- but we all, like Garion, have to remember ourselves. So anyway, it's good to see that heroes have internal battles: they can falter, but they can also recover, repent, and do better.

Another thing I appreciate is that Garion, while being the main focal point of the series, often takes a backseat to the action. He's always there watching his friends work and manage affairs, while he simply observes, thinks, and grows. It's not all about him, even though it is. That's an accomplishment of David Eddings, I think.

So, to sum up, it's a great series. I'm glad I read it again after all these years. I really love all the characters. Maybe I'll try out the Mallorean again. I never got through it the first time though I don't remember why. I also plan on re-reading the Wheel of Time series. Ha ha. That should only take me three years.

Sotiris Karaikos says

Μια ακ?μα απ? τις σειρ?ς που θεωρο?νται must read στο χ?ρο της υψηλ?ς φαντασ?ας και διαβ?ζοντας το κατ?λαβα το γιαντ?. Απ? τις πρ?τες σελ?δες καταλαβα?νεις ?τι ε?ναι μια εξαιρετικ? σειρ? με την κλασικ? συνταγ? που υπερτον?ζει τη φιλ?α, την αυτοθυσ?α και τη “μαγικ?” πλευρ? του ?ρωτα, με φ?ντο τη μ?χη απ?ναντι στο απ?λυτο κακ?. ?λα αυτ? αποδ?δονται με ?ναν πολ? καλ? τρ?πο και σε συνδυασμ? με τον μοναδικ? φανταστικ? κ?σμο, τους πολ?πλοκους χαρακτ?ρες και το χιο?μορ που διαποτ?ζει το ?ργο χωρ?ς να το ευτελ?ζει δημιουργε?ται ?να εξαιρετικ? αποτ?λεσμα που κρατ?ει το ενδιαφ?ρον ως το τ?λος. Παρ'?λα αυτ? νι?θω ?τι η σειρ? δεν ?χει τη βαρ?τητα που χρει?ζεται για να β?λω το πεντ?ρι, σ?γουρα, ?μως, αξ?ζει την προσοχ? μας.

Kelly says

I will let my review of this book speak for all of the Eddings books that I have read, which include four series of books (Belgariad, Mallorean, the Elenium and the Tamuli). I discovered these books in the seventh grade, and as a testament to how much I loved them: not only I, but all of my friends and I ripped through all four of these series over the course of six months to a year, sharing books and working out arrangements of who would buy the next one. I remember sitting around in a circle after tests waiting for others to be done where someone would finish a book in the series, and simply reach over and take the next one from the girl next to her who had just finished that one and so on down the chain. These were the books that got me into epic fantasy.

These are simplistic stories, and many of the characters are quite similiar. I had my disillusionment with the author when he started to create a whole new series with characters whose names were simply changed and plots that weren't even /trying/ to be disguised as different from these best sellers. It is very good vs. evil,

with only a few shades of grey in between, and the characters are at most two dimensional. It's quick and fun and enjoyable, and has no pretenses to being anything but a good story.

But. It is also witty and bright, and for a book series geared towards adolescents, does not simplify its writing style for them either in word choice or in some of the subjects that it deals with. For at least these four series, Eddings seems endlessly inventive and comes up with good jokes to last out nearly twenty books. Even the old ones that come back are usually funny as sort of an in-joke for people who have read the rest of them.

It is what it is, and it obviously doesn't hold up as well as it used to when I was 12 and very impressed with myself for understanding it all. But I'd still recommend it for some fun.

Note: The rating given is for the series over all. However, The Elenium and Tamuli are a little more mature, and the characters are better, and those are both four star worthy series.

Stephen says

3.5 stars. Fairly satisfying ending the Belgariad. Overall, this was an above average epic fantasy series geared more towards the YA audience but still enjoyable for adults.

One final note: I listened to the audiobook narrated by Cameron Beierle and he did an excellent job with the series.

Patrick says

Meh. I like many of the characters, but they do the same things in the same way for 5 books and it just wore on me. Many things were resolved too easily, and some were not resolved at all except in a sentence. e.g. Barak's been freaking out about his bear possession for 5 books and it's resolved in one sentence in a flashback saying now he's dealt with it.

Ce'Nedra was apparently supposed to show maturity and growth, but I think she showed very little progression. It's hard to root for this obnoxious girl to end up with the humble, likable Garion.

One of the superfriends finally died...but of course he gets brought back to life.

I like some of the climax with Torak. I like it when there's a creative ending to a big bad beyond just physical confrontation, but I can't decide if how Garion vanquished him was satisfying or not. So-so I guess. I didn't understand Errand's role in this book at all, or what he or Ce'Nedra had to do with the prophecy and why they had to be at the climax.

I actively dislike the "trapped by prophecy" theme forcing characters into roles with no choices. The long denouement after beating Torak was mostly boring, and the last vignette with the stone was unnecessary and boring. I commented more in depth in the last book how I dislike that race completely determines personality and intelligence. All of race x are stupid, no exceptions. All of race y are violent brawlers, no exceptions. By comparison, Lord of the Rings shows individuals with unique characteristics while still having generalizations that are true about most of a race.

I just read that this is supposed to be YA, and it's basically clean enough. But despite Garion and Ce'Nedra, I think the themes and characterization seem geared toward adults, as well as the length and boringness.

I think Lord of the Rings mostly holds up still today. I think this suffers along with series like the Prydain Chronicles and would not be published as a new series today.

Jesse says

Alright, this concludes my complete re-read of this series (until I start the second one...). There was a lot in this book that I didn't remember. In fact, the ending was much better than I remembered; an epic scene of the protagonist fighting a massive god-in-the-flesh in the abandoned city of his priesthood. Pretty good.

The plot structure is mixed up a bit from previous books, as all the characters have split into two groups and are traveling in different directions...to the same goal.

As with the previous reviews, what makes these books good isn't the plot (and there are definitely holes and glaring coverups), but the characters and the rich world they are moving in. And, once again, Eddings drives those aspects home with great finesse.

C.E. Murphy says

Turns out ENCHANTERS' END GAME has all kinds of POVs in it, mostly, in fact, of women. Well, no, not mostly: mostly it's Garion. But every other POV is a female, because Eddings dips in around the West and visits the queens who are holding the thrones while their husbands are off fighting the big war.

Re-reading as an adult, I found that interesting for two reasons: one, it means every POV in the Belgariad that is not Garion's is female, which--from the adult perspective--is fairly awesome. One wonders if that was his wife Leigh's (whose name went on the much later Eddings books) doing, or if--well, honestly, it does simply make the most sense. Ce'Nedra's a fairly obvious viewpoint character, since she's the most important of them whose storyline doesn't follow the same physical path as Garion's, and the kings' activities can be related through her gaze, since she's with them. The queens, however, are entirely out of either Garion or Ce'Nedra's line of sight, and they're doing important things, so bringing them in as viewpoint characters makes sense.

Two, it means that Eddings presented a totally different series of points of view in the final book, which is, like, Not Allowed. Readers have certain expectations, dammit! You can't go around messing with them! ...except apparently you can. So that's kind of cool from a writer's POV, 'cause hey, look, perhaps one can get away with that kind of thing.

I also realized on this re-read that although my youthful perception was that this story was done, upon reflection it's clear Eddings never intended The Belgariad to be the whole story. He always intended The Malloreon to follow it. All the threads are in place, and while I, like many others, might object to the fact that he wrote the same story again (and again, and again; Eddings is an excellent demonstration of Robin

McKinley's theory that perhaps at the heart of it we all only have one story to tell), there is the fact that he wrote that same story many times *to huge success*. His books, and that story, with its faintly different trappings, were and are immensely popular. There may be a lesson there, for those of us who do this for a living.

Lastly, my reaction to the whole series is: my goodness, those are straight-forward books. I'd forgotten how much of them is about Collecting Each Token (a character from each race), Visiting Each King, etc. There's nothing really devious about any of it, though this is not meant as a slight: I spent a little while imagining these books as written today, GRRM-style, and while you could *do* it...

...well, you wouldn't have the Belgariad when you were done, and that would be a shame, because despite their flaws, these are still entertaining, delightful reads that I would not hesitate to recommend to any fantasy reader.
