



The Sword of Calandra

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Tristan does not imagine that his troubles are over. He stands reluctantly revealed as Calandra's king--but his right is almost universally disputed, his castle has no walls, his wife is betrothed to a dead man, and his throne will kill him during his crowning unless he can lay hands on the long-lost sword of the Last King. And his homegrown magic is no more reliable than it's ever been.

He seeks the sword by magical means, without success. Galan of Radak--and his sorcerer Reynaud--are laying siege to Crogen castle. After an attempt on his life, Tristan departs for Kovelir, convinced that Crewzel's fortune-telling cards can give him a clue to the missing sword's location. Of course, it's never that simple.

The Sword of Calandra Details

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Author : Susan Dexter

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From Reader Review The Sword of Calandra for online ebook

Alexandra says

2nd in series.

Gwen says

I never realized that there were books beyond the first book, The Ring of Allaire. I don't know how many times I read TROA as a kid. Definitely many times!

Anyway, it was nice to realize that the story continued! I read this to my children and they definitely enjoyed it!

Nytetyger says

Book two in the series and just as good as book one. I know Tristan is a true 'wooby' but he is so darn brave and wonderful, and I adore both of his animal friends-- how often do you meet a brave canary?

Omiae says

Well, having been really surprised by the first book which I wasn't expecting much from but loved, I was really looking forward to reading the next book in the series, and it didn't disappoint.

I have to say, it isn't the most epic fantasy story ever, but it is incredibly enjoyable and a good quick read, which isn't too deep and complicated. The fact that it isn't complicated like most fantasy doesn't take away from it at all.

As with the first book, the characters are full of life and well, character. There are less active character in this book, compared to the first one, where new characters were joining Tristan on his quest every few chapters. This book mainly focuses around Tristan on his quest to find the sword that will allow him to be crowned king (which he doesn't want to be, but has no choice). He is joined on his quest by my favourite of all the characters, Thomas the cat. For a cat, he has such a personality, it's wonderful!

Although, Tristan, being the lead, is actually a really great character. I find far too often in fantasy (along with other genre) that I actually don't like the lead character much, but Tristan is a lovely exception. There is something quite lovely about him. Such as him being a 'wizard' normally this would mean he would be amazing and all powerful, but in all honesty, tristan's magical ability is a bit rubbish. It improves slowly, and when he does do some magic, it is usually pretty good, but it seems to be such a hard task for him, he doesn't do it much, and usually suffers for it.

As for the story, well, it was very enjoyable too! A simple quest to find a sword, not the most original idea i

must say, but Dexter pulls it off. As I've said before, it's quite a simple story, and nothing is over done. You never stick in a location just a little too long. It's a very concise story, but is still an excellent one, and that is a talent in itself! Far too many fantasy stories are over complicated nowadays, so it's nice to read something simple like this.

Along with the individual story for this book, the overall story is growing too, the hounds of Nimir are after Tristan, and he fears them more than anything, but also, the fact that spring has come but the snow is still present is made more obvious in this book. Towards the end especially, when the snow starts to become a real issue, and Tristan realises he must come face to face with Nimir to end the winter.

It's starting to build to a climax here, but also keeping it's own as a story in it's own right, which I always enjoy.

So basically, I really enjoyed this book, I recommend it (and the others in the series) to anyone who is a fantasy fan, and, in fact, to anyone who isn't really a fan, but wants to try to get into the genre.

Jeff says

Thirty years does much to your memory... but I do remember reading this book. This sequel to Ms. Dexter's excellent Ring of Allaire reminds readers that waking the sleeping princess and revealing the true king of the kingdom seldom solves all the problems.... in fact, in this case, it causes more new problems.

This is also the first book I recall reading in which the author went into detail in the forging of a sword... it was a fascinating endeavour and one which I still recall all these years later.

Christopher says

Susan Dexter does a much better job with the second novel of the Winter King's War. She devotes a lot more attention to details, fleshing out our heroes, adversaries and newer characters, as well as the land of Calandra itself.

Toni Moore says

A light, fun read. More caustic cat dialog, nasty villains, and engaging characters. This book concerns the quest for the king's sword so that insecure wizard Tristan can be crowned legitimate king of Calandra. He and his queen, Elisena, have found all the necessary regalia except the sword. And the sword is vital, because if you don't have the right one, the throne zaps you to another plane of existence (or non-existence). Nice twist on how the sword is found. Just one more book to go in the Winterwaste series.

James Kidd says

read it as a kid and loved it. Read it again now. Just as good.

MaryBliss says

A pleasant, classic, fantasy escape with an array of interesting characters and a lively mix of ethics and adventure. An enjoyable read.

Arlene Allen says

I loved Susan Dexter. She never wrote enough to satisfy me.

Joy says

This story just keeps getting better and better!

Tracey says

The second book in the Calandra trilogy is The Sword of Calandra. I had memories of this one, because this book has (I don't think this is a spoiler) a detailed and fascinating account of the forging of a sword, which was something I knew nothing about, and which I remember being engrossed in. I enjoy learning about where things come from and how they're made, and especially things as dear to my heart and yet present-day-exotic as swords.

Tristan is in residence in the delapidated castle at Crogen, and preparations are ongoing for his crowning, amid a worsening of the weather – I feel for them, I really do; I've been beginning to suspect Nimir's hand in our winter - and constant threats from just about everyone in the surrounding countryside. Elisena has located the royal regalia, and everything is present ... Nearly. They discover that over time and generations of kings and wizards the crowning has become thickly woven through with spells and rituals which must be followed. And they discover – Tristan being Tristan, the hard way – that trying to take the throne without heeding every detail of the accretion of ceremony could be fatal. The problem is that they don't have the king's sword. And they very much need the king's sword. And therefore this is the quest for this book: locating a blade which has not been seen in centuries, possibly since the last king of Calandra fought the Duke of Esdragon. It could be anywhere – or nowhere, though they hope that's not so likely given its lineage and properties. Once more Tristan finds himself with no other choice but to set out on Valadan – with Thomas at his saddlebow – to try to learn more.

It's fun to see how little Tristan expects to be missed when he leaves the castle, apart from Polassar and Allaire and, mostly, Elisena and Minstrel; few enough of the people of Crogen recognize him as their king as yet, especially when he wears what he has always worn and physics old ladies' cows for them. He has no real purpose there, and the mission is almost as much to be useful as it is to find the sword.

They go to Kovelir, in hopes that the old wizard they met last time they were there - Cabal, who knew Tristan's master Blais - will be able to help them, or at least to sponsor their search through the magic

academy's library. Instead, through his soft-hearted reluctance to hurt the old man, who has aged and sickened in the months since Tristan last saw him, he finds himself apprenticed. Which is awkward, at best. He doesn't have the heart to break the truth to Cabal, His days are spent with Cabal, and his nights in the library and on the streets searching for first Crewzel's son and then Crewzel herself, the street magician who befriended him (in her own way) the last time they were in the city.

All of his spells of seeking seem to come to naught. Some information turns up in the library, but not enough, and time is running out – and Tristan finally decides his only course of action is to go to Kinark, legendary for its swords and the place where the king's sword was made, and commission a new blade to the exact specifications of the ancient one. It's risky – but there's no other real choice. And that is how he meets Jehan, a smith with some very large and very painful demons. (Given that it's a fantasy I should specify they're metaphorical demons...)

Swords are pretty common Quest items, but this is an uncommon quest. It's one man, relatively ordinary in many ways, trying to accomplish something he feels is greater than he is. Others may have confidence in him, but he doesn't; he is so very human, believing he is well able to do many things but incapable of a huge number of other things, knowing from experience that however perfectly everything seems to be going it could all blow up in his face at any moment. Sometimes literally. He is befuddled at having been pushed to the throne; he is uncomfortable with ceremony and leadership on such a scale; he is scornful of his own abilities as a wizard. He's real.

In Calandra Ms. Dexter continues to present flawed, human, real characters. They don't necessarily behave or react as the reader expects them to, any more than almost every human in any of our lives always lives up or down to expectations. I love the characterizations, and the plots, and the story-telling. The only thing I don't love about Susan Dexter's books is that there hasn't been a new one in years.
