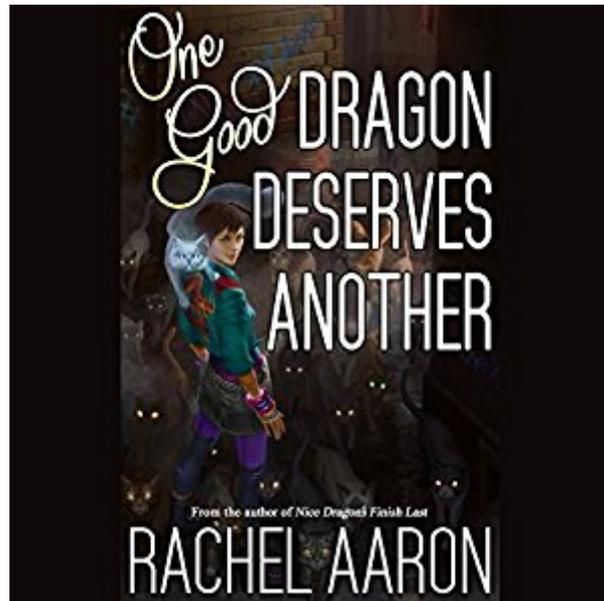


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One Good Dragon Deserves Another: Heartstrikers, Book 2



Synopsis

After barely escaping the machinations of his terrifying mother, two all-knowing seers, and countless bloodthirsty siblings, the last thing Julius wants to see is another dragon. Unfortunately for him, the only thing more dangerous than being a useless Heartstriker is being a useful one. Now that he's got an in with the Three Sisters, Julius has become a key pawn in Bethesda the Heartstriker's gamble to put her clan on top. Refusal to play along with his mother's plans means death, but there's more going on than even Bethesda knows. Heartstriker futures are disappearing, and Algonquin's dragon hunter is closing in. Now, with his most powerful family members dropping like flies, it's up to Julius to save the family that never respected him and prove once and for all that the world's worst dragon is the very best one to have on your side.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

CLASSIFICATION: The Heartstriker series is an action-packed urban fantasy series with a strong dose of comedy, post-apocalyptic SF themes and dragons.**ANALYSIS:** Ever since I got my hands on *The Spirit Thief*, the debut book by Rachel Aaron, I've been enchanted by the worlds she imagines and the characters that inhabit them. When she announced this new series, I was very much looking forward to it with a lot of curiosity. After reading *Nice Dragons Finish Last*, I was thrilled to bits with the new series. *One Good Dragon Deserves Another* or *OGDDA* as the abbreviation goes is the brilliant follow up to *Nice Dragons Finish Last* (NDFL). It's a cracker of a sequel that basically starts within a month of the climax of NDFL and basically widens up the world,

and story in every way possible. I'll be discussing some plot points of the story which will be spoiler-ish so please be forewarned of it. The plot opens up with Julius and Marci happily forming a partnership and being able to do their job as curse-removal specialists. The problem arises when Bethesda returns to the DFZ and grabs Julius to go with her to a special meeting. Which turns out to be the upcoming nuptials (of sorts) of Ivan Heartstriker and Svena White Witch of the Three sisters. While this happy event is a very perfunctory one, it turns out Bob being a seer has invited a special dragon to this ceremony. That dragon being Amelia, who is the only surviving member of the A clutch and a mighty dragon in herself. While Julius is unaware of who she is, he does get to know her and is bemused by her interest in him. Things however take a horrible turn when Estella, the oldest daughter of the Three sisters returns and hatches a plan to defeat Bob at his seer game. It will be up to Julius, Marci, Bob and the rest to help the Heartstriker clan survive the coming onslaught while also trying to survive Algonquin's hunter who has a special interest in killing dragons. This book in a word was magnificent and here's why: a) It gives us the whole backstory about the dragons and why there seems to be so much infighting among dragon clans b) Why Algonquin the lady of the lakes and other spirits hate the dragons so much c) How does mankind fit into the magic equation All of the above and much more is laid bare for the reader and the author truly gives us two protagonists to root for. This time Julius shares the spotlight with Marci who is frankly fantastic as a protagonist. The previous book focused on Julius and while it was a fun read. With OGD, Marci takes center stage and we get a stronger, multi-faceted story. The book's cover kind of highlights this new shift and Marci also learns so much more from her association with Ghost. How and when this happens, is possibly the most surprising twist and only the second most shocking part of the story. The story also focuses on Bob, Justin, Chelsie, Ghost and couple of other major characters. The character cast is suitably widened and I loved this aspect of the story-line. Bob, I believe is a character that is such a hit and in this volume, we get to know more about him and his powers. This just made me love Bob more even when he's at his most infuriating. There's also a strong light shined on Chelsie who has so far remained in the shadows and we kind of get an inkling why that is. Lastly the plot reveals the magical history of the world as well as the backstory of the Dragons. This revelation makes so much sense from a world-building point of view and has me intrigued for further exploration. The story takes a suitable dark turn within a few pages of its start and Rachel Aaron does keep the tension evenly strung throughout the story. This book very much reads like a Jeffrey Deaver thriller wherein the entire plot unfolds over two to three days and the twists come left, right & center. This book possibly is the most twisted story-line that Rachel has written so far (among the 10 fiction books she has written so

far). I couldn't quite keep with all the happenings as there's a seer battle going on as one of them reiterates "you can never be too sure with a seer". The story unfolds at a wicked pace and the readers will be racing along to find what truly is happening. Lastly while the book ends on a very surprising note, it's the epilogue that's the real stunner and I mean it. After all the twists and revelations that the main plot has in it, the last few paragraphs of the epilogue reveal so much more and further deepen the world and magic system so to speak. After finishing the book, I can only imagine the amount of email that Rachel will be getting about the epilogue. As for any drawbacks, this story is definitely not a standalone; one cannot just jump into it. It needs to be read after *Nice Dragons Finish Last*, so that's the only point I can think which detracts from this sumptuous thriller. On all other fronts, it aces its characterization, plot twists, plot pace, etc. **CONCLUSION:** *One Good Dragon Deserves Another* is a first rate sequel that completely outshines its predecessor in every department. It reads like a thriller, is a urban fantasy, Sci-fi mashup in its plot and is a fantastic read overall. When it comes to books from author that we love, I don't think we can ask more than that. Be sure to read *One Good Dragon Deserves Another* as it absolutely cements Rachel Aaron's reputation as a gifted storyteller.

Rachel Aaron's *ONE GOOD DRAGON DESERVES ANOTHER* is witty, fresh, and fun. A sequel that expands on world building, characters, and the series plot makes this one a winner. Our story opens two months after the events of the first book and Julius Heartstriker and his human mage friend Marci are hiding out in the DFZ. Who are they hiding from? Depends who you ask, but anyone bearing the name of Julius' dragon clan "Heartstriker" is someone to avoid so far as he's concerned. But family is tough to dodge even at the best of times, so when you've got scores of draconic brothers and sisters there's no hiding out for long. Sooner than Julius would like his family are back in the picture, dragging the "Nice Dragon" into dragon clan politics and maybe even war. If there's one thing clan Heartstriker is good at it's getting into trouble and stepping on toes and chopping off heads. So it shouldn't come as a surprise when Estella, dragon Seer and the de facto head of the Three Sisters clan, starts targeting the Heartstrikers directly. While our protagonists Julius and Marci are worried, the matriarch of the clan Bethesda doesn't bat a single heavily mascaraed eyelash. After all, what does a powerful clan of almost a hundred dragons have to fear from Estella? But all bets are off when a Seer gets involved. Fan favourites Bob and Chelsie are back and better than ever in *ONE GOOD DRAGON DESERVES ANOTHER*, taking a more active role in Julius' life. I adored both characters in the first book, but getting a peek at their

individual motivations and agendas was fascinating! I love the fact that Heartstriker's enforcer is a woman, since that role is typically reserved for male characters; Chelsie can definitely kick some serious dragon ass, which we get to see in multiple wonderfully written battle scenes. You go girl!

The other badass lady in *ONE GOOD DRAGON DESERVES ANOTHER* is of course Marci, the most lovable character ever. It's not easy being a human in a dragon world, especially one with a sassy attitude. Her magical brilliance, cunning, and audacity are actually all draconic characteristics, now that I think about it. She'd make a great dragon. But aside from helping out her BFF/potential BF Julius, Marci has her own problems to deal with. For one thing, her spirit cat Ghost has been acting very strange indeed and may not actually be a spirit cat after all. I'll not spoil the surprise but holy crap were Marci and Ghost's scenes together awesome!

Marci's magical abilities and her relationship with the spirit cat led to my favourite relationship in this book: the tentative alliance between Marci and Amelia Heartstriker. That's right, we finally get to meet a member of the illustrious Heartstriker clan, Bethesda's first group of children. And Amelia does not disappoint! The hard-drinking, magic-wielding dragoness is a perfect counterpoint to her more controlled siblings. And I loved seeing her geek out about magic with Marci! As if the fabulous characters weren't enough, the plot of *ONE GOOD DRAGON DESERVES ANOTHER* was also compelling and unpredictable. The major plot arc wraps up with enough detail to satisfy, and then some major game changers are introduced in the epilogue. No cliffhanger, just intriguing stuff! I have burning questions that need to be answered in the third book. These questions include:

1. How will clan Heartstriker respond to a certain spirit throwing down the gauntlet?
2. Will Julius ever get up the nerve to ask Marci on a date? Preferably one that doesn't involve tank badgers?
3. And finally, what the heck happened with Chelsie in China?!

Suffice it to say that after *ONE GOOD DRAGON DESERVES ANOTHER*, I'm eagerly anticipating the third book. There's something for everyone in this wholly unique series: humour, heart, and seriously great characters. If you're not already reading the Heartstrikers series, do yourself a favour and pick it up!

One Good Dragon Deserves Another brings us back to the intriguing world of the Heartstriker clan, but as we tantalizingly learn more, their very futures are snatched away. Rachel Aaron carries off this complexity of plot where seers are manipulating fate, and the heroes are still learning the rules of this world, right alongside our readers. She masterfully lays in all the hints, but the relevant do not become apparent until the critical moment. Her balance of discovery and action is astounding, there is never a quiet moment, yet readers do get those opportunities to learn more and understand this

world of post magic's return. Julius continues to be a compelling hero, harassing not his own powers, but his ability to bring people together, which seems such a trial in our own mundane world. Marci is a pure joy, displaying a mixture of ruthless to go all out for what she desperately believes in, but still the naivety of a researcher, that strives more than anything else to know. Getting to know more of Julius's siblings and some key spirits provide another fascinating aspect to a story that's as much about ruling other as it is about ruling one's self.

Been waiting for this sequel for a long time and did not want to stop reading it after I downloaded it shortly after midnight on the release day. However, being mortal I had to sleep a few hours before resuming. Fantastic story - kept me interested from start to finish. The only complaint I have is that I have to wait until next year to get the sequel.

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