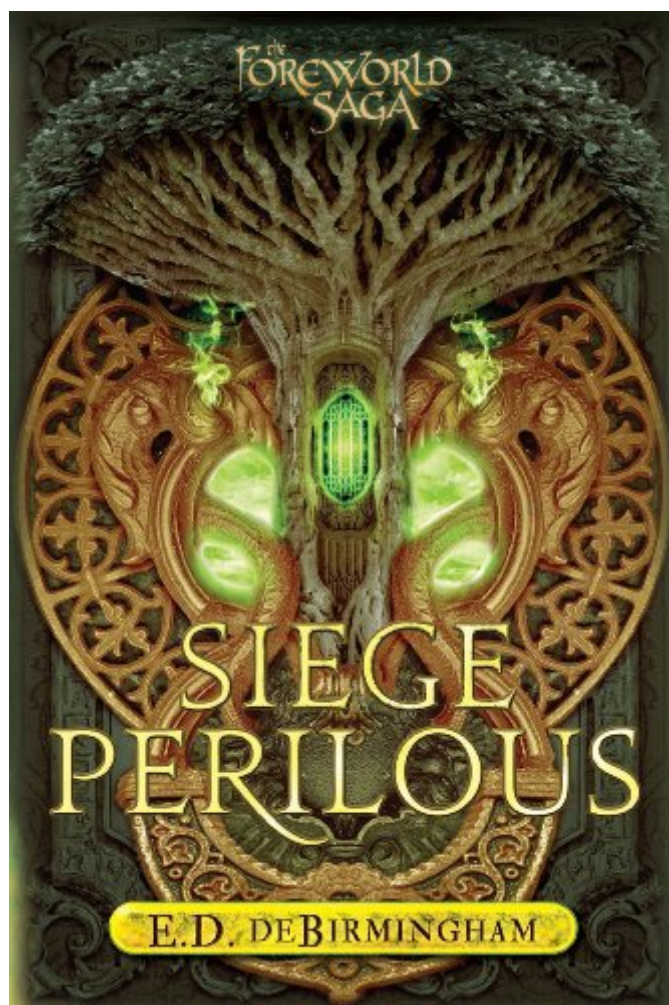


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Siege Perilous (The Mongoliad Series Book 5)



Synopsis

Ocyrhoe, a young, cunning fugitive from Rome, safeguards a chalice of subtle but great power. Finding herself in France, she allies with the persecuted, pacifist Cathar sect in their legendary mountaintop stronghold, Montségur. There she resists agents of the Roman Church and its Inquisition, fights off escalating, bloody besiegement by troops of the King of France, and shields the mysterious cup from the designs of many. Percival, the heroic Shield-Brethren knight from The Mongoliad, consumed by his mystical visions of the Holy Grail, is also drawn to Montségur where the chalice holds the key to his destiny. Arrayed against Percival and Ocyrhoe are enemies both old and new who are determined to reveal the secrets of the Shield-Brethren with the hope of destroying the order once and for all. Alive with memorable characters, intense with action and intrigue, Siege Perilous conjures a medieval world where the forces of faith confront the forces of fear. Choices made by characters in The Mongoliad reach their ultimate conclusion in this fifth and concluding novel and all of Christendom is at stake.

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Customer Reviews

The final book in the Foreworld saga. With the main story finishing up in the previous book this finishes off a secondary tale that had started in the first novel but didn't really pick up until the second one once things got going, although I am slightly curious where the epilogue of the previous novel takes place in correlation of this tale. BUT as to the story itself, well we definitely got an ending, maybe I after five novels I was expecting something a little more definitive than what we got. As in although the heroes of the story sort of won they lost as well. It was a well told tale, there were a couple of twists I didn't quite expect. As a whole I'd say the series was good, interesting characters and concepts. And seeing how this particular series is out of my usual "comfort zone" as they say I did want to finish it once I started it. If you're interested in this sort of thing Definitely start with the first book, maybe even a couple of the stand alone novellas for a glimpse into the world itself to see if you want to dive into the main story.

I got into the Mongoliad series because of Neil Stephenson and followed it as much out of curiosity as anything else. This last piece in the series however is mediocre and that is being charitable. It gets 2 stars because it had one or two good lines. But the plot and characters were pathetic. I kept thinking: who is she writing this for, an adolescent? I hope Neil Stephenson had nothing to do with this edition of the series. A sad ending to a series of books that had some very good moments. In any case, it has cured me of ever reading this collaborative-effort sort of literature. A note on the editing or whatever digital nonsense transcribes books into Kindle format: please do something about this. The mistakes at times make the literature nearly unreadable. I really like my Kindle, however, it's not just this book, many books I've bought lately through Kindle are a real mess.

I don't usually bother writing book reviews, but I'll make an exception here. "Siege Perilous" is -- in a word -- dreadful. Coming as it does as the purported fifth book in Neal Stephenson's (et al) "The Mongoliad Cycle" it has become a clunky, awkward filler to end the series and tie up loose ends, that, in retrospect, might have better been left alone. As an aside, I've read everything Neal Stephenson's written, including the obscure "Mother Earth, Mother Board" which he wrote for Wired in 1996. And yes, Neal Stephenson's name seems to be curiously absent from anywhere in this book, even the Acknowledgements. But still, he was the major draw at the start of this Cycle, so he bears some responsibility here. The writing is blocky and sophomoric, the character developments are uneven and contrived, the plot jumpy and uneven with far too many deus-ex-machina quick-fixes that wash over what would have been, in previous books in the Cycle, well-developed

and evocative passages in the plot. As one brief example: Ocyrhoe and Ferenc are re-united in a lengthy and almost embarrassingly-adolescent plot development that's painful to read. Quotes (of many available): "Let's run away together from all this and see what happens if we go out into the world alone." and "Now it is time," he agreed, and gently brought his lips to hers. "erk...I'm currently at 68% (Kindle measurement) and really doubt that I'm going to waste my time finishing this plodding, amateurish writing. Quite a pity that what was a very well-written, compelling historical piece has devolved to this, simply to let one more author milk some money out of what was a very creative collaborative work. Neal Stephenson should disavow any involvement or relationship with what this has become. Offshoot: after wading through this, I seriously doubt I'd ever even try any of the myriad "Foreworld" and "Sideworld" companion pieces the "Mongoliad Cycle" seems to have spawned. But, good news! Neal Stephenson's next new novel "Seveneves" is due out May 17. Personally, after this dreck, I can't wait for something of substance to be associated with Neal Stephenson's name again.

If you've read through book 4.....You might as well get a little color on the history of the Cathars, and get a preview of this author's potential, especially if she spins off a little series starring our favorite little Binder for the young adult reader. Ultimately an unsatisfying finale to a series of books which lost even the original authors' attention. Even the characters sort of wander off...

If you listened to the first 4 books, be prepared to be very very disappointment. The writing is good, but the narration is awful. just awful. The first 4 have some of the best narrating i've ever heard. The original narrator could do a dozen voices and had great accents for everyone. In the 5th book, the narrator is switched to a female who can't do any voices other than a flat, listless, droning emotionless cant, that makes it so i can only listen to about 30 minutes at a time. I loved the series so much that i'll soldier on through her voice, but man....its bad. I can't even rate the writing (as it appears Neal Stephenson isn't involved in the 5th book), because the narration takes so much away from the story that it changes the whole experience.

As book 5 in the Mongoliad series, now being worked by a committee of authors, it's become predictable and somewhat tedious. Sure it's a good read for a day in airports (etc), but for a serious reader, there are drawbacks. The combat scenes seem well done, as by one who understands swordplay, and each of the primary characters has been developed to the point where we know and feel somewhat familiar with them, but the book never bursts out into something special. I was a bit

disillusioned when I read through the climax of what I assumed was the final book in the series, but found instead, no conclusion at all, but a hint toward yet another in the Mongoliad series. It's become something like the Frank Herbert (and company) "Dune" series, e.g., "Grandchildren of Dune's Children Meet Shai Halud." Too much. The next installment of the Mongoliad will proceed without me.

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