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Rogue Weather Warden Joanne Baldwin is racing to New York to warn her former colleagues of the impending apocalypse. An ancient agreement between the Djinn and the Wardens has been broken, and the furious Djinn, slaves to the Wardens for millennia, have broken free of mortal control.

With more than half the Wardens unaccounted for in the wake of the Djinn uprising, Joanne realizes that the natural disasters they've combated for so long were merely symptoms of restless Mother Nature fidgeting in her sleep. Now she's waking up—and she is angry....

Firestorm Details

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From Reader Review Firestorm for online ebook

Angela says

With this, the fifth book in the Weather Warden series, Rachel Caine continues her fine tradition of plots that never let up on the pace for an *instant*. I've got to hand it to her, she's got that pacing thing down to an art.

Picoreview: A whole lot of "not what I was expecting" throughout this plot, based on where *Windfall* left off. Some of it was the "wow, that was pretty cool" kind of unexpected; some of it, more the "who put what in the where now?" variety. Still a riproaring read, but one which didn't play out for me quite as well as earlier installments of the series. This may change as Book Six comes out and I get more of an idea of where we're going with all this, but I don't know yet.

Whoo boy. When last we left off, we'd had Jo running for her life from a cadre of Djinn who'd all gone red-eyed and psycho with the impact of Mother Earth Herself waking up and being pissed. And given that the cadre was led by none other than the Uberhot David Himself, this was shaping up for eight or nine thousand kinds of Oh Shit.

So I was totally expecting a book that was going to be all about the Wardens going at it with the Djinn. This was not what we got, and part of me was disappointed by that. I mean, the fangirl in me was all about the YAY! when David showed up for his first scene and was coherent, and was coherent in all of his subsequent scenes as well, sure. But it also felt like a little bit of a copout. Just about all of the on-camera Djinn action involved the Djinn going after Demonmarked Wardens specifically, not all Wardens in general. And while the whole "hunting down the demonmarked Wardens" thing was great and all, it also really kind of took the sting out of the whole idea of the Djinn as vengeful servants of the Mother about to eradicate humanity from the face of the planet.

Most of the book as well, at least from Jo's perspective, was running around putting out fires. In some cases, literally. And that fire sequence went on way, way too long given that Jo didn't actually accomplish anything, and that the only real reason it needed to be there in the plot was for her to find out that David and the other Djinn had killed Demonmarked Wardens. This kind of thing made the overall plot feel a quite a bit less cohesive to me, and it didn't really feel like it started getting its legs under it until we saw that a Demon Mark had come after the first Oracle--and that Ashan was in alliance with Demons. And by then, we were pretty far into the book.

Also? I kinda liked that Eamon wanted a Djinn to heal this person in the hospital--and I do have some curiosity as to what exactly the story is there--but through most of his on-camera time, my reaction was "yeah yeah yeah, he's a slimebucket, can we get back to Jo saving the Earth now?" It just felt like that was a subplot that was out of sync with the main goings-on, in terms of threat level. Something that would have been a more credible subplot earlier in the series, and which loses a *lot* of steam when paired up with a "the world is literally about to end" main plot.

But. I *really* disliked that he lets Sarah go and then she winds up right the heck back in his clutches, presumably while Imara is getting captured and beaten senseless by Ashan. Granted that this all happened off-camera and that therefore it would have been hard to show in a novel told in first person, but it all left me feeling "buh huh what just happened there?" Not to mention that it really left me irritated with Sarah as a character. I didn't like her very much in *Windfall*, and I like her even less now that this has happened. I'm not seeing any redeeming characteristics in Sarah at all, and no reason for her to be in the overall plot except as a

victim for Jo to be obligated to go out of her way for since she's her sister. Bah.

On the other hand, we had plenty of goodness to exult in, so let's get down to that.

While I could have done without the bits involving Emily only half-assedly healing Jo and then trying to take Imara, I *did* like that Emily had some genuine fear about rumors that Jo was behind all the shit that's gone down in all the prior books. Which makes absolute and utter sense. I mean, if you're some low-level random Warden who hasn't been in on the details of the recent scary shenanigans and suddenly you're alone with the person suspected of causing it all, you've got every right to be absolutely scared. So that was pretty cool. So was Emily backing off once she learned that Imara was Jo's daughter (though one can also argue that she should have had a bigger WTF?! reaction there as well).

Liked me some Cherise, who was around just long enough to provide some interesting mortal viewpoints and then got the hell out of the way. I really liked that she immediately came up with "catering" as a reason to hang around--she may not have superpowers, but by gods, she can organize getting food. And Jo did need the reminder that yeah, while the Wardens may have the power to save the planet, everybody else on the planet has a vested interest in hanging around too, so it's really not fair to tell a regular mortal like her to just fuck off and do nothing. So, kudos there.

How about that Lewis, then, giving Jo the car? This, ladies and gents, is part of why Lewis is still in the game when it comes to Jo's affections. He totally understands her and what she loves. And I liked that we had just enough of a fight between David and Jo about the car to get across just a touch of jealousy on David's part and to hit Jo with the cluehammer that Lewis is in love with her. No more than that, and very quickly moving on, since bigger things are still at stake. *Perfect*.

David? Oh my yes, still Uberhot even if I'm starting to swing to the Jo/Lewis ship camp. LJ user kisanthe has posited to me that David is really too much of a Dream Guy, a point with which I think I agree. Jo's got tons and tons of hot burning passionate love for him--but you could make a very good case that there isn't much substance beneath it. After all, every single time David's with Jo, he's generally doing one of two things: having hot burning passionate sex with her, or else making grand romantic gestures like oh, say, sacrificing himself on her behalf. Kinda light on the whole "daily existence" connection you need if you want to spend the rest of your life with someone. The ties she has with Lewis still feel like they're more *real*. See previous commentary re: car. ;)

Raise your hand if you totally envisioned the Earth Oracle as played by the lady who played the Oracle in *The Matrix*. I kept expecting her to offer Jo a cookie.

Also, raise your hand if you're also an LKH fan (or former fan) and kept reading "Asher" for "Ashan" every time he was on camera. I kept doing that all throughout this book. Hell, I've kept doing it typing up this LJ post. But! Really, really liked that Ashan had teamed up with the Demons in his desperate attempt to purge humanity from the planet. Really nice touch, that, and I hadn't seen it coming at all. His fate was *exquisite* justice as well--that brief description of his gagging on every breath he took in his shiny new human form spoke *volumes*.

I'm not sure yet what I think about the whole idea of Jo losing her memory, though. I came out of that ending with a big ol' mental case of whiplash, going, "What the hell just happened here?!" And naturally I read the preview chapter for *Thin Air*, and I'm all "Timmy's still in the well! AAAAAAH!"

Long story short, shakier work perhaps than previous installments--but keep 'em coming, Rachel. Very

anxious to see how this story is going to end!

Joy says

It really is necessary to read these in order. Each one is more a segment of a very long book rather than a story with a conclusion. I was pleased with the personification of the Oracles that communicate with the sentient being we call earth, The Mother. The Oracles are 3 not the usual 4 in regards to elements; Earth, Fire and Weather, nice Goddess concept of 3s.

Kt says

After narrowly escaping the event of the last book, Joanne has a whole new challenge, maybe the biggest one yet, motherhood. When Johnathan sacrificed himself for David to be restored as a djinn, he also gave life to Joanne's djinn daughter, Imara. She never really believed Imara could possibly be able to be born without David's death, and she really did not expect her to be born as a six foot tall amazonian goddess. Imara looks just like Joanne, just made "exotic." Now that all the normal djinn, including David, have been possessed by mother nature and turned against all of humanity, Joanne realized its up to her to try and convince Mother they are worthy of survival. If she fails, so does all of humanity.

Even though it came at a complete shock, Joanne takes to motherhood very well. She instantly forms an unbreakable bond of love with her daughter and would do anything to protect her. This is kind of ironic considering Imara is a djinn who is so much more powerful than a human, but a mother wanting to protect her child truly is universal. Imara has all of the knowledge from both her parents, but she still has a vulnerable aspect to her. At times it is almost easy to forget she is only a few days old, but then she will do or say something to show that vulnerability. I don't know if it was as a result of Joanne and David's immense love for her, but I found myself instantly caring for her. She was born just in time for the world to start crumbling, and must learn immediately the hard lessons of life.

Joanne has always been special. When she was human, she was abnormally powerful with weather, then she became a djinn and all the powers that came with that. Now that David is no longer draining her, Joanne's powers are finally back in full force, with a new addition as well. Her change back to human made her manifest new powers in the fire warden category, which is extremely rare. Putting her powers aside, there is something even more special about her. She is the only one who even has a chance at convincing Mother Earth of humanity's worthiness. It isn't really clear why this is, but my guess would be that it is because of her constant self-sacrifice and drive to do the right thing no matter the cost.

This is yet another fast paced book in the Weather Warden series that will not disappoint. Each book makes me only care more for the characters, especially the newest one, Imara. The ending is very heart wrenching, and lives up to cliffhangers of the previous books. Just like its predecessors, this book is a must read for any urban fantasy lover.

Kes says

[Imara to be killed so quickly - though I would not be surprised if she becomes either a painful plot point or

resurrected at some point (hide spoiler)]

Taylor Mortsof says

I thought this book was okay, I definitely did not like the fact that at the end she didn't know who David was or even who herself is, but I do hope that she will remember David and have her memories of her undying love for him. I hope that this series spent them into one where it leaves you mad at how the author leaves things. I really do love Jo and David together since the very first book!

Cathy says

It's another 3.75 star book for me. It was a bit frantic, the stuff with Eamon was all unnecessary, the parts with Imara never really rang true, but it was still very entertaining. And what I have to give the author the most credit for is having a really strong plan for the series, it isn't one of those series where the author had a good idea for the first few books but just sort of wings it after that. It reminds me of Butcher's Dresden in that way (yes, not to his level), things keep coming together and building in a way that is very satisfying and really makes me want to pick up the next book. I'm glad I discovered the series late so I've been able to read so many of the books in a row without having to wait.

Gillian Murrell says

Another great action packed edition to the Weather Warden series. The Djinn have freed them selves from slavery and are running amuck. Mother nature is waking up and she is not happy with the state of the earth. Joanne has a fully grown daughter who is half Djinn and David has gone awol and that's just the start of the book.:)

Angela Oliver says

Another fast-paced whirlwind of explosive energy and excitement, this time with a little apocalypse thrown in to the mix. The weather has gone crazy as the Earth Mother stirs in her sleep and Joanne Baldwin, rogue Warden tries to find ways to bring it to a close, one that preferably doesn't involve the death of the entire human race. Lots of road trips, and one very unnerving plane flight, this is a book for literary adrenalin junkies. I have cottoned on to Rachael Caine's writing style now - she thinks "okay this situation is really, really bad for Joanne. How can I make it worse?" There seem to be a lot of additional threats thrown in to the mix, which distract rather from the main narrative - Eamon, for example. Why can't he give up already? And I do feel it is kinda cheating to give her a daughter that is already, practically, an adult. Then again, a baby in this sort of story would have a very short life expectancy.

Overall, a great, adrenalin pounding, wild ride, with a rather irritating ending. Not because it's a cliffhanger - because I have book #6 right here, so I don't need to stress about that at all, but because it seems kinda cheap. Still, we'll see what "Thin Air" delivers to us.

Off to the library now to acquire those final three books. I reckon I'll be done with this series within the week, and then I should read something a little more literary. Yeah, right!

Karen says

It took me a while to get through this book and I'm not sure why. It has a lot of action and I still love the characters - although I'm not sure of my feelings for Imara, a grown daughter just jumping into things felt odd (which it probably should). The ending is once again not expected, so I'm looking forward to the next book to see how things progress.

Susana says

Honestly i don't know what else to say about this series...

Strong female character....check!

A swoon worthy hero/Djinn guy.....check!

Non stop action with high stake risks.....check!

Cars to die for...well at least in Joanne's perspective...check!

Strong family bonds _LOL _ yes, definitely!!

Although i have to say that i was kind of expecting a baby Djinn. That would have been cute, but very time consuming...oh, well, maybe next time...

I could clarify about what i'm babbling about, but then, where would be the fun, when you got to read it?? Right?

And then, ahhhhh, that ending!! Arrrgh!!! The Drama!!

All this to say that i really could use the next book to read.

Kogiopsis says

(this review is a little scatterbrained but honestly, no one who's not 5 books into the series was going to understand it anyway, so I'm not gonna sweat it.)

My favorite junky UF series continues to be junky, full of lovingly described fast cars, and a favorite.

Yet again, Rachel Caine has upped the ante by taking away one of Joanne's supports. Last book she lost her own powers, and largely her access to David's; this book she's got her own abilities back in hand, but the Djinn - including a resurrected David - are outright Warden-cidal and can't be counted on at all. In the past Rahel or 'Alice' have shown up to pull Jo's bacon out of the fire, but that's not an option for (most) of this book.

It's just Joanne Baldwin against the apocalypse, and honestly: that's what I like most in this series.

Jo is an indomitable heroine and, what's more, she's supremely devoted to humanity. While some of the scenes of her trying to convince the Mother - that is to say, the Earth - that humanity was worth saving were a bit awkward, I believe them from Jo more than I would from a lot of characters. She's always put other people first, be they friends, strangers, or antagonists, and she's always had an unshakable faith in humanity

being worthwhile despite all the crap other humans (and specifically other Wardens) have put her through.

By my very nature, I wasn't good at taking in the big picture; for me, the whole world *was* that lost, scared little girl wandering in a field. Those college boys trapped in their wrecked truck. The world revealed itself to me one person at a time.

And later, facing down a Demon-powered wildfire:

Of course, we didn't leave. We didn't even discuss it. We just went to work.

Narratively speaking, this is a great example of a protagonist whose greatest strength is also their weakness. Joanne is the only one with a chance of speaking to an Oracle to calm the Mother - but her fervent love for humankind takes her on detours to try and save lives, keeping her from dealing with the big picture. The quality she needs to communicate her plea is the same one that slows her down in getting there. It works brilliantly in the plot, upping the stakes and the tension as the book progresses.

Speaking of plot - this is clearly an installment in a series; there's no way it could be read as a stand-alone. Partly, I think, because of that the ending felt a bit flat and rushed: it was setting up for Book 6 as much or more than it was rounding out Book 5's story. I'd be more bothered by this if I hadn't gone to the library and checked out the next 4 volumes, but it may be frustrating for others who don't have easy access to the rest of the series.

Also, before I get into spoilers: Cherise is still around and advocating for the power of the ordinary non-Warden human in a crisis; bless her heart. While the character she's flirting with in this book is... not a good choice, I'm glad she's still involved in the story and that she's insisting on her own ability to help with magical disasters.

(view spoiler)

Brownbetty says

One of the things I'm noticing about this series is that the author does a really good job of making sure that after her heroine defeats something apocalyptically big, there's still something left to pose a credible threat. Sometimes she does it by depowering Jo, and sometimes she does it by coming up with a bigger apocalypse for next time, and so far it hasn't gotten annoying.

One thing I did find irritating: throughout the series, it is hinted, implied, and sometimes outright said that Lewis is carrying a torch for Joanne. In this book, Joanne decides she might have feelings for Lewis as well, and reacts by declaring to herself, horrified, "No! I love David!" (not a quote, but I can't be bothered to find it.)

Joanne. Honey. It is possible to love two people at once. If you want to be monogamous about it, fine, but loving one person does not remove from you the ability to love another, and loving another does not deprive the first person of any of your love.

Jeann (Happy Indulgence) says

After seeing Joanne Baldwin, kickass weather warden being bruised, beaten, powerless, and everything else thrown in her way, it was great to see her finally manifesting her powers here and using them to save herself and others.

Let's face it, she's been dragged through the ditches and back in the series so far, and we're all getting a little tired of that. But the stakes are now higher, with her adult, half-djinn daughter around and her sister under hostage by a madman.

She can no longer rely on David saving her in every situation because he can become psychotic at any point and kill her. It's an impossible love that you can't help to root for at any point.

I've thoroughly enjoyed the Weather Warden series and will continue to do so. Can't stop now, I'm halfway through!

Check out my Happy Indulgence blog for more reviews.

Claire says

This review originally appeared on BrizzleLass Books.

I read the first four books in this series consecutively about a decade ago then hit my reading slump which lasted a few years so have had a few of this series on my shelf just waiting for me to get to them, you know how it is. Picking it up I wasn't sure if I was going to remember what had happened so far in the series, after all it's been a long time, my memory is definitely not what it used to be but Rachel Caine has added some useful reminders through the first few chapters to help jog broken memories like mine (thank you!) and before I knew it I was straight back into the series as though I read the previous books yesterday.

Joanne, now trying to combat the fact that the Djinn are no longer controlled by the Weather Wardens, David the Djinn she is in love with, and father to her daughter, Imara included. As she searches for answers and to resolve the conflict the world attacks along with the Djinn and the Wardens see things they have never seen before, at a time when they are weaker than they have ever been before.

Lewis, the strongest of the Wardens does all he can to help Joanne. I still suspect he is in love with her, I've held this belief for a few books now, but her affections are firmly with David, for now.

Rachel Caine does evil well and the two-sides of evil I've loved in this series are the human and Djinn. Eamon is the human evil, a cold calculating man who uses threats, kidnapping and plain nastiness to get what he wants. We learn more about him and his motivations in this book and I suspect things will get more sinister as the series progresses. Ashan is our Djinn evil and despite the fact we should despise him I can't help but to like him rather a lot. He is consumed by his need for things to be the way he thinks they were meant to be and that drives him completely. It means he doesn't see any wrong in annihilation (I don't use this word lightly). He sees Joanne as a pesky ant who keeps thwarting his plans and boy does she keep getting in the way.

Finally, and this really does have to be talked about, Joanne's love of fast cars. *sigh* I mean she drives some beasts in this series and this book especially. She loves cars, she loves them to growl under her foot and she loves to drive the hell out of them. Girl after my own heart that's all I can say! (I know if you've seen my car you'd never believe that but hey have you seen insurance prices!)

Overall, getting back into this series has ignited the spark again, I've already got the next book in the series on the bookshelf so I hope it won't take me a decade to get to it again! Thanks to my readers for voting for me to read this one and getting me back into it!

Deyara says

Probably my favourite book of the series. Quite fast-paced, theres a lot going on (it is an apocalypse after all!) and Jo is running around from crisis to crisis trying to save the world. Loved Imara, she is such an interesting character. Liked the Mother Earth aspects, though I do wonder about whats so special about Joanne that Mother Earth will listen to her, and take her advice!
