



The Light Beyond the Storm Chronicles

A.L. Butcher

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A beautiful young elven sorceress flees for her life in a dark world where magic is forbidden and elves live as slaves. Running from the house of her evil Keeper she must find a way to survive and to fulfill her destiny in a society where her very existence is illegal. Watching her are the Order of Witch-Hunters; the corrupt organisation that rule by fear and ignorance and a mysterious wealthy nobleman, lord of an idyllic valley who is not all he seems. As the Slavers roll across the lands stealing elves from what remains of their ancestral home the Witch-Hunters turn a blind eye to the tragedy and a story of power, love and a terrible revenge unfolds.

Can the sorceress, her mysterious lord and their companions; a deadly and enigmatic half elven thief and a young innocent forest elf whose sister was taken by Slavers succeed in rescuing the missing elves? Will love, magic and determination be enough to outwit the might of the Order and the deviousness and cruelty of the Slaver lords?

An adult dark fantasy/ fantasy romance which contains violence, sexual scenes and swearing

The Light Beyond the Storm Chronicles Details

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From Reader Review The Light Beyond the Storm Chronicles for online ebook

A.L. Butcher says

Mine.

Leeland Artra says

A good romance/dark fantasy read! Yes, I said romance AND dark fantasy. WARNING: This novel contains graphic sex and rape scenes. If you enjoy dark fantasies with lots of horrible things happening to the abused main characters, almost everyone being brutish you'll enjoy this to no end.

I am not a regular dark fantasy reader and read this as it was the book of the month read for the Goodreads group Indie Book Club. As I read it all I could think for the first half of the book was "oh my word how can it possibly get worse." Of course Alexandra managed to make the bleak dark world even more brutish by the word. The characters were interesting with only a couple coming off as standard fantasy villains. The world was well constructed and interesting. I really enjoyed Alexandra's unique take on magic and specifically magical artifacts.

The novel stands well on its own. The story took some fun twists that kept me wondering where it was going. The characters and events have stayed in my mind in that happy place I reserve for memorable fiction characters I liked. In short the world is interesting, the plots are compelling, the bad guys are really bad, and the good guys have some redeeming qualities. ;^) Even though it is a standalone novel it has some nice plot hooks for follow on books. The ending is an all-around reasonable ending with only the epilog providing a light cliff hanger hook for the next book.

Be warned this is a very graphic romance novel. This is where Alexandra deserves some serious credit. She has masterfully managed to mix two genre's which I would not have thought possible to mix into a believable compelling tale.

The only down side to this novel is I believe it was published a little too early. It needs a couple rounds of editing for language, improved depth to a few characters/ scenes, and correcting/replacing some of the repetitive phrases. A second edition of this with some of these problems cleaned up would be an easy 4 or 5 star.

Lee says

Loved this book! Characters are vibrant and alive, world is deep, adventure moves well and is intelligently thought out. The book needs a serious edit - normally wouldn't have finished a read with so many editing problems, but the story is so compelling, that I couldn't stop!! With a good edit it would be one of the few five-star reviews I ever gave an independent author. I'm already seeking out the sequel!!

Light Beyond..., as the author has said, is not erotica per se, but an in depth swords and sorcery writing in which characters sometimes experience sex (very varied, sometimes very dark). But the sex scenes are very

explicit, described in appropriate (to the genre/fantasy world) language - very easy to get caught up in and visualize for the most part.

Alexandra Butcher, with attention to editing detail, has proven herself to be one of the next wave of great storytellers!

S.E. Lindberg says

Sex and Sorcery: The Light Beyond the Storm Chronicles is a unique mash-up of erotic and fantasy fiction. One reason I read this was to lure me out of my comfort zone of Sword & Sorcery, and this was a fun route to take. If one were to take a typical dark fantasy novel with elves & grand battles, and replace all the warfare with steamy sex scenes, then you would get this book. In fact, this book has no real battle scenes with substantial duels or military tactics on display. This book may define a new sub-genre: "Sex and Sorcery."

The closest thing I have ever read to this would be Brian McNaughton's The Throne of Bones, which has copious amounts of ghoulish sex (~zombie sex). "Throne" was not stimulating as much as it was horrific & weird. The Light Beyond the Storm Chronicles likely reflects more traditional romance novels.

The book's primary conflict regards the mistreatment of elven women, which are subjugated to rape and slavery by humans. A human magician who sympathizes becomes the savior of many elves. What can be jarring (to a "virgin" erotic fiction reader at least) is the willingness of the victimized women to satisfy their savior with the same carnal tricks the bad humans desire. The good human is also older than the elf he saves/falls-in-love-with; this coupling inflamed two-decades of sexual harassment training "no-no's" I have received by various employers. I eventually forgave this discomfort since this was (a) a fantasy book and (b) the human was not being deceptive as an influential mentor.

There were hints that love-making may empower sorcery, but the connection was not explicit. This is just the beginning of a series, and I would welcome the notion of the sexual energy fueling magic being developed more. A small quibble: the author's voice strangely sneaks into all of the dialogue (across characters). They all...pause as they...consider a synonym...or...recast their words.

In all, an entertaining read. Not recommended for young adults due to content; not recommend for those seeking bloody battles. This is recommended for fantasy readers who desire some...spice in their reading.

Lori Myers says

This book totally blew me out of the water! The fantasy genre is what I am most comfortable reading. This book took that fantasy realm and merged it beautifully with my second most favored genre of romance. Alex Butcher melds the two wonderfully! I have always thought the idea of celibate magic users a joke, Archos, although I tend to think of him more as an elementalists than your average run of the mill mage, seems to almost collect energy from the very act of lovemaking as opposed to it weakening him.

His is not a cold character, rather running deep with emotion. When those he loves are threatened, he reacts with calmness, but you can feel the blood boiling beneath! Just an amazing character!

I had no problem slipping into Dii's mind. The choices she made, the paths she walked...yeah, I totally get her! Dii blooms (for those of you that have read this, please forgive the pun) into a delightful character, full

of life and love, despite what she has gone through in the past. Dii had no choice in who she was before...now that she has a choice, the sky is the limit.

Olek and Ozena....all I can say about them, two souls meant for each other. I look forward to seeing more of them and the interactions they have. I love the banter, the innocence of a first true love. I love this underlying story just as much as the primary one.

The story is well thought out, the characters just amazingly complex and full of growth. My inner sword and sorcery- dungeons and dragons-playing geek, loved it! My adult romance loving self, loved the amount of romance...not too much, not too little. I look forward to the next one, (probably a bit more than I should)

Monica says

The first three chapters were slightly slow and it took me a few days to really get into the story, however, after that I really enjoyed this book, a little on the dark side, but great plot and a very interesting read. I am looking forward to future works by Alexandra Butcher.

Nathan Preedy says

For a new author, this book shows considerable promise. The level of detail in the world that Alex has created and the depth of the characters left a lasting impression with me and her descriptive writing style was almost right between 'too much and 'not enough'.

It was the first fantasy book I'd read that had such intense sex scenes but they were handled well and never descended into just porn (which, admittedly, I was initially worried about).

The premise and setting intrigued me and I will certainly be picking up the next book in the series when it comes along.

Spuffed says

Quick Rundown: This "book" is about female elf slave trading and the good guys save a lot of them. That's it. No depth, no surprises, no exciting battles, no angst, no nothing besides a severe lack of comma's and periods.

Writing is pretty awful. There were at least 2 errors in use or lack thereof of commas and periods per page and that's no exaggeration. And I never comment on editing issues but this one takes the cake so I had to mention it. I only noticed one misspelling error so the lack of commas and periods leads me to believe that a review of third grade English lessons would be helpful. Dialogue was very simplistic- lots of 5 word sentences found more so from the female characters than the male characters who spoke in more complex sentence structures. Yet, the inner dialogue from the females was more complex so they were clearly able to think in larger sentences but not speak them. I pondered if this was purposefully done to show the lower status of women but as I kept reading, I found that there was little need to ponder anything about such a simpleton's book. Dialogue was also very lame. Here are some examples:

"There! A large wooden door. Hmmm that lock looks tricky."

"I, Ozena Lyn, will seek the womenfolk and the children. I will avenge this evil...I will find the human lord."

And that's about as good as the dialogue gets and none of the surrounding sentences adds a damn thing to those statements. Reminded me of the writing style of "See Spot Run".

Characterization: What characterization? These characters were in no way complex. Completely one dimensional- especially the female characters. There was no depth to them whatsoever. And the main male protagonist, Lord Archos came off as an 80 year old man until about page 50 where I started to get an inkling that he might be younger than first portrayed. This put a big wrinkle in the "romantic" relationship between him and Dii.

Action: There are some action scenes but they were laughable as there was never any challenge for the good guys except for the need for a nap afterwards. The female characters are the only ones who need healing afterwards and even that isn't interesting nor challenging.

World Building: It was fair but pages and pages were spent on multiple occasions on the rooms of the main character, Lord Archos but of little consequence or need as they spent little time there. I found out how many tables he had in every room, how many vases of flowers were in rooms, etc but who gives a shit. Pointless information. The rest of the world building came mainly my own imagination from reading books set in the middle ages.

"Erotic" Scenes ?????: If kissing surrounded by red, curly, sparkling hair that tickles, tattoo licking and thigh nibbling get's your rocks off then you'll be satisfied by these love scenes because that's all that gets mentioned. Well, the words, "manhood" and "pip" (aka, clit) were mentioned a couple times but not much was done with either...ever!

"Dark Fantasy" ?????: Uh, clearly some have never read anything dark before because this was at most the shade from a parasol on a sunny Parisian morning. "Graphic" scenes consisted of one scene of a face plant into a clothed crotch and a ripped bodice with the threatening words of, "You will pleasure me...perhaps you need the attentions of a real man". Another "graphic" rape scene consisted of a net being thrown over Dii, a stab in the shoulder, followed by a beating (which was not described), threats of "sports", flung on a bench where he entered her. Literally, that's what it was. No more descriptive than that. Those two scenes required warnings of graphic rape scenes by other reviewers? For a ten year old reader, maybe. Though I wouldn't recommend this book for anyone of any age as it was just too awful.

Book's Message: Can be summed up from one quote found on page 85...

"She was a woman! Elf or not, she was neither your plaything nor your slave. You corrupt your own law; the authority you claim to wield is a terrible parody of fear and spite, power simply used for your own gain and your own indulgences. Power without reason and responsibility is not power- it is corruption. All I see is avarice and vice, greed and perversion- that is the legacy of those who claim to protect and fuel the

world with ignorance to keep it so. You do not protect, you condemn and destroy."

There ya go. That's what this book is about and I'm saving you from reading this ridiculousness.

This was a DNF for me at 62% which I forced myself to read hoping for something worth anything. I skimmed the rest. Not worth the \$3. Not worth the 2 hours I put into it hoping for something...anything, really.

-Spuffed, "*Half stars are for pansies and one gif is plenty.*"

Angus says

Elves have no freedom under the laws of the Realm which are enforced by Witch-Hunters and feudal land lords. An elf mage is lower than slave though if found visually appealing is sought after for carnal sport by human men.

Dii's world is oppressive and bleak until she finds safe haven and a place to grow in the Valley of Tremellic under the protection and tutelage of Archos the Archmage. Good people are loved and lost in this epic tale of a slaves struggle for freedom and the vengeance exacted upon her tormentors.

The romantic love scenes are tastefully done and hot. I recommend it as an adult fantasy read somewhat risqué for those below the age of seventeen but if they are reading novels they have my blessing.

<http://www.amazon.com/Light-Beyond-St...>

J.P. Wilder says

If you read other reviews on this book, it might be easy to get the impression that this book is some kind of steamy romance, set apart from others of its ilk only by the fantasy realm in which it is set. So, let me take a moment to throw that whole idea right out the window. This book is a serious work, dealing with serious thematic elements. The book's strong characters deal with deep internal conflicts through the use of very human needs and emotions, often times through the use of sex as a very effective tool to advance the plot, and drive the conflict.

To be sure, there is plenty of steamy prose, fantastical sex in a fantastic, dark fantasy setting. But, the story is so much more, so much better than just that. So don't be fooled into thinking that books that incorporate sex are just sexy books—dime-a-dozen throwaways.

This author proves that sex, if used appropriately (and not for simple, gratuitous reasons) is another tool in the writer's belt that may be used to advance the story, resolve or heighten conflict. It is, after all, one of the driving forces of human nature. Like violence, it is visceral, animalistic in its genesis, and may be used as an underpinning of good or evil acts, for it takes us to our most base selves. The author of this story weaves it

into the fabric of a great, dark tale, an extremely important component of the main character's backstory, and how she deals with her own evolution in a truly wonderful, and heart-wrenching way.

Beyond that, Ms. Butcher creates a world for the reader that is very rich in history. The magic system in this story is also quite good, researched well and put together in an excellent believable manner—as good as most I've read.

The characters, most importantly Dii, are deep and well developed, keeping the reader interested in their wellbeing right from the get-go. We watch and we groan, and we cry and scream at the book, as she struggles through a dark world, dealing with the baggage foisted upon her by past built on slavery and abuse. This story deals with deep issues of abuse and racism and the toll it can take on a person. But it goes one more, it deals with the very human (elvish) ability to overcome, to face the darkness, deal with it in very stark terms, and turn the pain and horror of abuse into the iron-like strengths that define the best of us.

I recommend this book, not only for its strong, fantastic elements, but for its great story telling, and wonderful characters.

Take a read. I think you will enjoy.

N.N. Light says

Warning: This book is 18+, contains graphic sex and violence and would be considered a trigger book (rape).

I've been a fan of the fantasy genre since I was a wee tot and I can say without reservation that this is one of the most original dark fantasy romance books I've ever read. Blending fantasy with romance is difficult, especially to hard-core fantasy readers, but Butcher pulls it off with aplomb.

Dii is an elven mage and a sex slave. She's abused, raped and more despicable things I won't get into. She somehow escapes from her master and thinks she's free. But between the Witch Hunters, her master's family and other sinister forces, she's on the run and in need of help. But when her path collides with Archos, a lord who's against the brutal enslavement of elves, she starts to realize that the world is not 100% evil. There are good people in the world, willing to help her. Will those hunting her succeed in capturing her or will she finally be free?

Don't be fooled into thinking that this is a fluff piece where it's all about the romance and sex. This is a deep, thought-provoking story with intriguing characters, plenty of action and a strong, independent female heroine seeking purpose in life. The main themes of slavery, violence and sex used as a weapon of power are well-laid out yet there's an underlying theme of what it means to be free weaving throughout as well. I found the sexual violence to be a little too excessive for my taste, though that's just my opinion.

I applaud Butcher for her world-building, crafting memorable archetype characters that grow as the plot progresses as well as a love story. Yes, it's a dark tale yet it sticks with you long after you are finished reading.

If you're looking for a dark fantasy that's not only original but sensual too, pick up this book! I'm looking forward to reading the next in the series.

My Rating: 4 stars

This review first appeared on N. N. Light's Book Heaven <https://www.nnlightsbookheaven.com/si...> We love talking about books and reading so come join us!

J.J. DiBenedetto says

Alexandra Butcher's "The Light Beyond the Storm" is a gritty, dark fantasy novel, with a much more personal story than is usually found in fantasy - which is a very refreshing change!

The book begins by following Dii, a young Elf-mage who's kept as a slave (in this world, Elves and mages are at best second-class citizens, and woe to anyone who's both). She quickly escapes her master's captivity and comes to the attention of both the Order of Witch Hunters (a corrupt group who capture, torture and often kill mages) and a very powerful mage, Archos.

As the story progresses, Archos (and his loyal assistant Olek) gradually take center stage, as he first finds Dii and then sets out to rescue a group of Elves who've been captured by slavers.

It's easy to become immersed in this world; it's richly described, and great attention is paid to the small details. This really is a "small" story - the fate of kingdoms and worlds is not at stake (although the epilogue implies that the scope and the stakes will be raised in book #2).

The book is well-written with very clear prose, and it follows the POV of various characters as the story progresses. One note/warning - there is very explicit sex at several occasions in the story, so be aware of that. And there are some very nasty people who do extremely nasty things, so, again, be warned.

It's a very good book, and I highly recommend it!

Walter Rhein says

Hot Elf Sex!

I thoroughly enjoyed the first book of the “Light Beyond the Storm Chronicles,” although there are many things about it that I confess I have issues with. However, the book gave me a lot to think about, and it is capably and effectively written so it’s definitely a series to explore.

Some readers might be put off somewhat by the adult content of this novel. Adult content is not the type of thing that is going to bother me, but I didn’t find the examples that appeared in “Light” to be all that graphic. I was 10 percent of the way through the book before I got to the first sex scene, which was really little more than a moment of standard lovemaking.

However, that scene did put me in a contemplative mood for several reasons. The protagonist of “Light” is a “kept” elf maiden named Dii who also has a talent for magic. The word “kept” is a polite way to say that she’s basically a sex slave to a rich family that doesn’t seem to have much of a problem passing her around amongst themselves or to other people to whom they owe a favor. Amazingly, the sex bondage theme is dealt with pretty lightly, which gives this book a kind of harmlessly voyeuristic quality. I suppose if Dii had been left psychologically and emotionally traumatized by her imprisonment and repeated rape, it would make the scene where she decides to “take a lover of her own choosing” less delightful. As it’s written, Dii has no desire to return to her previous life, but she doesn’t appear to harbor much resentment. Maybe this can be chalked up to the fact that Dii is an elf maiden—not human—and maybe they’re just into that (don’t judge people, c’mon!).

Don’t get me wrong, I like Dii, although she also seems a bit powerful for a woman who was kept as a sex slave. Again, this isn’t bad, I think it’s just a result of “sanitizing” the themes of this book and keeping it as a piece of escapist entertainment. Toni Morrison, for example, would have dealt with this theme differently, and I have no doubt that the final result would have been significantly less fun than “The Light Beyond the Storm” (in fact, I think Morrison’s version would have been unreadable, so Butcher is already ahead on points in my book).

Let me discuss a scene that will give you a better idea of Dii’s personality. Dii is offered a bag of coins from a recent lover. Dii, of course, didn’t have sex with the guy for money, and she considers giving the money back. However, in the end, she decides to keep the coin because, you know, she really is kind of desperate. Now, I had a hard time believing that Dii could afford herself that inner dialogue. I don’t know if writing it that way was an attempt by the author to justify Dii to less mature readers who would have been uncomfortable with her just taking the cash from the start. As far as I’m concerned, somebody who had been through the things Dii had, would DESERVE all the cash she could get her hands on. I also think that she would think she deserved it herself (and the disconnect between what she thinks and what society as a whole thinks—and what potential readers think—would create all kinds of potentially interesting situations for social commentary). Sidestepping this seemed like a bit of a wasted opportunity to me.

Still, Butcher’s choices weave an interesting tapestry. I’m left a little confused as to whether my own interpretations of this novel are a critique of Butcher, society as a whole, men’s vs women’s issues, or my own screwed up perception of things. Any book that get your head spinning in such a delightful way is worth a look in my opinion. I’ll be curious to hear the responses to this review from other readers and, hopefully, the writer as well.

But you can’t respond unless you read it...so get on that people!

Sharon Stevenson says

I received a copy of this book for honest review. 'The Light Beyond the Storm Chronicles' is the story of Dii, an elven sorceress who has been kept as a slave. Dii goes on the run from her captors but Witch Hunters are seeking her out relentlessly.

The story is very much a romance at heart, with plenty of steamy graphic sex to keep erotica fans happy. There's some very dark material in there as well, however. Dii suffers through some terrible ordeals before she meets Archos, a lord who is actively against the horrific treatment and sexual slavery of the elves.

The fantasy setting is well drawn and enjoyable to read about. The villains are just completely evil. The good characters are well written and likeable, Dii in particular, and they are easy to sympathise with.

The main thing that bothered me about this book was how the women seemed to be constant victims, completely at the mercy of men. They didn't seem to do much to fight for themselves and their own freedom. To be fair the story that was being told didn't really need them to, but I probably would have enjoyed it better if they had. Aside from this, the story and main characters were captivating enough to keep me reading.

I believe this book will be best enjoyed by fans of erotic romance.

Kyra Halland says

Kyra's star ratings:

Characters: *****

Story: *****

Writing mechanics: ***

Emotional engagement: *****

A long time ago, I thought it was unfair that in the fantasy books I read, wizards never got to have personal lives. Kings and princes and ordinary village guys and everyone else, yes, but not wizards. "The Light Beyond the Storm Chronicles" certainly makes up for that.

Aside from the sex scenes (which are not frequent, but are very explicit, occasionally bordering on kinky), The Light Beyond the Storm is an intriguing tale of a world where elves and mages are oppressed, an elf woman, Dii, who decides to fight for her freedom, and the powerful human mage, Archos, who assists her and becomes a force for helping elves and other oppressed people against the cruel, decadent nobility and the ruthless Order of Witch Hunters. It also involves two very sweet love stories.

Dii, who starts out the novel, kind of fades into the background after Archos comes on the scene, but Archos is such a seriously cool character that I didn't mind too much, though I do like to see the female character take a more active role. Even so, it's clear that Dii is a big motivation for everything Archos does. And, to be fair, with Dii being a female elf mage, she has virtually no freedom or ability to act independently in this world. Archos is awesome - handsome, powerful, scary when he's doing his really cool magic, completely badass and ruthless when he has to be, but also with a very tender side, and a genuinely good heart when it comes to helping the unfortunate and oppressed. I don't know if it's kind of contradictory to say this of a book with such graphic sexual content, but it's refreshing to read a fantasy novel with a clear moral compass,

where the good people are strong, smart, and admirable, instead of being weak, stupid, and pathetic as is so common in current "dark" or "gritty" fantasy (*coughgrrmartincough*). I enjoyed the other characters, but Archos especially stands out.

The world is painted in vivid detail, from ancient magic caves to fields and forests to the dark and dangerous city. I would have liked to know more about why elves are so oppressed, how they came to be treated as little more than property to be used and abused, and what gives the Order of Witch Hunters so much power. The background of the elves is hinted at a little bit late in the book; I get the feeling we'll learn more about that in the next book.

The book could use a careful edit to smooth out some long, tangled sentences and tidy up the punctuation.

For those who prefer not to read such graphic content, I would say that this book can still be enjoyed even if you skim over or skip the sex scenes. Also, there are a number of rapes that occur in the book, but none of them are described in detail.

Overall, I found myself caught up in wanting to see if Dii could keep her new-found freedom and if Archos could help the captured, enslaved elves, and in the two romances. I'm looking forward to finding out what happens in the next book.
