



## Dances of Deception

*J.C. Kang*

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The world knows Kaiya as the Dragon Charmer.

After vanquishing the Last Dragon with the power of her voice, all she wants is to return to a quiet life of anonymity. Instead, the Emperor tasks her with an onerous task: negotiating with the aggressive Teleri Empire for the extradition of her cousin, who tried to murder the imperial family and usurp the Dragon Throne.

The mission reunites her with her childhood friend Tian, now an assassin-spy who loathes killing. He is no longer the adorable, gullible boy from her memories, any more than she is the adventurous, sweet girl from his. Instead of rekindling nostalgia for a youthful innocence they both yearn for, their reunion ignites a mutual hatred.

When the Teleri Empire breaks off negotiations, Tian must help Kaiya escape. Orcs, Ogres, and enemy soldiers stand between them and home, and their volatile relationship could get them captured... or killed.

## **Dances of Deception Details**

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Author : J.C. Kang

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## From Reader Review Dances of Deception for online ebook

### Gianna says

\*\*\*\*\*Actual rating 4.5 stars. Originally posted here on my blog.\*\*\*\*\* (Spoiler Free post below)

True Colors Of Betrayal has been, by far, my favorite of this series.

In fact, I found that almost immediately after starting the book, I had a feeling that it would turn out to be my favorite from this series and I was not wrong. Although I think that my deep appreciation for this book and series comes from the fact that I've followed these characters from day one, this was still a great book.

Following immediately after The Dragon Charmer and Princess Kaiya's battle with Avarax, we find ourselves catching up to Tian when Jie catches up to her old friend with news of Princess Kaiya's arrival for the up and coming Northwest Summit. But it's in this cold, unfamiliar city where the lives of Tian, Princess Kaiya and Jie are forever altered.

This book, unlike the first two is not based on the legend/prophecy of Princess Kaiya and the last great dragon, Avarax. And while I loved reading about Princess Kaiya discovering and developing her powers and her voice, I really liked the strong politics/war (though technically considered a territory conflict) elements that were in this book because the reader is shown a more realistic side to the characters and the world that they've been living in up until this point.

All of the strengths, skills and challenges we've seen from Tian, Jie and Princess Kaiya over the past three years or so (book wise) felt like walks in the park compared to True Colors of Betrayal. Particularly for Princess Kaiya, in the sense that she was never fully face-to-face with any of the politics or cusps of war quite like she is in this book. For the most part readers would watch as those around her manipulated/schemed and used her as a chess piece for their own means, starting with Avarax, Peng Kai-Long or Minister Hong Jianbin (the list could go on.)

Although she doesn't have full control over her actions and decisions while being caught in the middle of a brimming war between several other neighboring nations, watching Kaiya endure months of downfalls and heart ships as she attempts to make it safely back home to Cathy was intense.

This book brought a great sense of mortality with it as well the fact that we see Princess Kaiya even have to face being without her gift on top of being without the security of the Tianzi or Cathy. It is like experiencing the story of what happens to a hero after they've done the legendary task they've been destined to accomplished. The defeat of Avarax marked an ending as well as a beginning for Kaiya; with new settings, new faces, new creatures, a little less magic and a new enemy, I found it hard to just talk about a handful of them.

Speaking of which, Geros (The first counsel) was and is one of the most memorable, cruel and loathsome villains/antagonists I think I've ever come across. Which was another reason I found this book to be so fantastic; I found Geros' character to be even more threatening and intimidating than Avarax. Geros' character is consistently present throughout the book, but Avarax was mainly this looming myth whose existence couldn't be fully proven or denied.

However, it wasn't all gloomy. There were small bits of humor and a really nice build up to Kaiya and Tian reconnecting in this book. Which I thought was great; we finally got to see Tian again and his tough, Moquan warrior persona but through Princess Kaiya's eyes. She herself has since shed the shy, timid and innocent shell she once had when they were children and since discovering her voice. So, the reader gets to watch Tian and Kaiya's story begin again in this book as well.

Also with the slow progression of their relationship, the reader gets to see a slow strain in Jie and Tian's. At one point a question of loyalty and even bouts of jealousy. And it was great that we finally get to learn more about the mystery behind Jie's past and her parents while also getting the chance to see her character in a more independent/solidarity role apart from both Tian and Princess Kaiya.

By the time I got to the end of the book I was happy to see the true leader role that Kaiya eventually ends up taking by the end of the book--despite the circumstances. I'm eager to see how she moves forward with the neighboring territories fighting around her and the deep seeded corruption rooting away at her home land Cathy from within.

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### **Jackie says**

Kaiya is now known as the dragon charmer. She put down the last dragon. Kaiya just wants peace and quiet but that's not to be. The Emperor has a big mission for her. Another great that can't be put down.

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### **Hugs says**

Devoured it! Loved it!

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### **Rebecca says**

J.C. Kang brings back his amazing cast in this third installment in the Dragon Songs Saga! Kaiya must fulfill her role of ambassador, but will unexpected romance change her path? What will become of Tian and Jie?

There are tons of action scenes and twists and turns in this third book. Readers will learn a bit more about Tian and Kaiya in their youth. Kaiya must do more than she ever thought possible to survive and with the help of Tian and Jie, she just might be able to make it back to her homeland. Foreign alliances work against her, but Kaiya is never one to back down from a fight.

Kang jam-packs this book with incredible story-telling. Fans of the first two books will be delighted in the scenes contained within and will be begging for more as they turn the last page. I recommend this book--and the series--to everyone who loves dragons, and those who love science fiction, fantasy, and action as well.

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### **Dianne says**

Can anyone be trusted or will Kaiya need to rely on her inner growth to protect herself and those she loves?

Will this be the end of her innocence about the realities of the world around her? She may be able to sing a dragon to sleep, but she is ill-prepared for what atrocities await her. **DANCES OF DECEPTION** by J.C. Kang takes us deeper into Kaiya's troubled world where monsters lie in wait, and their viciousness and depravities know no bounds.

Princess Kaiya will be reunited with Tian as she is sent on a mission of peace with the warmongering Teleri Empire. The Tian she knew is gone, in his place is a man of powerful convictions and steely determination, an assassin without the heart to kill, a spy who misses nothing. The friendship they shared as children is sorely tested as the brutality of the world Kaiya is plunged into is as far from her comfort zone and delicate upbringing as could be imagined. Like a Phoenix, Kaiya will rise a sadder, but wiser young woman, who will give her life to keep her world safe. What she will endure will be far more heartrending than she could have ever dreamed of in her darkest nightmares and it is far too real to be prepared for. Heroes will die, new ones will emerge and the world will be forever changed as a long lost love is rekindled from the despair all around. Sometimes the sacrifices made never end, but they will always leave scars.

J.C. Kang's world comes alive once again with scenes that jump off the pages and become real. Brilliant dialogue runs throughout as if this talented author lived each page himself. The feel of "otherness" still saturates each page as we traverse a world of both magnificence and malevolence.

Each addition to this epic series has built on its predecessor and only increases the magnetic pull for readers. I was moved to tears at one point, raging anger and sat in awe of the strength of these characters against all odds. Another hidden gem for me and I loved it!

I received this copy from J.C. Kang in exchange for my honest and voluntary review.

Series: The Dragon Songs Saga - Book 3

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For Reviews & More: <http://tometender.blogspot.com>

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## Georganne says

Tian is now the Trade Officer at the Cathayi Embassy at Iksuvius. Jie arrives by ship to deliver a message to the Ambassador that Princess Kaiya will be arriving in a month's time to meet with the leader of the Teleri Empire to negotiate the extradition of Peng Kai-Long. Princess Kaiya arrives, and Tian soon discovers that this is not the same girl that he knew in his childhood. Kaiya had mixed feelings about Tian. She remembered their carefree childhood and hoped that he would be able to bring some of that feeling back into her disciplined life. Kaiya is attacked at the embassy and Tian notices Jie as a young woman for the first time rather than as a co-conspirator. When Kaiya meets with the First Consul Geros, things don't go as planned. The First Consul will track her down. Kaiya is forced to flee the city with Tian, her Imperial Guards and a few others. She is deprived of all things that she knew as a royal, clothes, bed and shelter. She has to live off the land like all other travelers on her long journey home. They are attacked by the enemy and befriended by allies. Will they ever get home? A long, eventful trip that needs to be experienced by the reader to

understand duty and honor to country.

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### **Tabitha Ormiston-Smith says**

The Dragon Songs books just get more and more exciting! Now, in this third book in the series, we have had time to become attached to the resourceful Kaiya and the dashing Jie, and in a fresh departure, we see Kaiya on a journey of personal development that's a major challenge to both protagonist and author. They both carry it off with grace and style, and although at times it had seemed this book must be the end of the series, a surprise ending reassures us of at least the possibility of more to come.

I was about to mourn the necessity of waiting for Mr Kang to produce another book, but I see there is already one more published, and it will be wonderful if I do not melt my keyboard in my haste to acquire it.

Highly recommended for lovers of fantasy, romance or historical fiction.

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### **Lana says**

This was my most favourite book so far in this great epic fantasy series as we travel away from Kaiya's homeland across the sea into the north of Tevara to embark on some of the most gruelling experiences of Kaiya's life. The girl who had been so protected throughout her life in Cathay, as a princess of the realm deserved to be, is through the experiences and challenges which she faces, seen to mature into a beautiful and caring woman who takes on such unexpected roles and faces with courage the demands placed on her in the most horrific of situations. She has to learn how to cope with so much adversity, loss and pain and we see her change and even break down losing her cool exterior, showing emotions which would have been unacceptable back in Cathay. Her friend Tian is back in her life and they are tested to their limits in this amazing book which very often left me so scared for their lives, as they face such brutality at the hands of their enemies, however, they also come across new people who befriend them and who they learn to love and appreciate as family. There is so much going on in this book and it is such a page turner that it very often kept me up reading through the night and with such a dramatic ending it left me dying to read book 4 and see the end to this most awesome quartet. I really appreciate that J. C. Kang wrote and presented to us his readers the whole quartet at once rather than publishing a book at a time as it made the reading of the series much more powerful and no waiting, so a big well done to this amazing author who I am sure we are to see much more great works of his in the future!

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### **Deborah says**

Princess Kaiya is well out of her comfort zone in this superb continuation of the Dragon Songs Saga. Sent to a foreign land to negotiate peace with the brutal Telerei Empire, Kaiya is reunited with her childhood friend, Tian, only to discover that life has changed them both so much they quickly develop a mutual dislike. There is more romance in this novel, less intense intrigue (though there is still plenty), more brutality, personal loss and atrocities to deal with, through which the characters grow and develop. As usual, almost every person has their own agenda, and new storylines are woven into the mix, adding yet more depth and

flavour to a saga worthy of that description.

I absolutely adore this author's sumptuous descriptions, the rich language which evokes the glorious settings, and the pomp and ceremony of the intricately crafted cultures filling this world. This series is a rare gem, not to be missed by lovers of epic and high fantasy – you will delight in both the intricacies of the story, the complex but subtle magics on display, and the awesome, Asian-based world building.

I will admit, this story didn't go quite where I expected it to go, but that's not a bad thing, it's nice to be surprised once in a while. I don't want to give any spoilers, suffice it to say I had believed the characters involved to be so steeped in their own cultural restrictions that what happened, even in the unprecedented situation they found themselves in, required quite a conscious suspension of belief. On the other hand, it sets up the next book so well I can't wait to read it!

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### **Aneta says**

Entire series currently for 99c here:

<https://www.amazon.com/Dragon-Songs-S...>

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*"Hold the dragonfly with care," eight-year-old Princess Kaiya's voice chimed in his head, quoting an old Hua proverb. "For even their fleeting lives have value."*

Strong 4 stars.

This is a very good book. I've decided to read it as a standalone, as an experiment, and despite never having read the first 2 books in the series I never felt lost.

#### **PROS:**

- + well-written and well-structured, it's a big book (700+ pages) but it wasn't artificially bloated - everything felt like it was there for a reason
- + can successfully be read as a standalone (there is a cliffhanger of sorts and a set-up for the future installment but there is a resolution for the main story)
- + interesting non-Western setting
- + Kaiya is a well-written female character who feels realistic rather than a caricature: she is allowed to be feminine and strong at the same time, have positive relationships with other women, she also deals with menstruation and cramps on page
- + Tian's storyline especially was very-well structured, with the *dragonfly* parallels and the ending being neatly linked to the beginning
- + great romantic subplot, with a well-executed build-up which sets it apart from the instalove that happens so often in stories

#### **CONS:**

- the main storyline is enjoyable though not particularly memorable

- did not enjoy the villains in it, or their motivations (I am so very done with violence against women as a plot point, though to be fair it wasn't executed badly here)
  - I didn't much care for Jie's story/chapters and just plain disliked Geros'
  - thought I enjoyed Kaiya and Tian's story and characters a great deal, side characters weren't really developed
  - a brief phase with a love triangle
- 

### **Chavelis Reyes says**

The third installment of this series does leave a strange taste in your mouth at the end of it. While in the first book you have the tale of a young girl finding her voice, and in the second a young woman epically disarming a dragon with a song, this third book deviates from the usual that I was accustomed to by embracing a new arch in the story. The story takes a strange turn as Kaiya faces the dangers of hostile territory and struggles with evil kings and rulers. While she handles the situation in a very Kaiya fashion, the first half of the story progresses smoothly until sh\*t hits the fan. The second half takes a very odd turn I started to wonder if the book I was reading was from even the same series. Yet, it does start to clear up around the end, and the epilogue held promise for the final installment in the series. I was left in a state of disappointment in the characters, but I still have hope for them to achieve a happy ending yet in the fifth book.

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### **Cal says**

The expansion of the story to include the other races and empires makes for an excellent 3rd entry in the series.

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### **Anna K. Scott says**

This book takes on a darker tone than the ones before it. I felt an ever-present sense of foreboding, always wondering what terrible thing would happen to Kaiya next - and feeling hugely relieved any time she managed to avoid disaster. Her luck would inevitably run out, but she rises from it stronger than ever.

I'd looked forward to Kaiya's reunion with her childhood friend, Tian. Unfortunately, it doesn't get off to a good start. Sometimes one meets an old friend and it's like no time has passed at all; other times, the distance is too wide despite past closeness. Neither matches up to their rose-tinted memories, and this is only made worse with stubborn miscommunication.

At the end of the book, I was left wondering what more our cast of characters would be put through, and I picked up the next book almost instantly to find out.

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## **Shomeret says**

I promised J.C. Kang that I would read True Colors of Betrayal in January when he sent me a review copy. Well, I got to it a bit early. As usual, this is an honest review.

If Kaiya had continued to progress in the direction that she was headed at the end of The Dragon Charmer she would have been an even more formidable leader at the close of True Colors of Betrayal. Unfortunately, her momentum was disrupted by trauma. This is the fate of far too many women, but it isn't a natural stage of development. Kaiya was hijacked on her life journey. She was transformed into a survivor who would never see the world in the same way again.

There was a long chase sequence in this novel that I found rather uninteresting. It has always seemed to me that all chase sequences are the same. The only way they can diverge is by mode of transportation which doesn't really provide enough variety. The plot picked up for me after Kaiya stopped fleeing though the resolution was rather bleak.

I sincerely hope that Kaiya can fully recover from her victimization. Judging from the description of the fourth novel in the series, she has a rough row to hoe.

For my complete review see <http://shomeretmasked.blogspot.com/20...>

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## **Fiona Andrew says**

The Princess is sent as an emissary to the Northern Conference, but of course all is not as it seems. She arrives on the Golden Phoenix to great pomp and ceremony. She is quickly swept up in the events of the Teleri's successful take over of the Provence, the First Consul Geros has decided that the Princess should be one of his wives and give him an heir with the right to the Hua Empires Throne. The Princess escapes but leaves him alive a decision she will come to regret. Her adventures to escape and reach Hua to warn them of the coming invasion are full of hardship, death and sacrifices. Will she arrive before the Teleri and will the Emperor relieve her. Off to read the next book

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