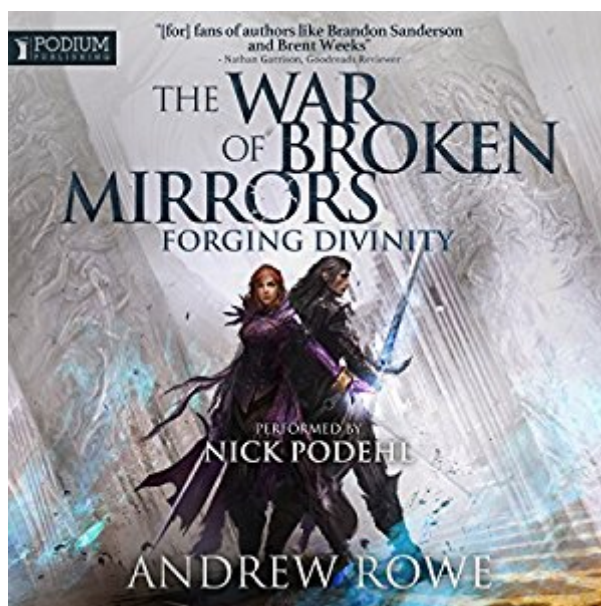


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Forging Divinity: The War Of Broken Mirrors, Book 1



Synopsis

Some say that in the city of Orlyn, godhood is on sale to the highest bidder. Thousands flock to the city each year, hoping for a chance at immortality. Lydia Hastings is a knowledge sorcerer, capable of extracting information from anything she touches. When she travels to Orlyn to validate the claims of the local faith, she discovers a conspiracy that could lead to a war between the world's three greatest powers. At the focal point is a prisoner who bears a striking resemblance to the long-missing leader of the pantheon she worships. Rescuing the prisoner would require risking her carefully cultivated cover - but his execution could mean the end of everything Lydia holds dear.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Certainty in the face of variables is a sign of insanity." I loved this as much as I didn't, which is why it fell into my LIKED vs. my LOVED rating. I felt like a pendulum trying to decide, but in the end there were a few more negatives than positives. But it didn't get close to my INDIFFERENT rating, so that should say how much I liked it. I couldn't really summarize this as the story revolves around three characters all on their own mission that ended up overlapping one other. I'm afraid if I tried I'd accidentally give something away. So the book blurb is going to have to do. The world was nicely developed, in my opinion. I never felt cheated. Matter of fact, in the beginning there's a lot thrown at you. And I never felt like it let up. Not in a cool way, but in a let's-get-all-this-out-now way. Normally I can go along with info dumps when it's worked into a dialog. That happened in a lot of places, but it was sooooo

long that I ended up skipping, hoping I'd understand later. I did, so yay me and yay to Rowe for keeping it clear. The world, however, never came close to the amount we learned about the magic system. Some people are going to love it. For me—and keep in mind that I love love love magic—it was too much. Much like the world building, it felt long-winded and overcomplicated. I skimmed, and I fear I paid a price for that. I think if I would have been patient, some of it could have been more entertaining. I liked the writing for the most part. Action scenes were incredible. I had a clear picture of what was happening. Those scenes were the reason this didn't get a lower rating. They were really nifty, particularly those with Taelien. There were some typos, enough that I noticed by not enough to ruin the book for me. Now, the reason I was enjoying this so much was the characters. Taelien was a badass, and his magic was by far my favorite. Manipulating metal might sound boring, but Rowe made it fun. Super fun! Taelien's got a lot to find out about himself, and he truly wants to be a good person. He's an easy character to root for, especially with his adventurous personality and slightly blind bravery. Our heroine, Lydia, was nicely gifted, but her magical ability of gaining knowledge about stuff just wasn't as enthralling as magic used in a fight. Even so, she was a tough gal, collected, curious, and strong in her own right. Never a damsel in distress. Our other protagonist, Jonan, used sight magic—making himself invisible, looking through mirrors, and so forth. I never got as good of a feel for him as I did the other two. I could never quite peg his intentions. Overall, I'd recommend this to those that like a traditional upbeat fantasy. It's short and fun. Because of Taelien I'll be picking up the second book. I'm curious about his story and where he'll end up.

Forging Divinity is the first installment in what promises to be an entertaining and complex new series. This debut novel follows three primary POV characters, two of which are spies for rival organizations. Caught in the middle of this unlikely pair is Taelien, a young swordsman wielding a supposed sword of legend, about which he knows very little. All three leads are well written (though I'm rather partial to the half-blind Jonan), and clearly have their own agendas and eccentricities. There's something to be said for a male author who is capable of writing from a female perspective, and Lydia is definitely a successful example of this often rare skill. Rowe also does a good job of exploring many of the gray areas produced by political intrigue and a "for the greater good" mentality. Where Rowe really shines is his world building, presenting the reader with a well-developed and intricate magic system, further augmented by a diverse political and religious landscape. It's certainly a unique spin on the typical fantasy genre. The plot itself also presents the

reader with some unexpected twists and turns, and the novel features perhaps one of the best fight scenes I've encountered to date. All and all, this debut piece is an entertaining introduction to a world and cast that will likely become even more engrossing as the series progresses.

The system of magic in *Forging Divinity* is clever, compelling, and enticingly deep from the first pages. It was always a treat when it showed up again, and it was interesting to watch how it built itself into the plot of the novel with new and interesting complexities. Conversely, the book can get a bit wordy at times, with overlong explanations of how the world is built that are not integrated into the happenings in the plot itself, making it a slow read in many places. It would have been nice to see those elements shown and not told more often, however, if you enjoy reading about systems of magic, I don't think you will be disappointed! The combat and action scenes were amazing, and they are still easy to imagine even now, weeks after finishing the book; every fight is vividly described, painting a clear picture in the reader's mind and really holding engagement. These are the parts where the book truly shines, each scene unique and memorable.

I bought *Forging Divinity* a while ago on Kindle and I loved it. The characters are really well done. They're very logical and rational, they consider every single aspect/detail and really use their heads. That's their strongest point imo. The magic system is very cool, refreshing and does make sense. Things don't happen just because its magic, there's a reason behind it. Spells are deconstructed and you can really understand the fundamentals of it. Gods and goddesses do take a active role in worldbuilding, but you can't never really know how much of a god is that person claiming to be. However, it isn't the most fast-paced book out there, but when there's action, it's really immersive. I REALLY enjoyed this book. Definitely gonna read the sequel.

This is one of those fantasy worlds where everything is thought out and realized. The way magic is handled makes it feel like you could pick up a textbook from any of the various practicing groups and read in-depth documentation on the way it is used, the history of use, and ways it can kill you if you're stupid. (Always a good thing to find in a novel.) I'd expect a source-book of everything that's talked about could be put together if Rowe wanted (Disclosure: I actually do own some of the fantasy RPG sourcebooks he's worked on for other intellectual properties through his gaming industry jobs.) The humor feels natural, and the dialog between the characters flows smoothly even when discussing lofty concepts like gods in the flesh and different schools/domains of magic. It'll be interesting to see how it goes from here!

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