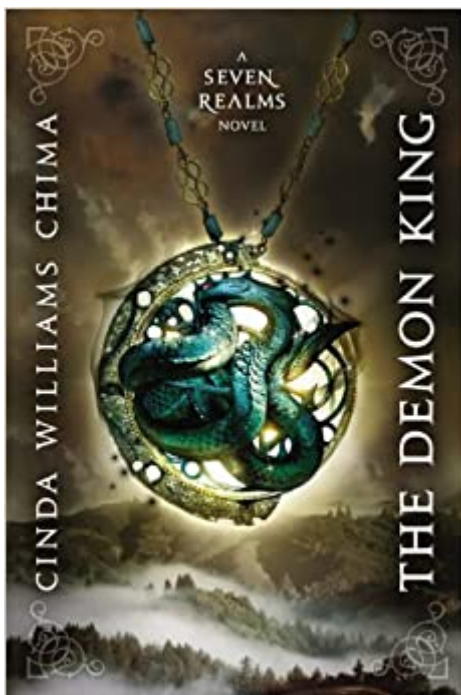


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The Demon King (Seven Realms)



Synopsis

One day Han Alister catches three young wizard setting fire to the sacred mountain of Hanalea. Han takes an amulet away from Micah Bayar, son of the High Wizard, to ensure the boy won't use it against him. The amulet once belonged to the Demon King, who nearly destroyed the world a millennium ago. With a magical piece so powerful at stake, Han knows that the Bayars will stop at nothing to get it back. Meanwhile, Princess Raisa and Marianna has her own battle to fight. She's just returned to court after three years of riding and hunting with her father's family. Raia aspires to be like Hanalea, the legendary warrior queen who killed the Demon King and saved the world. But it seems that her mother has other plans for her—plans that include a suitor who goes against everything the Queendom stands for. The Seven Realms will tremble when the lives of Han and Raisa collide in this stunning page-turner from best-selling author Cinda Williams Chima.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 7 Up — Han Alister was once a street thief and gang leader, nicknamed Cuffs for the magical silver cuffs he's worn for as long as he can remember. Now that he's reformed, he can't seem to escape from his past, and he spends much of his time hunting in the mountains with his clan friends. When he and his friend Fire Dancer meet a group of young wizards, Han comes into possession of a magical amulet linked to the legendary Demon King, not knowing that it will bring danger to him and his family. Meanwhile, Princess Raisa is soon to turn 16 and be named heir to her mother's throne. She becomes aware of intrigues that surround the queen, who seems to be strongly influenced by their country's High Wizard. Han's and Raisa's adventures and journeys

toward understanding themselves run parallel throughout the book, intersecting only when the princess dresses up as a commoner and meets Han briefly. The conclusion leaves both Raisa and Han setting out on new adventures toward a common destination, leaving much to be resolved in their futures and in the future of their land. Chima shows a sure hand with details and history, and readers will be drawn into the lives of the two protagonists. Fans of magic, danger, and high fantasy will find a complex and involving world and be left waiting for the next volume in this exciting trilogy.

—Beth L. Meister, Milwaukee Jewish Day School, WI Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Digital edition.

Praise for *The Demon King*: 'The *Demon King* is a page-turner for any reader, regardless of age.' Robin Hobb 'Dozens of characters, complex and distinct in personality, are placed with jewel-like precision, set off by dark glints of villainy... [readers] will clamor for the sequel.' Publishers Weekly

Praise for Cinda Williams Chima: *For The Dragon Heir*: Centuries of wizardly scheming, slavery and slaughter reap apocalyptic fallout in this final volume of Chima's trilogy... Heroes and villains alike are swayed by aching human motivations into disastrous choices with devastating consequences...The resolution is-like the end of childhood itself-tentatively hopeful, if not triumphant. A superlative accomplishment. Kirkus. --This text refers to the Digital edition.

The Demon King
The Seven Realms Book #1
By Cinda Williams Chima
KU: NON
Non-KU Price: \$8.99
Genre: Young Adult Fantasy
Book Summary: Times are hard in the mountain city of Fells-march. Reformed thief Han Alister will do almost anything to eke out a living for his family. The only thing of value he has is something he can't sell—the thick silver cuffs he's worn since birth. They're clearly magicked—as he grows, they grow, and he's never been able to get them off. One day, Han and his clan friend, Dancer, confront three young wizards setting fire to the sacred mountain of Hanalea. Han takes an amulet from Micah Bayar, son of the High Wizard, to keep him from using it against them. Soon Han learns that the amulet has an evil history—it once belonged to the Demon King, the wizard who nearly destroyed the world a millennium ago. With a magical piece that powerful at stake, Han knows that the Bayars will stop at nothing to get it back. Meanwhile, Raisa and Marianna, princess heir of the Fells, has her own battles to fight. She's just returned to court after three years of freedom in the mountains—riding, hunting, and working the famous clan markets. Raisa wants to be more than an ornament in a glittering cage. She aspires to be like Hanalea—the

legendary warrior queen who killed the Demon King and saved the world. But her mother has other plans for her...The Seven Realms tremble when the lives of Hans and Raisa collide, fanning the flames of the smoldering war between clans and wizards.

My Review: In this world villains aren't always evil and heroes aren't always good. Demon King is a wonderful blend of world building and mythology couched in histories. The book also serves as an introduction to two main characters, Han "Cuffs" McAlister and Raisa Marianna, and a host of side characters. Each one fully developed with layers of backstory, strong emotions, flaws, and desires. Ms. Chima has built a world so rich in background and enriched with characterization that you feel immersed after reading only a few pages. She's pulled in pieces of real world cultures and spun them into a fantastical realm, with amazing results.

Long ago there was only one realm, broken by the famed Demon King in his quest for magical prowess. Now there are Seven Realms. Fells is a small mountain kingdom ruled by the blooded queens of Hanalea's bloodline. The Clans, the wizards, and the humans inhabit the Fells under an uneasy truce because of the Naeming, enforced by the blooded queens of the Fells. Something subtle is trying to shift the balance of peace, hoping to topple the Fells into civil war. Caught in the center of the shifting powers are Han and Raisa. Han is a former street thief and gang leader. He's trying to evade wizards who are killing in an effort to find something they think he has, only to be blamed for those murders by the Queen's Guard. Stuck in a no-win situation, all he wants to do is survive. Raisa is a headstrong princess who is hungry for real world experiences. She's tired of being cooped up in a gilded cage and wants to change the world for the better. One chance encounter may well change the fate of both of their worlds.

I wasn't sure what to expect from Demon King. What I got was a read worth devouring in a single sitting, characters that lived with their flaws and it made them richer. I craved the next book. Heck, I read all three in less than a week. While I want to give Demon King 5 stars, I have a serious problem doing that for any book with a cliffhanger ending. If I was reviewing the entire series, I would, but I'm only reviewing one book. I give Demon King 4 out of 5 stars. If you want an immersive read, pick it up and prepare to lose sleep.

TLDR: Very good series with strong characters and tons of intrigue. Avoid if you are looking for action packed books with minimal descriptions.

Book 1: Really good. Book mainly followed the building up of the two POV characters. The minor conflicts kept the story moving. I thought the end dragged slightly with the travelling and descriptions.

Book 2: This was another characterization book

and the weakest in the series IMO. It mainly focused on the training and schooling of the POV characters. The book felt slower to me. I also felt that at times the certain actions/explanations were detailed too much, and other areas could of been expanded. Book 3: Action starts picking up in book 3. The "About" on the Kindle edition of this book gives a pretty big spoiler imo. I spent the first portion of this book worrying about it and trying to figure out how the timelines would align. I ended up disappointed with how the aftermath of this scene played out. I was really hoping for the two characters to travel together for a bit. Besides this the book was really well written. Probably tied with book 4 as the best books in the series. Book 4: Finally. 2.5 books of character building, 0.5 books of character maneuvering, and 1 book full of action. The culminating book met expectations. OK. The specific issues i have with the books might be considered SPOILERS. 1) What the hell is up with Averill's character. The first two books he seems like a submissive husband and lets a wizard walk all over him and his life. His actions/reactions towards Han and Dancer does not support this in any way. The Averill in books 3-4 would of killed Bayar instantly. 2) There are issues with the Micah storyline. Here are two, but i have left out other more spoiler ones. What happened on the roof with Micah? Not clear. The ending with Micah was unsatisfactory.

This book and its sequels are amazing. They follow two separate characters going about their lives, primarily within three circles. There's the Castle and the aristocracy, where princess Raisa lives; Then there are the slums, where former Ragger streetlord Han lives; finally there are the mountain dwelling naturalistic clans in the mountains, where both Raisa and Han have fostered for large chunks of their lives. Raisa struggles with the restrictions placed on her as princess returning to court after three years of comparative freedom within the clans. Her name day approaches, when she will become eligible for marriage and while she does not wish to be wed, others pressure her to think for the good of the kingdom. Meanwhile, Han struggles with survival now that he has left 'the life' as leader of a gang of youth on the streets of Ragtown. Nothing ever really goes his way. Naturally the story of these two entwine, but I won't spoil any details. Needless to say it is an amazing story and the characters are very lovable. You'll feel disappointed each time the POV switches between our leads, just to get engrossed again and feel the same the moment it switches over. The marriage of their two stories into one is beautifully done, without drawn out cliché or obvious manhandling of our protagonists. All feels organic and well crafted. This series of four books is among my favorite.

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