

SPECULATIVE FICTION REVIEW by Stephanie Young

TITLE *The Sharing Knife - Legacy*
AUTHOR Lois McMaster Bujold
PUBLISHER Eos
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COVER ART Julie Bell

Précis

Lakewalker Dag and his farmer wife Fawn return to the camp where Dag calls home. They receive a cold welcome from all but a few of the folks there. Fawn does her best to fit in and succeeds somewhat with one side of the family but she is never truly accepted.

Just before the situation comes to a head, a malice (a spirit being of great power) is reported and Dag heads out with a patrol to stop it, leaving Fawn behind. Dag manages some fancy groundwork (a method of controlling and using the inner power within us) to link Fawn to him through their marriage cords, since farmers do not have the ability to control their ground.

The malice proves to be more powerful than anything Dag has ever encountered and never kills himself to take it out. Fawn senses this and travels to be with him and comes up with a solution to a deadly problem.

The council stills wants to hear charges against Dag for bringing the farmer girl in and the result is unexpected.

Protagonist: Dag and Fawn

Antagonist: Dag's brother Dar

What I liked The subtle use of magic in the story, the growth of Dag and Fawn in dealing with the unfriendly reception in the camp, the great description of what a malice can do, and the emotion of the book.

What I didn't like Not enough history on the world and the mages of old, although I suspect that as this series progresses more will be revealed. Pace drags a bit here and there but not enough to be a concern.

Final Comments This is the second book in the *Sharing Knife* series and I am now a fan of Bujold's fantasy writing. I still like the Miles Vorkosigan series better and was disappointed (like many fans I am sure) when she stopped it and wrote the previous fantasy series starting with *The Curse of Chalion*. I have only read the first of that series and thought it was so-so but this series is much better.

The focus here is definitely on the characters and the uneasy relationship between Lakewalkers and Farmers. I see the Lakewalkers as similar to the Native American Indians and the Farmers as the white European settlers in the early days of the West. The magic is subtle and never gets in the way but yet is integral to the story and the books are fun to read and make you think. A different kind of fantasy that you should read

Rating 🍊 🍊 🍊 🍊 🍊 🍊

