The Perfect Shadow by Brent Weeks

Brent Weeks is author of what I consider the best fantasy trilogy of all time. *The Night Angel Trilogy* really seemed to have it all. You had a complex plot, multiple subplots, hot women, incredible and vivid action, intense relationships and all was contained within an enjoyable style of writing.

Mr. Weeks earlier this year took a break from his current *Lightbringer* series in order to bring to fans a short story about stand-out character from *The Night Angel Trilogy*: Durzo Blint. Obviously, fans of the original trilogy were excited, but a little skeptical about how Weeks’ writing style would hold up in short-story format.

Well, the good news is that he pulled it off. Although there is only about an hour to two hours reading contained in the book – there is a whole lot of story and action to be enjoyed within *The Perfect Shadow*. The story itself jumps about a bit, but basically tells the becoming of Durzo Blint as a Wetboy. Having already lived a vast number of lives he is given the chance to help Momma K get from her lowly position as a prostitute into a position of great power...all he needs to do is kill the Shinga’s Wetboys.

Now, we know enough about Wetboys to know that this isn’t going to be easy. Durzo begins training with the fifth Wetboy (there are only five remember?) and through his training he will need to kill the other four. I won’t spoil anything else for you, but I will tell you that the Durzo vs Wetboy scenes are absolutely fantastic and I will also say that should you be able to pick up the graphic audio version of this novel (basically an audio book with really cool sound effects/music added) they are taken to a whole other level.

I’ve read the ebook and listened to the graphic audio book and I have to say that the second reading was as good as the first. If you think that because the story is short it is not going to have any kind of substance, then you are completely wrong. Not only do we learn a huge amount about Durzo and his motivations for becoming as formidable as he is by the time we meet him in *Night Angel*, we also learn more lore in regards to the Ka’karis and perhaps more importantly Jorsin Alkestes.

As Brent has said on his site:

“When I wrote *Perfect Shadow*, I was afraid it was going to fall into a publishing no-man’s land: too short to be distributed as a novel, too long to be sold as a short story. Orbit’s digital publishing has given me a way to get this story out. More than that, it’s given me the artistic freedom to write a story exactly as long as it needs to be.”

I certainly agree with him. Although the conventional thoughts on the fantasy genre are the longer the novel the better – there are certainly writers (Brett and Weeks especially) who really seem to have an ability to tell a lot of story in a tiny amount of words. I also think that with so many fans disappointed that we aren’t going to see another *Night Angel* novel for at least 4/5 years the short stories are a good way to keep the lore and characters fresh in our minds.
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