



BOOK REVIEW

Book Title	Kalanon's Rising
Author	Darian Smith
Date	February 2020
Stars	

I read this book as part of the SPFB05 competition.

Oh how I loved this book! I read it in two days! Couldn't put it down!

It is a combination of 'murder mystery', political thriller and a magic/demon fantasy tale. That's what I loved most – how it wove these three elements together and never allowed one to dominate. Such clever plot craft! And it did all this with compelling and vivid characters. The investigative 'team' are all highly individual and forced to operate within a context of prejudice and suspicion. On my blog recently I've written about the importance of engaging characters and this book has them – in spades. Each one is different, original and you engage with them for different reasons. That said, the one compelling feature is that you want them to work together to solve the mystery – yet that is filled with so many challenges. Which, in itself, is another reason why the book works – it is so tense and exciting.

The writing style is straightforward so it doesn't detract from the story, told simply enough because the events are where the complications lie. It is highly original, breaking some of the traditional tropes and doing so for reasons that lie firmly within the needs of the story.

The world building is such a strength too. Economical but that doesn't mean it is any less detailed and vivid. You quickly get to grips with the world because it serves as a means to thwart the challenges and discoveries the protagonists face.

All in all, very clever writing indeed. I strongly recommend this book!