



## Six Celestial Swords

*T.A. Miles*

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Inspired by the rising chaos in Sheng Fan, Xu Liang, mystic and officer of the Imperial Court, leaves his homeland for the barbarian outer lands in search of four magical blades to unite with two sacred weapons already in the possession of the Empire. His plan is to bring all of the blades together and return them to Sheng Fan's Empress as a symbol of unity that will bolster the people's faith in the Imperial family and assist against the surge of dark forces. Complicating his plan is not the finding of the blades, but finding them with bearers; foreigners who have no intention of parting with them and less intention of serving an Empire they've scarcely heard of. It becomes Xu Liang's task to ally himself with these barbarians of the outer realms and unite them with his cause, as well as with one another. Only the complete reunion of all six blades and their fated bearers can stand against chaos, rising like a dragon from slumber beneath the foundation of a nation unprepared.

### Six Celestial Swords Details

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Author : T.A. Miles

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## From Reader Review Six Celestial Swords for online ebook

### Arec Rain says

I am not quite sure how to go about this review. On one hand, the world was so intricate and detailed that, at time, I felt lost. There is a lot going on, and if you blink, you too will become lost. If you take the time to actually read and take in each word, you are rewarded with a rich world as well as mythology. Sometimes, the detailed flowery prose can be too much, and sometimes it's just right.

It's hard explain this novel without giving anything away. If the description sounds like something that would interest you, then I suggest you try it out.

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### Bikram says

I had requested and received audiobook version of this book for free from the publisher, in exchange for an unbiased review.

This is a very start of a new Fantasy series and I can see myself continuing to read next installments. We rarely get to read quality new fantasy stories based on east Asia. So, when I have this quality work, I want to cherish it. This book has a quite extensive world building. Getting to know the East Asian culture (though fictional) and nuances was a good experience. The different characters that T. A. Miles wrote for this are all very interesting and multilayered. Their names were difficult to keep track of at the start. But then I got used to them. The story itself is very engaging and complex, setting up for a meaty future books.

The narration was a mixed bag. I liked that all the characters were so uniquely narrated, with different voices. But most of the narration was done in a breathy voice which was little unpleasant. Other than that though, it was all good.

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### Branwen Sedai \*of the White Ajah\* says

Loved it! Review to come! :)

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### Barbara Douglas says

This is one of those terrific books that seriously needs a good editor. The plot is great, the world is intriguing, the pace of revelations is good, the characters are appealing (though frankly, the length of the main character's hair is a little beyond a joke. I had long hair for years, and the trouble loose hair that long would cause on an extended wilderness trip doesn't bear thinking about.). But, and it is a strong but, the writing is frustratingly erratic. Some of it is beautiful. Some of it sounds like it's been translated from a different language (I did occasionally wonder if this was deliberate). Idioms are misused, the wrong form of words is often chosen (one can "stand in amazement", or "stand amazed", but to "stand in amaze" conjures up hedges ...). There is also a tendency to repeat information, and several times characters come to the same personal

realisation more than once. All of these things should be caught and corrected by a good editor. I am not myself opposed to creative use of language; I revelled in Howard Pyle as a child, I adore Tolkein, and I view the vocabulary of the Thomas Covenant series as a blessing rather than a curse. But creativity must be tempered with clarity, and too often I had to go back and puzzle out what was meant from what had been said, or mentally substitute the word that seemed better to fit the context. (So many words in English are only nearly synonyms!) So, only three stars, though I want to know what happens badly enough that I will read the rest of the series.

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## Josh says

This is for the Audiobook version narrated by Steve Barnes.

Story: 3/5 stars

Performance: 3/5 stars

Overall: 3/5 stars

This was an interesting book to listen to, but it's difficult to review. There are a lot of things that it did right, but a few things that I really didn't like. To start with what I liked. The opening setting gave an east Asian fantasy feel and had a great original concept. The author is an excellent wordsmith, who is great at describing the scenery and what's going on. I also really enjoyed watching a diverse group of characters come together for a common goal. There was good character growth, and I enjoyed the flashbacks to show some of the character's history. It was an interesting use of switching between first person and third person points of view as well, and the author did it in a way that I never got confused or lost as to what was going on.

Now, on to my few gripes with the book. It doesn't say anywhere in the synopsis that this was a romance novel. I also checked the Amazon Kindle page, where it shows three genres for the book, and none of those were romance, so, I was completely caught off guard when approximately 70% of the way through the book it became a romance novel. Some of the times it seemed like it could fit the characters, but a couple times it seemed forced, and ultimately it didn't add anything to the story for me. About that point in the book, I had a little difficulty finishing the story as well, but that's mostly because I don't enjoy romance novels.

The narrator did a good job voicing all of the characters, giving them all unique voices that were easy to differentiate. He also used a kind of raspy voice for the general narration that I found unique, and I enjoyed it. However, the narrator liked.... To pause.... In the middle... of sentences. There were quite a few scenes where I didn't notice it, like in the action scenes, but at times it really broke my sense of immersion.

If this review sounds like what you're looking for, it may be worth it for you to check out this book, but I doubt I'll be listening to book two.

The publisher gifted me a copy of this book with no expectation of me posting a review. This review is my unbiased opinion.

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## Shari Sakurai says

\*I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review\*

When I first began reading this novel, I was expecting to read an oriental tale but instead I found myself quickly immersed in an epic fantasy adventure.

Mystic Xu Liang sets out to retrieve the four missing celestial swords which have the power to save his empire. With his loyalty to his empire and empress driving him, Xu Liang is determined to complete his mission no matter what. His journey across realms sees him forming alliances with others who possess the swords that he has been searching for.

Six Celestial Swords is an incredibly well-written and gripping fantasy novel. It is full of wonderfully detailed and beautiful descriptions that really bring the story to life and many memorable characters. The novel kept a steady pace with plenty of action and twists and turns. I thoroughly enjoyed reading Six Celestial Swords and can't wait to read the next book in this amazing fantasy series.

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### **Jennifer says**

Another DNF. I made it to chapter 8, skimmed until chapter 10, then gave up out of boredom. It had some potential to be an interesting story, but it dragged on too long and failed to catch my attention. I found it a little difficult to keep the names straight, as some of them were very similar to each other at the start. If you're going to give characters similar names, you need to wait until the reader has time to solidly grasp the identity of one character before adding the next. I think there was a little too much going on here, as there was political unrest and many references to the Sheng Fan empire being under attack from within, but at the same time, Xu Liang is on a quest to get swords to fight an awakening mythical dragon. I'm not even sure why he believes in the dragon, since he seemed to be the only one worried about it. Also, I feel that if this quest is an emergency, he should probably not be taking time to paint scenery as he goes. One aspect that totally went beyond belief is that he is fasting this entire time, held together by meditation and purity (he can't be "corrupted" by food or medicine) so he's actually quite fragile while he's riding all over the world and fighting. The empress is also fasting, though in her case it is from fear of poisoning. I found this rather crazy - if there is absolutely no one that can be trusted even to bring you untainted food, how are you still alive? Surely by now someone would have just killed her, especially once she was weak from starvation.

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### **Aki says**

Six Celestial Swords reminds me strongly of the writing of James Fenimore Cooper. That's not a compliment.

This book has a beautiful cover. That's the first and foremost reason I picked it up. Beyond that, I read the Amazon reviews and saw a bunch of people bitching about "the gay agenda." As I'm all about the gay agenda, and I'm a fan of fantasy set in Asia, I was excited to be able to pick up a copy of this book on Instafreebie. I immediately set to reading it.

After a rather confusing creation story, the book begins with, well. With Xu Liang being on a mission for...something to help the empress. It's very vague, and I only had a clue because of the blurb. The empress is in seclusion meditating, the are Evil People Plotting, etc. etc. Danger, danger, and the Hero Xu Liang is off to save the day wearing loose ankle-length hair while riding a horse. Yep.

You know how I said this book reminded me of that ever-so-famed author of The Deerslayer? Well, read the Twain essay and replace everything he complains about in Cooper's prose with this book and there you have

it. Perfect hero, fights that are less than exciting, big speeches, and far, far too much tell. Not to mention word misuse.

I'm not going to give examples; if you really want to know, go find out for yourself. But I will say first and foremost that this book needs a hard edit to get rid of pronoun confusion. It was consistently unclear who was doing what in far too many scenes. For reference, pronouns should refer to the last appropriate noun mentioned. In this book, far too frequently, they don't.

I'm not touching the plot because the plot would be a perfectly fine plot if liberated from its tomb of excess words. There was the occasional sentence that stuck out for being quite lovely. Really, if this book ever undergoes a significant edit, do alert me, I'd be interested in the result. But until then? I just can't.

Plus, say "Fanese" outloud. (The name of the language in this.) It's rude in American English, it's downright shocking in British.

If you are a Cooper fan, this might be the book you've been searching for. If you dislike adverbs being attached to nearly every dialogue tag, find something else.

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## **Robin Chambers says**

This is a tale to be savoured, not skimmed: elaborately and lyrically unfolding like an intricately designed carpet it would be sinful to stomp across. Bear with the beginning and soon you will feel the pull of the tale. As a lifelong Tolkien fan and a language enthusiast, I was delighted by the paragraph on the possible derivation of 'Dryth' as an impressive array of characters lined up nicely for a lengthy quest (the inclusion of a feisty female adolescent dwarf 23% in adds another intriguing dimension).

Tolkien said that the only criticism he would accept of Lord of the Rings was that it wasn't long enough, and for those fantasy lands / noble quest enthusiasts who like nothing better than a long journey through many lands with sorcerers, elves, dwarves and men in search of god-given weaponry with which to combat a dragon called Chaos the size of a world, you are in for a treat in Six Celestial Swords.

The author is settled in her style. She has an excellent ear for assonance and consonance, and for the rhythm of a blank verse line disguised within the prose. Just one example: "the orbs glistened an almost pearlescent shade of blue behind the sheen of unshed tears" (I notice such things because I write in the same way). There is real skill in finding apposite similes and metaphors without any of it being overblown. I've read a number of books with maps in the front, but this was the first time I felt intrigued enough to print the map: that I might have a copy of it beside my e-reader for easy reference.

The story is impeccably imagined and intricately described: T.A. Miles has a meticulous eye and a rich turn of phrase. Examples are legion: "...proud-looking brick structures standing close together, life flowing between the narrow gaps like blood through veins." "God, let me show you my remorse with my blood rather than my tears." "His smile was too pale to hide his suffering." "The sword Aerkiren painted swaths of its twilight glow upon the darkness, streamers of eerily luminous liquid trailing each strike, spilling from lethal wounds."

Stay in the saddle long enough and you will reach Vilciel, a gigantic mountaintops city built in an almost unimagined age by dragons "more lizard than serpent, with great egos to match their tremendous intellects." The elves of a ruined land found a new home in the ruins of that stupendous place. I found myself wondering

whether Peter Jackson would relish the challenge of creating such a location, should film moguls anywhere decide to follow *The Hobbit* with another far-reaching quest involving much trudging across spectacular landscapes.

The story literally grew on me. I became genuinely involved with the characters and their several dilemmas by the end. The further in I got, the more involved I became. It wasn't until I was 75% in that I became fully aware how many of the dilemmas were caused by dictates of the heart clashing with constricting and intolerant cultural 'norms'. It is refreshing to have sexual orientation dealt with in this normally macho genre, alongside the 'standard' prejudices concerning race and class. The principal characters are complex and in many cases on quests of their own: to find themselves, within the context of this overriding search for the six celestial swords.

The series deserves to garner a loyal band of readers over time, and I am pleased to wave a flag in its honour near the beginning of its journey to popularity with followers of the genre.

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### **Jan Drotos says**

I wasn't sure of this one but it drew me in and kept me there! Have the next one on my wish list.

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### **Sarah says**

<http://www.bookwormblues.net/2016/08/...>

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### **Naticia says**

I had trouble caring about any of the characters in this book, and that plus a rather standard quest and the sudden and confusing love triangles (squares? pentagons?) made this a difficult book to finish.

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### **Dana Busenbark says**

We find ourselves reading a book set in a mystical place called Dryth, another called Sheng Fan, and then The West. We are in the time of the Dragons. When a warrior of the Jade Emperor decides to attack a sleeping dragon, what happens? We are set in an Asian inspired story line. We find ourselves walking the line between good and evil, right and wrong, a quest to search for weapons that can save or destroy. I felt at times like I was reading an alternate world of the Lord of the Rings series in this book. It made it a very interesting read. This was the first book I have read from this author and it did not disappoint. It is a fairly long book and took me just under 10 hours to read. I read fast too! Watching as the questers look for the weapon given by the Gods, taking a motley band of 'friends' on the search was fun. Enjoy the read. I don't want to say too much more, for fear of giving anything away. Just know there are at least two more books in the series so far!

RECEIVED THIS BOOK AS A GIFT FOR A FAIR/HONEST REVIEW and REVIEWER FOR Bloggin'

With M. Brennan.

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## **Christina says**

I've had my eye on Six Celestial Swords by T.A. Miles since before it came out. That cover caught my eye, and landed it on my TBR pile. A fantasy version of China, the kingdom of Sheng Fan is under a severe threat. In order to avert disaster, the court official and sorcerer Xu Liang leaves home on a quest for four magical blades that will combat the rising dark forces. On his way, Xu Liang assembles many and varied companions, dwarves and elves among them. If this all sounds very Tolkienesque, well, it is, right down to the lush language and sometimes languid pace. Once you get past a few difficult early chapters-mostly because of the many Chinese names- you find yourself in the middle of a splendid adventure that takes some fascinating twists and turns before it's done. I really didn't want it to end, but fortunately, the next book in the series is already out and there's another one coming!

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