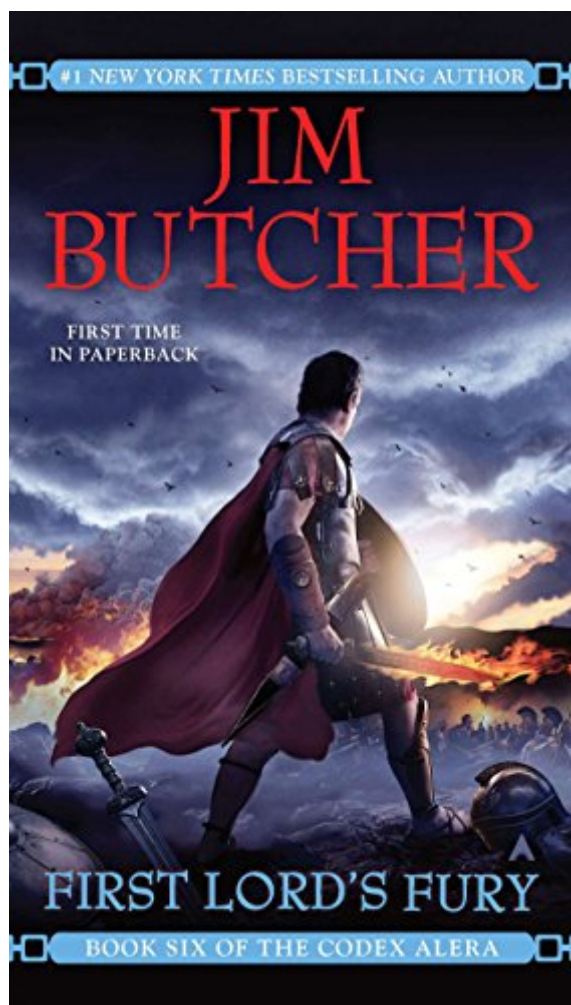


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First Lord's Fury (Codex Alera Book 6)



Synopsis

In the final novel in #1 New York Times bestselling author Jim Butcher's acclaimed Codex Alera series, the people of Alera—who use their unique bond with the elementals of earth, air, fire, water, wood, and metal for protection—must face the ultimate conflict. For Gaius Octavian, life has been one long struggle. Battling ancient enemies, forging new alliances, and confronting the corruption within his own land, he became a legendary man of war and leader of men—and the rightful First Lord of Alera. Now, the end of all he fought for is close at hand. The brutal, dreaded Vord are on the march, using fear and chaos to turn the Alerans against one another, and forcing those who will not submit to flee to the outer reaches of the realm. Perhaps for the final time, Gaius Octavian and his legions must stand against the enemies of his people. And it will take all his intelligence, ingenuity, and furycraft to save their world from eternal darkness...

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Customer Reviews

Jim Butcher is an amazing story teller. I discovered him thanks to recommending his other series,

the Dresden Files, to me. After getting caught up on that series and waiting for the next title to be released, I decided to check out his other series, Codex Alera. I generally don't read a lot of high fantasy, and was especially dubious about a series that started off as a bet, but wanted to give it a shot given my love of his other work. Who would have thought that the lost Roman legion and Pokémon would inspire a NYT best selling series? There is a wonderful blend of mystery, action, wit, suspense, humor, and romance in these novels and appeals to a wide audience. The story is comprised of several different character arcs artfully woven together to progress the overall plot, which helps keep things interesting and creates quite a few cliffhangers throughout each book. Overall, a great read!

First off, let me begin by saying that I am a great admirer of Jim's work, and that for the most part this series is good and I enjoyed it. I will readily admit, however, that I began to lose interest in it after book 4. In fact, if I were to read the series again I would begin with book two and end with four. Here is why:

1. The Protagonist - Octavian "Tavi" is the perfect human being. While he begins the series as a flawed character that can't keep up with his sheep, doesn't have friends, and has a questionable future, he ends as the most powerful war crafter in the realm with unquestionable talent in nearly every aspect of life. For what it's worth, I found myself caring less and less about Tavi, and maybe it's because he became boring.
2. Uninteresting and Overly Used Themes - There is a great, northern ice wall, because of course there is. What fantasy series doesn't seem to feature some ginormous barrier to keep the evil out? Themes that are explored and touted are the evils of slavery, women overcoming traditional gender roles, a boy at a magic academy, the boy who appears to have a humble, poor background but actually comes from nobility and is born with all the right genes... this isn't just a problem with this series, however. It's a problem that plagues the genre in a very big way.
3. At the end of the day I couldn't even come close to finishing the last book. There was nothing that made me want to keep listening (I have the audible version). I don't know if I just got tired of listening to the narrator's voice, if the Vord just weren't interesting enough, or if it was something else. I do know that it was extremely predictable: the queen was revealed to be the weak point of the Vord in the second book already. You don't have to read four more books to know that she's the key to their defeat. Where is the suspense? Maybe that's what killed it for me. All the plot twists and surprises that were earlier encountered in the series are gone. If you want to read a really good series, check out the Dresden Files. Out of 15 or so books, I only think Ghost Stories is a dud. You won't regret it.

This is the culmination of the Codex Alera series, and it goes out with a bang. Tavi is coming back to Alera leading a most unusual army, only to find that his fellow Alerans are up against the wall with the merciless Vord crushing their greatest strongholds and killing their strongest furycrafting lords. At least by this point, Tavi is finally coming into his own furycrafting strength, but even he is no match for the might of the Vord. Then again, Tavi has always been smarter than he was strong, and he makes good use of that in this final war. In addition to Tavi and his crew, we see some fine performances put in by the remaining furycrafters. Even Aquataine puts in a good show. But nothing compares to the rabbits Tavi's uncle Bernard manages to pull out of his hat. Much of those particular tricks had their origins as wild ideas from Tavi years before, but Bernard has taken them to their most impressive ends. Perhaps the most world-shattering moment comes at the command of Bernard, as a hundred commoners throw down a demonstration of power that would completely spend a High Lord's power and then do it again the very next minute, and the next, and the next. It was one of those moments where even as the reader you stick her head between your legs and kiss your ass goodbye. I won't spoil the end, but I'll just say that it was quite satisfying. Just about everyone got what they deserved, in one flavor or another. In particular, the epilogue was good, tying up a number of loose ends and giving some hint about what was to follow in the years and decades ahead. As one character said, the interesting times were definitely over, and yet it felt the new story of Alera was just beginning. So, if you're contemplating this series particularly if you're struggling through the slow first book, Furies of Calderon, give it a shot. The road to the payoff is long and fun, and the payoff is definitely worth it.

This is the last of the series, and it delivered what I was looking for: resolution. And it was a great ride getting there as well. Like the author's Harry Dresden series (so far), there are perhaps a few too many blow by blow battle scenes and fights, but they are very well imagined and described. I like that the female characters are not token women, but are seriously strong (in more than one sense of the word) in their own right. Jim Butcher's imagination boggles the mind, not only with regard to plot twists, but also with the freaky concepts he comes up with relating to furycraft, other humanoids, other cultures, and so on. Good stuff. Really enjoyed it.

Jim Butcher is a fantastic author. The Codex Alera series is smart, thrilling, and full of feels. You will be biting your nails on the edge of your seat, weeping in heartbreak or joy, or spontaneously

bursting into laughter. If you read this in public, you are likely to get a lot of weird looks, and may be approached by others who are wondering what has you so thoroughly immersed. I burned through this series, and then had to pace myself on the last book, because I didn't want it to be over. I can't wait to read more of his work.

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