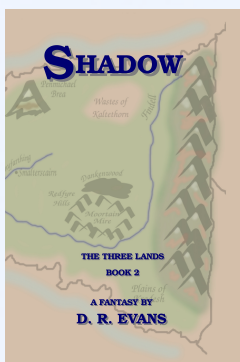




# ENGINE HOUSE BOOKS

## BOOK BITS #9



### ***SHADOW*** by **D. R. Evans**

*SHADOW* IS AVAILABLE IN A RETAIL EDITION (ISBN 978-0-578-00775-5), IN AN ECONOMY EDITION, AND AS PART OF A MULTIBOOK CONTAINING ALL THREE OF THE STORIES OF THE THREE LANDS.

EHB: Tell us a bit about *Shadow*.

DRE: Part of the agreement when *Palindor* was accepted by its original publisher stipulated that there would be two sequels. *Shadow* is the first of these. Although *Shadow* can be read as a standalone story, it was written more as the first of a pair of stories, the other of which became *Phendric*.

EHB: Is *Shadow* then basically a continuation of *Palindor*?

DRE: I don't think so. Although many of the characters are the same, the timbre of the story is, I think, quite different. Knowing that there was going to be a third book enabled me to develop the characters more strongly. And I would characterize *Shadow* as a much darker book than *Palindor*. There is one scene in *Shadow* that, to my mind, represents the darkness underlying the book: the scene in which Michael's party is crossing the bridge over the Findell. The gratuitous death in that scene contrasts with the almost playful danger posed by the three-headed troll in a similar river-crossing scene in *Palindor*.

EHB: Was the idea of Catherine returning to

Palindor with her son yours, or did you get it from somewhere else?

DRE: As far as I know, it was mine. I certainly didn't consciously copy it. The idea worked well enough that I reused it in *Phendric*, when three generations are transported to Palindor.

EHB: You have said that in the case of *Palindor*, you didn't have much of the story worked out before you started writing. Is the same true for *Shadow*?

DRE: Not to the same extent as was the case for *Palindor*. For example, I knew when I started that Catherine and Michael were going to be on opposing sides, and I knew that the entire book was going to be set in the context of a somewhat Job-like contest between Olvensar and Malthazzar.

EHB: Did any part of the story surprise you as you were writing it?

DRE: Yes. I don't think I had ever planned for the scenes in Malthazzar's realm, Sheol; or at least I hadn't planned to develop them to the extent that eventually happened.

EHB: How much of *Shadow* is simply setting the stage for *Phendric*?

DRE: Very little, I hope. *Shadow* did establish some themes that recurred in *Phendric*, but in general *Phendric* reaches back to *Palindor* more than it does to *Shadow*.

EHB: Which do you prefer: *Palindor* or *Shadow* (or *Phendric*)?

DRE: I can't answer that. Although they form a trilogy, the flavor of each is quite different, and which I prefer depends on my mood. I think each has its merits.

EHB: Is there anything you'd change about the book if you had the chance?

DRE: I might change the title, but I can't think of anything about the story itself. On reflection, possibly I'd re-work the first chapter, which strikes me as too expository. Although I'm not sure exactly how I would change it. I knew it was a problematic chapter even when I wrote it, but I never could think of a good way to change it while still conveying the necessary information.

EHB: You mentioned the Job-like context of *Shadow*. Was this similarity intentional?

DRE: Yes. Although the working out of the “contest” is quite different in *Job* and *Shadow*, I've always been intrigued at the basic idea of the “masters” of the two sides standing away from the action to let their respective adherents decide the result of a contest — if nothing else, it displays a remarkable confidence in one's followers. In *Job*, of course, only God stands aside (although Satan operates with certain restrictions). It seemed more symmetric in the context of the Three Lands to have both Olvensar and Malthazzar entrust the contest to their followers. The basic idea, though, was definitely patterned after the book of *Job*.

EHB: Speaking of *Job*, the Three Lands series is obviously somewhat allegorical. How much did this drive the plot?

DRE: That question deserves a considerably longer answer than the one I can give it here. It certainly drove the overall theme, which reaches its climax in *Phendric*. However, the allegorical theme had little bearing on the individual books.

EHB: To conclude, can you tell us three factoids about *Shadow*?

DRE: One: The Cornish town described in Chapter 1 and Chapter 4 is based on St. Ives.

Two: Early drafts included a chapter set in Penclaw, describing how Anderskerrin came to leave the fishing village and settle in Soltarwyn.

Three: The original publisher of *Palindor* decided to stop publishing fantasy after accepting *Shadow*, but before it could be published.

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