



Playing with Fire (Skulduggery Pleasant, Book 2)

By Derek Landy

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Skulduggery and Valkyrie are facing a new enemy: Baron Vengeous, who is determined to bring back the terrifying Faceless Ones and is crafting an army of evil to help him. Added to that, Vengeous is about to enlist a new ally (if he can raise it from the dead): the horrible Grotosquery, a very unlikable monster of legend.

Once Vengeous is on the loose, dead bodies and vampires start showing up all over Ireland. Now pretty much everybody is out to kill Valkyrie, and the daring detective duo faces its biggest challenge yet.

But what if the greatest threat to Valkyrie is just a little closer to home?

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 5–9—In this sequel to *Skulduggery Pleasant* (HarperCollins, 2007), 13-year-old Valkyrie Cain and her mentor, the living skeleton detective, are faced with the return of the evil Baron Vengeous, who has been freed from prison. Vengeous is trying to reanimate the Grottesquery, a monster made up of pieces of a variety of evil creatures. If his scheme is successful, the Faceless Ones, "the terrible dark gods, exiled from this world," will return. Faced with treachery within the ranks of good magicians, Valkyrie and Skulduggery must rely on their own Elemental magical powers and a few trusted allies to confront Vengeous's magic and helpers, such as the vampire Dusk and Billy-Ray Sanguine, who has the ability to tunnel underground. One magical action sequence follows another as Valkyrie must find the courage to face what seem to be insurmountable foes. Humorous conversations between Valkyrie and Skulduggery add flavor to this generally dark and often-violent novel, as does the girl's appreciation of the dichotomy between her evil-fighting life and that of a quiet student lived by her reflection while she's off saving the world. Fans of the first book will particularly enjoy the new schemes and evil creatures found here. While the back-and-forth between Skulduggery and Vengeous's forces repeats a few too many times, readers looking for a mix of magic and action will find it here.—*Beth L. Meister, Milwaukee Jewish Day School, WI*
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From [Booklist](#)

In this sequel to *Skulduggery Pleasant* (2007), skeleton-detective Skulduggery and his apprentice, Valkyrie Cain (aka 13-year-old Stephanie Edgley), track down the recently escaped Baron Vengeous, who plans to animate the Grottesquery, a vicious monster assembled from a variety of fearsome beasts. The Baron has finally located the remaining ingredients necessary to complete his work—the late Lord Vile's armor and some blood from one of the Ancients. There's not much character development, but Landy, who has also written horror screenplays, is in his element here. His style is cinematic, and the action nonstop. Skulduggery's subtle humorous asides (some referencing classic horror films and stories) lighten the mood, and magical details, such as Valkyrie's ability to throw fireballs, add to the fun. Fans of the earlier title as well as fantasy buffs pining for the now-vanquished Voldemort will enjoy this tale of good versus evil. A final scene suggests another installment is in the works. Grades 5-8. --Kay Weisman

Review

Landy gives the term "deadpan humor" a whole new meaning; readers who prefer their heroes laconic and their action nonstop are in for a wild ride. -- *Kirkus Reviews (starred)*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Hanelore Evans:

The book *Playing with Fire (Skulduggery Pleasant, Book 2)* can give more knowledge and information about everything you want. Why then must we leave a very important thing like a book *Playing with Fire (Skulduggery Pleasant, Book 2)*? Some of you have a different opinion about book. But one aim which book can give many data for us. It is absolutely suitable. Right now, try to closer with the book. Knowledge or data that you take for that, you are able to give for each other; it is possible to share all of these. Book *Playing with Fire (Skulduggery Pleasant, Book 2)* has simple shape but the truth is know: it has great and

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