

DRAY PRESCOT: 40

**SCORPIO
INVASION**

KENNETH BULMER
writing as
ALAN BURT AKERS

A Mushroom eBook

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ALAN BURT AKERS

a Mushroom eBooks sample

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Dray Prescott

Dray Prescott has been described as a man above middle height, with brown hair and level brown eyes, brooding and dominating, with enormously broad shoulders and powerful physique. There is about him an abrasive honesty and an indomitable courage. He moves like a savage hunting cat, swift, sudden and lethal.

The superhuman Star Lords have brought him to Kregen, four hundred light years from Earth, where, in pursuance of their schemes for that marvelous and terrifying world, he has been successful on his own account. His education in the horrendous conditions of Nelson's Navy stood him in good stead in his early days on Kregen; now he has won lands and estates and has recently given up the job of being the Emperor of Vallia after putting the island empire together again with the help of the divine Delia, the empress. A fresh mission for the Star Lords has landed Prescott in much skullduggery and political intrigue, and a deal of skull bashing.

Down in the southern part of the mysterious continent of Loh he has with the aid of the kregoinya Mevancy nal Chardaz and of the kregoinye Caspar the Peaker, with the assistance of Trylon Kuong and of Llodi the Voice, kidnapped instead of killing Queen Leone.

The Star Lords want a high-spirited lady called Kirsty to be queen, and have ordered Leone killed so that she cannot return through reincarnation.

The conspirators are hustling through the palace having succeeded in their plan. Now some resistance will be made against the hostile Shanks, Fish Faces raiding from over the curve of the world.

Crouching by the palace wall a reddish brown scorpion, glinting of body and arrogant of tail, speaks to Prescott, speaks directly from the Star Lords, from the Everoinye.

“You, Dray Prescott, have disobeyed the Everoinye and failed to do what you were commanded to do.”

Now Prescott must answer for his disobedience, as he tells us in this volume, *Scorpio Invasion*.

Alan Burt Akers

Chapter one

“You will deal with the Shanks, Dray Prescot.” The rustling voice, like dead leaves blown scraping over gravel, spoke menacingly. “Before that you will answer for your disobedience.”

I opened my mouth to shout in baffled rage that this cretin of a scorpion couldn't understand, and, then, I understood. Disobedience was the issue here. The blue radiance grew about me. I looked up to see the gigantic form of the phantom blue Scorpion hovering. Chill smote me. In an icy blueness I swept away into blackness.

Blackness and blueness swirling all about me... Head-long tumbling with the breath knocked from my lungs... The freezing grip of icy chains lapping my limbs... Oh, yes, I knew all about these sensations. The high and mighty Everoinye, the Star Lords, were summoning me to their presence — and this time they were going to discipline me for what they considered disobedience.

Streaks of lambent blue fire shot through the blackness. My body felt black and blue too, by Vox. Instead of having Queen Leone assassinated and then, through the

disgusting rites of Kaopan, making sure she could never be reincarnated, I'd saved her and switched in some poor pathetic dead girl to take her place. No one here in Makilorn apart from we plotters would know that. The Star Lords wanted Kirsty as queen, and now she would be.

As I thus hurtled helplessly through a maelstrom of supernatural forces I, Dray Prescott, Lord of Strombor and Krozair of Zy, felt that perhaps all my modulated feelings for the Star Lords had been misplaced. I'd thought we'd been getting onto a better footing where we might understand more of one another's problems. Now, particularly after they'd sent Caspar the Peaker to assassinate Leone so that Kirsty might be queen, I fancied all my old hatred and contempt would flare up uncontrollably.

That, as I knew to my cost, would be a mistake.

Maybe, just maybe, the Star Lords' plans could exist within the framework of decency. Perhaps, just perhaps, absolute power had not corrupted them past redemption.

Below me through the swirling mists I saw a patchwork of green.

Peering more closely I realized I was looking down from a great height upon fields and forests and hills.

This amazed me so completely that I stared without believing.

Never before had I seen anything outside the blue outlines of the phantom Scorpion as I was whisked up to meet the Everoinye or to be tumbled headlong, naked

and unarmed, into some dismal spot of Kregen to sort out a problem for the Star Lords.

Arms and spirals of blue, like contorting tentacles, waved all about me. I could hear a vast rushing, as of the wind at the end of the world. A blustery gale swung me up, twisted me about so that for an instant I was staring directly upwards.

Like a lance thrust, a glittering streak of brilliant viridian green slashed across the heavens. I heard the discordant clashing and hissing as the vivid green streak sliced into the blue mists about me.

In the next instant I was right way up, looking down, and seeing my sword and harness falling through thin air below me.

With a single flicking lick of a blue tentacle, a line of blue radiance reached out, snatched the sword and harness, withdrew into the main bulk.

I knew who controlled that acid green. That was the Star Lord called Ahrinye. He might be a million years or so younger than the other Everoinye; he was at once impetuous and icily contemptuous and he wanted to run me hard, so hard that I believed I'd have little chance of survival.

The ground below was coming up mighty fast.

Seeing that ground, and the falling sword, continued to astonish me. When I say I'd not seen anything outside the blue Scorpion I mean ordinary earthly objects of Kregen; I'd seen plenty of fireworks as the Everoinye squabbled among themselves, and as Zena Iztar with her mellow golden yellow light tried to mediate.

The blueness was fading. Without a single doubt the blueness was thinning and vanishing. And I was still high in the air and falling straight down!

“Hey!” I shouted up, feeling the wind gusting about. “Hai!Star Lords!” I bellowed, feeling the wind now as a rushing force upon my falling body. “What are you doing?”

What they were doing was perfectly obvious. They were doing nothing.

“Help!” I hollered up. “I’ll be squashed flat! Hai!”

Down and down I plummeted. The ground was confoundedly near by now. “You bunch of miserable onkers, you crew of cretins! Catch me!”

By the pustular nose and infected warts of Makki Grodno! The stupid phantom blue Scorpion had dropped me!

I twisted my head around to look up. Maybe I did that because I did not wish to stare at that frightening ground swishing up so rapidly.

Up there a dim redness washed away to one side. Red was often the color of the Star Lords when they argued with Ahrinye and his acrid green.

“Star Lords!” I bellowed. Still, down and down I fell.

The only explanation I could see for this contretemps was that Ahrinye had attempted to take over control of me and had not quite succeeded but had caused the Scorpion to drop me. The phantom blue Scorpion had fumbled.

“Ahrinye!” I yelled up. “Do something, you stupid great onker!”

Down below the ground looked a patchwork of green, and there were the roofs and towers of a town some way off by a river. I was going to hit and go splat! In a very very short time.

“Star Lords!” I shrieked. “Ahrinye!” And then, with desperation and cunning caused by despair, I yelled up: “Zena Iztar!”

She had been off on her own work far removed from Kregen, or so I had been led to believe. If the Star Lords were unable to agree to save me, my only hope remained Zena Iztar. She had promised her patronage and support for the schemes I wanted to implement for the good of Kregen. If I was dead I’d be of no further use to any of ’em, by Krun.

Down below the ground was so close I could see walled gardens filled with greenery and flowers and fountains. Low red buildings bordered the gardens. In the next instant I’d go squash! and that would be the end of Dray Prescott, lord of this and that, etc, and prince of onkers.

Inevitably, my last thought would be of the one person in two worlds who matters more than anything else — including the damned Star Lords.

I thought of Delia, Delia of the Blue Mountains, Delia of Delphond. I’d not been as attentive to her as I ought to have been, as I desperately wanted to be, in the sweet name of Opaz. The Everoinye called me away from Delia. Still, the Sisters of the Rose called her away from me, too...

I composed myself for oblivion.

Two thin streaks of fire reached down from the heavens.

On one side the acrid green of Ahrinye smoked down to coil and lap beneath me.

On the other side the glorious golden yellow radiance diffused a cushion under me.

“Zena Iztar!” I gasped.

The sensation was like falling upon a fireman’s safety sheet. My headlong descent checked. The torrent of wind past me ceased. I was still falling, but slowly as immaterial superhuman forces caught and cushioned me.

The water felt hard enough as I went bodily into it, by Krun!

Down and down I went, turning, ready to begin the ascent to the surface. Great, fat, golden fish swam lazily away, flicking their transparent fins insolently. The bottom of the pool, all green and clean, showed me I was in one of the carp pools of cultivated gardens. Lily stems twined away above. I gave a look of dislike to the tangle of stuff; a couple of flipper strokes drove me safely past and now I began to rise. Able to swim underwater for a long time, I was in no discomfort whatsoever from lack of air.

Although Zena Iztar and Ahrinye had slowed my fall, I’d still been traveling at a good rate of knots when I went into the water. The following rise in balancing compensation saw me shooting up swiftly. I felt a vast wet and floppy mass cushion above my head and then I

popped up out of the water into the air with a lily pad balanced on my skull.

I must have shot up over man height before flopping back like a porpoise. In that fragment of time I saw an encircling red brick wall, a green and blossoming garden, an iron gate — and standing each side of that iron gate an armed and armored guard leaning on a spear.

In a lightning swift vision, that whole scene as it must have appeared to an observer etched itself on my brain. Sink me! It must have tickled up those two drowsy guards. There they were, standing guard duty with the sound of the party going on in the next garden. They were bored stiff, itchy, thirsty, and half-asleep. Then like a thunderbolt a thing falls straight out of the sky and goes splash! smack into the middle of the carp pond.

Before the guards have time to close their astonished mouths up leaps a fountain of water and a monstrous naked man like a salmon leaping the weir. Splashing and splashing, down he goes into the water again. Just where he's come from, the guards really don't wish to think about. All they know is that he's fallen in the water.

That scene, bright and brittle, and wet, was good for a laugh in after years, especially with the lily pad balanced on my skull.

By the time I'd spouted water like a whale and got rid of the lily pad and swum to the bank, the guards had managed to close their mouths and were waiting on the edge ready to prod their spears at me.

I checked my stroke a few feet from the pond bank, treading water, and looked up.

“Hai, doms,” I called up. “It’s a nice day for it.”

Bored, insensitive, callous though these guards most certainly were they remained guards with a job to do for which they took pay. They wore uniforms of a cut and style unfamiliar to me. There was altogether too much flowing drapery, and gold lace, and looping cords and feathers. These were clearly gala uniforms, put on in honor of the party whose sounds were now clearly evident beyond the red brick wall. Two ornate pole arms slanted down at my head. I was not fool enough to imagine those fancy halberds would not be honed to razor sharpness.

“You’re a dead man, dom,” said the left hand one. His face, brown and seamed, strip-bearded, wore no particular expression. Bored, he’d kill as a mere part of his duty.

“You know no man is allowed in here,” confirmed the other, whose face might have been his companion’s twin.

The streaming mingled lights of the Suns of Scorpio slanted in across the pond and the ruby of Zim and the emerald of Genodras struck sparks of fire from the wicked spiked and bladed halberd heads.

I spouted some more water and pondered the situation.

If this amazes you, it should not. By this time in this my narrative you should be well aware that I, Dray Prescott, abhor violence and killing. Behavior of that

kind has been forced on me by the force of circumstances and — I own it, I own it — by the arrogance of my own resentment and resistance to unjustified and cruel authority.

“Now, see here, doms—” I began.

They were having none of that. The sweet scent of fully blooming blossoms drifted across the carp pond. The suns shone. The air, that glorious fragrant air of Kregen, filled my lungs. And these two talked indifferently of killing.

“No good arguing,” said the left hand one. “Stick him, Lin. Them’s the orders.”

Obediently, Lin thrust his halberd at me.

There was no difficulty in evading the spiked halberd head. I paddled a little way off, regarding these two in frustrated sorrow.

“He wants to play clever,” observed Lin. “Better send for a bowman, Hwang, and get it over with.” He yawned. “We’re off duty in half a bur.”

Guardsmen can usually judge the time they stand on duty and know when their reliefs are due.

Hwang nodded and propped himself on his halberd. “Off you go, then.”

Now this I did not want. I paddled toward the bank until I was within reach. Lin turned, waiting.

“Giving up, dom?”

I put a hand on the brick facing and looked up.

Hwang sucked a breath, stood upright, swiveled his halberd and thrust hard.

With a sinuous sideways movement I slid the blade, took the haft in my fist, and jerked harder than he'd thrust.

With a loud yell of rage and surprise he went head-long into the water. Lin shouted his own anger and swung his halberd down in a flat arc. This time I was not as clean in my response and Lin toppled sideways, staggering under the impact of his own halberd. Ignoring the splashings and frothing from the man in the water I hefted up onto the bank and as Lin attempted to rise put the hard toes of my right foot into his throat. He emitted a gargling gasping groan and collapsed.

Amidst a great deal of splashing and foaming Hwang spluttered: "You fool, dom! Now they'll..." His words were chopped off as he went under again.

Lin was unconscious. I looked at the pond as Hwang surfaced, spouting, and now his yells were of an entirely different character.

"Help! Help! I can't swim!"

"By the Black Chunkrah!" I said, fairly spitting with annoyance. "What a carry on!" And, feeling like a buffoon, I dived in, stroked swiftly to him as he went down again, and probably for the last time, got a fist into his fancy folderols of uniform, and hoicked him up. By the time I'd towed him to the bank and dragged him out his face held a beautiful tinge of green. I thumped him down where he groaned and vomited. I looked at the pair.

“The Divine Lady of Belschutz undoubtedly has a few words for you two,” I said. Working swiftly I stripped off a length of cloth of a reddish color and wrapped it about me, drawing the loose end up between my legs and fastening the makeshift breechclout firmly with Hwang’s belt. He wore a second belt equipped with a sword, a lynxter of an ornate fancy pattern, and a dagger. This belt I buckled up about my waist. I looked about.

The noise we had made must surely bring more guards running.

These two lovelies were out of the reckoning for the moment. Now I had to find a safe way out of this infernal place. The noise of the party beyond the gate indicated that that was not the way to go.

In the opposite wall across the pond stood another gate. That way, then.

Leaving wet footprints that would dry rapidly in the heat of the suns I padded around the carp pond, heading for the gate.

I stopped stock-still. I must be growing senile. Was I then so wrapped up in the legends of Dray Prescott that I must always prance around half-naked clad only in a scarlet breechcloth and brandishing a sword?

I ran back very sharply to the prostrate guards and relieved them of all their weapons and Lin’s uniform — which was dry. When I leaned over and stared at my reflection in the water I looked a proper fancy guard.

Then I retraced my steps around the pond to the farther gate.

This led into a further garden whose walls were covered with espaliers.

The colors and scents of flowers wafted most pleasantly across the central grassy lawn. A two-wheeled handcart carrying a rotund water tank was attended by two old Ochs who were painstakingly watering the borders. They looked up indifferently as I ran past. The jet of water did not waver by a hair's breadth. Making for the gate opposite the one I had entered by, I reflected that the old Ochs were slaves and they were females. The next gate led into a walled garden crammed with flowers.

By this time I had a shrewd suspicion that where I had touched down after the Scorpion dropped me had landed me in very hot water.

That made me look back for an instant at the spectacle I must have made tumbling out of the sky, going splash! into the water and then spouting up again with the lily pad balanced ludicrously on my head. Well, yes, I suppose it was comical. Had those two dozy guards, Lin and Kwang, been more awake they might even have found a little chuckle, if not going to the extreme of actually laughing.

More walled gardens followed, gate after gate. A few more female Och slaves barely looked up as I went by, intent upon their labors.

Given that the sound of the party ought to come from the central portions of this damned maze of gardens, then to keep on going directly away from the party should bring me to the outside wall. That, at least, was

the theory. Ha! You who have followed my narrative will know how theories have the diabolical habit of mercilessly tripping up one hight Dray Prescot.

So far the guard uniform had brought me through without question. Slaves do not normally stand up when a guard passes and challenge him with a "Who are you?"

Other guards might, though.

Two other guards did. Directly, harshly, slanting their spears at my midriff. They were tough, hard-faced, wearing curved leather armor and polished metal helmets flaunting red and yellow feathers. They marched smartly in through the open gate towards which I was walking and simply marched straight up to me, pointed their spears, and challenged me in a most decisive and unmistakable way.

They did not speak exactly as Lin and Hwang had done; the burden of their message was exactly the same.

"There is no excuse," said the left hand one in a clipped, tight voice. "You are not allowed here."

The right hand one said: "We shall take you along to the guardroom. Now just come along quietly."

To reinforce the words she used her spear to tickle my ribs.

"Now look here—" was as far as I got before the spear jabbed again.

"Get moving, you loveless spawn of Holpo the Blasphemer!"

Well, as many folk have said many times, if ladies wish to put on armor and act as soldiers, jikai vuvushis, and wield weapons, they are perfectly entitled to do so.

In the struggles in Vallia during the Times of Troubles, I, myself, had cause to be thankful to the gallant regiments of jikai vuvushis who had fought so well for us. I had shuddered away from their use and had only reluctantly come to realize that girls, no less than boys, must be allowed to do what they wish and are able for the good of all.

All this being so, the obverse is also so.

I took the spear haft into my fist, pushed and then snatched it cleanly from the girl's grasp and used it to parry the second girl's automatic stroke. Then I tapped both as gently as I could under the fancy helmets just above their ears. I tried to catch both as they fell, but as I am an apim, *Homo sapiens sapiens*, and have only two arms, one of the poor girls pitched over onto the path. I lowered the other to her side and stepped back to view them. I shook my head. This happening is the obverse of the bright colors and armor and glittering weapons and flaunting feathers. They both slumbered peacefully.

When I moved off I did so very smartly.

Which was just as well.

A long blue-fletched Lohvian arrow sprouted from the thigh of the nearest sprawled girl.

Without thought, without hesitation, instantly, I hurled myself sideways, ducking away, fleeing over the ground.

More arrows flicked past. When a Bowmaid of Loh shoots at you, you must deflect the shafts, run and dodge the shafts, or let the shafts shaft you to death.

“By Makki Grodno’s pustule-covered armpits and leprous biceps!” I said to myself as I leaped from side to side and raced on, zigzagging to save my life. “They’re mighty sharp around here.”

I went roaring past the open gate and immediately cut along to the left beside the wall. That pitiless rain of arrows dried up. I took a breath and scuttled rapidly along by the wall heading for a narrow door at the far end of the path. I ignored the opposite gate this time; it seemed to me that would only admit me onto more trouble. I could hear a few high-pitched shouts from the rear and guessed the Bowmaids would be running after me, their long legs flashing in the suns-light.

The door proved to be unlocked. When I opened it, slid through, and slammed it at my back I assumed the girls, seeing this garden empty, would realize I hadn’t had time to cross to the opposite gate and therefore know I’d gone through here. In that case... I slid the bolt firmly, snicking it into its socket with a click.

I turned around. The walls in this garden were completely bare of the vegetation of all kinds that graced the walls of the other gardens. The whole expanse was covered in coarse gravel of a reddish orange tint. In the centre stood a brick fountain with water gushing up and falling into a stone basin. A number of indentations here and there over the gravel thickened near the fountain. Each little scoop looked to be the size of a large animal’s hoof, and the further indentations around the central one looked unmistakably and unpleasantly like the mark of giant claws.

The only other exit in this walled garden lay opposite and in the centre of the wall. The door stood wide open. I crossed to it.

To have rushed in through the open doorway would have been highly foolish. I loosened one of my swords and, leaning against the wall, poked an eyeball around the edge of the doorway. This garden looked perfectly normal. Perhaps there were a few more trees than usual and more pretty little birds, otherwise the flowers banked in profusion and the air was filled with their perfume. I took a breath and stepped past the edge of the doorway. At the side an opening had been formed. This was a double wall, creating a long alleyway between the gardens. The alleyway was floored in the same reddish orange gravel. Also, I had not failed to notice the size of this doorway, and the width of the alley between the walls convinced me the animal who lived here and was brought here to drink was of a considerable size.

I shoved my sword back firmly in the scabbard and prowled on.

So far I'd managed to avoid the cluster of roofs visible over the walls. Red tiled roofs, with flat terrace and balcony connecting features, they seemed to me to denote that this place was a luxurious country villa. In that, of course, I could be wildly wrong. By the movement of the twin suns I saw I was in the northern hemisphere of Kregen again. All these walled gardens would appear to indicate I was still in the continent of Loh.

From these conclusions and from what had happened to me since I'd arrived it was now quite clear just where I was. Whilst it is no doubt a splendid and magnificent thing to die young for some great cause, it is, as San Blarnoi points out, far more comfortable to support the great cause without getting killed. And, as the soldier poet Kapt Larghos the Lamé observes in his military rhythms, you can get just as dead in a petty skirmish as you can in a full-scale battle. He should know — he got himself killed in an ambush fifteen hundred seasons ago.

The need at the moment was to find the outside wall and go either through a gateway or over the wall and get clear of these gardens. They were highly unhealthy — for unwanted men.

Going on cautiously I crossed three more enclosed spaces of flowers. Apart from that mad dash to the left away from the arrows, I believed I'd kept to a straight line. Unless the villa possessed grounds of enormous extent I ought to be nearing the outer wall, surely, for the sweet sake of Opaz?

Or, perhaps I was running along this series of gardens parallel to the outer wall? "By the Black Chunkrah!" I said to myself. "That is not one of your more helpful notions, Dray Prescott."

The next garden contained a pool clearly designed for people to go swimming. The place was deserted, but from beyond the far wall floated the happy sounds of laughter and the clink of glasses. I stopped and listened.

You may believe me when I say I listened most carefully, most carefully indeed, by Krun!

Over in the jungles of South Pandahem we'd encountered the Cabaret Plant. This little beauty grew in the form of a large gourd with tendrils. It had the happy knack of making sounds as of a party to lure its victims to a carnivorous end. Seg and I had experience of the horrors which the dinkus of the forest call the Naree-Giver for they obtain the poison with which they tip their blowpipe darts. So, I stood and I tried to identify the merry sounds and the clink of bottles and glasses.

One thing was sure, I couldn't afford to hang around long. Those ferocious Bowmaids of Loh were after me and they'd shaft me on the spot. The idea that there might be Cabaret Plants growing here to yield their poison came as an ugly thought. Although, mind you, I didn't believe a Bowmaid of Loh needed to tip her deadly arrow heads with any poison.

Taking great care, I stuck an eyeball around the corner. Truth to tell, perhaps, the sight of a Cabaret Plant might have been more welcome than the scene that confronted me.

With caution I could have walked around and past a Cabaret Plant. There was no way I was going to pass this little lot. They were having a party, they were enjoying themselves, and they'd welcome me to their festivities as the human sacrifice to be offered up to whatever dark gods they worshipped.

The women wore precious little in the way of ordinary clothes. Sumptuous silks flowed from their shoulders

and trailed them across the grass. They wore artificially-high-heeled shoes. Their navels were bare and many wore jewels there. Their hair piled high in artful mountains of gems and loops of pearls. There was a great use of blown glass as ornament, glittering in the radiance of the Suns, twining around neck and arm and thigh. Every woman was veiled.

“I knew it!” I said to myself. “That damned gerblish onker of a Scorpion! Dropped me down into a harem. Right into a seraglio. This is where I’ll lose portions of my anatomy first, before they chop me up.” I felt quite warm. “That idiot Ahrinye and the Star Lords between ’em are out to do me down.” This was not strictly true, as I knew; but, as I say, I was somewhat warm by this time.

The harem women moved in loose graceful poses. The veils were light chiffon-like drapes, heightening the beauty and mystery of the concealed faces. Most of the poor creatures would be slave, and there was a very great deal of money parading about there. And, they were drinking and listening to the music from an enclosed balcony, and appeared not to be too displeased with their lot.

Time to go. I drew back cautiously and turned about. The other gate in this garden would have to lead somewhere useful, by Krun!

Padding off towards the gate and keeping my head turning I saw the lissom figures appear above the wall to my right rear. Here came the Bowmaids!

Running fleetly over the grass and jinking from side to side, I managed to avoid the lethal arrows sleeting in. If they brought up any more girls they'd put down a barrage no one, not even a Krozair of Zy, was going to run through unscathed.

With a last burst of energy I roared through the gateway. The ground here was uniformly covered by reddish orange gravel. No fountain sparkled at the centre. Instead a monstrous form towered up, shaggy, shambling, its six arms forming a wagon wheel of colossal power. Its four legs supported it in a half-upright position. Its eyes were large, like saucers, round and staring — staring at me! A red tongue licked out past rubbery lips and the gleam of yellow fangs was enough to put a breeze up anybody's spine.

The thing shambled over the gravel towards me. The six arms reached for me. High excited shouts at my rear told me there was no way back.

“By the Blade of Kurin,” I snarled to myself, and ripped out my sword. “If this is the way of it, then I'll make a jikai of it!”

**That's the end of the sampler. We hope you enjoyed it.
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About the author

Alan Burt Akers was a pen name of the prolific British author Kenneth Bulmer, who died in December 2005 aged eighty-four.

Bulmer wrote over 160 novels and countless short stories, predominantly science fiction, both under his real name and numerous pseudonyms, including Alan Burt Akers, Frank Brandon, Rupert Clinton, Ernest Corley, Peter Green, Adam Hardy, Philip Kent, Bruno Krauss, Karl Maras, Manning Norvil, Chesman Scot, Nelson Sherwood, Richard Silver, H. Philip Stratford, and Tully Zetford. Kenneth Johns was a collective pseudonym used for a collaboration with author John Newman. Some of Bulmer's works were published along with the works of other authors under "house names" (collective pseudonyms) such as Ken Blake (for a series of tie-ins with the 1970s television programme *The Professionals*), Arthur Frazier, Neil Langholm, Charles R. Pike, and Andrew Quiller.

Bulmer was also active in science fiction fandom, and in the 1970s he edited nine issues of the *New Writings* in

Science Fiction anthology series in succession to John Carnell, who originated the series.

More details about the author, and current links to other sources of information, can be found at www.mushroom-ebooks.com, and at wikipedia.org.

The Dray Prescott Series

The Delian Cycle:

1. Transit to Scorpio
2. The Suns of Scorpio
3. Warrior of Scorpio
4. Swordships of Scorpio
5. Prince of Scorpio

Havilfar Cycle:

6. Manhounds of Antares
7. Arena of Antares
8. Fliers of Antares
9. Bladesman of Antares
10. Avenger of Antares
11. Armada of Antares

The Krozair Cycle:

12. The Tides of Kregen
13. Renegade of Kregen
14. Krozair of Kregen

Vallian cycle:

15. Secret Scorpio
16. Savage Scorpio
17. Captive Scorpio
18. Golden Scorpio

Jikaida cycle:

19. A Life for Kregen
20. A Sword for Kregen
21. A Fortune for Kregen
22. A Victory for Kregen

Spikatur cycle:

23. Beasts of Antares
24. Rebel of Antares
25. Legions of Antares
26. Allies of Antares

Pandahem cycle:

27. Mazes of Scorpio
28. Delia of Vallia
29. Fires of Scorpio
30. Talons of Scorpio
31. Masks of Scorpio
32. Seg the Bowman

Witch War cycle:

33. Werewolves of Kregen
34. Witches of Kregen

35. Storm over Vallia
36. Omens of Kregen
37. Warlord of Antares

Lohvian cycle:

38. Scorpio Reborn
39. Scorpio Assassin
40. Scorpio Invasion
41. Scorpio Ablaze
42. Scorpio Drums
43. Scorpio Triumph

Balintol cycle:

44. Intrigue of Antares
45. Gangs of Antares
46. Demons of Antares
47. Scourge of Antares
48. Challenge of Antares
49. Wrath of Antares
50. Shadows over Kregen

Phantom cycle:

51. Murder on Kregen
52. Turmoil on Kregen

Notes

- [1] walfger: mister, monsieur, herr. *A.B.A.*
- [2] Wr.: Abbreviation for walfger. *A.B.A.*
- [3] dwabur: five miles. *A.B.A.*
- [4] See *Warrior of Scorpio*, Volume 3 of the Dray Prescott Saga. *A.B.A.*
- [5] fluttclepper flick: Hell for leather — very fast and risky speed. *A.B.A.*
- [6] Tighten your scabbard: Slang for ‘Don’t lose your temper’, ‘Don’t get off your bike.’ *A.B.A.*
- [7] The Kregish word for stranger is autmoil. *A.B.A.*
- [8] Dustrectium: As Kregen has no gunpowder, this is the word used for firepower, from bows, ballistae, catapults, etc. *A.B.A.*
- [9] poor glahbers: equates with ‘poor devils’. An expression of pity. *A.B.A.*
- [10] See Dray Prescott volume 37, being volume 4 of the Witch War Cycle, *Warlord of Kregen*. *A.B.A.*
- [11] Jibrfaril: pain lover, in the sense of taking pleasure from giving pain. *A.B.A.*