



## Calamity (The Reckoners)

By Brandon Sanderson

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**Calamity (The Reckoners)** By Brandon Sanderson

**Order the sequel to the #1 *New York Times* bestselling novel *Firefight* today!**

From the bestselling author of the Mistborn series and *Words of Radiance* comes *Calamity*, the final book in the #1 *New York Times* bestselling Reckoners series: *Steelheart*, *Firefight*, and *Calamity*.

When *Calamity* lit up the sky, the Epics were born. David's fate has been tied to their villainy ever since that historic night. *Steelheart* killed his father. *Firefight* stole his heart. And now *Regalia* has turned his closest ally into a dangerous enemy.

David knew Prof's secret, and kept it even when Prof struggled to control the effects of his Epic powers. But facing Obliteration in Babilar was too much. Once the Reckoners' leader, Prof has now embraced his Epic destiny. He's disappeared into those murky shadows of menace Epics are infamous for the world over, and everyone knows there's no turning back. . . .

But everyone is wrong. Redemption is possible for Epics—Megan proved it. They're not lost. Not completely. And David is just about crazy enough to face down the most powerful High Epic of all to get his friend back. Or die trying.

### **Praise for the Reckoners Series:**

#### ***#1 New York Times Bestselling Series***

"The **suspense is relentless** and the **climax explosive.**" —James Dashner, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of the *Maze Runner* series

"**Another win for Sanderson . . . he's simply a brilliant writer.** Period."  
—Patrick Rothfuss, author of the *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestseller *The Name of the Wind*

"**Action-packed.**" —EW.com

"**Compelling.** . . . Sanderson uses plot twists that he teases enough for readers to pick up on to distract from the more dramatic reveals he has in store." —*The A.V. Club*

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## Editorial Review

Review

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**★“Snappy dialogue, bizarre plot twists, high-intensity action, and a touch of mystery and romance . . . leaves [readers] panting for the sequel.”** —*Booklist*, Starred

**“An absolute page-turner.”**—*Publishers Weekly*

**“A straight-up Marvel Comics-style action drama.”**—*Kirkus Reviews*

About the Author

Brandon Sanderson is the author of the #1 *New York Times* bestselling Reckoners series: *Steelheart*, *Firefight*, and *Calamity*, as well as the internationally bestselling books in the Stormlight Archive and the Mistborn trilogy. He was also chosen to complete Robert Jordan's *The Wheel of Time* series. His books have been published in more than twenty-five languages and have sold millions of copies worldwide. He lives and writes in Utah. To learn more about Brandon and his books, visit him at [brandonsanderson.com](http://brandonsanderson.com) and follow @BrandSanderson on Twitter.

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1

The sun peeked over the horizon like the head of a giant radioactive manatee. I crouched, hidden in a tree of all places. I'd forgotten how weird the things smell.

“We good?” I whispered over the line. Instead of using mobiles, we were relying on old radios we'd rigged to work with headsets. The audio snapped and popped as I spoke. Primitive technology, but essential for this

job.

“Wait a sec,” Megan said. “Cody, you in position?”

“Sure am,” crackled the reply, laced with a calm Southern drawl. “If anyone tries to sneak up on you, lass, I’ll put a bullet up his nose.”

“Ew,” Mizzy said over the line.

“We’ll move in five,” I said from my perch. Cody had called the contraption I was using a “tree stand,” which was really a glorified camp chair strapped some thirty feet up the trunk of an elm. Hunters had used them back in the day for hiding from game.

I put my Gottschalk--a sleek, military--style assault rifle--to my shoulder and sighted through the trees. Normally, in this sort of situation I’d be sighting on an Epic: one of the super-powered individuals who terrorized the world. I was a Reckoner, same as my team, dedicated to bringing down dangerous Epics.

Unfortunately, life for the Reckoners had stopped making sense about two months ago. Our leader, Prof, was an Epic himself--and had been caught in a rival’s intricate plot to find a successor. Consumed by his powers, he had left Regalia’s empire in Babilar, but had taken with him her hard drives, complete with notes and secrets. We intended to stop him. And that led me here.

To a large castle.

Seriously. A castle. I’d figured those were just in old movies and foreign countries, yet here one was hidden in the woods of West Virginia. And despite the modern metal gates and high-tech security system, this place looked like it had been around since long before Calamity appeared in the sky--lichen covered the stonework, and vines twisted up one of the weathered walls.

Pre-Calamity people had been weird. Awesome too--evidence: castle--but still pretty weird.

I looked away from my scope and glanced at Abraham, who was hiding in a nearby tree. I could pick him out

only because I knew exactly what to look for. His dark outfit blended well into the dappled shades of morning, which was--our informant said--the besttime to assault this particular location: Shewbrent Castle, also known as the Knighthawk Foundry. The world's primary source of Epic-derived technology. We'd used their weapons and tech to fight Steelheart, then Regalia.

Now we were going to rob them.

"Everyone have their mobiles off?" I asked over the line. "Batteries out?"

"You've asked that three times already, David," Megan replied.

"Check anyway."

They all gave the affirmative, and I took a deep breath. So far as we knew, we were the last cell of Reckoners. Two months in and we still had no sign of Tia, which meant she was probably dead. That left me in charge--though I'd gotten the job by default. Abraham and Cody had laughed when I'd asked if they wanted it, while Mizzy had gone stiff as a board and almost started hyperventilating.

Now we were putting my plan in motion. My crazy, foolhardy, incredible plan. Honestly, I was terrified.

My watch buzzed. Go time.

"Megan," I said into my radio, "you're up."

"On it."

I shouldered my rifle again, peering through the trees toward where Megan would launch her assault. I felt blind. With my mobile, I could have tapped into Megan's view to follow her attack, or I could have at least brought up a local map and watched my team represented as blips. Our mobiles, however, had been built and distributed by Knighthawk--who also maintained the secure network they ran on. Using those to coordinate an attack on Knighthawk's own installation seemed about as smart as using toothpaste for salad dressing.

“Engaging,” Megan said, and soon a pair of explosions shook the air. I scanned through my scope and picked out the smoke trails rising in the sky, but couldn’t see Megan; she was on the other side of the castle. Her job was to make a frontal assault, and those blasts had been grenades she’d thrown at the front gate.

Attacking the Knighthawk Foundry was, of course, absolutely suicidal. We all knew this, but we were also desperate, low on resources, and being hunted by Jonathan Phaedrus himself. Knighthawk refused to deal with us, and had gone completely silent to our requests.

Our choices had been to try to take on Prof unequipped, or to come here and see what we could steal. This seemed the better of two bad options.

“Cody?” I asked.

“She’s doing fine, lad,” he said over the crackling radio line. “It looks just like that video. The place released drones right after the explosions happened.”

“Pick off what you can,” I said.

“Roger.”

“Mizzy?” I said. “You’re up.”

“Groovy.”

I hesitated. “Groovy? Is that some kind of code word?”

“You don’t know .??. Sparks, David, you can be a real square sometimes.” Her words were punctuated by another series of explosions, larger this time. My tree shook from the shock waves.

I didn’t need my scope to see the smoke rising from my right, along the castle’s flank. Soon after the blast, a group of basketball-sized drones--sleek and metallic, with propellers on top--popped from windows and flew



toward the smoke. Larger machines rolled out of shadowed alcoves; spindly and about as tall as a person, each had a gun arm on the top and moved on tracks instead of wheels.

I followed these with my scope as they started firing into the woods where Mizzy had planted flares in buckets to give off heat signatures. Remotely firing machine guns enhanced the illusion that a large squad of soldiers was out there hiding. We kept all the shots aimed high. We didn't want Abraham in the crossfire when it was his turn to move.

The Knighthawk defense played out exactly as we'd been shown on the video from our informant. Nobody had ever successfully breached the place, but many had tried. One group, a reckless paramilitary force out of Nashville, had taken videos, and we'd managed to get copies. Best we could guess, most of the time all of those drones were inside patrolling the hallways. Now, however, they were out fighting.

Hopefully that would give us an opening.

"All right, Abraham," I said into the line, "your turn. I'll cover."

"And off I go," Abraham said softly. The careful, dark-skinned man rode a thin cable down from his tree, then slipped silently across the forest floor. Though he was thick of arm and neck, Abraham moved with surprising nimbleness as he reached the wall, which was still shadowed in the early-morning light. His tight infiltration outfit would mask his heat signature, at least as long as the heat sinks on his belt were functional.

His job was to sneak into the Foundry, steal whatever weapons or technology he could find, and get out in under fifteen minutes. We had basic maps from our informant claiming that the labs and factories on the bottom floor of the castle were stuffed with goodies ripe for the plucking.

I watched Abraham nervously through my scope--pulling the aim point to the right so an accidental discharge wouldn't hit him--to make sure no drones spotted him.

They didn't. He used a retractable line to get to the top of the short wall, then another to reach the castle's roof. He hid beside one of the crenellations while he prepared his next step.

"There's an opening to your right, Abraham," I said into the line. "One of the drones popped out of a hole beneath the window on that tower."

“Groovy,” Abraham said, though the word sounded particularly odd coming from him, with his smooth French accent.

“Please tell me that’s not a real word,” I said, then raised my gun to follow him along as he made for the opening.

“Why wouldn’t it be?” Mizzy asked.

“It just sounds weird.”

“And things we say today don’t? ‘Sparks’? ‘Slontze’?”

“Those are normal,” I said. “Not weird at all.” A flying drone passed by, but fortunately my suit was masking my heat signature. That was good, since the wetsuitlike clothing was pretty darn uncomfortable. Though mine wasn’t as bad as Abraham’s; his had a face mask and everything. To a drone I’d have a tiny heat signature, like a squirrel or something. A secretly very, very deadly squirrel.

Abraham reached the alcove I’d pointed out. Sparks, that man was good at sneaking. In the moment since I’d looked away, I’d lost him, and had trouble locating him again. He had to have some kind of special forces training.

“There’s a door in here, unfortunately,” Abraham said from his alcove. “It must close after the machines exit. I will try to hot-wire my way in.”

“Great,” I said. “Megan, you good?”

“Alive,” she said, puffing. “For now.”

“How many drones can you see?” I asked. “Have they rolled out the larger ones on you yet? Can--”

“Little busy, Knees,” she snapped.

I settled back, anxiously listening to the gunfire and explosions. I wanted to be out there in the mess, firing and fighting, but that wouldn't make sense. I wasn't stealthy like Abraham or .??. well, immortal like Megan. Having an Epic such as her on the team was certainly an advantage. They could handle this. My job as leader was to hang back and make judgment calls.

It sucked.

Was this how Prof had felt during missions he supervised? He had usually waited it out, leading from behind the scenes. I hadn't realized how tough that would be. Well, if there was one thing I'd learned in Babilar, it was that I needed to rein in my hotheadedness. I needed to be like .??. half a hothead instead. A hot chin?

So I waited as Abraham worked. If he couldn't get in soon, I'd have to call off the mission. The longer this took, the greater the chances that the mysterious people who ran the Foundry would discover that our “army” was only five people.

“Status, Abraham?” I said.

“I think I can get this open,” he said. “Just a little longer.”

“I don't .??.” I trailed off. “Wait a sec, what was that?”

A low rumbling was coming from nearby. I scanned below me and was surprised to see the mulchy forest floor buckling. Leaves and moss folded back, revealing a metal doorway. Another group of drones flew out of it, zipping past my tree.

“Mizzy,” I hissed into my headset. “Other drones are trying to flank your position.”

“Bummer,” Mizzy said. She hesitated a moment. “Do you--”

“Yes, I know that word. You might need to institute the next phase.” I glanced down at the opening, which was rumbling closed. “Be prepared; it looks like the Foundry has tunnels leading out to the forest. They’ll be able to deploy drones from unexpected positions.”

The door below stopped, half shut. I frowned, leaning down to get a better look. It appeared that some dirt and rocks had fallen into one of the door’s gears. Guess that was the problem with hiding your entrance in the middle of a forest.

“Abraham,” I said into my headset, excited, “the opening out here jammed open. You could get in this way.”

“I think that might be difficult,” he said, and I looked back up to note that a couple of drones had retreated after a barrage of explosions from Mizzy’s side. They hovered near Abraham’s position.

“Sparks,” I whispered, then raised my rifle and picked the two machines off with a pair of shots. They fell; we’d come prepared with bullets that fried electronics when they hit. I didn’t know how they worked, but they’d cost basically everything we could scrounge up in trade, including the copter that Cody and Abraham had escaped Newcago in. It was too conspicuous anyway.

“Thanks for the assist,” Abraham said as the drones dropped.

Beneath me, the gears on the opening scraped against one another, trying to force their way closed. The door moved another inch.

“This entrance is going to close any second,” I said. “Get here fast.”

“Stealthy is not fast, David,” Abraham said.

I glanced at that opening. Newcago was lost to us; Prof had already attacked and ransacked all of our safehouses there. We’d barely gotten Edmund--another of our Epic allies--out to a safe hiding spot.

The people of Newcago were terrified. Babilar was little better: few resources to be had, and old minions of Regalia’s were keeping an eye on the place, serving Prof now.

If this robbery went bust, we'd be broke. We'd have to set up somewhere off the map and try to rebuild over the next year, which would leave Prof with free rein to rampage. I wasn't sure what he was up to, why he'd left Babilar so quickly, but it bespoke some kind of plot or plan. Jonathan Phaedrus, now consumed by his powers, wouldn't be content to sit in a city and rule. He had ambitions.

He could be the most dangerous Epic this world had ever known. My stomach twisted at that thought. I couldn't justify any more delays.

"Cody," I said. "Can you see and cover Abraham?"

"Just a sec," he said. "Yeah, I got 'im."

"Good," I said. "Because I'm going in. You have ops."

2

I slid down my rope and hit the forest floor, crunching dried leaves. Ahead of me, the door to the hole finally started moving again. With a yelp, I dashed toward the opening in the ground and jumped in, skidding a short distance down a shallow ramp as the door closed with a final grinding sound behind me.

I was in. Also, likely trapped.

So .??. yay?

Faint emergency lights running along the walls revealed a sloping tunnel that was rounded at the top like a

giant's throat. The incline wasn't very steep, so I climbed to my feet and started inching down the slope, gun at my shoulder. I switched my radio, carried at my hip, to a different frequency--protocol for whoever made it into the Foundry, to let me focus. The others would know how to reach me.

The dimness made me want to flip on my mobile, which could double as a flashlight, but I restrained myself. Who knew what kind of backdoors the Knighthawk Foundry might have built into the things? In fact, who knew what the phones were truly capable of? They had to be some kind of Epic-derived technology. Phones that worked under any circumstances with signals that couldn't be intercepted? I'd grown up in a pit underneath Newcago, but even I realized how fantastical that was.

I reached the bottom of the incline and flipped on my scope's night-vision and thermal settings. Sparks, this was an awesome gun. The silent corridor stretched out before me, nothing but smooth metal, floor to ceiling. Considering its length, the tunnel had to lead under the Foundry walls and into the compound; it was probably an access corridor.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Jeremy Bryant:**

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