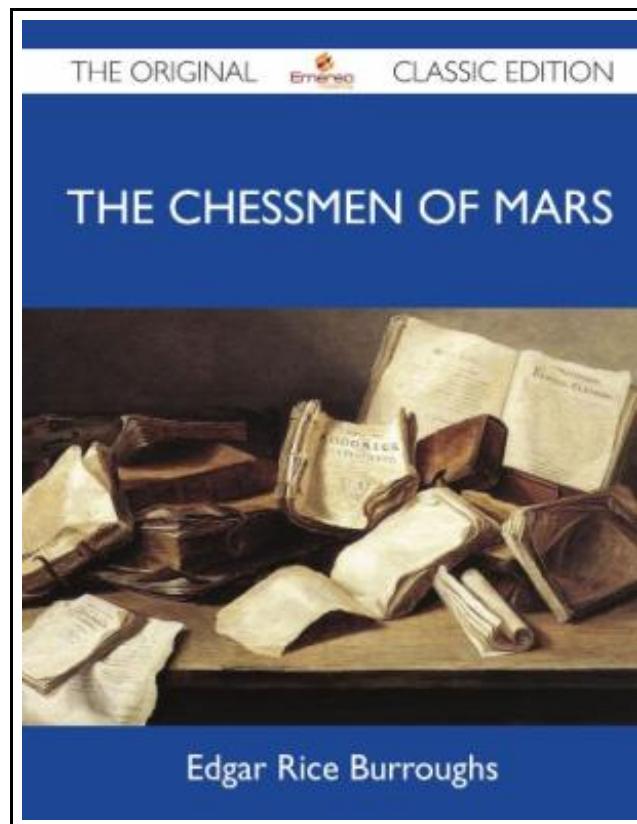


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Reviews

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tebbo. Paperback. Condition: New. 106 pages. Dimensions: 9.7in. x 7.4in. x 0.2in. Burroughs Best Martian Tale - Conventional wisdom has it that the first three books of Burroughs Martian series, A Princess of Mars, The Gods of Mars, and The Warlord of Mars form an excellent trilogy and all the rest of the Martian tales are quite poorly done in comparison. You will disagree. Here are two examples as to why Chessmen is Burroughs best work in this series. 1 You can hardly conceive of a more ghastly creature than a spider-being who lives as a parasite on headless human bodies, but that is a perfect description of Ghek the Kaldane, one of the central figures of the book. Burroughs takes this repulsive monstrosity and makes him such a loveable character that you cannot help but like him. 2 Burroughs not only wrote a good yarn, he wrapped his tale around a striking boardgame that he had invented-jetan, or Martian chess. Its no real trick to invent a chess variant. There are thousands of them, and most of them are rubbish. What is so singular about jetan is that it is a good chess variant. I read Chessmen as a child, and after reading it, the first thing I had to do was make a jetan set and play the game. I whiled away several enjoyable hours with the game. John Gollon, a noted authority on chess variants, had a similar experience when he was writing Chess Variations. He thought hed include a chapter on jetan for some comic relief, so he made a jetan set and played a few games. He found jetan quite good-very playable and interesting. He then pronounced jetan not a mere novelty, but . . . a respectable game. These two singular achievements (Ghek and jetan)...

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