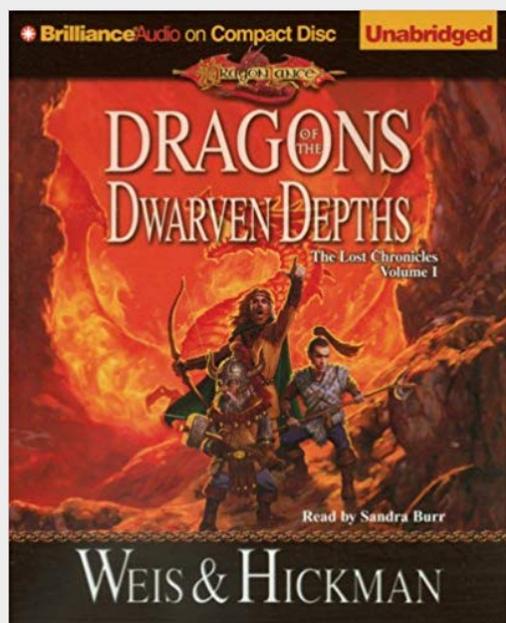


Dragons of the Dwarven Depths: The Lost Chronicles, Volume I (Lost Chronicles Trilogy) by Sandra Burr, Margaret Weis



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The Companions are back in the first volume that features an untold story from the War of the Lance. The beloved heroes return: Tanis, Raistlin and Caramon, Sturm Brightblade, Tasslehoff, and Flint Fireforge. Old friends, such as Riverwind and Goldmoon and Laurana travel with them. Old enemies are here too, as the companions encounter new adventures and new dangers in the very beginning months of the War of the Lance.

This audiobook starts with the celebration of a wedding. The companions believe they have slain the evil Dragon Highlord Verminaard. They have rescued the refugees from Pax Tharkas and taken them to a valley in the Kharolis mountains.

After they are attacked by the Dragon Armies, Tanis and Flint are sent to search for the long lost dwarven kingdom of Thorbardin, hoping to persuade the dwarves to give the refugees shelter for winter.

Each of the other companions face their own trials. Raistlin remembers that, according to tales of old, the key to Thorbardin lies in the haunted fortress known as Skullcap. The others want nothing to do with this accursed place, but Raistlin feels strangely drawn to the ruins, and he persuades a reluctant Caramon to accompany him there.

Sturm becomes obsessed with finding the legendary Hammer of Kharas, and his obsession nearly plunges the party into disaster. Riverwind, now chieftain of his tribe, is made the reluctant leader of the refugees and worries that he is not suited for the task. Tika Waylan must decide if she has the courage to undertake a perilous journey to save those she loves from certain death, while Tanis Half-Elven wrestles with his faith in the newly returned gods.

It is the dwarf, Flint Fireforge, who faces the most crucial test. As the heroes race against time to save the lives of the innocents dependent on them, Flint is forced to make a difficult choice, one on which the future of mankind may rest. And the only one he can depend on for help is the happy-go-lucky kender, Tasslehoff Burrfoot.

For a time, it seems they have found a safe haven in the dwarven kingdom, only to discover there is no safe place anywhere in this world, as the Queen of Darkness and her dragons set the land aflame.



Reviews of the **Dragons of the Dwarven Depths: The Lost Chronicles, Volume I (Lost Chronicles Trilogy)** by Sandra Burr, Margaret Weis

1. Gom

This review looks at the Kindle version of "Dragons of Dwarven Depths" by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman.

Fantasy readers should not begrudge Weis and Hickman for returning to the story that started the Dragonlance franchise but they should have concerns. Far better writers have failed to recapture past magic when they returned to past subjects (for example, Hemingway's "The Dangerous Summer" simply can not live up to the same ground he covered before in "Death in the Afternoon"). Thankfully Weis and Hickman avoid the major pitfalls. This book does not take any luster off the original Dragonlance

Chronicles.

"Dragons of Dwarven Depths" is a solid if unspectacular addition to the series. There is a certain joy in seeing beloved characters interact with one another and the writers send more than a few knowing winks the reader's way since we know more about the plot than the characters do at this point.

Some of the best parts of the Dragonlance series focused on the intimate moments; when the companions seemed more concerned with their own survival and what was in front of them than the epic wars for control of Krynn. Weis and Hickman are able to present some very good scenes when they can think small; when Tika and Tas face dangers; when Raistlin, Caramon and Sturm explore a dungeon; when Tanis and Flint look for a lost city. When Weis and Hickman try to show the bigger picture (for example, Riverwind leading an army of refugees or an in-depth take on dwarf tribal politics), the authors simply lose the narrative and the reader loses interest.

There remain some problems with the book. This book suffers from poor editing; poor copy editing and poor plot editing. One of the chief reasons Weis and Hickman split the Companions apart in "Dragons of Winter's Night" is they could not focus on character development when there are too many actors on the stage at once. That's a problem here since Tanis, Tas, Flint, Caramon, Raistlin, Laurana, Tika, Sturm, Riverwind, Goldmoon, Elistan, Gilthanas, even Hedrik the Theocrat. not to mention a host of new dwarven characters and villains, fight for page time. Tolstoy may have been able to pull the strings on so many puppets but Weis and Hickman simply are not up to that level. For example, the first part of the novel shows more focus and depth on Tika than almost any other part of the series. She's invisible the second half of the book. One has to also concede that the first half of the book is much more gripping than the second half--and no, that has nothing to do with Tika.

Despite these flaws, the authors are able to hold the book together through good characters and a decent enough plot. If Weis and Hickman did nothing to take the series to greater heights in this book, they at least did not tarnish their previous glories.

I gave the book four stars--but I have to give a lower ranking to the Kindle version. Words blend into one. Spelling mistakes not in the original book can be found in the Kindle version. Spacing is atrocious as paragraphs are jammed together. This comes off as amateurishness and readers should expect better from the published of a well established series like Dragonlance.

2. Skillet

Having won a small skirmish in the War of the Lance, the companions (with several hundred newly-freed slaves-turned-refugees), are holed up in a valley, hopefully to wait out the bitter, unforgiving winter and proceed to safety with the first thaws. Resourceful and street-smart, they are aware that defeating a single commander is hardly sufficient to topple a cohesive military unit and throw the remaining draconian and human troops into chaos.

Their fears prove true after their nemesis, Verminaard, is resurrected and flexes his muscle over his escaped prizes. And so begins a desperate rush for survival and shelter in Thorbardin.

There are almost no rehashings of events that occurred in the trilogy's first third, enabling the authors to leap right into the story, showing us glimpses into the Draconian plots as well as the struggles of the heroes.

Surm and Flint are fleshed out in detail, and they become more mature as well as composite characters, engendering rage as well as pity and sympathy from readers. Reorx himself makes a brief appearance, and shows an unexpectedly playful, almost capricious side to himself. There are references to the Dragonlance Legends saga and these will doubtlessly be of interest to fans of those books as well as new fans who have read *Dragons of Autumn Twilight*.

3. Wishamac

Do you need to read this book to make sense of the Dragonlance series? Not at all. But there are two good reasons to do so:

1. If you are a fan of the RPG adventures, and you wondered how they might reconcile the Verminaard's end in the novels with Verminaard's end in the adventures, you should probably read this.
2. If you just want one more shot at reading the classic version of the

Heroes of the Lance, all together, acting the way you remember them acting, you should probably read this.

It's fun, it fills in some gaps, and it's like visiting old friends. If you have the time, pick it up and get some warm feelings and nostalgia from the read.

Disclaimer: If you aren't already nostalgic for the original series, it's probably not worth your time.

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