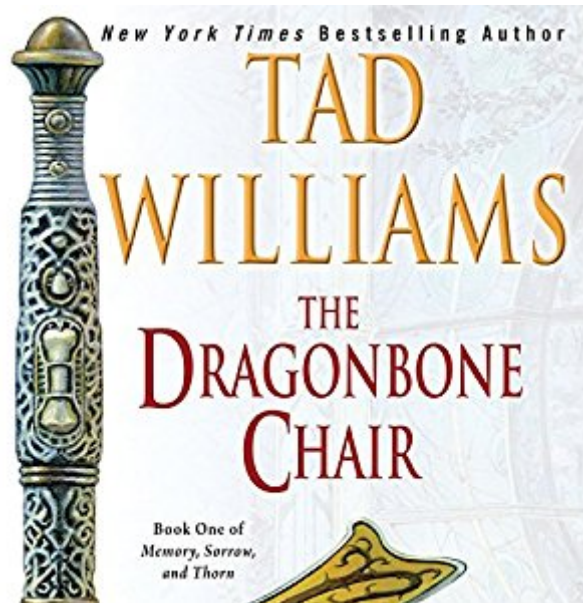


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The Dragonbone Chair: Memory, Sorrow, And Thorn, Book One



Synopsis

A war fueled by the dark powers of sorcery is about to engulf the peaceful land of Osten Ard - for Prester John, the High King, slayer of the dread dragon Shurakai, lies dying. And with his death, an ancient evil will at last be unleashed, as the Storm King, undead ruler of the elvishlike Siti, seeks to regain his lost realm through a pact with one of human royal blood. Then, driven by spell-inspired jealousy and hate, prince will fight prince, while around them the very land begins to die. Only a small scattered group, the League of the Scroll, recognizes the true danger awaiting Osten Ard. And to Simon - a castle scullion unknowingly apprenticed to a member of this League - will go the task of spearheading the quest for the solution to a riddle of long-lost swords of power...and a quest that will see him fleeing and facing enemies straight out of a legend maker's worst nightmares!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the better of those epic fantasy sagas that are out there. Strong writing, good characters and superior world-building are marred only by a lack of originality in the plot. The story is essentially the same as in most other fantasy trilogies since Lord of the Rings. The invincible evil guy is back from the dead and out for revenge, so the lowly, unknowledgeable kid is suddenly thrust out, aided by a cadre of unlikely characters, to find some sort of talisman to stop the evil dude before he destroys the world, or at least messes it up too badly. However, this same-old story comes off very well due to the author's skill. The world-building in this story is very good. The entire population of the world doesn't all speak the same language, or have the same religion, or get along with each other. The author doesn't use the same old mix of elves and dwarves and goblins so

frequently encountered in other stories of the sort. Rather, we get new races which are essentially the same as the familiar, but with some differences. The characters are also superb. Simon, the boy, is likable, believable, and pitiable, and his characterization is not only good, but it's consistent. The characters grow logically and believably in this story. Of course, there are some of the compulsory characters as well. There's the witch-woman who's the equivalent of Tolkien's Tom Bombadil, the mentor-figure who dies before he can reveal too much, and the travelling companion who seems to know everything. The story proceeds logically, but at times it difficult to get through. The names of people and places are exotic and unneededly difficult to pronounce. And the story doesn't even really take off for more than 200 pages.

The first time I read this series (on the advice of a friend), I found it hard to get through the first half of 'The Dragonbone Chair'. At the time, the only fantasy I had read was Tolkien and a select few mixed series. I was ready to read an epic fantasy, with all the battles and magic to match. What I found Myself reading was a less-than-epic story of the mundane exploits of a kitchen-boy. Or so I thought. After I got the "feel" for the book It really opened up. For the first time I found Myself actually caring for the characters I was reading about (something even Tolkien's Masterpiece didn't entirely do for Me). Tad Williams writes with a very personal style, actively and effortlessly making you a part of his tale, while bringing such a sense of reality to the unreal it's uncanny. Almost nothing in this series seems completely unbelievable. From the undying Sithi, to the little folk of the 'Troll-Fells', every character in these books seem like someone you know (or wish you knew). How they act. How they think. You're in their heads for better or worse. And the reality of it is dazzling! All My Gung-ho loyalties aside, this was an amazing series. As afore-mentioned, What really hooked Me with this series was the realism. I'm sure for some of the die-hard fantasy readers out there, this may sound like an affront on the flashy/Magic-laden fantasy that has been a staple of their literary cuisine. But with Mr. Williams in the kitchen, fantasy and reality mesh into a most enjoyable morsel that goes down easy and leaves you ravenous for more. And yes this series does contain magic. But even magic is given a realistic twist (for the most part). Usually being referred to as "the art", and being applied through the means of natural law.

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