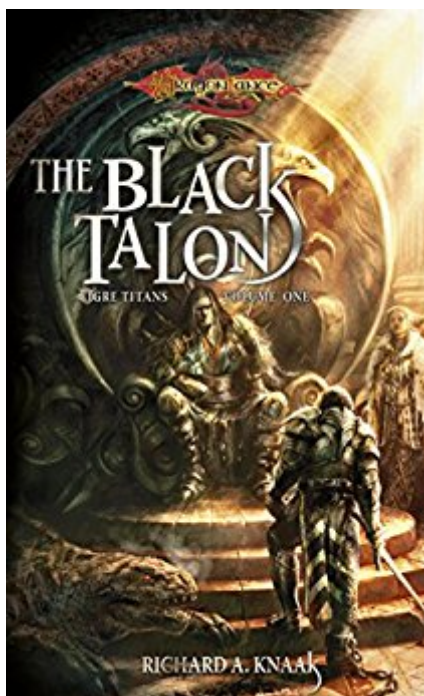


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The Black Talon: Ogre Titans, Volume One



Synopsis

An ancient ogre empire threatens cataclysm for all in this new Dragonlance(R) trilogy! With a dire enemy now seated on the throne of the minotaur empire, the one-handed half-breed ogre Golgren returns to his own realm on the mainland and uses brutal means to consolidate his power and forge unlikely alliances. He must cope with an elite band of sorcerers, whose magical tactics are not easily thwarted. These Ogre Titans--led by their inner circle, the Black Talon--emerge as his greatest rivals. Golgren's obsession to resurrect the glorious past of the ogre race will engulf humans and elves, but may ultimately be decided by a deadly, capricious god. From the Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

Always interesting, seeing the ogres of Krynn being fleshed out. And they are just as nasty as you might think. Once a race of beautiful, godlike magic-using quasi-immortals, extreme ogre decadence led to their degeneration into the hideous giants D&D players know and love. And it is

that nigh-forgotten past that drives the action of this novel. Golgren, a half-ogre of most unusual parentage, has a dream for the ogre race; Dauroth, leader of the Ogre Titans, has another dream entirely. Neither is willing to compromise, and so conflict is inevitable. Be warned: This novel depicts ogres for what they are: Brutish, hideous giant thugs, who exist seemingly to engage in war, rape, torture and other evils. While none of the above is explicitly shown, it is still pretty clear what ogre society is like. And, believe it or not, an incredibly twisted and unlikely love story begins to emerge. All in all, well worth your money.

Black Talon by Richard A. Knaak is the first volume in the Ogre Titan trilogy. The other two books are scheduled to be called The Fire Rose set for release in December of 2008, and The Gargoyle King set for release in December 2009. This trilogy marks the return of Mr. Knaak to the Dragonlance universe since he last wrote Empire of Blood to finish off the Minotaur War trilogy. With Black Talon, Mr. Knaak proves that he has not missed a beat and if possible, has learned a few new tricks along the way. When I finished reading this book, I ended with the distinct impression that things are about to change in the Dragonlance universe. I will not say much on it, because I don't want to spoil things, but the change has been a long time coming and certainly a positive thing in my eyes. When first picking up this novel, readers will notice it is not your typical Dragonlance book. In fact, this novel has about one hundred more pages. Mr. Knaak uses every one of those additional pages to his benefit. The plot of this book is multi-layered, deep, complex, and by all means interesting. The main plot centers around Golgren, whom fans will remember from previous books. The main story arc follows Golgren as he rises the social ladder of the ogres and how ruthless he has to be to hold any power. It also hints about what his plans are should he gain the power he is seeking. The first main sub-plot is that of the ogre titans and their plans both for working with Golgren and what their other plans are. Another sub-plot centers on the elf slave Idaria, and how she may be more than she presents herself to be. There is also a small sub-plot regarding a Solomnic Knight. Additionally, there are several other pieces mixed in that I can not talk about for fear of spoiling anything, but I must say this is one of the deepest Dragonlance books I have read in a long time. Mr. Knaak obviously has a vision for not only this trilogy, but a bigger vision for Dragonlance as a whole. Traditional Dragonlance fans may be a little shocked at the overall 'feel' of this novel. This is not the classic Dragonlance novel. What I mean by that is it is much darker and grittier than the vast majority of Dragonlance books out there today. There seems to be a shift towards a darker, bloodier, more violent setting. The ruthlessness of the ogres does a lot to bring those feelings out, but I think it is more than that as well. I am really looking forward to seeing if this

is a permanent shift or just for this particular trilogy. I for one am hoping at least some of this grittiness stays. Only time will tell though. The characters in this are a very good mix, there is Golgren who is an ogre with one hand seeking to become a leader in a race that prides itself on its physical prowess. There is Dauroth who is the ogre titan leader and obviously has schemes of his own, whether they coincide with Golgren or not remains to be seen. Then there is Idaria, the elf slave who may have her own agenda. There are countless other characters as well, but in order to keep this review at a reasonable word count I won't bring them all up. Suffice it to say that there are many characters present in this novel, and each one has a purpose. In some novels I have read, there are characters simply to add filler and take up space. Not so with this novel. Every character has a reason for being in each scene, even if the reader is not privy to that reason right away. One thing I really like about the characters is the tremendous character development. All of the main characters develop rather significantly during the novel. I am really impressed due to the size of the novel how much actual development is in here. Also, Mr. Knaak did a very good job at giving each character their own voice and allowing the reader to see each character as unique. My only criticism of this book, and this may be a personal bias, is there are many times when Mr. Knaak used the 'ogre tongue' for actual dialog. While this is a nice touch, there are times when he does this that the reader is left wondering what was just said. It was like watching a foreign movie with no subtitles. It took away, a little bit, from the overall feel of the novel due to the fact that I would then have to try and see if I could figure it out. Instead of the reading process being smooth there were small gaps. Mr. Knaak's pacing and prose lend themselves well to this type of novel. He has shown with the Minotaur Wars trilogy that he can write strong characters among other strong characters. This novel proves no differently. While in reality this is only a four hundred page novel, once I finished I would have sworn it was at least six hundred just due to how much was really involved and conveyed with this novel. I really like the overall feeling that Mr. Knaak leaves the reader with, that being there are some changes ahead for the Dragonlance setting. Maybe that is just me, but hopefully that turns out to be true. Overall, if you are a fan of Dragonlance this book needs to vault to the top of your must read list. There are many elements that fans will pick up on and recognize, but there is also a sense of newness that permeates this novel. It's very refreshing to read a Dragonlance novel like this. I also think that fantasy fans in general will enjoy this book as it's a very solid addition to the fantasy genre. While Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman may be finishing their last Dragonlance book, Mr. Knaak has proved that he can carry that torch for years to come. I for one am eager to see where he takes us. This is certainly a book I will be recommending to others.

It was good to read about a completely different race than most other fantasy series. I don't think the author gave enough background about ogres but you get enough of a feeling about them to enjoy the book. I also like the titans and the tension and mistrust between them and the ogres. I thought the storyline was different than other books as well which added to its appeal. It was entertaining enough for me to want to read the next book in the series.

New read The human added a great tie in to the story that made it believable. The halfbreed made for a great success story which made it enjoyable.

Consistent story although there is no delving deeply into reader and character symbiosis. The story is sound and you do scratch the surface of beginning to relate to the characters. I do realize that there are two more books in the trilogy so this may just be the intro and the stories and characterization get deeper

Good story line and kept me entertained

This is a great read the author is fantastic. I have read some other fantasy books that were not this good. I could not put it down.

It has been a while for not diving into the Dragonlance world. Good book and very interesting story about Ogre.

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