

Dark Lord's Fury: The Dark Passage Chronicles

Raven R. Worthington

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Imaginative and ambitious, Worthington's tale is truly an epic adventure.

Dark Lord's Fury, the second book of the Dark Passage Chronicles by Raven R. Worthington, continues the epic adventures of the Seaton family's battle against the evil that threatens their kingdom. The ambitious tale explores themes of destiny and betrayal, with an ending that clearly leaves the door open for the next installment of the series.

As his wife, Melina, travels to the safety of Castle Petoshine to protect their soon-to-be-born child—the prophesied future savior of the land—warrior prince Caprius Seaton fights hordes of undead creatures in the continued effort to halt the uprising of the dark lord Makoor. Joined by beautiful fellow warrior Calista, Caprius follows a trail of evil, consistently besieged by vampires and other creatures of darkness, and aided by the supernatural powers contained in his claymore.

Worthington's tale is truly an epic adventure, branching off in different directions as it follows the various main characters, continuously adding to the roster of evil beings along the way. The central threat to the heroes is the vampires, whose numbers reach thousands, and who are varied and complex in their appearance and abilities. Some are able to switch between human and vampire forms, while others seem unable to do so. Still others are afforded more extreme powers through mysteriously acquired flasks of the dark lord's blood.

Although the momentum of the plot is effective, there are a fairly large number of typos and grammatical errors. Characterization is mostly thorough, though relationships among characters often lack some credibility, and most characters' loyalty to one another is mercurial.

There is an overall lack of attention to detail, apparent in the omission of necessary explanations of events and character behavior. For instance, Melina must travel to Castle Petoshine to obtain the protection of the wizard Grongone, and it is noted that she must be separated from husband, Caprius, for twelve years; however, no justification is given for the separation, and the actual length of time remains unclear. In another instance, a member of the royal Seaton family relates a memory of becoming a member of the undead, though no explanation for his apparent resurrection is given in this installment of the series.

The plot sometimes seems forced. Readers may find it curious that powers afforded the Seaton brothers can be rather easily transferred to another, arguably less worthy individual; the anointment of the new knight ultimately feels contrived to force the plot in a certain direction. Similarly, while main characters often seem to have some difficulty with one-on-one battles, their claymores become powerful enough to kill thousands of vampires at a time. Readers may wonder at the subjective use of the powerful swords.

Dark Lord's Fury is imaginative and ambitious, and has the potential to become a more engaging tale. More careful attention to detail and character development, in addition to more effective proofreading and editing, is certain to prove beneficial to what could be a very worthy novel.

JEANNINE CHARTIER HANSCOM (January 17, 2014)

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