



The Dragon's Legacy

Deborah A. Wolf

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Deborah A. Wolf's *The Dragon's Legacy* is a powerful, compelling read that combines elements of epic fantasy with strong storytelling. Reminiscent of the classic fantasy novel *Dune*, *The Dragon's Legacy* is an addictive start to a promising, exciting trilogy.

Sulema Ja'Akari of Aish Kalumm, a warrior and desert daughter, has finally completed her ritualistic naming ceremony. She's eager to take her place among the ferocious women of her tribe, who consort with massive saber-toothed cats and use magic to protect their people. Wolf's careful world building makes Sulema's desert seem believable—there may be dreamshifters, but people still drink coffee in the morning, and mothers adore their sons. Sulema, excited to come of age, is the perfect protagonist to explore Atualon's landscapes and cultures.

Sulema crosses paths with Jian, a child of the two-moon dawn who “imagined he would steal one of the Western barbarians' dragon-faced ships and sail to the Twilight lands.” Their destinies mingle, and soon they're adventuring together to the throne of the all-powerful Dragon King. Telling the story from multiple viewpoints, Wolf unveils Atualon's many cultures, magics, and rituals in a way that is both lyrical and satisfying.

Wolf lingers in description, painting scenes that include both familiar and fantastical elements. Coffee, with fish-and-jjinberry pemmican? Yum. There's little backstory—instead, the narrative is immersive. Wolf leaves generous room for the trilogy's forthcoming volumes and never paints herself into a corner. *The Dragon's Legacy* is similar to the Prydain Chronicles in this way, and has the same sense of urgency. After all, the future is at stake—not just Sulema and Jian's, but the fate of their world as well.

Wolf's *The Dragon's Legacy* is a welcome, desert-scented breath of fresh air, worth devouring, again and again.

CLAIRE RUDY FOSTER (March/April 2017)

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