



When Darkness Descends: The Revelation Trilogy Book 1

G. W. Lücke

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In the engrossing fantasy novel When Darkness Descends, a boy seeks revenge in a mythical world.

G. W. Lücke's *When Darkness Descends* is a dark but uplifting fantasy novel in which a boy's desire for revenge fits in with an exiled king's scheme.

Five-year-old Tom sees something that no one should ever see: a bad man murders his nanna. As he grows up, he enters a deep emotional vortex of depression, anxiety, and self-loathing, fed by the fact that he did not stop the bad man from escaping.

Tom finds solace in a book about the Ersturmen, a race of people led by warrior princes and kings, and learns about the mystical land of Enthilen. All through his reading, Tom never loses sight of his mission, which is to avenge Nanna's murder by extinguishing her killer. Tom's revenge scheme attracts the attention of wicked Malphas, who, when Tom is sixteen, uses magic to transport Tom to Enthilen for his own sinister purposes. While Tom hunts for the killer, Malphas tries to use Tom to establish himself as the realm's supreme tyrant.

This high fantasy novel features a catalog of people, places, and physical geography, all described in detail. The Ersturmen people's anthropological elements, including their social structures, languages, and looks, borrow from the folklore of the Middle Ages. This helps what's strange about the book to feel familiar, grounding fantastical elements with recognizable reference points.

Tom, who is motivated by revenge, is a resonant lead whose story alludes to adult mental health themes: he has to overcome his poor self-image in order to achieve his desired outcome. Malphas is more stereotypical—a villain with an oversized ego and an evil plan—and secondary characters most often exist as tropes.

Conversations in Enthilen are made to contrast with conversations in Tom's realm, where Tom speaks in the patois of a lower class kid. In Enthilen, though, he speaks like a hero, and so, too, do all those around him, sometimes at the expense of clarity. Descriptions work in the same way: the book's language is heightened in Enthilen and elsewhere, but not on Earth.

As Tom's unlikely hero's quest progresses, he faces hardships around his travel, his conflict with Malphas, and his likely confrontation with a known murderer; suspense increases with each development, all working toward an ending that includes resolution for Tom and that makes room for future series development.

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BENJAMIN WELTON (November 4, 2020)

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