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Preeminent storytellers Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman have redefined epic fantasy. Since the publication of their *Dragonlance* series, millions of readers have enjoyed their imaginative world-building, rich characterization, and intricate storylines. Now these best-selling authors bring their talents to one of the most innovative fantasy creations ever in *Dragon Wing*, the first volume in *The Death Gate Cycle*.

An assassin and the royal child he has been hired to kill form an unlikely and unstable alliance as the plots of human sorcerers, elven pirates, and dwarf revolutionaries threaten to overwhelm the airborne kingdoms of Arianus.

Dragon Wing Details

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Bill says

This is the first Weis/Hickman novel I've read. I'll certainly keep going with this seven-volume series because this one was a lot of fun.

Any time I pick out a Fantasy or Sci-Fi novel to read, it is imperative that it has this one quality: Give me an interesting (the more mind-blowing, the better) world or concept.

These authors obviously put a lot of thought into this world they've created, and described it in a manner that was not dull or over-wordy, but fun and adventurous.

Top marks here, and hey, a pretty darn good plot too. I also enjoyed the characterizations as well. Nothing quite John Irving-esque here, but

good enough to care about what was going to happen next to them.

The next volume is definitely on the near horizon for me!

Dirk Grobelaar says

This is certainly an example of 'thinking out of the box' as far as world building is concerned. I'm not too sure how to approach a review of this book. I've never read the Death Gate Cycle before, and I must say that this book left me intrigued. I did, initially, have a struggle wrapping my mind around the world of Arianus and the different realms. The maps and diagrams in the front of the book certainly helped. One or two of the characters left me cold, but that didn't really alter my reading experience. Let's face it, the world(s) being presented here is almost a character in its own right. I did enjoy the surprises and twists, although the intrigue (political and otherwise) being presented here is not nearly on the same level as what can be found in other series'. I think that actually helps the plot in this case, where too much skulduggery could seriously bog things down. There are secrets and conspiracies though, and enough adventure to keep the pages turning. I would recommend this to people who intend reading the whole series. It's blatantly obvious that some loose ends are only going to be resolved right at the very end. Like I mentioned, I wasn't sure how to approach this review. I couldn't help but feel it might have been better to wait until I've finished book seven. On the other hand, by then I would likely have forgotten what I wanted to say in the first place.

Anyway, I'll not go into plot details. This series has a large following, it seems, and most folk likely already know what it's about. It is Fantasy, with just the slightest touch of Mechanical Sci-Fi (if that is even a term). I enjoyed it and will check out the sequels. Oh, and the cover art is pretty cool too. So, if you're into Dragonlance era Fantasy that is reminiscent of Dragonlance whilst still being something else entirely, you might want to check this out.

Charty says

I'm re-reading the Death Gate Cycle because it's been a long time and it seemed like a good summer series. The first book is amazingly spry in that they don't bog it down with endless details and make it carry the entire world-building burden. Plus they are pretty sneaky by starting the reader off with a main character

(Hugh the Hand) who isn't really the main character at all, yet he makes a good entry point for the reader. You think you are getting some pretty standard fantasy/medieval realm story and then you realize that this will be something quite different. Enough details about the world and upcoming conflict are hinted at, but the world and story can be enjoyed as a stand alone effort in this volume. Especially engaging are the Gags and their world involved in Kicksey-Wicksy, a giant machine that no one quite remembers what it's supposed to do, and yet the entire race of Dwarves lives to serve it (and actually worship it). Our main antagonists, Haplo and Alfred are introduced and by the end of the book I was sucked back in and ready to read the next one. A good start and I thought this held up surprisingly well after so many years away.

Anna says

I split the review for this up... Too long = too lazy to read (admit it). I first read these as a teenager and I was completely and utterly hooked. It's been roughly fifteen years since then, and of course, the reading experience changed.

This is sci-fi-fantasy at its hugest form. Tolkien has created a massive fantasy world, in all its glory. The Death Gate Cycle can rival Middle-earth in its magnitude, though I'm not sold on its ability to speak to people's imagination. Weis and Hickman wrote something that entwines sci-fi and fantasy, and adds tons of physics, magic and very nonsensical moments to the mix.

This book is character-driven and it is hard not to get involved. From the unreadable Patryn, Haplo, to the lamentable Jonathan (book 3 Fire Sea), to the overconfident, proud Xar, and the very intriguing and one-of-a-kind (truly!) Zifnab; I always felt like W & H had done their utmost to create characters you wanted to read more about.

When you've grown used to Alfred, you can actually feel other characters' despair, most notably Haplo, when Alfred – once again – faints, in the face of danger. As their bond grows, I was often torn between “God no!” and “Hell yes!”: I love how in the end they interact like life-long friends. Dare I use the word “bromance”? Hell, yes.

It is impossible not to feel endearment and frustration at the interaction and evolution of the relationship between Jarre and Limbeck, the dwarven rebel couple in book 1, Dragon Wing.

One can only love the dog, who roughly goes by that name “dog!”, and who is ridiculously important for Haplo. Won't say. Spoilers. He has personality and is written with endearing expression and emotion.

Bane, the extremely manipulative tyke of a child. I was happy to see how his fate turned, sorry-not-sorry. For someone so small, he caused a lot of trouble and truly got on my nerves.

I'll get to Hugh the Hand and Haplo elsewhere. These characters were the reason I got sucked into the stories. What, how, why, when? Take me on this adventure and show me all this world has to offer!

Jennifer Troike says

Book one in a 7 book series. I LOVE the series. Let me say this, if you think 'oh no it's just another fantasy

series', think again. Yeah it sure seems that way, till you get further in... and you start realizing some of the plot, and the timeline... just WHEN it happens will interest you! Some books drag, some are better, but the last 2 books are my favorite.

Book 1 however is action packed and hooks you in quickly.

Ignacio Senao f says

La fantasía más clásica está desapareciendo. Estos autores la han cocinado muy bien con la clásica saga Dragonlance que muchos la consideran de usar y tirar.

Esta nueva saga que abrieron no es reversada, no es adulta, no hay presencia de sangre ni sexo, tramas políticas simplonas... Pero amigos: ¡COMO ENTRETIENE!

Rayco Cruz says

El libro va de menos a más, afortunadamente. Después de un comienzo lento y desconcertante y a medida que vamos conociendo mejor las motivaciones de cada personaje, la trama se va desenmarañando y me fue gustando más y más. La existencia de los sartán y los patryn, con el misterio que los envuelve, así como la identidad aun misteriosa de ese al que Haplo llama "amo" ha sido lo que más me ha gustado.

El hecho de que todos los personajes, menos el pobre Linbeck, como Hugh La Mano, Bane o, incluso Iridal (sin olvidar a uno de los más importantes: el perro), tuviera sus propias motivaciones ocultas e intereses secretos le ha dado a la obra una sensación de permanente misterio que creo que es lo que me ha mantenido enganchado y ha conseguido que no pierda el interés con ese principio tan lento.

Aaron Miller says

The Death Gate Cycle is probably my favorite fantasy series. The settings are unique and engrossing. The characters are deep and complex. Haplo is the most interesting fantasy character I've come across.

Jim C says

This is the first book of a fantasy series from the authors who were responsible for the origins of Dragonlance. In this one, we are introduced to a land that has different realms. These realms could either be higher or lower than each other and they have their own story. Each realm is known but at the same time remains a mystery to the other realm's residents.

I would classify this as epic fantasy as there was so much going on but it never got bogged down in the details. There were aspects of subjugation of races, revolution, and idolatry. Immediately I was intrigued by

this book as we were introduced into the character of Hugh the Hand. He is an assassin who is hired to kill a child. I was invested in the characters and the mystery of why a child was to be killed. I knew there was more than meets the eye and there was. There are several races of sentient beings in this book and I liked the conflict in between these races. This is an interesting world and is vast in its scope. With some fantasy novels trying this huge undertaking, the description can get stuck in a mire with its details. That never happens in this book as the pace is terrific throughout.

I was impressed by the huge undertaking of conceiving this world. With a little bit of humor thrown in the reader is intrigued by the characters and the mystery of where this book is heading towards. This is the first book so it left a lot on the table but I look forward to exploring these stories.

Nimrod Daniel says

A good start for the series. The characters are nice, the plot is quite good, but the ambitious worldbuilding is probably its greatest achievement.

4.25/5

H. says

Dragon Wing is book 1 of 7 in The Death Gate Cycle. The Death Gate Cycle is set in the far future, a post-apocalyptic world that looks a lot like traditional fantasy worlds—full of humans, elves, and dwarves. The difference are two races, Patryns and Sartans (demigods in their own minds). Their war led to the Sundering of the world. The Patryns were imprisoned in the hellish Labyrinth and the world was split into four—one for each of the old elements. The Death Gate Cycle follows a Patryn escapee from the Labyrinth, Haplo, as he explores the four worlds on behalf of his lord. It's those four disparate worlds that make the Death Gate Cycle special. Weis and Hickman tread heavily on the well trodden ground of fantastic racism. But the four worlds allow them to examine it from four different perspectives in rapid succession as the first four books focus on a different world. The Death Gate Cycle is epic fantasy but the nature of the worlds allows the introduction of tropes from post-apocalyptic and science fiction, injecting much-needed originality into the genre. It makes for one of the more underrated epic fantasy series in my opinion.

Dragon Wing takes place on Arianus, the world of Air. Arianus is composed of "islands" of porous rock floating on bubbles of lighter-than-air gas. The elves travel by mechanical-magic airships and the humans travel by dragon. The dwarves are trapped on the lowest level of the world operating the Kicksey-winsey as virtual slaves of the elves. Haplo steps into the world of an assassin, a crown prince, an evil wizard, a reluctant revolutionary, and a bumbling chamberlain. As good as the Death Cycle gets, a great small story is interwoven with Haplo's larger story.

Fantasy Literature says

The Margaret Weis/Tracy Hickman novels make up one of those corners of the Fantasy genre that you either enjoyed in your teens (and remember fondly)... or you didn't. I have to admit that I'm of the latter camp, and while I strongly suspect that there was a time when I could have greatly enjoyed Dragon Wing, that time has

passed me by. These days, I'm a little too jaded and I've read a few too many works in a very similar vein. Dragon Wing isn't bad, necessarily, but I'd be lying if I said I particularly like it.

It starts well, mind you, as master assassin Hugh the Hand is employed by the king for that most politically...
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Brandon Pratt says

hands down, my all-time favorite series. it's starts a little slow... you have to make it to the point where haplo is introduced, the main character in the series. from that point on, the series is amazing. this isn't just some wierd fantasy series for dorks, like trekkies or something. there are a lot of philosophies and ideologies presented throughout the course of this series, plus the story is wildly creative and interesting. there's nothing like it.

Cris says

Ha sido todo un acierto recuperar esta serie que leí por primera vez durante mi adolescencia. Como era de esperar, esta relectura la ha privado del barniz de obra maestra que le apliqué entonces, pero aún así ha pasado la prueba con creces. Se trata de una colección de libros en la que tiene cabida la reflexión sobre grandes temas pero que se sustenta, sobre todo, en unos personajes carismáticos, un universo rico y complejo y un ritmo narrativo adictivo que deja espacio suficiente a los detalles.

En mi opinión, esta serie llega al listón de joya del género fantástico (con permiso de Sapkowski) ya que, a pesar de apoyarse en muchos de los estereotipos tradicionales, crea un nuevo espacio totalmente genuino. Se aleja en gran medida del hilo narrativo habitual: si bien también contamos con la figura del héroe (varios, de hecho), en vez de seres humildes que descubren poco a poco su poder, los protagonistas surgen de entre los que hasta ahora se creían dioses. Su hazaña final no será luchar activamente por la salvación del universo, sino que dicha salvación depende en gran parte de su capacidad para aceptar lo limitado de su poder, saber retirarse a tiempo y aceptar que no tienen derecho a gobernar en la vida de nadie. Recorremos, por tanto, el camino contrario al que siguen muchas historias del género.

Reseña completa y mi versión de la portada en <https://sidumbledorefueralibrero.com/...>

Beatriz says

Gran comienzo de El Ciclo de la Puerta de la Muerte, de los creadores de Dragonlance (aunque a mí me gusta más esta saga que la de Dragonlance).

Este libro sitúa la historia en el mundo del aire, Ariano. Es fascinante la imaginación de los autores del libro para resolver cada pequeño detalle que pueden encontrar los personajes, sobre todo esa capacidad para imaginar distintos mundos.

Creo que una de las mejores sagas de fantasía, pero no mucha gente la conoce.

