



Up From Hell

David Drake

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Taranis and his men forage for the collected tribes of the Crow as they march against the Romans, but he brings back more than he bargained for when he frees a beautiful and mysterious prisoner, Alpnu. Together they face a power sealed in a cave for millennia and newly risen from Hell, in David Drake's story *Up From Hell*.

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Up From Hell Details

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From Reader Review Up From Hell for online ebook

Jennifer says

This was really interesting. And not what I would have called historical, honestly. It seemed like a new world I'd never read about. And it was really well written (unlike this "review"), which is really what I am looking for nowadays. I have no time for poorly written nonsense even if the nonsense is spectacular.

Marco says

An entertaining short story, set at the dawn of the Roman empire. Taranis and his men forage for the collected tribes of the Crow as they march against the Romans, but he brings back more than he bargained for when he frees a beautiful and mysterious prisoner, Alpnu. Together they face a power sealed in a cave for millennia and newly risen from Hell.

Bobbi Jo says

I would read more of this. It's a good short story on its own.

Anjum Choudhury says

This short started a little slow at the beginning. The world was alien to me and I couldn't quite grasp who was who or what was happening (for reference: imagine watching the first episode of Game of Thrones for the first time). There are a lot of characters but Alpnu is my favorite by a large margin. I'd totally read a story that's just about her, her deceased husband and what she does with her powers.

The story picks up once Taranis is sent away from camp and Drake beautifully renders an eerie atmosphere. The fantastical creatures and the circumstances under which Taranis, Galo and Alpnu encounter them are wonderful and incredibly vivid. There's an, "Ah ha!" moment in the story that justifies the slow beginning so hang in there.

The one thing that put me off in the story was the dialogue. For something set in a historical setting, the dialogue is awfully contemporary and American, and it just didn't jell with the epic swords & sorcery angle of the story. The story is much more compelling when nobody's talking and action takes center stage.

'Up From Hell' is a bit of an effort of a read, but the pay off towards the middle makes it worth it.

Anjum Noor Choudhury

Author of A Time to Tour Ghost City

David Key says

Drake Strikes Again

Didn't realize this was a short story. I started and didn't put it down till I drew up short when it ended all too soon. Typical Drake fantasy, part war fantasy part sword's and sorcery all good action with elements of Lovecraft thrown in. Like I said too short.

A.M. says

Taranis scavenges with his men for food to feed the armies of the thousand chiefs. He often takes the advice of his cousin Galo who has a knack for finding things. But the day he leads them to a Roman villa where a wizard fights and a regal woman is held prisoner, everything changes.

A short story on the Tor website. Read it here:

<http://www.tor.com/2016/08/18/up-from...>

Typos... houseman I think is meant to be horseman, and life is meant to be lift.

And if I'm noticing typos, the story has lost me.

The narrative shifts back and forwards, and the ending just didn't work for me. I'm not sure why. Maybe it just felt too much like a Conan style adventure - (view spoiler)

And usually the Tor covers make me green with envy but this one has missed that too. All I keep seeing is the odd crease in his right arm and his right hand looks deformed. Plus, the beastie was meant to look like this:

The creature moved toward me in the moonlight, as pale as drifting fog. I could see it clearly, silhouetted against the clouds. I could see the sword still gripped in my right hand, but my muscles were frozen from the rap on the head.

The creature paused, looking down with its meaningless smile. Its groin opened and the member extended toward me. The teeth set around its circular mouth were needles like those of a dogfish.

Ewww... but the illustration misses the mark and usually Tor nail it.

And oddly that makes me disappointed. I'm used to the high standard.

2 stars

Sachin Dev says

Short twisted little read from Tor.com - I should probably be going back to pick up rest of David Drake's historical fantasy books to make more sense of the story - but seemed like a neat little side adventure for one of his main protagonists from his series, a mix of horror and adventure. Good fast solid read. Inspired to pick up more of David Drake now.
