



# Darkwar

*Glen Cook*

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## Darkwar Glen Cook

The world grows colder with each passing year, the longer winters and ever-deepening snows awaking ancient fears within the Degan Packstead, fears of invasion by armed and desperate nomads, attack by the witchlike and mysterious Silth, able to kill with their minds alone, and of the Grauken, that desperate time when intellect gives way to buried cannibalistic instinct, when meth feeds upon meth. For Marika, a young pup of the Packstead, loyal to pack and family, times are dark indeed, for against these foes, the Packstead cannot prevail. But awakening within Marika is a power unmatched in all the world, a legendary power that may not just save her world, but allow her to grasp the stars themselves.

From Glen Cook, author of the *Black Company* and *Dread Empire* novels, comes *Darkwar*, collecting for the first time, the stunning science fantasy epic that originally appeared as *Doomstalker*, *Warlock*, and *Ceremony*.

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## Darkwar Details

Date : Published December 1st 2010 by Night Shade (first published 2001)

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Author : Glen Cook

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## From Reader Review Darkwar for online ebook

### Zeta Syanthis says

6/5. This book ripped my fucking heart into a million pieces and I don't know if I will even be able to look at it without crying. >.< There is far more of Marika in me than I ever want to believe. >.<

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### Rob says

Review excerpt links to full review:

Where Cook's story and character worked to greater effect (than Karen Miller's *Empress* was the manner in which he did not beat the reader about the head with less desirable character traits of his protagonist. The unique milieu also sets Cook's work apart, not just from Miller's later novel, but from much of what was being published at the time and even some of what is on the shelves now (harsh female protagonist's life story against a science fiction/fantasy hybrid backdrop). Elements of the novel(s), particularly the less technologically advanced society's quick adoption of large advances like space travel, reminded me a bit of Poul Anderson's classic novel *The High Crusade*. It has been quite a while since I've read Anderson's novel, but the resonance between the two felt very strong for me.

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### Vaidotas says

Liked it only because writer created a plausible world and race society.

But scenario often becomes boring. Same escalation all the book: the main protagonist gets stronger, kicks the asses of bad guys and somehow worsens the whole situation.

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### Jordan Blue says

AMAZING!!! SCI FI FANTASY CROSS UP

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### Justin says

good book

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### Shiva Last says

This books never run into a dead end with its plot. Friends die but that is the way of life on the cold and social class run planet. The concept of this books "magic" is presented in a whole different way and the group that maintains this people of power have a dark way of doing it. It has many scenes that leave you devastated with what the main character has to go through and what she is willing to give up to achieve her goal. The character development is massive! You see a shift in personality and the deep effects that events in

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time have on her. This book is one that is without a break in the harsh reality that is hers. I highly recommend Darkwar to all those seeking a view into a harsh world, and those seeking a book that just won't part with their fingers

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## **Sarah says**

2.5 stars

Darkwar is an omnibus edition of an older trilogy by Glen Cook, a science fantasy featuring a race of space-going felinoids. The story charts the meteoric and ultimately world-changing life and career of Marika, a pup of a backwater clan.

At the beginning, Marika's clan appear to be a medieval frontier society - iron weapons are prized, hunters and warrior rule the society and technology is usually a bow and arrow. As the world opens before her, though, Marika realizes she and her people are small (and ultimately expendable) pawns in a much greater game. After losing almost her entire clan, she moves on to join the silth, a witch-like sisterhood alleged to be in charge of their territory.

As Marika is exposed to new cities of the planet, both the technology and conflict grows. What at first appears to be a clan war ends up changing the fate of their entire race.

The storyline itself leave nothing to be desired. it is epic, there are real consequences and sacrifices are made to the greater good.

The problem I had with this story is the heroine herself. In the beginning of the story, she is a rather weak link in an otherwise strong chain. As she grows stronger, though, she starts to rise above even being considered a link in a chain at all. There is no secret that Marika, with her famed powers, could destroy pretty much anything that comes her way. Massively important conflicts are presented as being dangerous or climactic, but when there is never any doubt that she will triumph.

By the end of the story, she is so overly powerful that it's hard to care about any conflict any more. It's usually safe to assume that she will use her massive, massive powers to wipe out any resistance - and she usually does. Only in the final pages does she make any real sacrifices, but it doesn't make up for hundreds of pages of false tension.

I suppose anyone who is interested in the book should NOT be dissuaded from reading it by this review. It might be gripping for other readers. For me, it was a little too bland to really love it, but just interesting enough that I wanted to finish it

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## **Slap Happy says**

Enjoyed this one quite a bit. In hindsight I am gonna deduct a star for some repetitions... like the constant reminding that the Silth have a blind hatred of Marika, for example. Restated again and again. Yeah, got it. Characters telling her every couple pages that they hate and fear her. Yeah, got it. Friends and allies telling her that, in case she had forgotten, those individuals do indeed possess a blind hatred and fear of her. For her natural talent and power. Yeah, got it. Markia saying it herself...? Yeah, got it. Always so simply stated. Everything Cook writes is simply stated, brief. It is one of the things that I like about him and his writing

here throughout Darkwar. But in instances like this this constant reiteration becomes annoying because it is only redundant without adding any depth. Still, many authors I feel add more words in an attempt at adding depth when they really have not said anything more of value, which is even more frustrating to try to read through, so in a way my hangup about Darkwar could have been worse in the hands of another author.

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## **Matt says**

Trying to keep this spoiler free...

Originally published as three separate books Darkwar is Glen Cook at his terse yet powerful best.

This is the story of Marika a Meth pup of the Degnan Packstead living in the longhouse of her dam. Marika and her littermate Kiblin, who she loves despite the fact that he is a naturally weak and cowardly male, share a strange and taboo gift. Driven by hunger caused by the ever worsening winters nomads begin attacking and overrunning the Packsteads changing Markia's life forever.

From which I deduced (as this is Cook not much ever explicitly spelled out for the reader – terse, remember) that we have a dog-like species with a female dominated social structure living in an essentially bronze age setting and that the plot is likely to involve the budding power of the young pup.

Right, but never in the way you expect, part of what I like about this book is that it repeatedly lures you into thinking you “know” what is coming next and then confounds your expectations totally.

It is, in a way, Marika's story and while she is not really a classically “likeable” protagonist she does earn your deep respect through her endurance of suffering, steadfast defence of her ideals and a few tender and touching moments.

It is also the narrative of a society undergoing a massive structural change while facing the prospect of total destruction.

What marks this out as exceptional for me is that I can't seem to let go of it after several days and multiple other books; my mind keeps drifting back to examine moments, elements and ideas from this work.

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## **Jeffrey Grant says**

This book is uniquely appealing to people like myself that enjoy both the fantasy and science fiction genres. The story is more focused on plot than anything; the development of the main character is somewhat lacking and everyone around her is presented in a very WYSIWYG fashion: the manipulative people are predictably manipulative, the cowards are cowards, and no one moves or really grows beyond their prescribed roles (with the odd exception of a notable secondary character). The strength of the story somewhat offsets the shallow characters, however, and it evolves very believably from a primitive shamanistic beginning to a starfaring end. Cook also does an excellent job at creating the society. While individual characters don't get a lot of attention, the socio-political entities involved in the story are dynamic and interesting, giving the whole thing a very epic feel. The ending was a little hectic and tough to follow, but overall the whole thing was tied off very well; people can and have done a whole lot worse trying to tie off a series like this.

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## Bookwraiths says

Originally reviewed at Bookwraiths Reviews

As most of my friends know, I am a Glen Cook fan, have been since I was a teenager in the 1980s and read *The Black Company*. That quintessential grimdark fantasy (before there was even the term) blew my mind, turning me into a fan for life. Since then I've tried to read everything the man has written. Most of his novels I've enjoyed (though I obviously have favorites and some not so favorites), but one of his "underappreciated" series is *Darkwar*, which was first published back in the mid-80s as a trilogy.

This is a story about Marika: a Meth pup of the Degnan Packstead, living in the longhouse of her dam. (The Meth are a dog-like species whose dominant sex is the females of the race.) In their simple society, Marika and her litter mates live a routine life, concerned with hunting and gathering food as well as staying out of the way of their elders. But while this childhood together does encourage strong bonds between litter mates, the sibling love between Marika and her weaker and cowardly brother Kiblin is an unnaturally strong and committed one, sealed by their sharing of a gift that is as much a curse as a blessing. A gift of magic that each keeps secret from their dam, so as not to attract the attention of the unnatural Silth witches, who kill with their thoughts.

But the two pups need not worry about being discovered, because soon the world starts to change around them. Winters growing colder and longer. The land of snow moving further south from the pole. And Marika and Kiblin overhear the adult meth of the Packstead whispering of invasion by armed and desperate nomads, and worse yet – the return of the Grauken: that most horrible of times when meth feed on meth!

From this familiar set up of medieval civilization and gifted farm child, Glen Cook crafts a powerful tale of a society undergoing massive changes while dealing with the prospect of worldwide cataclysm. But instead of being limited by the standard fantasy tropes, Cook deftly remolds them into new, different patterns, continually surprising you as he evolves *Darkwar* from a traditional medieval fantasy to fantasy steampunk and then finally a fantasy/sci-fi hybrid.

Something especially refreshing about this novel was that Marika was a powerful, female protagonist. (Not nearly as common back when this was published.) And while she was introduced in the classic "Chosen-One-comes-to-save-the-world" character style, she soon morphs into something else: a "hero" who doesn't behave as one but isn't really an anti-hero either. A more appropriate label for Marika would be that she is the physical representation of societal change; a force of nature itself that destroys and creates in equal turns as it sees fit. There is no animosity in Marika's acts, merely decisions that are caused by the operation of cause and effect as one decision begins a chain reaction which results in more changes occurring in a rapid progression until everything is now different. Thankfully, however, Cook mixes in enough tender and touching moments to keep Marika from losing all semblance of her humanity — though she is a difficult character to really love.

If all that doesn't sell you on giving this one a try, then let me attempt to do so in another way.

I re-read *Darkwar* a couple years ago (It having been more than a decade since I read it last), and, after all those years, the book touched me more deeply now than it did when I was younger: Certain societal changes and obstacles of Marika and her world eerily mimicking our own ongoing problems. Since then I've found myself wondering many times "How would Marika deal with this or that?" And when a fantasy story touches me that deeply, it had to have done something right.

## Phil says

EPIC.

Fantasy cat/fox people transcend their rural traditions to progress into new Technology Zones and eventually travel the stars...using innate necromantic magic of sorts.

Wow.

I wasn't sure if I would like the book when I first started. A lot of the scenes that I was really interested in watching unfold were briefly summarized instead. Initially, this bothered me...a lot...but then I realized that in order to finish the story and not drag it out into a Robert Jordan-esque series, the brevity was necessary. By the end, I couldn't read it fast enough.

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## Kevin says

Alas I could not finish this one. It started out very interesting and I liked the world that Cook created here, but at a little over halfway through this omnibus, I was just plain bored and didn't like the main character. She was selfish and arrogant and just not that fun to read about. It's a shame because there is a great story in here somewhere; it just took way too long to get to it and didn't keep me interested. It almost feels as if Cook ran out of story but had already committed to a trilogy so started adding political intrigue filler which unfortunately fell flat for me. I am disappointed.

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## Larry Kenney says

Wow. I went into this boo knowing nothing about it. And i think that's exactly how this book should be approached.

I'm a huge fan of Glen Cook. Seriously. His epic storylines, military fantasy/sci fi, and flawed characters are STILL ahead of their time. If you are looking for super heroic characters with flowing hair and impeccable honor, look elsewhere. If you want relatable characters, with their own strengths and weaknesses, who aren't always sure of what the best thing to do is, but do it regardless, then you are in the right place.

I dont want to spoil the story, so no spoilers here.

But I can tell you, watching the main character, a pup named Marika, and her struggles and triumphs as she grows up in the turbulent times of her world, and how they shape her and her them, makes for one of the best books I have ever read.

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## Jim says

*Darwar* is an omnibus that contains *Doomstalker*, *Warlock & Ceremony*. Written in the mid-1980's, after the

initial Black Company trilogy, it is a story of a race of aliens in their struggle for continued racial existence the the face of an impending planetary ice age. While initially this comes across as fantasy, complete with magic, in reality it is magic and science, often at odds with each other, that drive the story line.

While not as strong as the Black Company books, they are still well enough written to be of interest to fans of Glen Cook.

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