



## Impossible Odds

*Dave Duncan*

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## **Impossible Odds** Dave Duncan

Elite warrior swordsmen, they are unequalled in any time or realm . . .

### The King's Blades

The King has decreed that new Blades must be sworn into the service of the Grand Duke Rubin, deposed by a foul usurper and currently on the run. But none of the rough youths being readied at Ironhall possess the seasoning to survive what better, more skilled Blades already have not. Still, two woefully unprepared candidates are approached with an offer of early bonding and probable death: deft but dense, rude Ranter, and eager, impetuous Ringwood . . . with a third, the inadequate swordsman but potentially able spy Bellman, enlisted into their threadbare ranks. Joining the Duke's entourage along with the courageous and prescient White Sister Trudy, the would-be champions must restore a rightful ruler to the throne or die in the process. But before them waits an army of the dead. And the Duke whom the Blades must protect to the last drop of their lifeblood is not the liege they imagined . . .

## **Impossible Odds Details**

Date : Published September 28th 2004 by Harper Voyager (first published 2003)

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Author : Dave Duncan

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## From Reader Review Impossible Odds for online ebook

### Aneel says

Pretty good, but not great Blade adventure. Interesting whodunnit elements. Less compelling plot than usual. Duncan's been introducing more and more magic elements in these books that are making the world harder to believe.

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### Elizabeth Brooks says

This is the book currently in my gym bag. Which means that it will take me probably 2-3 weeks to read it.

If it wasn't for *Jaguar Knights*, this would probably be my least favorite King's Blades book. Note that doesn't stop me from re-reading it when I'm plowing my way through the entire series.

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### Ane says

My 3rd favorite of the Blades series!! This one was a total page turner! Hooks, twists, turns and lots of unseen deception! I loved it!! TOTALLY RECOMMEND IT. . .but you would want to read the first 4 books to enjoy the world of the Blades even more and the off-handed references made to the other books :)

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### Sean Randall says

So I asked for a look into hither too shadowy corners of this most magnificently crafted of universes, did I? yes, I most certainly did, see my thoughts on Paragon Lost. that told the story of Sir Beaumont and Tasha, the then future Queen of Chivial.

This work introduces us to the Duchy of Krupina, opening the doors for more political skullduggery. The Krupinese, or some of them at least, seem to have embraced conjuration as Chivial embraces Blades -- and battle is joined.

not war, that's far too boorish for the story of a few individuals, be they notable or otherwise. This, an astonishing tale of murder and treachery, of bamboozlement and sorcery and of bluff, counter bluff and shadow - this is the story of Grand Duchess Johanna of krupina. Nobody is ever as they seem, of course, and characters are revealed to be most assuredly what they aren't right to the very end.

There's much of the Blade's bindings here too, for Ironhall is lacking when the Blade's of this story are bound, and so neither have completed their training. Fallibility, saving graces and walking dead litter the pages. Five down, one to go.

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### Jess says

If I could rate this a 3.5 I would. The reasoning is simple, throughout the first half of the novel I was thoroughly intrigued, wondering how these poor young men (which gets browbeaten into us every chapter, just in case we forgot) could prevail in returning the Duchess to her son, and possibly husband.

I was grand all the way through my reading, into almost the last 15-20% of the book. Roughly right around (major spoiler!) when Ranter comes back as one of the undead shadowmen. What a ridiculous Deus Ex Machina. Ranter does not act like the others because the binding protects him? I'm half convinced the author was writing this area of the novel, got the idea and went back to where we first encountered the shadowmen and only THEN wrote them in as being different than the others.

That's the only thing that really niggled at me, until just a few more pages and everyone had a happy ending. Sure, books I read typically do have happy endings, but everything was so nicely wrapped up it rankled of being contrived to me. I still enjoyed the novel, just not as much as the previous ones. Also, barely any Durendal in this one. Boo.

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### **Katie says**

Had a nice little twist at the end.

I think the problem w/ Duncan's Blade books is that he readily kills characters off. You have to give him kudos for...you know...allowing people to actually die when they live dangerous lives, but this means that you aren't too likely to get attached to anyone, which means you don't get as emotionally invested in the characters. Stuff happens, and it's interesting, but I don't really \*care\* too much about anyone in the story.

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### **Jon Kerr says**

Really enjoyed this. I need to seek out some more of Duncan's work...

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### **Lee Wilson says**

As always, Duncan writes a fun, likeable story that somehow fails to transcend light entertainment. enjoyable, but not truly satisfying.

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### **Lauri says**

Kuninga Mõõkade kuuesalisest tsüklist ilmselgelt kõige nõrgem osa. Kuigi ega siin sel tegelikult otseselt midagi viga pole - Duncani nõrk tase jääb paljude autorite jaoks kättesaadamatuks tasemeks lõpuni. Aga kuidagi ei haaranud siin see saksapärase nimedega tegelastega madin ühe pisikese vürstiriigi trooni nimel. Lõpp kiskus ka kuidagi eriti imalmagusaks. Huviga loetav loomulikult sellest hoolimata.

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## **Bruce says**

A good addition to the Kings Blades series. Not part of the main line, so stands completely on its own. Nice action/mystery tale, half told in the past, and half in the present as a couple of blades, a former white sister, and a failed blade candidate escort an exiled grand duke back to his kingdom. Duncan continues his legacy of unexpected twists throughout, making this a compelling read.

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## **Benjamin Thomas says**

Impossible Odds by Dave Duncan is the 5th book in his "King's Blades" series. I've enjoyed all of these books pretty well but some a little more than others. This one was slightly less enjoyable than the last one, Paragon Lost, which I regard as the best of the batch so far and with only one more to read.

This novel was a little different than previous books in the series and I appreciate when authors do this. I'm sure authors don't want a series to grow stale any more than readers do. This time, instead of following a single "blade" through an adventure, we get to follow three main characters, including two blades that are thrust into circumstances they really aren't prepared for and a third, older student who really isn't a bound blade at all. Their assignment seems straight forward enough but soon becomes very convoluted, in turn driving the plot into many twists and turns. We have multiple points of view which made it a little difficult for me to follow, as well as two rather lengthy flash back scenes that provided further information for the protagonists as well as the reader. They were like short stories within the novel but did, however, slow down the pace of the plotting quite a bit. And the end was a bit too contrived for my taste as if the author worked too hard to make a happy ending for all. Overall I still quite enjoyed the novel and would recommend it to all fantasy readers. However, make sure you read these books in the order they were published because while each one does stand alone, I think readers will get more out of them if read in order.

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## **Janet says**

Duncan is wandering the globe with this series. *Paragon Lost* took us to his version of Russia; in *Impossible Odds* we're off to a tiny Germanic country. This is the weakest of the series so far, with an improbable ending, but was still a lot of fun. Lots of swash, lots of buckle.

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## **Shari Mulluane says**

This is another fun read. Romance, intrigue, mystery, and drama fill the pages and keep you riveted for hours. Nobody is exactly who they appear to be and just when you think you know who is plotting what; you discover that you are wrong. I loved every minute of it.

Full Review Here:

Dragons, Heroes and Wizards

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## **Katherine says**

Fantasy, adventure, swashbuckling. Another in the "King's Blades" universe. Exciting and fast-paced, but less polished than others in the series, with a plot that's just a little too convenient. Young swordsmen overcome obstacles ranging from undead fighters to treachery on all sides, in their attempt to restore a Duchess to her rightful place.

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## **Mike Malony says**

Reread this weekend. Better than I remembered. Though I had some details wrong, surprise is nice on a second reading anyway.

There is the wonderfully horrific opening, and intro to the characters, which is a little longer than some of his hooks. About a quarter of the way in it drops into the back story, which sets up the remote setting and other characters very well. Then at the halfway mark jumps back to current and rushes through to The End. Kept Me Up Late Finishing.

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