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Viper's Daughter

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Reviewer:

[Jane Churchill](#) [3]

Editor's Choice:

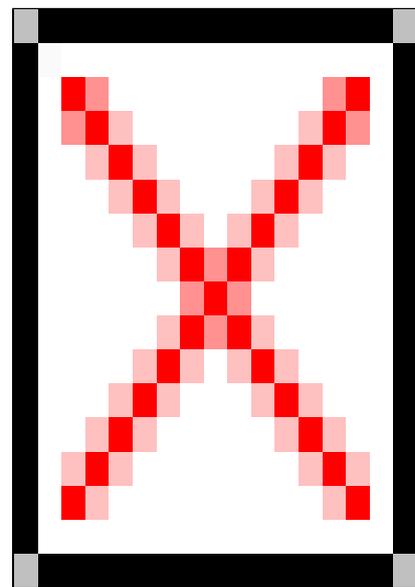
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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4



After a gap of ten years, this seventh book in the [Chronicles of Ancient Darkness](#) [4] series will delight fans both old and new. Although the characters are slightly older, we are in familiar territory and are immediately transported to the wonderfully evocative Stone-Age world once again.

Renn has left the forest as she believes she has become a threat to Torak. She suspects this might be some vestige from her mother who was an evil mage but is now dead. Once Torak realises she has left, he follows her trail to find she has taken their canoe. Renn's signs lead Torak to the raven mage who tells him he sees tusks and that there is a *demon that is not demon*. He tells Torak that Renn is travelling beyond the Far North to the Edge of the World. The Raven leader lends Torak his own canoe and he sets off to find Renn. He is joined by Wolf who leaves his own mate and cubs to help his pack-brother.

Renn disguises herself and becomes Rheu of the Sea-Eagles to throw Torak off the scent but along the way she is plagued by nightmares and visions of her mother, Seshru. She meets up with a strange boy Naiginn of the Narwhal clan

who accompanies her on her journey. Torak finds his way to the Narwhal clan too noting that here women are called half-men and are treated very differently to men. His own clan treat men and women as equals but here women are subservient to men. Torak eventually catches up with Renn to find her in the company of Naiginn who Renn claims is her half-brother. Ren flees with Niagrinn but too late realises she has been tricked as Niagrinn needs her mage skills to release his own power to become fully demon. It is up to Torak and Wolf to rescue her in a dramatic climax.

This is master storytelling; atmospheric and thrilling by turns. The books are meticulously researched and Michelle Paver is so adept at describing the environment in vivid detail along with the daily life of the different clans that you feel you are actually there with Renn, Torak and Wolf. The story is imbued with a spirituality and a respect for nature which adds to the story together with a strand pointing out that the equality of women and men is viewed differently in different cultures. A welcome return to this fascinating world.

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