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# BOOK REVIEW

Book Title	<b>Tales of Ioth</b>
Author	<b>DP Woolliscroft</b>
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Stars	

Well, Dave Woolliscroft does it again! The world he created in his Kingshold novel has grown significantly – and got a lot darker too. The ending of Ioth, City of Lights was dramatic and emotional. Inevitably these qualities are followed up in this collection of short stories that act as a bridge to the next novel.

It's a clever and highly original concept, having an anthology connect each novel in the series. It allows the story to advance but it also does a lot to develop the characters in this series. That's a good thing because the characters are the strength in his events.

In previous reviews I've commented on the credibility of the characters. They are real people, not a quality you might associate with anyone capable of magic perhaps. But as events spiral downwards for everyone, as danger and defeat appear to be insurmountable, these people's resilience is always visible. Not in any heroic way either. None of these people are heroes, their motives are often linked to something in their background and personality. In other words, because they've been formed properly and thoroughly from the very beginning. After two full-length novels and now two anthologies – four books – that is impressive writing.

So to the anthology itself. It includes a novella which acts as the main part of my bridge metaphor. The Dudenas arc is exciting. There are threats to our intrepid band of characters. It takes place in a location which resonated Jules Verne for me. Description is wonderful. Entwined within the narrative though are the reactions each character must deal with as they face up to the repercussions of what happened at the end of the last book. There is a lot of grief but, as is always the case, grief triggers guilt, blame, regret. None of these emotions are ideal for people who face yet more danger and hardship. They need to bond – yet they can't. They need a leader – but no one is up to the job. This is exactly how such things would play out in real life. It is a story of intense and highly-charged drama.

The other stories counterpoint the emotions beautifully. The Wild Continent is likely to play a significant part in the next part of the story and its peoples, their beliefs and culture are defined wonderfully in these short stories. Their beliefs about the creation of the world, especially. Beautiful. Spiritual. Such sensitive insight from the author here.

All in all, I strongly recommend Tales of Ioth. It is consistently as good as what has gone before and sets up exciting encounters in the next book.