




BOOK REVIEW

Book Title	Tales of Kingshold
Author	DP Woolliscroft
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Stars	

I'm not usually someone to read an anthology of short stories. I began reading this one with some uncertainty for that reason. I quickly changed my mind with Tales of Kingshold.

Because Dave Woolliscroft does it again. He's got a book that captures so many highly successful features but in a subtle, under-played way.

To be clear about the book. This is Kingshold 1.5. It is a sequel to his highly successful debut novel and it also acts as a set-up for what will happen next in the series. So what did I like? OK, here we go, and in order (so be impressed!).

1. Its writing style.

As I've mentioned, Dave the author is the puppet-master. He pulls the strings behind the scenes, the reader may not be aware of what they're thinking or feeling at the time, the emotions become apparent and you realise they've been bubbling under your reader radar for some time. Often the narrative style has a wonderfully dry and wry humour that can hide some of the tensions that suddenly appear and make you realise you're thoroughly engaged. This is no mean feat in a collection of short stories because he does this again and again. And never in the same way each time. That's why I rate it so highly.

2. Its characters.

Same thing again, a collection of short stories, different characters. Invariably the main protagonists are people we've met in the first book, in situations that may be linked (they may not) to what has already happened. These folk are all fascinating people, with quirks and foibles that make them fun to get to know but who you invest in for these reasons. Dave does this amazing job of turning very normal people into "heroes". A good example and my favourite because it's so funny, the adventures of Trypp, Florian and Motega in The Working Dead. These guys don't qualify as the traditional hero yet we cheer them on because we're so invested in them and their success. Neenahwi is another wonderfully grounded character and her story promises much in the next book, I can't wait!

3. The world building.

Again, it's the subtlety. There is magic in the world, monstrous creatures, demons and gods. But they are all subservient to the exploration of what it is to be human, without any pompous postulations or lectures on the subject. We see people going around, as people do, dealing with the amazing things that just happen to happen. It's a world like ours in so many ways. Dave Woolliscroft does Normal in the most amazing ways!