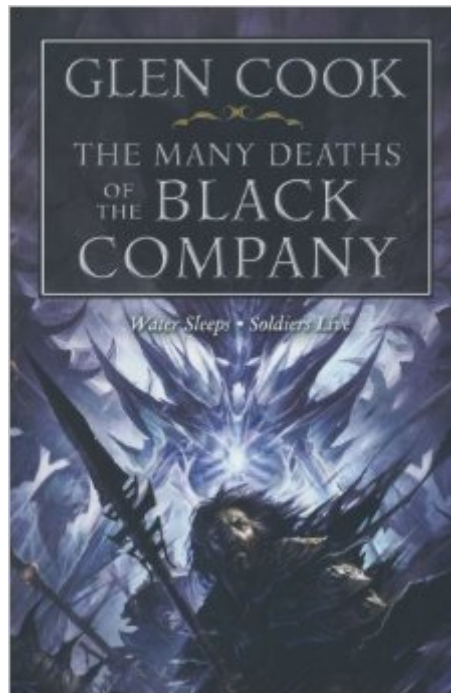


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# The Many Deaths Of The Black Company (Chronicles Of The Black Company)



## Synopsis

"Let me tell you who I am, on the chance that these scribblings do survive. . . "I am Murgan, Standardbearer of the Black Company, though I bear the shame of having lost that standard in battle. I am keeping these Annals because Croaker is dead, One-Eye won't, and hardly anyone else can read or write. I will be your guide for however long it takes the Shadowlanders to force our present predicament to its inevitable end. . ."The Many Deaths of the Black Company comprises the novels *Water Sleeps and Soldiers Live* •the fourth and final omnibus volume of Glen Cook's *Chronicles of the Black Company*, one of the greatest fantasy epics of our age.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Darkness wars with darkness as the hard-bitten men of the Black Company take their pay and do what they must. They bury their doubts with their dead. The Black Company, dirty deeds done dirt cheap." So begins the *Chronicles of the Black Company*, perhaps the first book ever published in a genre that is now called Dark Fantasy. *The Many Deaths of the Black Company* is an omnibus containing reprints of the second half of the *Glittering Stone* saga, a four book series continuing the tale of the Black Company, which was first published between 1996 and 2000. If you have not read the original Black Company series, the characters and plot may prove overwhelming. I recommend you start with the first novel, *Chronicles of the Black Company*. You will not be disappointed. "*Water Sleeps*" and "*Soldiers Live*" are the books contained within *The Many Deaths of the Black Company*. They conclude a series which has been nearly two decades in the making. While initially

published to little fanfare, *The Black Company* is now viewed as a revolutionizing force within Fantasy literature. His works are known for their mature and realistic setting, epic scope, military focus, morbid humor and gritty prose. The original editions of these two books are now extremely rare and regularly sell for 30+ dollars each. This is their first republication in the modern era, get them while you can. Rumors abound that Glen Cook plans a return for the Black Company but these books have yet to materialize. Until then: Here ends the annals of *The Black Company*.

Word of warning: if you like your fantasy fluffy and with elves, stay far away from the Black Company! Glen Cook's Black Company novels are meaner than a basket full of rattlesnakes and tougher than old boot leather. It's a dark world full of evil sorcerers, all of whom fear the men of the Black Company. They are a band of veteran mercenaries for whom kicking ass and taking names are all in a day's work, and impossible missions just another nut to crack. This is down to earth epic fantasy that trudges through the mud and the blood. *The Many Deaths of the Black Company* is the fourth of four omnibus editions. If you haven't read any of these books yet, start with *The Chronicles of the Black Company*, and then the *Books of the South* and *The Return of the Black Company*. *Many Deaths* contains the novels *Water Sleeps and Soldiers Live*, the last two books that wrap up the series (although Cook stated in a 2006 interview that he has two more unpublished ones, *A Pitiless Rain* and *Port of Shadows*). You will have much more enjoyment starting from the beginning.

Though the last few books had some spots that were hard to get through, "*The Many Deaths of the Black Company*" pulls you along and keeps you guessing. Though I finished this book less than a month ago, I'm already going back through the series. If you read the first three omnibuses, you obviously had every intention of finishing the series but let me encourage you by saying that "*Water Sleeps*" and "*Soldiers Live*" are among my favorite books of the series. If you haven't read the other books, obviously do so first because nothing in these books will make sense otherwise. In closing, this is a perfect end to an almost perfect series.

I'm a long time fan of the Black Company, and while the later books (*Bleak Seasons*, *She is the Darkness*, *Water Sleeps*, and *Soldiers Live*) are not as good as the first three (*Black Company*, *Shadows Linger*, *The White Rose*), they are still in a class by themselves. This collection includes *Water Sleeps* and *Soldier's Live*. Great stuff. I've passed it down to my children, and they have all read them as well, multiple times.

Hard to believe but I got a part of my soul now in the land of the hidden shadows. For months, I have been part of the company, reading from its annals day by the day. Coming to the end of the road, it is hard to continue without the Company's characters and adventures at my side. I'm grateful for this great entertainment, echo got me through stressful times in my own Khatovar. I will miss you both Lady and Soul Catcher!

This series was touched and touching by both the ghosts of soldiers and the meme of history. And makes limited sense readily apparent, but seems more real than fantasy for it. In a virtual sort of way. Offers you the wondering of why, too.

I've been caught up reading this book and cannot help fear finishing this series. Glen Cook does a wonderful job changing up the view points enough to where the book loses the tedium that many other series tend to have a hard time shaking. I recommend the Black Company series for anyone who likes fantasy, battles, cloak and daggers, with character consistency. If you see this book for 12 bucks or lower I recommend it for a good time killer.

The conclusion to the saga of the Black Company was all you could have hoped for. It ties up most loose ends, and gives a variety of sendoffs to most characters that you'll love or hate. The finale in particular is very satisfying. *Water Sleeps* I feel is notably better than *Soldiers Live*, and I feel this is because of A LOT of redundancy in *Soldiers Live*. You have characters retreading the same area over and over again, for different and very valid reasons, but it gets very frustrating. You certainly get the futility of it all pretty quickly, how so much could have been avoided if different decisions were made earlier on. Death is sudden and often meaningless, yet due to the scope the books have taken it is more frustrating than in the early days where these were just a record of the mundane day to day of these soldiers. Overall these two books are stronger than the previous two. It doesn't go and fix some of the more glaring plot holes that have existed since the start, nor does it ever really reach the heights of the first 3 books, but the conclusion is satisfying while still leaving doors open for the future.

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