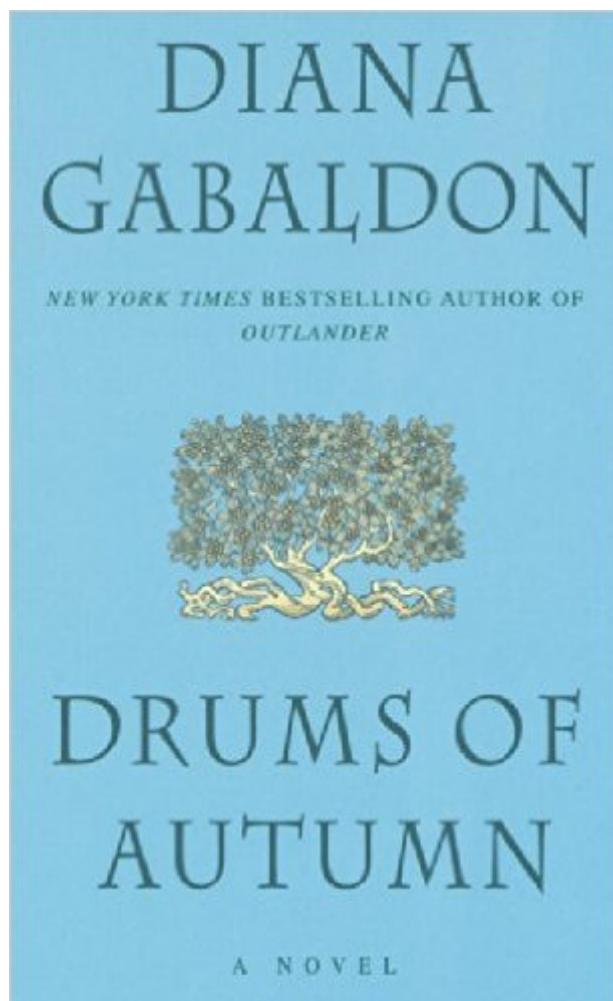


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The Drums Of Autumn



Synopsis

The magnificent saga continues....It began in Scotland, at an ancient stone circle. There, a doorway, open to a select few, leads into the pastâ "or the grave. Claire Randall survived the extraordinary passage, not once but twice. Her first trip swept her into the arms of Jamie Fraser, an eighteenth-century Scot whose love for her became legendâ "a tale of tragic passion that ended with her return to the present to bear his child. Her second journey, two decades later, brought them together again in frontier America. But Claire had left someone behind in the twentieth century. Their daughter, Brianna....Now Brianna has made a disturbing discovery that sends her to the stone circle and a terrifying leap into the unknown. In search of her mother and the father she has never met, she is risking her own future to try to change history...and to save their lives. But as Brianna plunges into an uncharted wilderness, a heartbreakingly encounter may strand her forever in the past...or root her in the place she should be, where her heart and soul belong....

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (4,541 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Ostensibly, "Drums of Autumn" is about reunions with fathers. Gabaldon, however, seems to meander about quite a bit before she remembers her theme. Although I didn't do an exact count, I agree with the reviewer who commented that the first 500 pages are terrible. "Drums" begins with Jamie and Claire attending the execution of one of Jamie's fellow inmates. Jamie and Claire, plus entourage, are heading to a Scottish settlement in Wilmington, North Carolina, where his aunt owns a plantation. The first half of the book mostly involves the mishaps on their journey north, life at the

aunt's plantation, Jamie's debate over whether to strike out on his own or accept his aunt's generous offer, an adventure-filled trip to the wilderness, and ultimately, getting settled in a home in the new world. While I don't want to suggest that all these events are mundane--this is Jamie and Claire Fraser we're talking about, after all--the events are very episodic. Gabaldon lacks any kind of overriding theme to organize the plot. In "Outlander," we had Claire's ultimate decision about whether to return to her 20th century life. In "Dragonfly in Amber," we had their attempt to prevent Culloden. In "Voyager," we first had Claire's search for records of what happened to Jamie, and later the search and rescue of Jamie's nephew Ian. Also missing in "Drums" is a good villain. With the deaths of Jack Randall and Geillis Duncan, Gabaldon has to create a new bad guy or two. She does introduce her villains fairly early on--only their true malevolence does not become apparent until much later. In other words, unlike the way the threat of Jack Randall loomed in "Outlander," the threat of these villains seems to disappear when they initially disappear from the plot.

"Drums Of Autumn" is the fourth book in Diana Gabaldon's extraordinary "Outlander" series. It amazes me that Ms. Gabaldon has been able to continue to delight readers with her consistently good writing, excellent plots, superb characters and meticulous historic research for thousands of pages and four novels. "Drums Of Autumn" most certainly will not disappoint fans of the series. If you have not read the three preceding novels, I strongly urge you to do so before beginning this book. "Drums of Autumn" may be able to stand as a novel in its own right, but I think it would be too confusing to enjoy it thoroughly without having read the historic and personal drama that Ms. Gabaldon details so well in her previous books. To label the "Outlander" series as merely historical romance fiction would be to do it a terrible injustice. This is an epic historical romance, yes...and so much more. The relationship between Claire and Jamie is one of the most caring and intimate I have ever encountered - in fiction or real life. This is a couple who are solidly committed to a life together for better or worse. Theirs is a love that truly transcends the boundaries of time. More than twenty years before this novel begins, Claire Beauchamps Randall, vacationing in post WWII Scotland, stepped through the ancient stone circle known as Craigh na Dun - and was suddenly sucked back in time to 1743 and war-torn Scotland. It was here that she met and married her own true love, highlander James Fraser. Before the tragic battle of Culloden Moor she was forced to return to the 20th century to protect herself and her unborn daughter, abandoning Jamie in the process.

This is the fourth in a series of what has been, until now, exceptionally well written time travel,

adventure/romance books by the author. There are four such books published to date in what is anticipated to be a series of six books. Those of us who are hopelessly addicted to this series are awaiting the publication and release of book five, "The Fiery Cross". I urge the reader to start at the beginning and read each and every one in the order in which it was written. Be not afraid of the length of each book. Trust me when I say that you will end up wishing that they were each longer, so riveting is the story that the author unfolds. Ms. Gabaldon is a master storyteller without compare, employing the superlative use of actual historical events with authentic period detail to weave a three dimensional tapestry of timeless love and adventure. While the core of the story is about a love that transcends time, it is an adventure story that holds the reader in its thrall. The love that spans time is that which twentieth century Englishwoman, Claire Randall, has for eighteenth century Scottish highlands warrior, James Fraser. Those readers who have read the first book in the series, "Outlander", know that in 1945, Claire, a combat nurse during World War II, is reunited with her husband, Frank, after the war. While on a second honeymoon in Scotland, she visits a strange, flat topped hill, where a forbidding stone circle draws her. Touching one of the stones, she is hurled through a vortex in time and finds herself in eighteenth century Scotland, where she meets the brave and brawny, red headed Scot, James Fraser, with whom she falls head over heels in love.

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