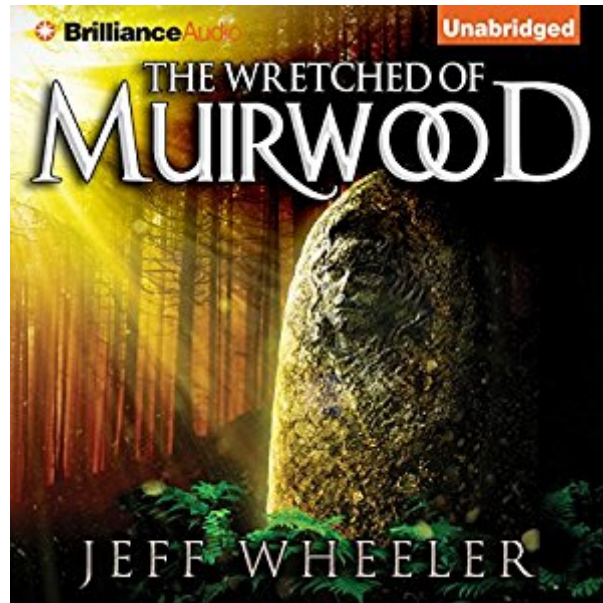


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# The Wretched Of Muirwood: Legends Of Muirwood, Book 1



## Synopsis

The Wretched of Muirwood, the opening novel in the Muirwood Trilogy, is the tale of the orphan Lia - who is part of a pariah caste known only as the "wretched", a people unloved, unwanted, and destined to a life of servitude. Forbidden to read or write, and forced to slave away in the Abbey kitchen, Lia is all but resigned to her fate. But when an injured squire named Colvin is abandoned at the Abbey kitchen, opportunity arises, and Lia conspires to hide Colvin and change her life forever.... Her plan becomes a perilous one when a nefarious sheriff starts a manhunt for Colvin, and the land is torn by a treacherous war between a ruthless king and a rebel army. Ominous and illuminating, Lia sets out on an epic quest for freedom with hopes to unravel the secrets of her concealed past.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 50 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Brilliance Audio

Audible.com Release Date: January 16, 2013

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00B1P0QSO

Best Sellers Rank: #11 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Romance > Fantasy #108 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy #138 in Books > Romance > Action & Adventure

## Customer Reviews

I've become a bit jaded since discovering the plethora of cheap books for kindle - because there are simply so many of them, and also because many books have not proven to be worth my time. This book was absolutely worth my time! From chapter 1 I knew I'd likely have trouble putting it down, and I was right. The writing style is engaging, the story is fascinating, and the characters - well, they just work. They click; they resonate. Pasqua is a particular favourite of mine, because even though I can't cook like her, I can certainly relate to her character and the softness beneath her brusque exterior. I loved the way magic - the Medium - had a light and a dark side, and how the choices of various characters determined how they could/could not use this power. I also loved the use of

symbolism, as well as the refreshing lack of gratuitous violence/sexuality. Well done Jeff.

I've always thought a good novel stands on its characters. In "The Wretched of Muirwood", Lia is a true-hearted and compelling heroine. She carries the story marvelously and has stayed with me as a good friend long past finishing. Combine an excellent cast of characters with an engrossing plot--even heart racing at times--and the Muirwood series is hard to put down. It has an exceptionally well-constructed world mythology with thought provoking themes on wisdom, faith, intention, and honor. Plus, it's plain fun. I cannot believe it is so inexpensive as an e-book. It's a no-brainer. Buy it and enjoy!

As an avid reader (and a 26 year old woman), I am always looking for new and interesting novels. I was looking through the Kindle lending library, saw that though this book doesn't have large numbers of reviews, everyone who has reviewed it had given it 5 stars, so I decided to give it a try. As a prime rental it was free, but after reading it, I immediately purchased it, as well as the rest of the trilogy. The way I explained it to my husband was that it is almost a Star Wars meets King Arthur. Which sounds a little strange, but it is a magical world with power akin to "the force", but placed in a political medieval setting on a different world, similar to ours. I am not necessarily a huge fan of Fantasy fiction, though I do love books like Harry Potter, Enders Game, Narnia, etc. I think that this book is one of those that can appeal to both young and old readers, and hold different levels of meaning and inspiration for each reader. It is placed in a rich, developed setting. The created world really comes to life. It is lush with detail and I can perfectly picture the settings in my mind, but the book is fast paced, easy to read, and full of life! There is deep religious subtext & symbology, but there is also friendship, love, betrayal, war, action, virtue, honor, pride, good, and evil. The characters are real, potent, developed, complex, and well written, the story is adventurous and compelling. What more could you ask for? I have read dozens of books, which I have enjoyed, but which I have not taken the time to review, or which I have not enjoyed enough to recommend to loved ones. I would (and have) recommended this book to my teen/tween nieces & nephew, my 20 & 30 something friends, my 58 year old mother, and even my grandmother!

Originally posted at Fantasy Literature. The Wretched of Muirwood is a book that I wouldn't normally have picked up. It's the opening installment of a trilogy that was first self-published by Jeff Wheeler through Createspace (an Amazon company) after being rejected by the traditional publishing houses. Wheeler pitched it to 47North, a speculative fiction imprint. I've

been skeptical of 47North titles because imprints don't go through the normal publishing process, and because I was not pleased with the last couple of 47North novels I read. Personally, I love the idea of being able to self-publish, but as a reviewer, I can attest to the fact that most (but not all) self-published work I've encountered that wasn't from an already well-known author has been... less than stellar. Far less than stellar. That's because self-publishing doesn't involve all those folks whose job it is to vet the work before it gets to the reader (agents, editors, slush-pile readers, and publicists). But Kindle Direct Publishing has led to a new model that has been trying for a couple of years now. Authors self-publish their books in Kindle format and keep complete control, pricing their book as they like. tracks the sales (and, I assume, the reviews) of these self-published books and offers contracts to authors whose books are doing well. Thus, authors have the burden of doing the self-promotion, often taking a monetary risk by giving away a lot of free e-copies to get attention, and those people getting the free copies are acting as 's slush-pile readers. A pretty good system for and for authors who are willing to do the work and who, presumably, have a product good enough to get the reviews they need. This is what happened to Jeff Wheeler; he gave away lots of free copies of *The Wretched of Muirwood*, got great reviews, and got 's attention. *The Wretched of Muirwood* came to my attention because Brilliance Audio (another company as of 2007) has been producing 47North titles on audio and sending me review copies. The cover of *The Wretched of Muirwood* is attractive and it's narrated by actress Kate Rudd, which I thought was promising, so I gave it a go. That's a really long introduction to Jeff Wheeler's debut novel, which is a story about a girl named Lia who works in the kitchen of an abbey. More than anything Lia wishes she could be one of the students at the abbey, but she's an orphan and is not allowed to study. When she saves the life of a young man named Colvin, she ends up accompanying him on a trip to meet up with a band of noblemen who oppose the tyrannical king. Along the way Lia discovers that she has some skills with magic and maybe even a Destiny. For readers who love the traditional tropes of epic fantasy and are looking for another story in which a humble young protagonist starts out illiterately baking bread in the kitchen of an ancient abbey but ends up as a warrior in an epic supernatural battle between good and evil, *The Wretched of Muirwood* is likely to please. It's well-written (not beautiful, but certainly miles better than most self-published work I've read), has a nice setting, an interesting story, and moves at a good pace. The greatest strength of *The Wretched of Muirwood* is the characters. Lia is a pleasant protagonist -- she's smart, eager to learn, courageous, and nice to be around, but she's not too perfect, at least at first. Other characters have their own distinct personalities and make a good supporting cast. None of them are anything we haven't seen before in this type of epic fantasy, but they are pleasant to read about. Those who are looking for something

new will find that *The Wretched of Muirwood* doesn't stand out. This was exactly the issue I had with the last couple of 47North novels I read, though *The Wretched of Muirwood* is better. The story could have benefited from something special, like an original magic system. Wheeler's magic consists of a nebulous energy called the Medium, which has its own mission and helps those who believe in it, similar to The Force in *Star Wars* or, more likely, the Christian Holy Spirit. After reading about Jeff Wheeler and discovering that he's a bishop in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, I suspect that parts of his story may be metaphor for LDS doctrine. (I can't say for sure since I'm unfamiliar with teaching that goes beyond what's found in the Bible.) Jeff Wheeler originally pitched *The Wretched of Muirwood* as a young adult novel and I think that target audience will enjoy the book most and will want to read Lia's further adventures in the next novel, *The Blight of Muirwood*. Brilliance Audio sent me the whole trilogy and I liked *The Wretched of Muirwood* well enough to give that second novel a try. Kate Rudd does a great job with the narration. She has a superior ear for the rhythm of the story and she can convincingly read both male and female parts. Originally posted at Fantasy Literature. Please come visit.

As a mild fan of fantasy novels (I've read the uber popular ones and will read ones recommended to me) I picked up this series on the recommendation of my two oldest children (14 yo girl & 12 yo boy). They said it was awesome and that I HAD to read it. So I did. And they were right. The setting and the characters are what is most important to me when I read fantasy. If those aren't well done then things just seem forced. The setting of Muirwood Abbey and the main character of Lia are not only well done, but they seem to go perfectly together. I immediately felt an emotional connection to both that had me unable to put the book down. I highly recommend *The Wretched of Muirwood*!

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