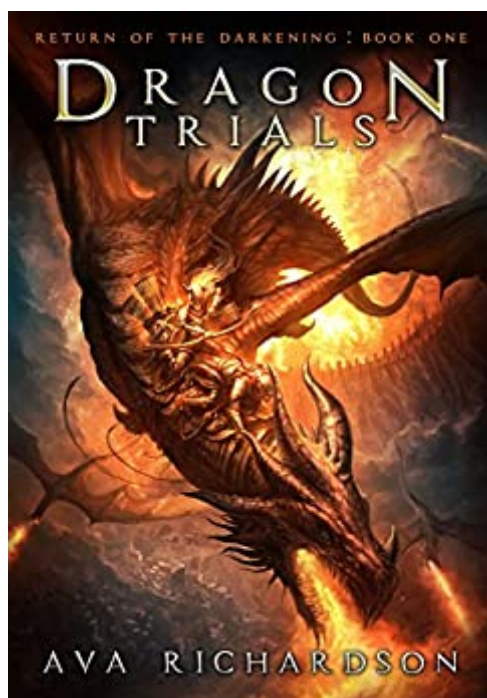


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# Dragon Trials (Return Of The Darkening Book 1)



## Synopsis

Sebastian Smith has long been ashamed of his drunken father and poor upbringing, but then he's chosen to train as a Dragon Rider at the prestigious academy. Thrust into a world where he doesn't fit in, Seb finds a connection with his dragon that is even more powerful than he imagined. Soon, he's doing all he can to succeed and not embarrass his new partner, Thea. High-born Agathe Flamma intends to bring honor to her family by following in her brothers' footsteps and taking her rightful place as a Dragon Rider. With her only other option being marriage, Thea will not accept failure. She's not thrilled at her awkward, scruffy partner, Seb, but their dragon has chosen, and now the unlikely duo must learn to work as a team. When Seb hears rumors that an old danger is reemerging, he and Thea begin to investigate. Armed only with their determination and the dragon they both ride, Thea and Seb may be the only defense against the Darkening that threatens to sweep the land. Together, they will have to learn to work together to save their kingdom or watch it fall.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

At first I was doubtful about reading this book. I thought I was another one of those novels whose plot emanated from the more popular ones. Usually you can see the pattern in the protagonist's character, his/her entourage and nemesis. Dragon Trials surprised me because of how well the characters were developed throughout the story. Of how they were gradually introduced and how they bonded and matured as the story progressed. I sincerely hope that Ava Richardson will brew her own brand of plots and twists to keep things interested. I hope she maintains or levels up the amount of thrill, mystery and twist in the stories to keep the readers guessing until the last minute of revelation. I enjoyed how the story unfolded, enjoyed the accuracy of the lore behind the story and how the relationship of the protagonists to their friends, families and even their own person are realistic and complicated. Overlooking some minor typographical errors, this series has a lot of potential to it. I, for one, will definitely follow Seb and Thea's adventures into the kingdom of Torvald.

3.5 This book didn't hold my interest very well until the end. Thea is rude and then kind to Seb sporadically for about 50% of the book. I wouldn't have minded if she were making progress or growing, but her character just felt flighty and unpredictable. Then, bam, the rudeness evaporated. The dragon training was boring. How can this be? I think it was partly because it sounded like caring for a horse (cleaning tack, pulling on reins, etc.) rather than working with a sentient partner. The plot went nowhere for 70% of the book. Hearing rumors and hearing more rumors can only carry a story so far. Yes, things were happening in the academy, but those were social problems. I wanted epic-level dragon problems. Plus, the problems at the academy and with the Darkening could have been timed to climax together rather than one piece at a time. Plot holes: timing Thea said her brothers became dragon riders almost as soon as they can walk. Later we find out they became dragon riders at 19, same as her. Some cadets have somehow not graduated for five years. Seb and Thea and the rest of their year graduated in, like, two months. Seb and Thea fought the final battle after over 24 hours of no food. Thea had a chance to grab food, but she took a waterskin instead. Why not stock up on food AND water? I don't understand. There were a few other minor quibbles. So, what did I like? The end was packed together and showed Seb and Thea make a difference against the big, bad, evil. Seb has special magic. The dragons talked more. People got hurt. Seb and Thea acted very stupidly, though, which is annoying. I won't read the next.

I thoroughly enjoyed flying through this book with Sebastian, Agathe, & the young red dragon, Kalax, that chose them. Thea, from the noble House of Flamma, & Seb, the son of a poor, drunken blacksmith, both seem to have a flair for disobeying rules & finding trouble, but finally become

full-fledged Dragon Riders.

Dragon Trials: Return of the Darkening, Volume 1  
Written by: Ava Richardson  
Narrated by: Tiffany Williams  
This is a fun teen fantasy novel centered around dragons and hopeful teens. These teens want to be picked to be dragon riders. The choosing happens every 5 years. It follows a very rich girl and a poor boy. Very few of each are ever picked. They are teamed up and it is not only the story of how they learn to be dragon riders but the interaction with the dragon, bullying from other riders, getting to know each other, and more. A fun, fantasy, and every kids dream to ride a dragon! At least I always wanted a dragon and not a pony!  
The narrator is perfect for this book. She is able to perform all the multitude of voices without fault. Wonderful job.

Very readable young adult literature. Characters are fairly typical in today's stories. Female noble wanting to escape traditional role. Male character poor, clumsy with some innate special powers. It move very well but sometimes I get confused as which character is speaking. Might be me, who knows? Kindle version of many books have big editing mistakes, wrong word substitution, strange confusing sentence structure. Could use better proofreaders.

This is first person, but the view changes from Seb, Sebastian Smith to Thea, Lady Agathe Flamma of House Flamma. Kalax the red dragon is their shared dragon and she picked them as her riders. Lady Flamma is disappointed when she realizes that the partner her dragon chose is a nobody from the poorest place in the city Torvald, Seb as Sebastian likes to be called, is the son of a blacksmith and while he is strong he has no idea how to hold a weapon let alone what to do with it. Seb is in awe of Thea, as Agathe Flamma likes to be called, because even though she is of a noble house she knows what to do in a fight, whether she uses a blade, a quarter staff, or her favorite a bow and arrows. She not the kind of lady who simply wishes to marry well; she has her older brothers' spirit and desire to be a Dragon Rider. These heroes in the making have a lot to learn about each other, about their dragon and about being partners with each other and their dragon. Will they learn quick enough when rumors of the return of the Darkening come to their ears from several sources? When it looks like war is upon them can they work together to save the day? Read on and find out. I thoroughly enjoyed this book

Richardson's dragons each require a navigator and a protector who fights with sword, bow and staff. Once the Dragon riders stopped a mysterious and barely remembered evil. Is it returning? Will they

have the necessary magic used in the past? Seb and Thea will do well just to avoid being kicked out of the Academy.

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