



## **Lightning Wolves**

*David Lee Summers*

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It's 1877 and Russians forces occupy the Pacific Northwest. They are advancing into California. New weapons have proven ineffective or dangerously unstable. The one man who can help has disappeared into Apache Country, hunting ghosts. A healer and a former sheriff lead a band into the heart of the invasion to determine what makes the Russian forces so unstoppable while a young inventor attempts to unleash the power of the lightning wolves.

## **Lightning Wolves Details**

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Author : David Lee Summers

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## From Reader Review Lightning Wolves for online ebook

### **Erin Burns says**

I received a copy of this book from the author, via Amazon, this does not affect my opinion of this book or the content of my review. Additionally, I do not "know" the author, nor do I have any type of personal relationship with him.

This book started off promisingly enough, with a dream about the war. No, not the civil war, a war between the United States and Russia in an alternate history where steam rules and fantastical engineering feats are accomplished, and where a shadowy entity known as The Legion runs amuck in society, politics and war. It turns out this is actually the second story in the series, but overall I'd say the author does a fair job of updating the reader on events so that this can be read as a stand-alone.

However, can and should are two very different things. And right after checking in with the main protagonists we start cutting away to other characters who are obviously and pointedly the main protagonists of the first book. I'll admit, it took me out of the story a bit and I struggled to care a whit for them. Maybe I am a bit too ADHD, but I have trouble focusing on more than a small handful of unknown characters at a time.

But, back to the two I consider the main characters in this book. One is Larissa Crimson, a bounty hunter and war hero living under an assumed name. She should have been right up my alley, a wild west feminist interested in science and engineering, Yes, that should have been my catnip. What got in the way of that, is before I even got to know her as she is, we started getting dreams of her childhood. The other is Professor Maravilla. He's a steam punk mad scientist and a naturalist with a penchant for talking to himself, and he too is living under an assumed name And then a little later we are introduced to the third main character, Sergeant Michael Harris. He's the one who ties the characters from the previous story back into the current one.

As for the story itself, the first part seems like a McGuffin. The professor and Larissa are searching for the answer to a camel carrying a skeleton which is spooking people off from an area. The mystery is eventually solved, but initially the only purpose I could see for it was to give the professor and Larissa a reason to be difficult to find. It turns out that isn't the case, it was a lesson characters needed to learn. There were several other plot lines that all eventually converged. There was excitement and drama, and off course fantastical steam punk elements.

So I suppose this all makes it sound as though I didn't like it, when that couldn't be further from the truth. There was much of it I enjoyed tremendously, it is just those parts are hard to explain without getting into spoiler territory. Legion is absolutely fascinating, and by the end of the book I did come to care about the characters. While a few elements could stand to be tightened up, it was, all in all, a very entertaining book that kept me engaged for the afternoon I read it. 3.5 stars

Cross-posted <https://burnsthroughherbookshelf.word...>

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### **Susan says**

Note: While this is Book 2 in the series, I feel that most readers could pick it up and enjoy it. There is enough material from Book 1 mentioned to explain the background of characters in Book 2.

This book is part alternate history, part steampunk, part mystery and all those parts come together for a massively entertaining read. Set in the 1870s Western USA, Russian forces occupy the Pacific Northwest while the desert Southwest is still Wild West. Our heroes from the first book have since scattered; now the impending doom (or fate) brings them back together. Ramon Morales (who was once a sheriff) and his fiance Fatemeh Karimi (a healer and owl talker) are resting up at Ramon's mother's house at the start of this series. But soon they are traveling west. Professor Maravilla and Larissa are hiding out in the Grand Canyon tinkering away with the ornithopters and other mechanical wonders. They too are pulled into the trouble brewing in the Pacific Northwest.

Billy searches for work and ends up on a chili farm owned by Hoshi, a retired Japanese samurai. Soon, they are asked to help hunt down a thief and murderer, William Bresnahan. New characters are pulled in to round out this team of soon-to-be heroes; the Shieffelins, Luther Duncan, and a completely foreign entity that only Maravilla can communicate with.

A wild ride through the wild west, with a rich mix of the various cultures and political factions, this book is a most entertaining read. Growing up, I didn't really care for Westerns because I felt they only focused on the Caucasian cultures while casting all others in a negative light (if mentioned at all). Lightning Wolves does not make this mistake pulling in many cultures with real characters that have regular flaws and gifts.

The plot jumps from character to character, giving us quality time with all our main characters. Some of my favorite scenes are where Maravilla and Larissa go off to investigate the rumor of a warrior ghost who rides a camel, haunting a certain mountain range. Just the imagery alone evinces a giggle from me. Natives of the desert Southwest may recognize several real locations used in this story (a plus in my book!).

For those who need some mechanical wonders in their steampunk novels, you also will not be disappointed. There are some carryover wonders from Book 1 (Owl Dance) such as the ornithopters. But Prof. Maravilla has been hard at work in Book 2 – there are indeed lightning wolves! These are steampowered metal contraptions in the shape of wolves and they are pretty awesome. Then there is the digging peccary, a metal mining machine in the shape of a javalina (but far larger).

I do have one small criticism for this book: many of the fight and/or escape scenes are pretty basic, like something you would see in the old black and white Zorro TV series. They also often come off rather flat as the characters don't have any particular emotions during the scenes.

The ending was definitely satisfying and I did not expect it to be quite what it was – pleasantly surprised! For those of you who read Book 1, you will notice a minor but important scifi thread weaving its way through the plot. This comes to the forefront at the end and it is well done!

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## **Anthony says**

Summers' "Clockwork Legion" story continues in this second installment, expanding the world and advancing the steampunk text introduced in the first book. The world is still in the midst of an almost world-war (Russia versus the United States) almost a century early due to the alien intelligence Legion's interference in book 1, and that high-level drama continues as backdrop to this installment. But where the

book really shines is in Summers' concentration on developing the supporting cast into lead characters in their own right. The first book focused on Ramon Morales and Fatimeh Karini and their travels, introducing us to a wealth of secondary characters; this book brings several of those (in particular the inventor Professor Maravigia and the former bounty hunter Larissa Crimson) to higher prominence and really lets us get to know them as well as we know Ramon and Fatimeh. New characters are introduced as well, with mysteries of their own to be explored in future books I'm sure.

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### **Clay Davis says**

A fun steampunk, wild west story.

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### **Katrina Roets says**

Do you want to know how you know that you're really enjoying a book? It's when the power goes out and you curl up on the couch with a flashlight so that you can keep reading. Seriously. This happened to me last night. Thankfully the power was only out for about 30 minutes, but during that 30 minutes, I was reading by flashlight. Why? Because I loved the alternative take on history. I loved the ideas of new aircraft and ways of doing things that fascinated me. The characters were well done and while I was reading the book, I celebrated and mourned right alongside them. If I had one complaint, it's that I didn't realize this was the second book in a series. It does explain though why at some points, I felt as if I ought to be familiar with a character that I wasn't. Ninety-Five percent of the time though, this book did great as a stand alone.

Would I recommend that you track down a copy? Absolutely. As for me, I'm going to see if I can't get my hands on book 1 and book 3 of this series.

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### **Duncan Rittschof says**

Review available on [www.duncansbooksandmore.com](http://www.duncansbooksandmore.com)

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### **Wendy Jensen says**

Russians invading USA in the 1870's and the efforts of a main core of characters who have come to know each other in rather different ways and from different cultures are trying to help save the country. There are the inventors of machines and flying birds that are far ahead of the time. The wild west. A good read, interesting and hard to put down.

I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads

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## **Jan says**

Really prods the reader to dig around and examine some of the real history included in the story! There's a samurai turned farmer, the Clanton brothers and some other outlaws, Geronimo, ornithopters, Russians, aliens, bigotry, greed, philosophy, and lots more. And it's STEAMPUNK! Well written fun for all with very interesting characters and clear imagery.

Edward Mittelstedt does a fine audio interpretation with clear speech and good definition of the characters.

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## **Deby Fredericks says**

The Old West as we wish it had been, full of adventure and crazy inventions but with some honesty about the prejudices and mores of the day. This is as much alternate history as adventure tale, with an ethnically diverse cast fighting battles that never were. Appearances by a few historical figures, like Geronimo, add spice. There's a poignant undercurrent on how inventions meant to lift humanity up can draw us into the same old quagmire of ambition and greed, plus an intriguing alien race trying to find its way through First Contact with humans. Nicely done.

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## **Beverly Laude says**

An enjoyable continuation of the Clockwork Legion series. If you enjoy steampunk & the Wild, Wild West, this series is for you!

The book has action & adventure, romance, war and clockwork. There is a clockwork lobo, lightning wolves, flying clockwork owls & a mining javelina. The inclusion of real historical figures like Billy the Kid adds a lot of fun to these books. There is also a Samurai warrior & a wedding. Very entertaining!

The narrator does an excellent job with various voices for the characters that adds to the enjoyment of the book. I look forward to more books like this from Mr. Summers!

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## **Erica Miles says**

Lightning Wolves by David Lee Summers is the second in The Clockwork Legion Series, and it is a sequel to Owl Dance, continuing the fantasy saga of inhabitants in the 19th Century U.S. Southwest. This book features the same dear, familiar cast of characters: former sheriff, Ramon Morales, and his Persian fiancée, Fatemeh Karimi, and this time, we are introduced to Ramon Morales' mother, as charming and wise a character as you could imagine, as well as ingenious Professor Maravilla and former Bounty Hunter, Larissa Crimson, who has now found a new vocation, working as a teammate with the distinguished Professor. We are even introduced to Indians, in this case, Apaches. And of course, Billy the Kidd once more makes an appearance, along with a mysterious Japanese swordsman. The super-intelligent alien being, Legion, still seems to be at work behind the scenes.

At this point, the Battle of Denver is over, having ended with the victory of Maravilla's airborne mechanical

owls having vanquished the Russian airfleet. Yet the Russians continue to invade and occupy Oregon and Alaska. The question is who will stop them? The U.S. army requires a new weapon to deploy and seeks Professor Maravilla's help. Will our brave, courageous characters succeed in their mission? You'll have to read this delightful mixture of science fantasy / historical fiction to find out.

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