



Warlock of the Witch World

Andre Norton , Jack Gaughan (Illustrator)

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Classic Fantasy Series. "Kyllan the warrior, Kaththea the untried witch, Kemoc, whose powers could surpass all others- these are the half-Earthling, half witch-brood family menaced by the sorceries of an unknown enemy. The burden of the struggle fell to Kemoc, who was forced to summon his untested powers in the battle to match the alien evil threatening the Witch World."

Warlock of the Witch World Details

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Author : Andre Norton , Jack Gaughan (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Warlock of the Witch World for online ebook

Dwer says

A 3 only because it is part of a series I am fond of. Otherwise, a 2

Janelle says

Next to the first book in the series, I enjoyed this one second-most. It is mostly Kemoc's tale, who is the son given wisdom by his mother's blessing. It picks up where the last story left off, with the triplets in the Eastern lands trying to combat an evil that is awake and hunting them. They have a small group of trusted companions but Kemoc can't reconcile himself with Dinzil. Dinzil is liked by everyone but Kemoc and he is searching for reasons why when Dinzil disappears with Kemoc's sister. This was full of action and ended on a cliffhanger which I assume will be concluded in the next book. It was a quicker and enjoyable read.

DaveA says

I am almost ready to upgrade this to 5 stars and upgrade the first book in this trilogy (Three against the Witch World) to a 4. Again, this book clearly ends in the middle of the story, but it has a surprise ending and some bit of denouement. This book kept me enthralled, and I'm eager to read the next one.

The different series in the Witch World books was rather confusing to me. To assist others, here are several sites with good information:

A suggested reading order:

<http://www.andre-norton-books.com/arc...>

Although I'm not sure I'd agree with this. Publication date order is often the best.

I like this site better. It gives a listing of the books by Cycle order and also lists publication date. This, I believe, was created by the author (or, at least putatively, endorsed by her):

<http://www.andre-norton.org/wworld/ww...>

And, on that same site, an overview of the available information about the entire series (at least 35 books):

<http://www.andre-norton.org/wworld/>

Doris says

The previous book in this series, Three Against the Witch World, followed the warrior Kyllan Tregarth, the oldest of the triplets born to Simon Tregarth of Earth and the Witch Jaelithe. Kyllan was the driving force behind the actions that broke the mental barrier hiding the Eastern land known as Escore from the minds of the Western land, Estcarp. His discovery of Escore triggered actions that wakened ancient powers (both good

and evil).

This book continues the tale, as Kemoc, the wizard (warlock) of the triplets, sets out to find allies to help reduce the evil in the land, as freed by his and his brother's actions. One of the allies that first presents is Dinzil of the Heights, and adept of great power. Even though Dinzil can cross the Valley wards, Kemoc feels something is "off" about the man. Unfortunately, not only do the people of Escore accept Dinzil, the third member of the triplets, Kaththea the witch, falls in love with Dinzil. She follows the adept home and this story follows Kemoc's attempts at rescue.

In this story, the three siblings have to work together even when they disagree, and we see again the theme of danger when power is used, whether it be for good or ill. I liked that Kemoc, although a wizard, is untrained, so he has to have assistance, and a great deal of that comes from the non-human, Orsya, a sort of mermaid creature who defies the rules of her people to help him. Norton's theme of allowing non-humans, and especially females, to act heroically, is again seen here.

I did think there was a little too much of reliance on chance encounters and rash use of chance-found items, such as the blade Kemoc found.

I didn't really "like" Kemoc, as he seemed willing to dismiss his brother as not as important, since Kyllan has no witch powers, but also I didn't like Kaththea, who dismisses Kemoc as 'just a man', even though she follows the Adept – who is also a man.

John says

1977 grade D

Series book W4

Chris says

The pub date on this is...a lie, kinda.

The thing dates from 1967. This edition is proolly from '82, sure, but...

It's the first SF novel I ever read.

Valerie says

I'm not sure how Norton chose the title for this book. It could have been sheer alliteration; or, by this point, it might have been just that Norton had written so many books that she was running out of alphabet.

Certainly Kemoc Tregarth never describes himself as a 'Warlock', a term which, unless he'd had a long talk or so with his father at some point, he'd probably never have heard.

Realistically (which seems an odd term for a fantasy work, but it applies--Kemoc has always been a severely realistic person, even given the expanded limits of reality in his life), Kemoc has no role models for his life. His father is an alien (alienation is a relative matter--Simon Tregarth is from our world--but in the Witch World, HE becomes the alien). Kemoc's mother is a rebel. His siblings, despite their unorthodox history, are pretty generally not very unusual among their peers (except for their bond, of course).

After being injured on the Borders, Kemoc has made an attempt to find guidance for how to pioneer a new life for an alien even among his fellow aliens. But he has had very limited luck. Because of the unique situation, Kemoc is forced to leave Lornt at, ironically, the very time when new archives have (literally) become unearthed there (a tower collapses in the Turning, revealing previously hidden troves of documents, artifacts, etc). But while the scholars at Lornt rub their hands and begin excavating new lore, Kemoc can't join them, at least until things settle down in Estcarp.

In Escore, Kemoc tries to make a place for himself among the People of The Green Silences. But although Kyllan finds a niche via his wife and in-laws, and Kaththea finds a place to at least make a new beginning (she hopes), Kemoc finds himself reduced to an envoy and escort, and charged with powers he has no guide on how to use. Several times he narrowly averts disaster in severely unsettling (even dangerous) ways.

To complicate matters, Kemoc is disturbed by the man who is courting Kaththea (Dinzil). He's sure that his reaction is not one of fraternal jealousy (after all, he has no problem with Kyllan's relationship with Dahaun). He has difficulty convincing others of this, however.

After an accident following an encounter with Thas, Kemoc discovers that Kaththea has gone away, and dedicates himself to following her. On the track, he encounters creatures from legend, and forms an alliance of convenience with Orsya, a Krogan (water-dweller) woman forced into rebellion by what she regards as a very foolish decision on the part of her tribe, and with a Merfay (an otterlike invisible creature).

Kemoc's journey is complicated by having to go through worldgates at the Dark Tower--and a lot of the story from this point on is fairly disorienting. Apparently the alien dimension is not easily interpreted by human senses. Worse, Kaththea has been deceived to the extent that she believes she must turn to violence to recover her former appearance. And Kemoc's precognitions seem to indicate that there is no way to save Kaththea and his and Kaththea's companions without killing her.

One thing I don't understand is why Kaththea is so easily convinced that her outer appearance is accurately reflective of inner corruption. Kaththea was trained by witches, who actively discourage judging situations and people by appearance. The implication is that, because she was not sworn, she is especially vulnerable to exploitation. Maybe. But why in this particular way?

Merged review:

There're crosslinked stories to this one in (among other places) Trey of Swords.

MyPaperParadise says

Terence says

I toyed with giving *Warlock of the Witch World* (henceforth, WotWW) two stars because, compared to its predecessors, I didn't enjoy reading it as much but the last third of the book and a conceit that I realized while writing this review redeemed it somewhat.

Three Against the Witch World, the immediately previous novel, primarily followed Kyllan Tregarth, one of the triplets born to Simon and Jaelithe, as he broke the mental barrier that hid the East from the mind's of Estcarp's people and discovered the Old Race's homeland of Escore. The triplets' presence, however, awakened ancient Powers both Good and Evil and reignited the struggle that drove the original Witches from the land long ago. In WotWW, the story focuses on the second son of the trio – Kemoc, the titular “warlock.” The Valley of Green Silences, chief citadel of the Light, is besieged and its people are looking for allies. One of these potential friends is Dinzil of the Heights but Kemoc senses something foul underlying the man's handsome and ostensibly friendly exterior. Unfortunately, no one else feels similarly and Kemoc has no supporting evidence. Dinzil seduces Kemoc's sister, Kaththea, and lures her to his seat of power in the mountains. The book is the story of Kemoc's efforts to rescue his sister and expose Dinzil's malevolence.

I don't believe I'm spoiling anything to say that he's ultimately successful but the price is dear, and Norton again dwells upon a favorite theme in her writing – the personal cost of Power even when wielded for Good.

It's not a bad tale. My chief problem is that I'm not very interested in Kemoc as a character. Two things annoyed me especially. One was that Kemoc spent a lot of time being rescued or relying upon the skill and power of others to get out of scrapes. Perhaps this is an inversion of the usual “girl needs rescuing by the hero” trope; a particularly insidious inversion as his guardian angel is Orsya, a Krogan girl who defies her people to aid him. If this is the case, it puts the book in a whole new perspective.

I've written elsewhere that Norton is a far subtler writer than usually given credit for, and this could be further proof of that.

The second annoyance is that Norton relies too heavily on chance-found magic items and not enough on the qualities and skills of her protagonists to advance the plot. For example, Kemoc uses a magic sword he stumbles upon without understanding how or even what he might unleash when he does. Similarly, he uses incantations learned when he was a student in Estcarp that awaken unknown Powers. (Though from a narrative perspective it was annoying, I did like how Norton depicted Kemoc's use of the words of Power – “something *answered*” [original emphasis] and dire things happened.)

A final observation: While considering what to write here, I was struck by the parallels I saw between Norton's “Witch World” series and Robert Jordan's “Wheel of Time.” In both a near-utopian society is destroyed when some people – in their arrogance and lust for power – began experimenting with Powers little understood or ultimately controllable. After the ensuing apocalypse, the human survivors create a civilization ruled by female Witches who fear and distrust any male who exhibits a hint of Power. I don't want or need to push the parallels much further but I wonder what, if any, influence Norton may have had on Jordan.

Even if not the best in the series, if you've fallen under the Witches' spell then you should read *Warlock of*

Nancy Laney says

Witch World, Book 4

Sandra Munger says

Kemoc, one of the Witch World triplets, has to rescue his sister who has fallen under the spell of a man who plans to take over Estcarp. In the course of his travels, he meets Orsya one of the water people. Always does a good job of building descriptions, relationships, and cultures.

Sandi says

I liked the story, but Kemoc's tale involved too much of him being acted upon and no intrinsic acts or powers on his part. Without his lucky chance in finding the magic sword and unicorn horn and meeting the Orsya, there would be no story at all. How did his sister become ensnared so easily and quickly without anyone else the wiser? Actually that is understandable but the idea that good can be subsumed so easily by those having and offering power is not an encouraging one even if it does seem true. Really, this book is simply the tale of his sister being corrupted by incredible power and he chases after her with no real ability to save her except that which comes serendipitously through disregarded readings or long ago. Still, I enjoy the world and will at least read the next to see how the trio makes out.

Magill says

I gave this 3 stars over the 2 for the previous book with Kyllan's story (Three Against the Witch World) as this had more of a plot and somewhat less exposition. I suppose if all three books about the triplets had been written today they would have been a single book, which would perhaps have balanced the weakness of TAtWW. But, if it were written today, the reader would likely have been bounced around between the de rigueur of alternating POVs. So avoiding THAT is a plus, as a book should be more than a narrative tennis match.

Some of the character motivations were perplexing, including how/why Kaththea was so easily fooled by Dinzil - love is one thing, but she seemingly had no ethical basis nor did she utilize the experience of her training (view spoiler). One wonders if Kaththea was so used to admiration from her brothers and being groomed by the sisters in Estcarp that she was rather overly susceptible to flattery, but that in no way excuses her easy mistrust of her own brother.

As others have mentioned, there were a number of chanced-upon objects of power and accidental uses of words of power. But fortunately, Orsya was there to guide Kemoc on his search and educate him as they went. She also provided significant aid in other ways on his quest. It isn't clear if all the Krogan have similar abilities or if she, like Dahaun, is special.

A couple of mentions of virginity in the book, one which allowed Orsya to use an object of power but not Kemoc; and also his take on Kaththea and Dinzil's relationship. I wasn't clear on why Kemoc thought she should be subject to the same rules as the witches, as their mother had not been, obviously.

The constraints of publishing in the 1960s probably makes this a hard sell to today's readers, but the spare stylized prose and the (mostly) strong females makes it worth the effort - and the books are so short! What is there to lose?

The cover is another another story, a perplexing mish-mash, that leads one to think that perhaps cover artists are forbidden to actually read the books, and must imagine a cover solely from the title and a random list of words provided by the publisher.

Pam Baddeley says

This is book 4 of the initial Witch World series and continues the story of the Three, the triplets born to Jaelithe, ex-Witch, and Simon Tregarth, man of our universe who entered the Witch World through an interdimensional gateway.

This time, the story is told from the viewpoint of the second-born, Kemoc, the one to whom their mother wished wisdom. After the events of the previous story, the Valley of Green Silences, haven for those who oppose the Shadow in the land of Escore, is ringed around by enemies. Its leaders try to make alliances with other races in Escore who traditionally have not followed the Shadow. On a mission to the Krogan, a people who depend on water and have gills, but can spend limited time on land, Kemoc meets Orsya, a Krogan woman, who tells him (correctly, as events transpire) that the Krogan will not ally with them; instead, her race will attempt to make a deal with the enemy in order to stay neutral and be left alone.

On his return to the valley, Kemoc finds that his sister Kaththea is friendly with Dinzil of the Heights, leader of an allied group. He has an uneasy feeling about Dinzil, who seems to sneer at his disability (Kemoc's hand was injured in the fighting in their homeland of Estcarp, over the mountains). But when he tries to share his worries with his brother Kyllan, he discovers Kyllan is inclined to put his misgivings down to overprotectiveness of their sister, or jealousy. Kyllan warns him not to broach the subject with her as it will only turn her against him. Soon after, a bird messenger alerts the Valley people that more fighters and their dependents are coming over the mountains between Escore and Estcarp to join the armed struggle, and Kemoc joins the party who go to escort them, as the countryside between the mountains and the Valley is riddled with minions of the Shadow.

On the return journey Kemoc is kidnapped by the Krogan who plan to hand him over to the Shadow in return for being left alone, and he only survives due to the bravery and resourcefulness of Orsya. Later, both join forces in a quest to save Kaththea. I won't say more about the plot to avoid spoilers.

I enjoyed this story partly because of the general weirdness which makes it so different to a lot of fantasy, and partly due to the character of Orsya. Kemoc's strength is wisdom, and he puts to good use the knowledge he gleaned in the earlier story when he spent time at Lormt, the old centre of learning in Estcarp, while recuperating from the injury to his hand. He learned words of power which sometimes have unpredictable results in Escore where so much old magic lingers from long-ago power struggles that left the land divided in an uneasy truce between those who follow the Light and those who do evil for the sake of having power.

In the previous story, the coming of the three siblings upset that balance and put current events in motion, but it is clear that Denzil's dabblings were well in hand, and they can't be blamed for his activities which would have caused havoc eventually. For it is possible that Denzil is the Warlock of the title - the term certainly fits his character better than Kemoc's well-meaning blundering and muddling through. I liked it that Kemoc is not the stereotypical man of action: he is a trained warrior and can fight when necessary, but he is also often out of his depth and dependent on Orsya who helps him for her own reasons, partly because she is far more adventurous than most of her people.

The final section features a lot of very weird morphing between different dimensional levels with distortion of perception and bodily reality (reminiscent of some of Michael Moorcock's later fiction, which again shows Norton's influence on the genre) and also shows Kaththea as more than a match for Denzil in her capacity for corruption and downright malice, which is a nice twist. It will be interesting to see how the story plays out, as I think from the title of the next book that the story will continue from Kaththea's viewpoint. This really deserves a 4.5 stars as I enjoyed it most of the series so far, but can't quite award the last 0.5 as the style of writing uses rather clunky dialogue at times which can jar.

Kat says

Old school fantasy/sci-fi. Wrote my thesis about this book and other Andre Norton's. No feminist protagonist, but strong female characters and even stronger feminist implications.

Mary says

Again Andre Norton drew me into the story just like the first time I read it back in the 80s.

Charles says

Also features the three children of Simon Tregarth and is very good. Quite possibly my favorite of the series.

Dantegideon says

Parts of this reminded me of Amber. Kemoc is a slightly frustrating character, but this is an exceptionally well-written book nonetheless.

Ronald Vasicek says

It is an OK book.

Valery says

obviously weak
