



The Book of Mordred

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Dark forces are taking hold in the kingdom of Camelot: King Arthur struggles to keep his knights in line as they steadily divide themselves into factions; the great Merlin has vanished at the hands of his lover and pupil, Nimue; wizards all over the countryside battle for whatever measures of power they can find. At the center of the maelstrom stands Keira, an innocent girl who possesses the ability to foretell the fate of her world. When Keira is kidnapped from her village home, her mother, Alayna, flees to Camelot and finds Mordred, an enigmatic knight who will ultimately become Keira's greatest champion, Alayna's greatest love, and King Arthur's greatest enemy.

In the long tradition of Arthurian legend, Mordred has been characterized as a buffoon, a false knight, and a bloodthirsty traitor. The Book of Mordred reveals a mysterious man through the eyes of three women who love him.

The Book of Mordred Details

Date : Published June 18th 2007 by HMH Books for Young Readers (first published September 12th 2005)

ISBN : 9780618809165

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Format : Paperback 352 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Mythology, Arthurian, Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Retellings, Adventure, Young Adult Fantasy

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Acetylcoa says

Hooray another book about Mordred... or so you'd think. Let's get right to it, shall we?

The main monster in this book is the lack of character development on Mordred's part. You'd think the gals would get into some intimate relationship with him, but then, there's nothing. You've fallen into a pit trap. His descriptions are mainly based on what the girls say about him. His actions are basically those of the average, introverted man. He's just a girl's fantasy. Actually, three girls' fantasy.

All three books in the...book have similar plots. Except near the end, where he degrades into a weak sausage, he's pretty much a golden, gallant, socially inept man, fighting Halbert--man, what a funny guy that wizard is. Believe me, you'll start with Mordred in mind and then leave thinking about Halbert. He will be everywhere. In the future you will pick up a book with "Mordred" scrawled on the cover and then as you open it, you'll see "Halbert".

Aside from Halbert, I find it fairly disturbing that Alayna, one of the lower class, received such a warm welcome at Camelot, which consists mainly of the upper class. England was very classist. If Arthur welcomed peasants as much as he did in the story, they'd all be swarming around his castle, breaking pots and tearing apart contracts and eating all his fish sticks and custard. But no, Alayna got special treatment... major flaw.

This is a very dramatic story--I could picture the drama version in my head, along with a theme song and ending credits. It's good for hormonal teenagers. Well, that is the intended audience. It's an easy read that can be finished in less than three hours. Maybe that's why some of the descriptions seem skimpy. I would've liked it more if the characters were more fleshed out.

Anyway, does the cover remind anyone of the Lord of the Rings? That is Aragorn in the cover, end of story.

Jackie "the Librarian" says

Before Mordred challenged Arthur for the leadership, he was a knight of the Round Table, headstrong and sarcastic, but also courageous and skilled in battle.

We see Mordred from three women viewpoint's: Alayna, whose daughter Kiera is kidnapped for her visions, the sorceress Nimue, and Kiera herself. In the last segment, Mordred and his brothers invade Guinevere's chambers to reveal what everyone already knows – the Queen and Lancelot are lovers. Guinevere is sentenced to death, Lancelot rescues her, and in fighting over how to handle Lancelot, two armies form. In a final battle, Mordred goes up against Arthur, in a vision of smoke and fog that has haunted the girl Kiera her whole life.

The story is told with great humor and skill, and as told from the women's viewpoints, Mordred is humanized, but not demystified. Mordred is seen as a knight who wants the best for the kingdom, but who is used by evil forces to precipitate the fall of Camelot. This is a compassionate look at a complex character from Arthurian legend.

Gaijinmama says

I'd rate this one a 7 out of 10.

It was simplistic and even though I know it's targeted for young adults, many teen readers could handle more complexity and more thorough character development....heck, I loved Mists of Avalon when I was 15.

That said, I've always found Mordred interesting and felt he got a bum rap. It wasn't his fault how he was conceived or how he was treated as a child....I mean we are talking serious unhealed trauma, adolescent angst, and major Daddy and Mommy issues here!!

Anyway, I liked the idea of Nimue being wracked with ethical questions, and it was nice to read a book that allows Mordred a bit of happiness in the end.

I also have a copy of I am Mordred by Nancy Springer, which I've been meaning to get to. It will be interesting to see if Springer develops the characters better.

Kathi says

First of all, let me declare that I will read (and probably enjoy) almost anything related to the Arthurian legend.

We learn about Mordred through the eyes of 3 women, Alayna, Nimue, and Kiera, and the story is told in three parts over time, each focusing on one of the women. Only Nimue was familiar to me from the tradition Camelot story. Alayna, a young widow, is befriended by Mordred while rescuing her daughter, Kiera. They supposedly have a deep and lasting love between them, although the story never shows us that. Later, Nimue encounters Mordred in another rescue and again, they develop a relationship. The final story involves Kiera, now a young woman, and her relationship with Mordred, Alayna, and Nimue.

Each story was well-told and well-paced. But, especially in Kiera's story, characters and plot lines are introduced with little explanation or backstory--not just the bones of the Arthur/Lancelot/Guinevere triangle, but other plots as well. And in the final sections, Morgana (Morgan la Fay) suddenly shows up and plays a major role in the outcome.

This book is considered YA. Characters were not explored in as much depth as I would have liked. And, most bothersome to me, the key character is still somewhat of a mystery, even at the end. Was he acting on his own or under Morgana's control? What influence, if any, did Nimue have? Too many unanswered questions for me to rate this book higher. I felt like it was a "surface" story without much depth.

Bridget Hanks says

I read this book years ago in middle school and absolutely loved it. It's sat on my bookshelf since then and I just revisited it. It doesn't hold the same charm it held then... I would definitely still recommend it to young fans of magic and medieval, but the story didn't hold enough fullness for me. The characters weren't as rich

as I remembered, the plot not nearly as well-woven. The romance was consistently hinted at, but not brought to a satisfactory conclusion. Perhaps I've just grown up too much and read enough books to raise my expectations to unrealistic levels. I think I'll be giving this book away, and hopefully some young reader can enjoy it as much as I did the first time.

Caitlinclawson27gmail.Com says

This book wasn't great. It was fine, but it wasn't that intriguing to me, and I don't think it was written very well. There were a few typos throughout, and the dialogue and descriptions were not very compelling to me. But, I picked it up because it was \$0.50 to buy from the library, and I enjoyed watching the BBC show "Merlin" and wanted to see how the character of Mordred differed between the two. It was interesting because although both stories are rooted in Arthurian legend, they had some crucial differences. For example, in the BBC show, Mordred is from a magical community, and he is kind of adopted by King Arthur's half-sister, Morgana. In the book, Mordred is rumored to be the illegitimate child of Arthur himself, and his mother was some sort of sorceress. In the "Merlin" universe, magic has been shunned, in "The Book of Mordred", magic is totally acceptable. In both stories though, Merlin knew that Mordred would bring about the destruction of King Arthur, and Camelot.

The book is broken up into three parts, each with a heroic Mordred saving the day. The three parts connected with each other in that there was the same bad guy behind the events, but they didn't flow very easily.

Partially because they were set 5 years apart from the story before, and partially because they are narrated by different characters. Between the first and second stories the transition is the weirdest because the bad guy (a wizard named Tolban) is the only character besides Mordred who appears in both stories. Mordred himself is really more of an accessory in both stories. He gets more of a plot line in the third story when he kills King Arthur, and then he dies too. Again, I was just comparing it to "Merlin" and I thought it was interesting that they both died, like they did in the TV show, but the ages were so much different. In the TV show, the king is maybe 25, and Mordred is probably not any older than 20. In the book, Arthur is graying, and Mordred is young enough to possibly be his son.

Over all, it was pretty good, but not great. I don't regret reading it, but I probably wouldn't recommend it to anyone else either.

Marianne says

I checked this out because I often like Vande Velde's books, and I hoped she could come up with a new twist on this tale--you know, make it readable and everything. Nope, no such luck. If anything, her version is even more depressing than the Mort d'Arthur, which is saying something. Give it a miss. If you want to feel depressed after a violent book, read War and Peace. The writing is better.

Eva says

I read Mary Stewart's Merlin Trilogy, and after that I have been obsessed with the Arthurian Legend. It's hard, however, to grow to love characters in one book, then read about them in another and have them be completely different. So, though this book is good by itself, after the Merlin Trilogy I was somewhat disappointed. I love that there are so many strong women in this book, but I was really disappointed with Arthur. He was so mild, without any passion, yet he was still willing to have his wife burned at the stake.

What kind of husband would do that? Arthur loved Guenivere far too much in Mary Stewart's book to even put her aside. Another thing was Arthur's relationship with Lancelot (Bedwyr). In this book they didn't even seem like friends. It made me sad. Still, this book is good, and I would recommend it. I liked Mordred a lot, if not quite as much as in the Trilogy. The ending, though, is similar to the Chronicles of Narnia (even though I love that book). Throughout the whole book, Kiera faced troubles, and, well, life, but in the end she waltzes off to Avalon to have an easy, trouble free life. It's almost as bad as a hero swooping in to save the day. I can't stand endings like that.

Courtney says

So when I picked up this book, I was thinking that we were going to get a retelling of Mordred where he was not as evil as the original story. There was certainly an attempt at this, but I think it fell short.

The reader sees Mordred through three different women. In the first two sections, the women have just met him, and they end abruptly. Basically I found myself not really caring about Mordred because I was merely shown the same cold, calculating side of him repeatedly. Mordred is not portrayed as evil in this story, just an asshole who doesn't even understand his own means.

Several small plot lines are merely dropped, Such as the wizard Halbert. And Morgan Le Fey shows up in the last thirty pages only to be a one dimensional character. In Nimue and Alayna's chapters Mordred was merely a stranger to us, therefore we did not really become attached to him. In Kiera's chapter, she has known him most of her life, but all we see is him ignoring her and her mother.

I don't really recommend this book. Nancy Springer has two great books, "I am Mordred" and "I am Morgan Le Fey". Those are really great at showing the other side of the traditionally evil characters.

Mkatherinejohnson says

Parts one and two were the best. In part three, motives became muddled and the main character was connected weakly to the main plot. I cared most about the characters in part one.

Throughout the whole book, Mordred would have been more likeable if less time had been spent setting him up as attractive and mysterious. That said, I liked his introduction, and his character was interesting.

The setting and atmosphere could have been stronger, but the attention given to minor characters was interesting and nice without distracting from the focus of the story.

Overall I enjoyed the book and would recommend it to a friend, with a few comments about the author's crush on Mordred.

Tre Willis says

The book of mordred is a great book there are three main characters there a bunch of action its about a girl named alayna and while she is making bread three knights bust into her house and take her daughter Alayna travels through the woods all the way to camlot she talks to the king so she can

Kathy says

I loved the writing style if this! It reminded me a lot of Robin Hood. I guess they both have that same sort of care free but serious children's book. And as the story progresses it gets decidedly less carefree. I loved this other look at the Arthurian legend, this time coming from Mordred's side of things. I suppose they did this in Merlin as well. I really liked Kiera's character. She was the right mix of the timidness a young woman/girl who I think is realistic for her time and her instincance on pretectig those whom she loves.

Elizabeth Ann says

It was a good read. I enjoyed following Mordred through his 3 different quests that led up to the climax. I liked how each of the women involved in each of the quests fates were all intertwined with Mordred and the fate of Camelot.

Though it had all the qualities of a medieval that we all want in a tale of knights and the round table, I wished to have more character development from Mordred. Because it was never told from his point of view, only from the 3 ladies, we never got the insight of Mordred's thoughts. Part of his character's charm was his mysterious personality (also his sarcasm and wit). So he never revealed much of what he was feeling, but this in turn made it difficult to see this character develop. I loved the way his character was portrayed, I just wanted to see more of it.

The tale was good to make you question what is right and wrong. Are there areas of gray or should we never change from what is always thought to work. It made you question which characters are good, and see others in a different light. It also showed that sometimes the best worst mistakes are made with the best intentions. If you enjoy fantasy tales of medieval times, this book is a good book for you.

Arthurianmaiden says

[
I started this book knowing it had two OC and that many people didn't like the last part with the last point of view.
I'll start with what I loved which is a lot, actually. I liked the fact that even if the book should be about Mo

Thursday Bram says

I picked up "The Book of Mordred" from the library based on Vivian Vande Velde's name on the cover. I devoured her books in high school: they were the perfect pace and length to go through in an afternoon.

Somehow, "The Book of Mordred" didn't hit the spot. As far as retelling of the Arthur mythos goes, it was only so-so, relying on the idea that the bad guys (Mordred and Nimue to a certain extent) really were the good guys.

The main character's constant sense of impending doom didn't help. We all know how the book will end — Mordred and Arthur dying — and having to hear some itty-bitty Cassandra go on about it isn't my cup of tea.

It's not just that the whole Arthur-from-a-different-angle thing has been over done. All in all, "The Book of Mordred" was just bland.
