



The Third Magic

Molly Cochran

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Eight years ago, a young red-haired boy discovered that he was the reincarnation of Arthur, once High King of Britain, master of the Round Table, wielder of Excalibur and the Holy Grail, fated to one day reclaim his throne and lead the world into a new golden age.

Almost immediately, people started trying to kill him. Arthur has been on the run or in hiding since he was ten years old.

Four years ago, after a climactic battle between the resurrected Knights of the Round Table and a dark magician determined to warp the powers of the Grail to his own evil purpose, Arthur Blessing spoke to television cameras, and therefore the world. He told them the time for hatred and fear was over and that a new time of peace was at hand.

Pursued as a new messiah, Arthur disappeared to a small farm in the American Midwest, surrounded by his Knights, protected most of all by Hal, most recently an FBI agent, but, long ago, Sir Galahad.

Now Arthur is eighteen, and Merlin has come to bring him to his destiny. There's just one small problem.

Arthur. What is he going to do as High King? How can he unite and heal such a deeply wounded world? No one believes in all that chivalry stuff anymore, and besides, he's not sure mankind is worthy of the powers of the Sword and the Grail.

Yet those powers are needed, now most of all. Now, with a master terrorist preparing to strike Cheyenne Mountain, to blow up the heart of America's nuclear arsenal and spread radioactive death across the planet. Now, with a psychopathic killer on the loose, a man determined to personally slaughter the Knights and Arthur himself. Now, with a chance to find Guinevere again, to put right their love that was spoiled and betrayed centuries ago.

Arthur Blessing. The Once and Future King. Now he must choose his fate.

The Third Magic Details

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Tomi says

I didn't realize there were three in this series. I read the first and enjoyed it so much when I saw the Third I couldn't wait to read it, literally. I may still read the second book even though I know what happens. I was a little less enamored with Hal and Arthur but it was still a very good book. The knights are funny without being clowns. The bad guy was bad and complicated but his back story was a little far fetched. Also wanted more with Ginny/Gwen (name??) and Arthur. Really wanted more there. I recommend to any King Arthur fan.

Terri Gilbert says

Better than the second book, not as good as the first. I wasn't crazy about the ending.

Chade66 says

This is the final book in the series. It gets really convoluted and confusing towards the end. I really liked the idea of the whole series, not wholly satisfied with how it wrapped up. Your mileage may vary.

Regan says

after an outstanding start with book 1, this one just didn't make it. It seemed like the authors just ran out of steam and to get the word count up retold portions of the Arthur story over and over again. They needed a villain and couldn't quite come up with one and had a cop out ending. Read book 1 and leave it go at that.

William Bentrim says

The Third Magic by Molly Chochran

Merlin's magic creates a situation where a modern boy may be the reincarnation of King Arthur.

If recollection serves me, this is a follow up to the Forever King. Admittedly it was 12 years ago that I read the book so I may be in error. The Forever King was co-authored with Warren Murphy. I remember thinking it was an exceptional book and looked at my data base and saw I had rated both it and The Broken Sword as excellent. This book was good.

Arthur Blessing was a sad character as was Gwen/Guinevere/Brigid. Seems like as a couple they could never get a break. That aspect was a bit sad. The story had the Knights of the Roundtable riding motorcycles. That was amusing. There was a juxtaposition of Camelot's tale with a modern story. It was disorienting some

times. I am a sucker for King Arthur stories and I still recommend the book but it is not up to the standards of it's predecessors.

I recommend the book .

Susan says

This the last book in this series. The quality of the books seemed to decrease with each one. I thoroughly enjoyed the first book, "The Forever King". The second book, "The Broken Sword" was not quite as good, but I still liked it. This book was a bit confusing. I didn't mind the flipping back and forth in time. On the contrary, I rather liked the visits to Arthur's post Roman Britain. What I didn't like was the odd mish mash of Arthurian and Celtic legends and modern day bad guys, that never quite came together to form a cohesive story.

Wanda says

There were some inconsistencies between this book and the first two, which annoyed me a little, but they did help the plot along. And the plot needed help, having become a bit convoluted. I might have wished for a slightly different ending, but it did leave me with a paler version of "wishing things had ended better" that the actual Arthurian legend always imparts. That same sense of longing, in a much milder form.

Mike says

Pile of incoherent babble. The plot seems to be "Merlin is immature and shouldn't do stupid things with magic." Nothing else matters. People get shot repeatedly and then get up unhurt because of unexplained magic that only happens sometimes.

Wow I didn't even notice this was part of a series. Why can't books be more obvious about such things?

Ella says

This book started out great. interesting people and a great story. Then about half way through it just died. the story didn't progress at all then the language got bad. The ending was awful. not worth reading.

Joy Wilson says

A great many readers will feel as I do that the last two books in this series did not fulfill the promise of the first book. I really enjoyed the breadth of history given in the first book as well as its fresh take on the Arthur legend. The second book seemed like to much of a repeat of the first so I was a bit disappointed; however,

the story did progress and I really like Hal and Arthur. This book, on the other hand, seems to be a very obvious attempt to persuade us all of the idea of recurring lives. It was altogether too "new age-y" for my tastes and while the story holds together and the ending fits the book, it felt like we had been taken on a hard left turn into eastern religion. I completely understand the anger other reviewers have felt, but some of the clues to this ending were present even from the beginning, I guess I just didn't want to buy what the author was selling. The story of the Innocent at the end was a bit overdone, and while I wanted to know more of her, this was what I had in mind. It felt like an afterthought in terms of fitting her in at the end of the story. Others may really love this book, but for me the last two books never being written would not have affected me at all, and in some ways I

It would have left the first story as truly unique.

Suzanne Vincent says

The Knights of the Round Table on Harleys at Sturgis? What could be better?

OK. So something could be better.

It wasn't bad, just not as good as The Forever King. It got a bit weird when Arthur started taking on Messiah-like powers, and to be quite frank I think the book struggled a bit with identifying a central character. A lot of stories going on at once.

One thing I've quite enjoyed about this whole series of books is the history segues--the story behind the story told in real-time, rather than as narrative flashback. All interesting takes on the characters and on the Arthur legends.

Doug says

A horrible end to a promising series. The Forever King trilogy had a lot of things going for it, mainly the first book, the second was atleast readable. However this book all but kills the entire series. This has to go down in history as the LEAST satisfying ending ever to a book, let alone a trilogy. The story was non-sensical and it spent way too much time going back in time to whatever this Third Magic thing is.

When reading this, I actually stopped part way through and checked Wikipedia to see what happened. I thought maybe the author got sick part way through and couldn't finish it or something. It seemed more like an unfinished draft or second tier fan fiction.

The story is filled with inconsistencies and inane story telling. The only reason I finished the book was to complete the series. If you're starting the series, I would suggest you stop at the second book and write your own ending. It will seriously be more satisfying than this.

Debbie says

Outstanding last book in series of 3. Each a little more intense and a little more imbued with deeper meaning.

Many layers are peeled back revealing Truth and Love.
I loved the wisdom woven into this wondrous story. Each character evolved and grew with the story.
And it was funny, suspenseful, interesting and well written.

Chris says

Molly Cochran's third Arthurian novel is both exciting and exasperating – exciting in the passages set in modern-day North America, exasperating when the action shifts to Dark Age or prehistoric Britain. In the descriptions of the young reincarnated Arthur living in the American Midwest, and the characters he encounters and the situations which develop, Cochran has that sure touch that comes from following the advice that all debutant writers are given: write about what you know. Within the thriller genre that she utilises, these episodes work well, with reasonably complex characterisation and hugely enjoyable edge of the seat action.

Cochran's Dark Age Britain is not one that I even vaguely recognise, however. The characters have anachronistic late medieval names taken from Malory, Orkney [sic] seems to have become a land-locked forest kingdom instead of the island archipelago it is, knights speak like actors in early 20th-century British talkies ("I say," is their usual preamble) and, most preposterously of all, Arthur's people are referred to as the English, who then fight against the Anglo-Saxon invaders, the real-life ancestors of the English! This is such a clumsy mash-up from different literary sources. In addition, feminist fantasy takes on the Matter of Britain (which is what *The Third Magic* in part is) don't need to justify themselves but I feel Cochran's mixing of genres in this novel -- thriller, historical fiction and feminist fantasy -- is both unsuccessful and mistaken.

Despite these strictures, this novel by the end repays persistence, and the final resolutions are unexpected and lyrical. Possibly worth a second look, *The Third Magic* is a book to borrow rather than to buy and keep; but on the basis of this exemplar I shan't be in any hurry to explore the previous titles in this sequence (the first two co-written with Warren Murphy), however magical they may claim to be.

<http://wp.me/s2oNj1-3rdmagic>

S.M. Carrière says

Alright, I admit that I wasn't expecting much from this book. I stand - well, sit - here corrected.

You see, I have a slight tic when it comes to anything to do with the Arthurian Cycle. The problem is that I'm a Celtic Studies student, and I know that the legend has much earlier roots than most people bother to acknowledge.

This was not the case with Ms. Cochran. I am suitably impressed with the amount of research that plainly went into this narrative. The fact that Author was plainly a British king - that is to say, King of Britain after the Roman retreat, made me smile. As a Celticist (is that even a word?), I get thoroughly annoyed when people ignore the Celtic roots of, well, anything, in much the same way that Classicists get annoyed if you don't believe Greece or Rome were the foundation of all civilisation everywhere.

I might be slightly bitter.

I digress.

I especially like how Ms. Cochran navigated the difficulty of acknowledging both the actual basis for the legend, and the later iterations of that legend. Making Lancelot a Gaulish swordsman, tipping her hat to the later invention of the Gueneviere/ Lancelot narrative by French bards, was a stroke of genius. I adore that the abduction of Gueneviere played a part in this story. That is to say, the abduction of the queen by Melwas - an earlier tale than the forbidden love previously mentioned.

There is a fine balance to be struck when tackling any fiction to do with Arthurian legend between pleasing those who have done any research whatsoever, and those who haven't at all and assume that Arthur is a late medieval invention.

There were a few factual errors that bothered me a fair amount. The worst possible error was the use of England and Britain to mean the same thing. It seems paradoxical to me that the King of England would be fighting against the Saxons since the English and Saxons (and Jutes for that matter) were allies.

The King of England, would be English, which is to say, English, which is to say, an Angle, which is to say, part of the Germanic horde (Anglo-Saxon) that was invading Britain, against whom King Arthur fought.

Get my drift?

Britain and England are not synonymous, and most certainly NOT at the time the offending scenes were set. England did not yet exist. Certainly now anyone who was English, would be considered British, but that was not always the case. The Angles fought the Britons. Arthur fought for the Britons. Ergo, he cannot be the King of England.

Granted, the English did later take him on as their hero...

Anyway, the substitution of one for the other indiscriminately irked me enough to give a visible tic beneath my eye whenever it occurred.

However, that is forgivable... I suppose.

That's enough of the factual stuff. Now to the writing.

The narrative itself was clear and easily read. It didn't possess any of the mastery of language and description I so admire in Steven Erikson. All the same, it was a great read - enough suspense and adventure to keep me reading at any rate. The story was surprisingly moody - which I rather like, thank-you very much!

Some of the knights verged on being caricatures, rather than characters, falling into the mildly amusing Classical description of Celts (loud, lusty drunkards). It irked me some, but the need for such comic relief was necessary. I'm pretty sure it only bothered me because I am such a fan of Celtic culture. I'm sure it wouldn't bother normal people.

All in all, a very worthy read. I do recommend this book to any urban fantasy lovers, and yes, even to Arthurian legend nuts. You'll be pleasantly surprised at how true to form this book is.

Well played, Ms. Cochran. Well played.
