



There Comes a Prophet

David Litwack

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"But what are we without dreams?"

A thousand years ago the Darkness came—a terrible time of violence, fear, and social collapse when technology ran rampant. But the vicars of the Temple of Light brought peace, ushering in an era of blessed simplicity. For ten centuries they have kept the madness at bay with “temple magic” and by eliminating forever the rush of progress that nearly caused the destruction of everything.

A restless dreamer, Nathaniel has always lived in the tiny village of Little Pond, longing for something more but unwilling to challenge the unbending status quo. When his friend Thomas returns from the Temple after his “teaching”—the secret coming-of-age ritual that binds young men and women eternally to the Light—Nathaniel can barely recognize the broken and brooding young man the boy has become. And when the beautiful Orah is summoned as well, Nathaniel knows he must somehow save her. But in the prisons of Temple City he discovers a terrible secret that launches the three of them on a journey to find the forbidden keep, placing their lives in dire jeopardy. For a truth awaits them there that threatens the foundation of the Temple. But if they reveal that truth the words of the book of light might come to pass:

“If there comes among you a prophet saying ‘Let us return to the darkness,’ you shall stone him, because he has sought to thrust you away from the light.”

There Comes a Prophet Details

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Author : David Litwack

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From Reader Review There Comes a Prophet for online ebook

Christina (Ensconced in Lit) says

I received this book from the author in exchange for an honest review. This fact does not bias my review. I award this book 4.5 stars.

There Comes a Prophet by David Litwack stars three young people- Nathaniel, Thomas, and Orah. Their world is centered around a religion of the Light and the Darkness has to be fought off at all costs. One young person is chosen for a Teaching, so that this is a warning that can be spread throughout the villages as to what happens when confronted with Darkness. After Thomas is taken for a teaching, Nathaniel and Orah realize that there is much to be desired of the world that they know, and start to question the whole setup of their society. This starts the three friends on a journey that leads to solving a huge puzzle and unveiling a world of secrets.

I was warned that the beginning is a little slow. I would say this is the sole downfall of this book and may be why people may put it down. I know partially this is to set up the world, but this becomes clear just from the narrative of the book. I think the book would have been better served if we started off with Thomas being taken for the teaching. However, from there, this book really takes off and I couldn't stop until the end. It is wonderfully written, with terrific, three dimensional characters, and centers around a mystery and journey that is artfully crafted. I was as curious as our three heroes as they discovered the mystery little by little.

Orah is reminiscent of Hermione from the Harry Potter series. She is a brainiac and solves most of the puzzles. That said, she does have her moments of doubt and is confronted with mysteries that she can't figure out, which I loved. No one can be perfect! I have to say I was in doubt about the character of Thomas, and I was a little confused that he opens our story. Let me tell you, he gets his moment in the spotlight, and I think it is incredibly appropriate to both start and end with him.

This author is extremely promising, and I can't wait to see what he has up his sleeve next.

Kevin Symmons says

Loved it. A dystopian society once again serves as the backdrop for an adventure for three young friends (Orah, Nathaniel and Thomas). Author David Litwack has used his obvious literary skills, thoughtful plotting and vivid characterization to create an unforgettable work. Will not spoil the complex plot but do not miss it!

Linda says

Previously published on my blog: <http://fictionfervor.wordpress.com/20...>

There Comes a Prophet surprised me. Big-time. After several review requests, I had come to expect, well, less from authors who self-published their works or worked with small publishers. (Pardon me if I sound insulting to the aforementioned authors or publishers, but it's generally true in my experience that those

works tend to be less polished than those from, say, HarperCollins or Simon & Schuster.) But *There Comes a Prophet* was well-written and captivated my interest as I read it. It is undoubtedly one of the best underappreciated works I've read.

PLOT:

The first fifty pages of the book did not capture my attention, but things quickly picked up when Nathaniel traveled to Temple City to rescue Orah from the vicars' teaching. From there the plot kept me wanting to continue to the next chapter, and the next, and so on. Every so often I would tilt my head to look at my clock and realize that an hour had passed.

What I think really pulled me into this book was the hunt to find the keep. I've always loved solving puzzles and going on scavenger hunts, and this book had plenty to keep me satisfied. I was excited whenever I made a connection or whenever I discovered something new in the riddle. Though I could crack some of the clues, the book was for the most part not predictable and flowed smoothly from one page to the next.

Though I have to say that I was disappointed with the lack of action (strangely enough, I love fighting scenes), the romance between Nathaniel and Orah was enough to make me smile whenever Nathaniel was being especially sweet to Orah or Orah was being especially bossy to Nathaniel (girl power!). The romance in this book didn't draw attention away from the focus of the story but was just enough to keep me interested—which is exactly what I want in romance in books, unlike the young adult paranormal romances I constantly see in bookstores today.

I also enjoyed the religious undertones in the book. I can easily imagine a theocracy going bad like that established in *There Comes a Prophet*, and I like how Litwack chose the deity of the religion in his book to be the light (or sun—I was a little bit confused on that subject). He captured the essence of a religion within the pages of this book.

CHARACTER:

Nathaniel, Orah, and Thomas were all charming characters that I adored (Orah especially), but all felt a little underdeveloped. Litwack seemed to TELL more than SHOW their qualities and characteristics, and because of that I felt a little distant from them. Sure, I knew that Nathaniel was a dreamer, but I didn't completely understand how he was one. Thomas seemed unstable most of the time, which made me uncertain of how I felt about him. Orah was, in my opinion, the most developed of the three protagonists, but I wish her life before Thomas's teaching, as well as of the others, was more fleshed out and provided more insight into her character.

The other characters in the novel seemed very minor in comparison and I didn't feel for them as strongly as I did for Nathaniel, Orah, and Thomas. I don't know if that was what the author intended, but I like thinking that everyone has a life story and that it shows in every little thing they do—only then do those characters become realistic to me.

WRITING STYLE:

I've had some bad experience with some self-published authors in which their works were just nightmares for grammar nazis (including me), but I'm glad to say that I only caught a few typos and grammatical mistakes in *There Comes a Prophet*. But for those few errors, Litwack more than made up for them with his superb vocabulary. I was blown away by the dialogue and the diction and the medieval tone they created in

this novel.

Overall, reading *There Comes a Prophet* was a delight. Though the characters were underdeveloped, the plot kept me reading up to late hours of the night and Litwack's storytelling painted a world of both light and darkness—and the truth that would mix the two.

source: ebook received for review from CBB Book Promotions

Lizzy Lessard says

There Comes a Prophet can be viewed as the YA version of *1984*. The key point of *1984* was that the government controlled every aspect of life, particularly thought and ideas. *There Comes a Prophet* has Nathaniel and his friends living in the same bleak universe. But there's one major difference between the two novels – hope. The children in *There Comes a Prophet* have an idea that transforms into a mission, which transforms into a revolution. I think that the message within this book is perfect for MG and YA readers – one person can make a difference. Three people can change the world.

During the first half of the novel, I had some trouble connecting with the characters. I wasn't sure why Thomas was on the mission since he felt useless – but then he becomes important to the plot near the end. Orah reminds me horribly of Hermione at times with her smarts and loyal nature. I did like Nathaniel throughout the novel, especially since he didn't whine or wallow in self-pity.

The world building was phenomenal and I like how each place on their mission was described so adeptly that I could visualize the map of their world without needing a paper copy. It's rare that a book written at this age level can have the depth of an adult novel. I think at times the message might be too deep for a MG reader to fully comprehend, but the story line is still entertaining enough for younger readers to enjoy. And the preaching is very limited, unlike *1984*. I would recommend this book to anyone who is a fan of dystopians or wants to read a fantasy book that isn't the typical find this item quest. The romance is limited, yet extremely sweet and touching. The subject matter of the book is dark, but there is very little violence on screen.

And yet another book that I need to buy in paperback for my mom and her schoolkids. This book deserves full marks.

(I received a copy of this book as part of a blog tour in exchange for an honest review.)

Megan (The Book Babe) says

Other reviews like this at The Book Babe

Due to copy and paste, formatting has been lost.

Wow. When I first started this book, the premise was just a little bit too boring, the characters were a little too meh, and the story-line was dragging. Yes, it was. I was supremely bored, and more than a little unhappy that I'd accepted this book's pitch. Then, when I was about 50 pages in, it suddenly just all came together.

The character's became more developed, the story-line sky-rocketed to terrific, and best of all, the premise suddenly became amazing. Because of one simple reason: It suddenly became an epic fantasy. Dystopian was just not working for this book. When I was sent the review request, that's what I chalked it up to. A simple dystopian, just like the hundreds of others that have been released recently. Was I ever wrong.

The book was clearly fantasy, and I can't believe that I missed it before. Honestly, I am so blind. But I'm glad I am, because after a certain dragon book, (I'm sure you can guess which one) I completely backed off fantasy. It just wasn't my thing, after that one book ruined it for me.

And that was that. So, in retrospect, I never would have picked this book up if I thought it was fantasy. On one hand, I can see the dystopian elements, but it reads so much like a fantasy!

Moving on, because I've spent a little too much time rambling about fantasy.

While the characters weren't exactly phenomenal, they were more than enough to keep me entertained, and I really wanted to know what happened to them.

Nathaniel, our lead character, was extremely brave, honest, and he just wanted to be a hero. Nathaniel was a dreamer, and I love that. We very rarely get to see dreamers anymore, because of the contemporary craze. Orah and Thomas were every bit as good as Nathaniel, but they lacked the leadership that Nathaniel ignites. The rebellion, and other spoilerish content, would not have began without Nathaniel. He's a born leader. And he deserves every bit of praise he gets.

All in all, *There Comes a Prophet* was a fantasy of epic proportions, that kept me reading until the very end.

Favorite Quote:

"Ideas combined with Courage can change the world."

Jill Swanson-Diaz says

There Comes A Prophet is a superbly written tale of science fiction. This story is set in a dystopian society where the age of discovery has been ruled as a deafening darkness. The people have come to believe that the Vicar's who rule and teach them have the final say. Although some express their discontent in minor ways, most choose to exist under their rule and except their way without question. I was enthralled and intrigued by the authors creation of this society. Instead of the usual destruction of a society which leads to a struggling rebirth, *There Comes A Prophet* deviated slightly from this norm. This society started out in an age of invention and knowledge and became stripped down into a state of controlled calm. Although, the Temple of Light is strict in their teachings they do not make their people suffer. This story is about the journey to restore knowledge to the society. David Litwack has an enjoyable and captivating writing style. His characters are wonderfully developed and endearing. Orah, Nathaniel and Thomas are all strong in their own way. They believe in their task as Seekers and for the betterment of their world. This story is full of emotion and plenty of mystery. You will love following these characters on their journey and excite in their discoveries. I highly recommend reading this novel! Especially if you are a fan of science fiction. I look forward to reading more from this author!

Allie says

Disclaimer: Please note that I received a free copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

As has been previously stated, some people have had a concern with the religious factor. After reading this for myself, I can assure you that the book is not religious in tone but more like the government is being led by religious leaders. They don't worship an actual God but the light which makes this enjoyable even for the people who avoid religious books at all costs.

This book takes place in a dystopian setting where the government is led by religious leaders whose job is to prevent the people from ever going back to that era where only destruction and chaos occurred -- the darkness. Nathaniel has always been wary of the Temple. Their methods of keeping the peace, and preventing the darkness from returning were unjust, and he believed there was more to the darkness than the Temple was letting on.

Together with his friends, Nathaniel embarks on a quest to find the keep -- it's the only way to find out the real truth about the darkness, and the mysterious "magical powers" the vicars wield. Together, they encounter many obstacles, and learn more about themselves and each other than ever before.

What I really liked the most about this book were the characters. All of them were multifaceted, and the actions of some were very unexpected. Throughout their journey of finding the keep, they matured, and were no longer the young adults you were introduced to at the beginning of the book. Nathaniel, Orah, and Thomas all had different strengths and weakness which made them much different from the cliche characters you usually read about in the young adult genre nowadays.

The mystery behind the keep's location is also very well written, and you won't know what's coming next until the characters do. Mr. Litwack's creativity definitely shined throughout the whole story, especially during the twists and turns you never saw coming.

Despite a couple of spelling and grammar errors, everything about this story is beautifully written; the characters, the plot, and the writing style are all superbly crafted, and will be sure to capture the hearts of people of all ages.

Charles says

A First Reads Review - There Comes a Prophet by David Litwack

If there was one word I could use to describe this book, it would be proficient. This book is fine, good even, but is, ultimately, forgettable. The language is solid, the story and characters are good, if not overly deep, and the world provided is effective in getting across what one would call the author's message, that humans have great potential for good while having great potential for evil, but to hamper the first for fear of the latter is limiting and, in the end, worthy of contempt. It's not exactly the newest idea to play with, but the author does a fine job of using the characters and the plot to get the readers to see what he's saying, casting no one

as mere devil, which is nice.

The story revolves around three friends, all young adults, which gives the novel as a whole a much more young adult feel. I'm not entirely sure if that is intentional that this book has a young adult feel to it, but that is enhanced by the general lack of adult themes. While there is a bit of romance going on, it is really only briefly touched upon, and only in a more sweet, childlike sense. No sex, no real violence, no real swearing. There are parts when the Temple uses psychological torture, but that's about it. And while the book does a nice job moving the action alone, there really isn't that much the sense of danger. Not even at the end, when the threat should be most real, did I feel the characters were in danger.

That said, it works as a young adult fantasy/sci-fantasy novel. Technically taking place in the far future, this book visits ideas similar to other young adult books like City of Ember, where the adults are either a part of or allow to continue a rather corrupt ruling organization that keeps the people from exploring their full potential. There is a quest with riddles to discover the lost past, and in the end people see the error of their ways and start moving back to taking control of their lives. This is done rather peaceably, as there are no battles, no real clashes. It is a bloodless rebellion, but effective nonetheless.

The choice of the Temple for the villain is a little old hat, as the idea of a religious institution keeping the people under control while reaping the benefits of technology isn't really new, but at the very least the Temple isn't shown in the worst of lights, and I still got the sense that mostly good people still existed and worked there. And the main characters were not solely good, either, though they come fairly close. They have conflicting feelings, though, and they think things through. They seem intelligent and strong and that just works. It all just works.

So I guess what I have to say and end on is that the novel made no mistakes. It is a solid read, but sadly that is about all I can say. It did little to go above being merely good, and while it comes as a relief to read after some of the other things I have recently. But there was a certain lack of greater imagination, of breaking from the norms. This was serviceable, this was proficient. But it was not great. And so I give it three stars out of five.

Fiona Ingram says

Nathaniel, Orah, and Thomas, best friends since childhood, live a peaceful, bucolic existence in Little Pond, a place as small as its name suggests. Their lives are simple, governed by the teachings from the Temple, and the ministrations of the Vicars and their squadron of Deacons. Hints of the past, the 'darkness', are resolutely squashed by the Vicars who explain that to doubt is to reject the 'light' of their teachings. Subsequently, the perceived 'magical' elements of the past are crushed in favor of so-called mystical teachings. For a thousand years, this peaceful existence continues. Nevertheless, secrets have a way of revealing themselves.

Nathaniel doesn't accept the Vicars' teachings; he believes there is more to life. A legend exists of earlier magic, hidden away in a place called the Keep. The secret path to the Keep has been preserved by Keepers, who will pass on the clues to a group called Seekers. But of course no one dares question the Temple, until Thomas is taken away for a 'teaching,' and comes back broken in mind and spirit. Seeds of rebellion grow in Nathaniel, and come to fruition when his friend Orah is taken. Determined to save her, Nathaniel ends up in the prisons of Temple City, and finds out the truth from a long-time prisoner. Armed with knowledge, he sets forth with Thomas and Orah to find the Keep. Can they survive the journey, and can they inspire their people to realize the truth behind the Temple? Will the fulfilment of their mission destroy their world?

Author David Litwack has created a believable dystopian world devoid of technology. Technology overtook humanity (perhaps a salutary lesson here?), and led to social collapse. Hints of the hideous effects of indoctrination in a totalitarian society remind us of the dangers of the suppression of knowledge. This is a coming-of-age story, a tale of friendship and loyalty, and of self-discovery and self-belief. Each of the friends discovers their own talents, and with that, their purpose in life. The author takes a philosophical approach and engages readers in ideas of freedom and choice, both personal and of thinking. This is such a well-written book, with so many thought-provoking concepts that I am sure readers will thoroughly enjoy it and appreciate the author's message.

First reviewed for Readers Favorite

Candace says

I honestly had no idea what I would think of this book. It has an interesting description, but I felt a little clueless about it. It sounds like dystopian fantasy or something. And the book started out feeling kind of fantasy, but that was just because of the world we're introduced to. The people live like they did in the old days, before technology and cars, etc. They weave clothing, they grow their food, they travel by foot or cart, they live simple lives. At about the halfway mark we get to see a bit of what we know, what is the ancient past to them. Huge cities, with incredible buildings, cars that move on their own, etc. Suddenly it starts feeling more dystopian. And it's neat because these three friends don't know what they are seeing and it's all amazing and like magic to them.

I was wondering what sort of religious tone the book would have. And I think it's important to clarify it. In this book the leaders of their 'world' are Vicars. But the religion is not really a religion. Because religion was cause for wars and so many disasters, they had wiped it out and made one common religion and now what they worship is the light. They live in the time of the light and they are taught to fear the dark and bringing it back. As the dark was the time before, when there were wars and humans went around destroying everyone with weapons. Now the Vicars are feared and dreaded but also respected (to a certain degree) and they tried to keep everyone in hand by scaring them with 'teachings'. But if you want to know more about that you'll have to read the book. ;)

So now that I've given you a better idea of what the book is about I bet you're wondering if I liked it, right? And yes! I actually really liked it! I found myself thinking about it when I wasn't reading, and when I was reading it was easy to keep reading, I never grew bored and nothing made me want to take a break. I really liked the characters and the very strong friendship they had. They weren't without issues, but they never got annoyingly angst and seemed to work through things with minimal drama. I also loved the world and how it all worked. I felt like I had a pretty good grasp on it. Of course, it wasn't immediate but there weren't any info dumps and everything was fairly uncomplicated.

Now, I really liked the book a lot, but there are a few things I want to mention, these aren't negatives exactly, just some thoughts. I liked the characters a lot but because of the narration style I felt like I didn't get really close with any of them, like they were kept out of arms reach. But at the same time I liked the way it was done because we saw so much more. So I guess I have mixed feelings there. I also felt a hint of romance and it might have been good if it was a bit stronger than a hint. Then again, I really like how important their friendship was, so it's not necessarily a negative. The last thing is that a lot happens in the book and so it was easy reading because it wasn't terribly deep. There were danger and intense moments, but it could have

possibly gone a little bit deeper, explored things a bit more and maybe turned this one book into two books. BUT, I also liked that this was an easier and faster read, that there was danger, but yet we weren't biting our nails off sitting on the edge of our seats. I still found myself eager to find out more, but I wasn't stressed out or anything. Not too badly anyway. I guess I'm saying that dystopian's have that potential to take things to a level of insanity, where the stakes are way high. I love them like that, yet I hate them because it totally stresses me out. So, like I said- not really negatives, but just some thoughts.

I most definitely recommend this book to dystopian lovers. And those that are fans of fantasy should enjoy it as well even though it's not a fantasy, it just has that old world feel in a large chunk of the book. The book may look a bit sci fi by the cover, but it's not really. It didn't have a sci fi feel to me even though there's one portion of the book that did lean a bit in that direction, it wasn't anything too strong and there weren't any crazy inventions or anything hard to comprehend.

You can find this review (eventually) and others like it on my blog at <http://www.candacesbookblog.com>

Kathleen says

As a high school teacher and avid reader, I am constantly in search of books for my students as well as myself. David Litwack's *There Comes A Prophet* is a perfect story for young adult readers, but its underlying theme and character development will keep any adult engaged. Nathaniel, Orah, and Thomas go on a journey to discover the keep, a rumored hidden treasure that many believe never existed or has been destroyed over time. Through their quest, the three main characters work to solve a riddle while meeting many strangers that provide them with more questions than answers. These questions, however, are the heart and soul of this book: How can just a few young people change the world? If all progress were stopped, would we look back to the knowledge and wisdom of our ancestors? David Litwack writes the message I hope all of my students hear: "Ideas combined with courage can change the world."

Mary Anne says

Three young villagers come of age in a world kept peaceful by an oppressive theocracy called the Temple of Light. Their lives change when Thomas and Orah are sent for the temple's mind control ritual, the teaching. Nathaniel tries and fails to help them and in the process is imprisoned. In the dungeons of Temple City, he discovers a secret that shatters his view of their world. This starts them off on a path of discovery, where they learn the truth, not only about their world, but about themselves and each other.

The plot has twists and turns that keep the reader spell bound. The characters are richly drawn and the society vividly exposed. As the three friends grow through their many adventures, the author explores how an individual finds the courage to confront authority and change the world, all without the gratuitous violence of books like *The Hunger Games*! Great read.

Sarah Brillinger says

I was pleasantly surprised by this book as I was a little skeptical in reading the description but the book was

so much better and not at all related to wizardry. It's a dystopian society, a future world where technology is no longer remembered except for a few key pieces that the rulers (the vicars) keep for themselves in order to spy on the people. Three young people start to question it all after one is taken away for a "lesson" that turns out to basically be torture. While in jail, one of the young people meets someone who calls himself a "keeper" and is given a clue to find where truth about the past actually lies. The group follows the trail and finds out the truth about technology and the good & bad of the past.

I read another book recently called Birthmarked that gave me the same kinds of questions that this one did. How can no one know what's around them? The people in this book have no idea about what's beyond a 3 day walk. I find it hard to believe that human curiosity and evolution completely stops, moves backwards in time and stays put for 1000 years until 3 curious teenagers discover the truth, but alas... it is a story after all.

Overall this book is well written, kept me very interested and entertained and I would recommend for any dystopian lover.

Arlene Kay says

When three young friends challenge a repressive regime, they set in motion changes that will shake their world. "There Comes A Prophet" underscores two themes: the power of friendship, and the impact of individual courage in a world gone awry. The author deftly sketches the landscape (both geographic and personal) of the society in which his characters exist, and teases his readers with the promise of a fuller life that is there for the taking.

Although the drama and pace of this book feel very much like a thriller, *There Comes a Prophet*, poses a philosophical conundrum that can apply to any world. Who amongst us will cast aside a reasonably comfortable existence and risk death in order to pursue a dream?

Mr. Litwack presents us with this dilemma, wrapped around beautiful prose and dialogue. His protagonists are audacious yet likeable; heroic but very human. Readers pf fantasy, science fiction, and distopian literature will find this book irresistible. As for the rest of us, the author proves that a strong tale, well told, will always thrill an audience of any description.

Kaben says

Note: this review was posted 8 October 2012 at On Starships And Dragonwings. The next day, in awful coincidence, the Taliban tried to kill fourteen-year-old Malala Yousafzai, the Pashtun schoolgirl known for advocating women's rights to education. As of this writing, Malala has survived gunshot wounds to the head and throat, but she remains in critical condition. Please keep her in your thoughts, or pray for her, according to your beliefs.

To learn more about the blog Malala wrote for the BBC:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7834402.stm

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-15879282>

We still credit St. Augustine for the modern Heaven, Hell, and Catholic Church, but it's no fair to praise/blame him for the subsequent Dark Ages. We once knew when and what they were, but nobody agrees anymore. If you use the term wrong, you're crass. So be vague about the "Dark Ages". For example, don't mean "600 years of religious zeal and intellectual turpitude between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance". If you do, someone will say "Charlemagne!" and then you've stuck your foot in your mouth. But what if a Dark Age began today, characterized by ignorance and zeal? What if religious fanaticism permeated and then dominated our politics? Would we benefit? What would be the risks? How would morality change? How would it be enforced? What would we be allowed to do and to think? What knowledge might we lose? Could we ever get it back? How?

With his first novel, "There Comes A Prophet", new author David Litwack gives a well-written and all-too-plausible answer.

Setting: There Comes a Prophet consists of a journey on-foot starting from the tiny village of Little Ponds.

Premise: In a world absent all technology save medicine and other Temple magics, one out of every three youths are chosen by the Temple of Light for Teaching — a feared, unexplained experience that leaves them changed and haunted. Thomas of Little Ponds is taken for a Teaching, and is kept longer than most. Upon his return, he and his two closest friends fear they too may be chosen for a Teaching. The choices they make to cope with this fear will trigger a chain of events a thousand years in the making.

Strengths:

- * Thought-provoking. The implications and possibilities are kind of scary.
- * Like all good adventures, There comes a Prophet will frequently make you wonder, "What would I do?" The answer is usually, "I'd do exactly what they did." This is also kind of scary.
- * Considering modern totalitarian theocracies, the premise is reasonable. So is the way the whole story plays out. Again, scary.
- * Nearly everything about this novel is believable: dialog, character development, events, conflicts, responses, consequences. You'll identify and empathize strongly with the characters. This makes for a gripping story.
- * Somehow, impressively, this gripping story has no fights to the death, no bloodletting, no demons, no sex, no drugs, no violence, not even any cussing. All tension is psychological. Okay, somebody gets a black eye, but we never see it happen.

Weaknesses:

- * The one big implausibility in There Comes a Prophet is the precepts of the Temple of Light. Frankly, they're too reasonable. I'll be vague to avoid spoilers: How many religious leaders would honestly endeavor to do no harm to their people? All? How many would cooperate to save humanity? All? While there would be many, there would also be holdouts who would violently disagree to the end, and kill for their beliefs. But the Temple of Light is very similar to things that could happen and have happened many times in our history, some of which exist today.
- * The premises of There Comes A Prophet are so huge that I think Litwack could have spun it into a much longer story. I wish he had. If all of Litwack's ideas are this good, he has room to be much more ambitious.

A friend of mine just commented, "So that period before the Renaissance: who brought Europe out of it? Europe? The Irish? The Arabs? Hint: it wasn't the Irish. Europe had nothing on the Arabs. They were way beyond Europe. Europe was still being all Augustinian, and couldn't get beyond Neo-Platonic logic. It was

Arabic thinking that brought Europe into the Renaissance.”

There are plenty of things besides religious fanaticism that could trigger a Dark Age (war, disease, natural disaster). But if the whole world falls into a Dark Age, which it could plausibly do, who could bring us out of it? According to David Litwack in *There Comes A Prophet*, the only answer is us, now, somehow reaching into the future.

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