



The Book of Earth

Marjorie B. Kellogg

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EARTH MAGIC

"In the beginning of the World, four dragons were raised from elemental energies and set to work creating a climate and atmosphere. They were called Earth, Water, Fire, and Air. When their job was done and the World was set in motion, the four found lairs where they expected to sleep out this particular world's history and not rise again until World's End."

But long before World's End something has begun to go horribly wrong, and Erde, only daughter of a powerful lord, is the one person who seems able to sense it. With her mother and grandmother dead, and no one left to protect her from the madness being spread by a priest ready to sacrifice anything and anyone to his cause, Erde flees her father's castle. In her flight, she stumbles across the dragon called Earth. Drawn together by their mutual peril and need, Erde and Earth have no choice but to join forces on a quest to find Earth's mage, the one human who, perhaps, can set the World back on its proper course.

Description from back cover

The Book of Earth Details

Date : Published February 1st 1995 by DAW Books

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Author : Marjorie B. Kellogg

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From Reader Review The Book of Earth for online ebook

Braxton Church says

FANTASY

actual conversation that could have happened, but didn't

SOMEONE: Hey Braxton, you should read the Dragon Quartet.

ME: What's it about?

SOMEONE: It's about these four dragons, each named after an element-

ME: I have literally picked them up and read all of them before you finished that sentence.

So, basically, if you give me anything involving dragons, and anything involving the four elements, I will be all over it. The Book of Earth, featuring my favorite element of the four, is perfect for grabbing my attention, since the dragon of my favorite element is going to be in all four books.

The story tells of Erde, the daughter of a baron in Germany in the tenth century. After a priest fills her father's head with power, witches, and Satan, Erde runs away from her home, and discovers that she's the Dragon Guide to the dragon Earth, who wakes up with the capabilities of a dragon child. So Erde, Earth, and knight and scholar of dragons Hal must journey across Germany in order to keep peace in the realm, and discover just what Earth's true calling is.

Any fan of fantasy should definitely pick this book up. After all, who doesn't love dragons?

Corvidae says

This series started off really cool. I read the first two years ago, before it was finished. I recently discovered that it was finished so went back to re-read the first two and finish it. This first book is probably my favorite of the four.

Amy Brobst says

I checked this out of the library in Davis as a try it and see and was very surprised how much I liked it. The story about the dragon Earth and his Dragon Guide Lady Erde of Tor Alte who is 14 years old and grieving for her recently deceased grandmother. It was hard to get into at first and it took me a long time to really get into the story, but in the end I loved it, because it is rich with emotion and very much detailed about how Erde lived. Erde, whose name means Earth, is accused of witchcraft by a priest who had been going through the lands spreading rumors of a Dragon coming and other devilish creatures. In truth, (my opinion) it is the priest who is the witch. or at least satan reincarnated. Hal, a knight who is in support of the King and a believer in dragons, calls him a hell-priest. Erde and her dragon bond immediately, for Erde had always dreamed of having her own dragon, because Dragons were part of her family tradition- something the hell priest takes away from her early on in the story, before she escapes her home to head for help- from the King. This story is rich in details because it shows how the dragon matures from a just awakened state to being able to magically transport Erde and company to various places. It is an amazing story.

Cathi95 says

(Fantasy 1995) Volume One of the Dragon Quartet. A brief introduction refers to the origin of the elemental energy dragons. The story begins with Erde, daughter of a powerful lord, finding her world turned upside down with the death of her grandmother and her father joining with a possibly deranged priest interested in sacrificing anybody and everybody. In her flight from her home situation, she finds the dragon called Earth (which is also her name in English), who bonds with her. They continue hiding from her pursuers until they join with another escapee from the crazy horde, which is growing larger all the time. So much of the story is their hide and seek avoidance of the believers, and part is the growing understanding between the girl and the dragon. Interesting enough to keep reading, and to go on to the next book

Theresa says

Erde, a young girl of royalty, finds herself in a most terrifying predicament. She escapes and joins up with two of the most unlikely traveling companions...

This was a good page turner for me. I was engrossed with the characters and fell in love with them from the start and found myself cheering them on from time to time. I found myself not wanting to put the book down.

Lu says

I really liked this. It had all the aspects I tend to like in a fantasy book, dragons and magic and knights. It also had an interesting main character, but I'm still unsure whether I liked her or not.

Barbara ★ says

Part one is very sad. Erde's father, Baron Josef is convinced by an evil priest, Guillemo Gotti, that Erde has had sexual congress and kills her best friend as punishment. When Baron Josef suddenly makes inappropriate advances to his 14 year old daughter, Erde realizes that it is no longer safe to stay at Tor Alte. Brother Gotti's is totally bat-shit crazy and is roaming the countryside on his own personal witch hunt. Unfortunately, Erde is caught in his crosshairs and flees into the woods where she comes face to face with a dragon named Earth. When Erde (coincidentally meaning Earth) comes across Heinrich Peder von Engle (Hal) she learns many things that she should have been taught but her grandmother died before she could impart all her knowledge of dragons and dragon quests. The main thing she learns is that she is a Dragon Guide. Now she must figure out exactly what that means for her and for Earth. Earth is a very young dragon and he cannot remember why he was awakened or where he is bound. So they are running blind in hopes that Earth will remember before Brother Guillemo finds them.

I really felt for Erde. She's a naive 14 and out on her own in a scary world where females have no rights. Luckily she's found Earth who serves as her protector and confidant which is interesting since she lost her voice and communicates via telepathy. When Hal joins them on their quest, Erde finally has a male protector who knows some of what is going on and who has had previous dealings with Brother Guillemo.

Even though most of the story is a quest to nowhere for no particular reason except strange prophetic dreams, the story was fascinating and kept me turning pages. The prose is wonderful and the characters (Erde, Hal, Earth, Mule) are entertaining with great personalities and very real problems. I wanted to know where they were going and why. I loved the dragon, the "smart" mule and even the she-goat who "tells" Earth not to eat her (too funny). A wonderfully realized story in a world (Germany I think) that is both brutal and beautiful. I cannot wait to get my hands on The Book of Water and find out who finds Water and how their quest interacts with Earth and Erde's.

On a side note: the book is classified as young adult and even though the main character is only 14, there isn't any of the usual teenage angst and b.s. I think it's because Erde is on her own for most of the story and she is voiceless. It's hard to complain when noone can hear you.

Sarah Wilson says

For the most part I like it, but things have a way of just magically working out WAY too often. Everything happened pretty easily for the main characters, all things considered.

Kay says

Interesting concept regarding dragons and actually, an enjoyable tale overall. I especially liked the way Erde (the human girl) and Earth (the dragon) communicated with one another.

I hope the rest of the tales are as good as this one.

Fenixbird SandS says

Volume One of The Dragon Quartet...My son loves dragons and was born under the Chinese zodiac sign of the dragon (Golden Earth Dragon)....

This begins like a movie we saw long ago, "Flight of Dragons" (updating) but I do not believe it is. Set in Medieval times.

Crystal says

It has taken me a few years to get around to reading this book, and all I can say for that is I wish I would have read it sooner. Book One: Earth by Marjorie B. Kellogg was a wonderful surprise and worth every second of time. Not a single page was wasted in this fantastic read of Erde, and her journey to self discovery, knowledge and of course, dragons.

During a time of odd weather, poor crops and herds, a superstitious priest arrives for Erde's grandmother's burial. During a time of solemn feasting and odd news, Erde never suspects that an innocent kiss can have life altering and devastating consequences. When she flees her father's lands for fear of the insane priest and

death, she stumbles upon Earth, a -young- dragon who has been awakened in a cave. Together, they travel across lands to seek the Summoner, who will lead Earth to his mission. Along the way Erde meets Hal, an exiled baron who has also had dealings with the priest who uses fear to control the lands. Hal has spent most of his life studying dragons, and vows to help Erde and Earth in anyway he can.

With a fast paced style full of dragon filled mishaps and magic, witches, love, betrayal and sacrifice, Book One: Earth of the Dragon Quartet is a must read for any dragon and fantasy lover. I cannot wait to read the other three, as I am sure they hold as much great storytelling. Do yourself a favor and read this book!

Aelvana says

As the only child of her baron father, Edre has grown up safe and pampered. But those walls are about to come crashing down when, after her grandmother's death, a priest arrives who sets her family against itself. Stricken mute and branded a witch, she flees her home and finds the dragons of her dreams. Or one of them, anyway. Earth isn't quite what she expected from a dragon, but she can't leave him alone. And as they journey together, Edre is drawn into a destiny she never suspected.

The writing is, for the most part, extremely solid and a pleasure to read. The author has an eye for detail, and paints characters and locations with a precise brush. Earth is my favorite of the lot. As he wakes, his mind goes from slightly more than an animal to someone more intelligent than a human, and Edre's personality compliments him wonderfully.

The only real problem I had with the book was that the back cover describes the first three-quarters of the book, and the rest of it is hardly a surprise because it's hinted so obviously. For example, Edre's memory loss really bothered me because it felt like the only reason for it was to make the face of the man in her visions someone she almost knew, but not quite, and to make the scene at the end more dramatic. Perhaps if there was more than one possible candidate for the stranger it wouldn't have been so bad, but as it stands everything was easy to guess.

As the admitted first book of a quartet, the book ends on a very open note, which makes having the sequel on hand a good idea. Despite the lack of surprises, this was still a solid read and one I would enjoy going through again. I rate this book Recommended.

Addendum: After attempting to read the second book and becoming incredibly offended at the main character within the first page, this is not a series I intend to continue.

Josie says

I really enjoyed this little fantasy book and am getting ready to start the last book in the series. I enjoy the characters and the fantasy. These books are about four dragons, their human guides and their quest to discover why the dragons have been awakened and to what purpose. Each book features a different dragon and their guide, but the characters from previous books are also involved. There are mutiple settings which kept my interest (medieval Germany, modern Africa, and future America.) Kellogg emphasizes the effects of climate change in each book, culminating in an America where many cities have been flooded and the landscape is hot and barren.

Pioden says

The Dragon Quartet-Bk 1 -I loved them at first, and did read all four of them, but the end books started to wear on me. Some of the writing style was difficult to read after a while, though the story was great. I think she tried too hard to have different characters, and they were too stilted?? Not sure how to describe what bothered me, other than the way she had some of them talk, among other things. Worth the read, I think, but I'd get them from the library, or used (as I did).

Amanda Hamilton says

I might be overstating how much I liked this book. The set-up isn't earth-shattering (see what I did there?) but it sort of arrives at a different area that I was expecting. Then again, its been a while (approximately 15 books ago) since I read any books with dragons in them but this one was good. A bit more Young Adult than I was expecting but good.

Also, it should be noted than you know you've read too many fantasy books when you check the front for the map of the world the book is taking place in. In fact, it took me a couple chapters to realize that the world its taking place in is a fictionalized version of Germany. Go fig. :P

Tanya Beaton says

I heard about this series through the recommendation system here on Goodreads. I was excited because it has a few of my favorite things: dragons, swords, a female main character, and the elements. What can I say? I was raised on Final Fantasy. :D

The character development was quite good - it's difficult to have your main character with a major disability throughout almost the entire book. Marjorie Kellogg played it very well, though, and it really worked. She hamstrung herself for a movie adaption, though. :P

It's a good start to the series, and I love how she emphasizes that the simplicity and freedom of the truth that is right in front of you is always to be preferred against the shackles of superstition and pre-conceived notions, and the elusive "they" who seem to say all sorts of malarkey but never bear the responsibility of the aftermath of their sayings.

Althea Ann says

This is the first of four dragon-themed novels, one for each of the 'elements': earth, air fire and water. It's an entertaining but unexceptional fantasy novel. Young Erde, heiress of a barony, is also heir to mystic dragon magic, but her powerful aunt died before she could pass on her knowledge. Erde is now prey for her insane and potentially abusive father, who is being frighteningly influenced by an Inquisitorial priest who is preaching against both witches and dragons, and is incidentally also behind a rebellion against the king.

Necessity demands that she run away - which she does, and she nearly immediately encounters a dragon, who bonds himself to her (in an Anne-McCaffrey-influenced manner). Unfortunately, the dragon, named Earth, although he knows there's a reason for him to be around, doesn't know much else. He seems to be lacking memory, and is very immature. Erde and Earth will just have to muddle along and figure things out. Luckily, they run into a royalist baron who is a big fan of dragons, who's willing to help them. The novel's pro-feminist, pro-pagan stance is not something I disagree with, but it became a little predictable at times. Also, although the author went out of her way to very specifically set the story in Germany, giving everyone German names and specifying the city of Erfurt, nothing about the characters, their behavior, or the setting feels German at all - it's just a generic fantasy-medieval setting

Davaonne says

This was a really entertaining read, the pacing was great. I really enjoyed the characters. To me there is nothing bad that I can say about the story, the only thing I didn't like was the cover. I wanted to be cooler, but what could I really expect it was a older book. All in all still a great read and I can't wait to read the next book

Isabel Garay says

If I could give this book a solid 3.5 stars I would. I pickled it up several years ago but its been on my shelf collecting dust for that long. I was a little disappointed with the ending which wasnt much of one at all but a sidestep into the next book. It felt as though no great battle was won, no resolution, only a narrow escape by the skin of their teeth. Some of the characters including Erde and Hal were very well developed. Hal having been my favorite. I will get the next book simply because Im curious. Overall I can say I enjoyed the book.

Julie says

Erde, the daughter of a German noble is suddenly and terribly thrust into a world of magic and fear when she is accused of a crime she did not commit. After fleeing her father's wrath and the insane ravings of a power-hungry priest, Erde heads into the mountains only to be joined by a small, clumsy, surprisingly un-fantastic dragon named Earth.

Earth knows that he is called to a higher purpose, he just does not know exactly what. Content to put as much distance between her father and herself as possible Erde and Earth go on the run and are joined by an unexpected cast of characters including Hal, a knight past his prime with no lands to call his own, his mule who has an uncanny ability to choose the swiftest roads and "talk" to certain people, and an old she-goat who flatly refuses to allow Earth to eat her. The unlikely team must navigate their way through unknown obstacles and face many dangers to help Earth remember and seek out his higher purpose.

I had mixed feelings about "The Book of Earth" throughout the entire reading. "The Book of Earth" started out slow, then got better, then started dragging again, got really, really good, then dropped off in the middle of the climax, and eventually led to a strange and anti-climatic ending.

Now, that's not to say it wasn't entertaining. "The book of Earth" definitely had its moments that made it

worth reading. Erde is an exceptionally likeable character despite the fact that she hardly speaks throughout the entire story. Hal, the displaced knight is also a great character despite the fact that he plays an overly father figure who becomes annoying at times, as fathers will I suppose. Earth, the dragon, is also likeable and has some very cute characteristics that make you want to hug him. He's insanely clumsy, purrs when he is petted, and lets his tongue hang out of the side of his mouth like a dog. He does however miss some of the endearing characteristics that fans of "Inheritance" will have come to enjoy such as the ability to speak. This lack of features, while annoying do not really detract from the story however, and if anything adds to the mystery a little bit.

My biggest gripe is that at the end and highpoint of the climax Kellogg breaks stride and we end up with a long soliloquy that detracts from the main theme that she had going up until that point. It created a sense of surprise when the story finally came to a close and left me feeling kind of like: "That's it? What the heck happened?" I also felt that Kellogg should have taken the leap into a fantasy world. Putting "The Book of Earth" in medieval Europe did not suit the story one bit. In fact, it became hard to remember that you were not engrossed in a fantasy world completely and it would have served her better to just create a new world that could have been more easily molded to her ideas and perhaps would have made the plot less tedious at times.

Overall this book left me with an extreme feeling of...indifference. I wasn't sad the book was over, wasn't glad I didn't have to read any more, I was completely devoid of feeling when I finally finished. I feel no desire or sense of urgency to complete the series, and highly doubt I will anytime in the near future anyway.

If you take your hand put it parallel to the ground in front of your face and wiggle it back and forth a couple of times while making a whining sound that goes along the lines of "ehhhh..." that would be a good summary of this book.
