



Mad Merlin

J. Robert King

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In the tradition of *The Mists of Avalon* and *Mythago Wood*, J. Robert King weaves an epic tale of Avalon, Excalibur, the Once and Future king, and the magician Merlin as he draws on the ideas and writings of Joseph Campbell to shape and interpret the legendary Arthurian mythos.

Mad Merlin Details

Date : Published August 13th 2001 by Tor Fantasy (first published July 1st 2000)

ISBN : 9780812584271

Author : J. Robert King

Format : Paperback 512 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Mythology, Arthurian, Fiction

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From Reader Review Mad Merlin for online ebook

Athena Thomas says

VERY good mix of "what could have happened" and fantasy -- love the way the author pulls in the "island" stories, as well as the pantheon of beliefs held. looking forward to learning about Lancelot in book 2 of the series

Alisha says

Amazing! It ties in Roman and Pagan religion into the classical story of Merlin. It's funny too!

Stephanie Ricker says

I hit another dud here. "But Stephanie," you say, "with a title like that, what were you expecting?" (At least, that's what it sounded like you said. Really shouldn't talk with your mouth full.) Anyway, I kind of like giving Arthurian-based fiction a shot, just in case it's awesome (and it sometimes is). This was not one of those times. The cover said the author was doing a brilliant retelling, weaving in the ideas of Joseph Campbell. Um. If by "weaving" you mean hauling out a generic myth and braining the reader over the head with it, sandwiched in between gore and slapstick silliness, then you'd be right. I suppose it wasn't as bad as I'm making it out to be; it's just that I'm protective of my myths, y'know? Treat them with respect and don't trivialize them by shoddy portrayals, bent to your whim.

Amanda Bliss says

interesting after you get past the first 50 pages or so

Joy says

Merlin's much more believable in this series and more barbaric

Marsha Burdick says

Interesting re-telling of the story of King Arthur. I really liked it, and I recognize that a lot of research went into this book. Merlin's viewpoint is unique.

Daniel says

Fantastic book im sure you've never heard of. Probably my favorite version of the Merlin/Arthur story and by far the one I found to be most thought provoking.

Dan says

One of my all time favorite books from the Arthurian genre with a very different take on Merlin's true identity as he struggles to remember who he is and what he's supposed to do.

Sue says

Definitely an interesting take on the Arthurian legend. With my love of both Arthur and Norse mythology, this combination of the two (with a dash of Roman myth tossed in) brought new elements to this old story. My favorite parts were early on, when Merlin was truly mad (or, more likely, schizophrenic, which is apparently even more devastating when you're a wizard) and he was struggling to figure out who he was. Also the appearances of both Loki and Odin (Wotan) brought elements of unknown, giving me the opportunity to not know exactly how this story was going to go (pretty cool for this story we've all heard many times before). My least favorite parts were the repeated, massive jumps in time that could've been used to build an even greater world, and felt as if those years were cut out by a television editor, eliminating those years for the sake of running time. I also found Guinevere and Arthur's chaste marriage to be dull, boring and immature. Oh, no, they can't have sex or they will lose everything! *eyeroll* Grow up, sex shouldn't be forbidden or villified, especially between grown, married adults who clearly want each other. But other than those things, this was pretty good and a solid 3 stars.

Pat says

Merlin is definitely mad! His magic is like a loose cannon striking without motive or reason.

Bev says

In this story Merlin is stark raving bonkers and he's the main character. Great story, written like an older tale.

Brekke says

Basically a retelling of the Merlin's side of the story from before Arthur's conception to after the epic battle between the Saxons and the Britons as well as their respective gods. A must read for those who are interested

in the myths. Some slightly different takes on things, pulling from the classics of course.

The first in a trilogy.

Sierra says

Okay, I didn't really finish it, but the incorrectness (for lack of a better fake word!) of the plot really threw me off. I was really hoping for a retelling/reinterpretation of the story, a la Marion Zimmer Bradley. Merlin's antics in Mad Merlin started to get old rather than humorous or quirky.

Ashley says

Awesomely written, the detail painted a great picture. I loved this version of the story, how merlin was portrayed... Just a great way to tell the story no silly childrens fantasy here.

Arthurianmaiden says

Mad Merlin is without a doubt a different book and a long one as well. I'll come to that later. The story starts from Uther asking Merlin help to seduce Igraine and continues with the classic growing up of Arthur with Kay and Ector, Arthur becoming king and then his first big battle against the Saxons.

The novel is definitely an epic one, rich of characters and intertwined mythos. In particular the mythology part of this book is the best part. Merlin is Jove, he is mad, as in he sees visions, he can't understand what is real, what really happened and what is not. He meets with Loki and asks his help, ending up in defining not only Arthur's life but Guinevere's as well. By the second half of the novel, the story of Arthur and the new born Camelot, is intertwined of scenes of gods, of Merlin talking with the gods and delineating the battle against Wotan. The book has also a lot of typical Celtic/Welsh mythologies and elements (Rhiannon, the idea of Guinevere being one of the little people, virginity as bringer of magical power, Guinevere as the land, the representation of the land etc.) which really created an enormous world in this trilogy first book.

The characters are amazing. While I admit Arthur and Guinevere both did not look particularly characterized, Merlin, Ulfius and especially Loki and Kay ended up being the most interesting ones. Oh yes, there's Loki as well and he will probably have an important role in the future books.

So yes, 5 stars because the plot is engaging, the characters are well rounded for the most part and I liked the mixed feelings of arthurian and other mythologies. Said this, the book /is/ slightly old and a bit boring in some parts, but it is worth it!
