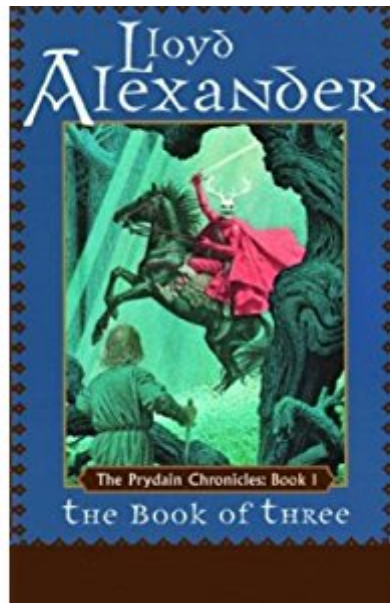




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The Book Of Three: The Prydain Chronicles, Book 1



Synopsis

FOR USE IN SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES ONLY. Taran, Assistant Pig-Keeper to a famous oracular sow, sets out on a hazardous mission to save Prydain from the forces of evil. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a wonderful book. It reminds me of Tolkien's, "The Lord of the Ring" trilogy. The setting is the land of Prydain, which is loosely based on the area of Wales. Some of the characters are based on Welsh mythology, but many are creations just for the fictitious Land of Prydain. The main character is Taran, the Assistant Pig Keeper to Dallben, a mysterious wizard like figure, who owns and consults "The Book of Three." When Dallben reveals to Taran that his book is showing a disturbance coming to Caer Dallben, and to Prydain itself, the bees begin to swarm, the chickens fly away, and Hen Wen, the oracular pig runs away. Taran goes into the woods to find Hen Wen. There he meets the famed good King Gwydion, and encounters the Horned King that is sent by King Arawn, the Lord of Annwyn, land of the dead. King Gwydion and Taran join together to discover what the Lord of the Dead is up to. They are captured and separated. Taran meets a tomboyish princess named Eilonwy, who leads him to safety, and reunites him with Gwydion, whom turns out to be the King's cousin, Fflewddur Fflam. They are joined by Gurgi, an hairy creature, who acts as spy for food. Believing King Gwydion to be dead, these four set out to go to Caer Dathyl, the kingdom of King Gwydion, to warn the Sons of Don that the Horned King is coming to destroy them.

They are a cast of hilarious characters, who face many adventures and constant danger, as they try to outdistance themselves from the evil army raised by King Arawn. They journey to strange places in this fast paced adventure story. Sometimes in front of, sometimes behind the Horned King's army, you won't be able to put this book down until its conclusion. This book is a classic.

Lloyd Alexander's Prydain series is made up of some simply lovely stories, full of adventure and heart and timeless lessons. These were my fiancée's favorite books growing up, so I decided to read them myself. The characters are recognizable fantasy-trope types, but manage not to be cloying or insipid, which would have killed the magic for me as a child or an adult. More importantly, the books remain intent on demonstrating the importance of hard work, kindness and selflessness, and steadily impress upon their audience the dignity and beauty of every living thing. This first book in the series would probably be suitable for a smart eight or nine-year-old. I appreciated the fact that while the main characters are believable as children, the author manages not to portray them in an infantile or patronizing way; they are fully conscious and human from the beginning, just as real children are. Fiction, even childrens' fiction, seldom does child characters any justice, but these books are an exception. Alexander paints our first impressions of Prydain with a broad brush, but manages to convey the essence of each character and place in a way that will be sustained and embellished throughout the series. Thus we get to watch Taran and Eilonwy engage in real heroics and exercise real wisdom, and in subsequent books we watch them grow up in a way that captures the moral trials of coming of age as few stories, fiction or nonfiction, have managed successfully.

Read these all as a kid and loved them. Been an adult for, hmm, quite a while now, and I still reread them all every few years. People talk about them in the same breath as Narnia and Lord of the Rings (although they are all primarily aimed at different age groups--or are not aimed at all). I really wish Lloyd Alexander had written more books like these (not more of The Chronicles of Prydain because that would have cheapened it since it concluded so completely). There are some short stories set in the same world but that's about it. I think these books (and maybe Narnia and LoTR) are the main reason I read fantasy. I am always hoping to find more like them (not complete ripoffs, you know what I mean). Does anyone know of any other works like these?

Read this when it first was written (1964) and loved it. Similar to Tolkien. Love the transliteration of the Welsh words at the end. Would urge all youngsters and oldsters who love fantasy and/or mythology to read, or re-read this series. Onto the next of this five book series.

I hadn't heard of these books when I was growing up, but I am now beginning to look at books of future interest to my son, and I would say that this is definitely a book and series that we will enjoy together in a few years. This book came out ten years after Tolkien's trilogy, and though it would be difficult to avoid all similarities to that archetypal work, there are some surprisingly similar elements -- but also some that are very imaginative and original (an oracular pig!). Taran is a pre-teen boy who is bored with his job and friends and village. He longs for adventure and, as he soon finds out, he should be careful what he wishes for! Looking for a runaway pig, Taran soon runs into danger, and must venture far from his home. Along the way he meets characters such as Eilonwy and Gwydion who will help him, and others he must fear. Sometimes Eilonwy's ubiquitous use of metaphors gets tiresome, and the volume would benefit from the inclusion of a map, but overall this is a highly readable story with an interesting cast of characters, good pacing, minimal violence, positive character development, teamwork and cooperation, adventure and lessons about the consequences of choice.

It arrived on time and in excellent state. The hardback cover of the 50th anniversary edition of The Book of Three is beautiful. The red parts are made in a rough cloth like material. The golden parts of the cover (front and back) are engraved and painted with a glittering gold paint. The glitter is so fine and small that if it's rubbed on your finger it's barely noticeable. When the light hits the gold paint at certain angles, the gold paint shines. Will be buying more of the Chronicles of Prydain 50th anniversary hardcover/hardback books in the series. So impressed!

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