

bernard cornwell the winter king

bernard cornwell the winter king: An In-Depth Exploration of the Epic Historical Novel

Introduction

When discussing compelling historical fiction that vividly portrays the tumultuous era of early Britain, the name Bernard Cornwell often emerges as a leading figure. Among his extensive bibliography, *The Winter King* stands out as a masterful retelling of the legendary King Arthur's origins, set against the turbulent backdrop of 5th-century Britain. This novel, the first installment in Cornwell's Warlord Chronicles trilogy, reimagines the Arthurian legend with gritty realism, complex characters, and richly detailed historical context.

In this article, we will delve into the themes, plot, historical accuracy, character development, and the significance of *The Winter King* within Bernard Cornwell's body of work. Whether you are a longtime fan or new to Arthurian fiction, understanding *The Winter King* offers insight into how Cornwell masterfully blends history, myth, and storytelling.

Overview of Bernard Cornwell's *The Winter King*

Background and Context

Published in 1995, *The Winter King* is Bernard Cornwell's reimagining of the Arthurian legend, grounded firmly in historical reality. Cornwell, renowned for his meticulous research and vivid storytelling, takes a different approach than traditional romanticized tales. Instead of a noble king wielding magical powers, Cornwell presents a hardened, flawed hero navigating a fractured Britain rife with violence, political intrigue, and cultural upheaval.

The novel is set during the decline of Roman Britain and the subsequent emergence of Saxon tribes threatening the native Britons. Cornwell's portrayal of this period emphasizes the chaos and brutality of the time, painting a landscape where myths and legends are born out of necessity and survival.

Plot Summary

The Winter King follows the life of Derfel Cadarn, a Welsh warrior and monk, who recounts the events leading to the rise of Arthur, a chieftain fighting to unify Britain's fractured tribes. The story begins amidst the chaos following the Roman withdrawal, where various factions vie for power.

Key plot points include:

- Derfel's early life as a warrior and his close relationship with Merlin, the druid and prophet.

- The political machinations involving the Saxons, Britons, and internal tribal conflicts.
- Arthur's journey from a disillusioned warrior to a legendary leader.
- The struggles to forge alliances and fight against external threats, especially the Saxon invasions.
- The personal sacrifices and moral dilemmas faced by the characters, especially Derfel and Arthur.

Throughout the novel, Cornwell explores themes of loyalty, betrayal, honor, and the blurry line between myth and reality.

Historical Accuracy and Mythological Reimagining

Blending History with Legend

One of the defining features of *The Winter King* is Cornwell's commitment to historical authenticity. He grounds his narrative in well-researched details about late Roman Britain, including military tactics, societal structures, and cultural practices.

At the same time, Cornwell reinterprets the mythic elements of the Arthurian legend, stripping away the magical and fantastical, to highlight the human struggles behind the stories. For example:

- Merlin is depicted as a wise but flawed druid, not a sorcerer.
- The legendary sword Excalibur is replaced with a more tangible symbol of leadership and conquest.
- The mystical aspects are minimized, emphasizing natural forces, political power, and personal dedication.

This approach appeals to readers interested in historical fiction that respects historical realities while reimagining legendary narratives.

Historical Setting and Research

Cornwell's detailed depiction of late Roman Britain is based on extensive research, including archaeological findings, Roman military history, and scholarly interpretations of the period. The novel vividly describes:

- Roman fortifications and military formations.
- Tribal customs and warfare.
- The decline of Roman authority and the resulting power vacuum.
- The cultural clashes between Britons, Romans, and Saxons.

This meticulous attention to detail enhances the authenticity of the story and immerses readers in a believable ancient world.

Characters and Character Development

Derfel Cadarn

As the narrator, Derfel is a complex protagonist. Once a warrior, he becomes a monk and confidant of Arthur. His character embodies themes of loyalty, faith, and moral ambiguity. His perspective offers an intimate view of the events and the internal conflicts faced by those caught in the tides of history.

Key traits include:

- Courage and resilience in battle.
- A growing sense of spiritual and moral uncertainty.
- Deep respect for Merlin and Arthur, mixed with skepticism.

Arthur

Unlike the romanticized king of legend, Cornwell's Arthur is a pragmatic, sometimes ruthless leader. His character is shaped by the chaos of his times, balancing personal ambition with the desire to unite Britain.

Notable qualities:

- Strategic brilliance and resilience.
- Flawed humanity, including moments of doubt and brutality.
- A sense of destiny intertwined with personal sacrifice.

Supporting Characters

The novel introduces a cast of vividly drawn characters, including:

- Merlin, the wise yet fallible druid.
- Morgan, Arthur's ambitious and cunning half-sister.
- Lancelot and other warriors, each with unique motivations.
- Saxon leaders, portrayed as formidable enemies.

Their interactions and development deepen the narrative, illustrating the complex web of alliances and betrayals.

Themes and Literary Significance

Themes Explored in The Winter King

- The Nature of Leadership: Cornwell examines what it means to be a leader—strength, wisdom, sacrifice, and moral integrity.
- Myth vs. Reality: The novel challenges traditional notions of heroism,

emphasizing flawed humanity over idealized heroics.

- Cultural Identity and Conflict: Tensions between Britons, Romans, and Saxons highlight the struggles for cultural survival and dominance.
- Faith and Superstition: The role of religion and belief systems in shaping actions and destinies.

Literary Significance and Impact

The Winter King is celebrated for its historical accuracy, compelling characters, and innovative reinterpretation of Arthurian legend. It stands out within the genre of historical fiction and Arthurian literature for its gritty realism and nuanced storytelling.

The novel has influenced subsequent retellings of Arthur's story, inspiring readers and writers to explore the legend from a more human and historical perspective.

Reception and Critique

Readers and critics praise The Winter King for:

- Its vivid and immersive world-building.
- Complex characterizations that go beyond stereotypes.
- The seamless integration of history and legend.
- The compelling narrative pace.

Some critiques note that the novel's departure from traditional romanticized Arthurian tales may not appeal to all readers, especially those seeking magical elements or idealized heroes. However, this approach is precisely what makes the novel a fresh and thought-provoking retelling.

Conclusion: Why Read Bernard Cornwell's The Winter King?

Bernard Cornwell's The Winter King offers a unique and compelling exploration of one of history's most enduring legends. By blending rigorous historical research with a gritty, realistic portrayal of the turbulent British Dark Ages, Cornwell crafts a story that resonates with fans of both historical fiction and mythic storytelling.

Whether you are interested in the historical context of Britain's fall of Roman rule, the human complexities behind legendary figures, or simply enjoy well-written adventure novels, The Winter King provides a rich and immersive experience. It challenges perceptions of heroism, power, and faith, leaving readers with a deeper understanding of how legends are born from the chaos of history.

If you haven't yet explored Bernard Cornwell's take on Arthurian legend, The Winter King is an essential read that redefines what it means to be a hero in a time of chaos and change. Dive into this epic tale and discover a new, more human side of the legendary King Arthur.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'The Winter King' by Bernard Cornwell about?

'The Winter King' is a historical novel that reimagines the legendary King Arthur's early life and rise to power during the late 5th and early 6th centuries in Britain, blending myth with historical fiction.

How does Bernard Cornwell portray King Arthur in 'The Winter King'?

Cornwell depicts Arthur as a complex, realistic leader and warrior, focusing on his struggles, political challenges, and human vulnerabilities rather than romanticized legends.

Is 'The Winter King' part of a series?

Yes, 'The Winter King' is the first book in Bernard Cornwell's Warlord Chronicles trilogy, followed by 'Enemy of God' and 'Excalibur'.

What historical period does 'The Winter King' cover?

The novel is set during the decline of Roman Britain and the subsequent rise of post-Roman Britain, around the 5th and early 6th centuries.

How accurate is 'The Winter King' in depicting early Britain?

While heavily fictionalized for storytelling, the novel incorporates historical and archaeological insights to create a believable portrayal of the period's culture and conflicts.

What are the main themes explored in 'The Winter King'?

The novel explores themes of loyalty, power, survival, betrayal, and the clash between Christianity and pagan traditions.

Who are the main characters in 'The Winter King'?

Key characters include Arthur, the warrior Derfel Cadarn, Morgana, and other legendary and historical figures intertwined in the narrative.

How has 'The Winter King' been received by readers and critics?

The book has been praised for its vivid storytelling, historical depth, and fresh take on Arthurian legend, though some traditionalists find its departure from myth challenging.

Is 'The Winter King' suitable for readers new to Arthurian legends?

Yes, it offers a more grounded and historically-oriented perspective, making it accessible for newcomers and fans of historical fiction alike.

Where can I buy or read 'The Winter King'?

The novel is widely available in bookstores, online retailers, and libraries in both print and digital formats.

Additional Resources

Bernard Cornwell's *The Winter King* stands as a compelling reimagining of early British history, blending myth, legend, and historical fiction into a richly textured narrative. This novel, the first in Cornwell's Warlord Chronicles trilogy, offers readers a vivid, gritty portrayal of King Arthur's legendary origins, grounded in historical and archaeological insights while infused with Cornwell's signature storytelling prowess. With its layered characters, atmospheric settings, and nuanced themes, *The Winter King* has captivated fans of historical fiction and Arthurian legend alike, offering a fresh perspective that challenges traditional romanticized portrayals of the myth.

An Introduction to Bernard Cornwell and *The Winter King*

Who is Bernard Cornwell?

Bernard Cornwell is a renowned British author celebrated for his meticulously researched historical novels. Known for series such as *The Sharpe Series*, *The Grail Quest*, and *The Last Kingdom*, Cornwell has established himself as a master storyteller who combines authentic historical details with compelling characters and vivid action sequences. His work often explores themes of loyalty, identity, and the brutal realities of war, making his stories resonate with a broad readership.

The Significance of *The Winter King*

Bernard Cornwell's *The Winter King* is a departure from his usual military-focused narratives, instead immersing readers in the mythic landscape of early Britain. Published in 1995, the novel reimagines the Arthurian legend from a more human, historically plausible perspective. Cornwell's approach is to strip away the mythic veneer and explore the political, social, and personal struggles of the characters, grounded in the realities of post-Roman Britain.

Setting and Historical Context

Britain in the Late 5th and Early 6th Century

Bernard Cornwell's *The Winter King* is set during a tumultuous period in British history, roughly around the late 5th and early 6th centuries. This era, often called the Sub-Roman or Dark Ages, was characterized by the collapse of Roman

authority and the fragmentation of Britain into multiple warbands and tribal kingdoms.

Key historical elements include:

- The decline of Roman control and influence
- The influx of Saxon peoples and other Germanic tribes
- The emergence of local warlords and chieftains vying for power
- The fading of classical civilization and the rise of early medieval culture

Cornwell's novel captures this chaos vividly, emphasizing the fragile nature of civilization during this time.

Myth and History: A Blended Landscape

While rooted in historical context, *The Winter King* is also heavily influenced by myth and legend, especially the stories of King Arthur. Cornwell's narrative aims to provide a plausible historical backdrop to these tales, suggesting that the legendary Arthur may have been inspired by a real person or series of figures, whose stories were later mythologized.

This blending of myth and history is central to the novel's appeal, as it invites readers to consider how legends evolve and reflect the cultural anxieties and aspirations of their times.

Main Characters and Their Complexities

Derfel Cadarn: The Narrator and Protagonist

At the heart of *The Winter King* is Derfel Cadarn, a former monk turned warrior. Cornwell's choice to narrate the story through Derfel's perspective lends an intimate and personal tone to the novel.

Character traits and development:

- Loyal and principled, yet flawed and sometimes naive
- A skilled fighter and shamanic practitioner
- Struggles with loyalty, love, and faith throughout the story
- Serves as a lens through which readers explore the broader political and spiritual upheavals

Arthur: The Ambiguous Leader

Arthur is portrayed as a pragmatic and complex leader rather than the idealized king of legend. He is shown as:

- A charismatic but often ruthless warlord
- A man haunted by his past and uncertain about his destiny
- A figure caught between loyalty to his people and the harsh realities of power

Other Key Figures

- Gwenhwyfar (Guinevere): A noblewoman with her own ambitions and struggles, embodying themes of love and betrayal.
- Mordred: A young, conflicted character who becomes entangled in the political machinations surrounding Arthur.

- Lancelot: Less of a knightly hero and more a cunning, ambitious figure.

Themes and Motifs

The Nature of Power and Leadership

Cornwell explores what it means to lead in a time of chaos, emphasizing that power is often built on violence, diplomacy, and personal sacrifice. The novel questions the mythic ideal of a benevolent ruler, instead portraying leadership as a complex, often morally ambiguous endeavor.

Faith, Belief, and Spirituality

Derfel's shamanic practices and the pagan beliefs of the Britons contrast with the rising influence of Christianity, reflecting the religious shifts of the period. The novel examines faith as both a personal guiding force and a tool for political control.

Myth-making and Reality

The novel investigates how legends are formed and the enduring power of myth. Cornwell suggests that the stories of Arthur and his knights are rooted in real experiences and figures, transformed over generations into symbols of national identity.

Literary Style and Narrative Techniques

Authentic Voice and Atmosphere

Cornwell's prose is gritty and visceral, immersing readers in the bleak landscapes and violent conflicts of early Britain. His attention to detail, from battlefield tactics to daily life, lends authenticity to the narrative.

Character-Driven Storytelling

The novel's strength lies in its deep characterizations. Derfel's introspective narration allows for nuanced portrayals of moral dilemmas, personal growth, and human frailty.

Interweaving Myth and History

Cornwell skillfully balances historical facts with mythic elements, creating a layered storytelling approach that invites reflection on the origins of legend.

Impact and Reception

Critical Acclaim

Bernard Cornwell's *The Winter King* received praise for its fresh take on Arthurian legend, its immersive setting, and complex characters. Critics appreciated how it bridges the gap between scholarly history and compelling fiction.

Fan Base and Influence

The novel has garnered a dedicated following among fans of historical fiction and fantasy alike. Its success has influenced subsequent retellings of Arthurian themes, inspiring authors to explore the legend from new angles.

Adaptations and Cultural Legacy

While there have been no major film or TV adaptations of *The Winter King* specifically, the novel's influence persists in popular culture's portrayal of Arthurian legend, emphasizing its realism and human complexity.

Why Read Bernard Cornwell's *The Winter King*?

For History Enthusiasts

- A richly detailed portrayal of post-Roman Britain
- Realistic depictions of warfare, politics, and daily life

For Mythology and Legend Fans

- A fresh, humanized take on Arthurian stories
- Exploration of how legends are formed and persisted

For Literary Aficionados

- Engaging, character-driven storytelling
- Thought-provoking themes about power, faith, and identity

Final Thoughts

Bernard Cornwell's *The Winter King* stands as a landmark in historical fiction, blending meticulous research with compelling narrative to reframe one of the most enduring legends of Western culture. It offers readers a gritty, nuanced view of a chaotic era, emphasizing that legends are shaped by real people facing extraordinary circumstances. Whether you are a history buff, a lover of myth, or simply seeking an immersive story, this novel provides a richly rewarding experience that challenges and delights in equal measure.

Additional Resources

- Recommended Reading:
 - *The Warlord Chronicles* trilogy by Bernard Cornwell
 - *The Mabinogion* – a collection of Welsh legends that inspired many Arthurian tales
 - Archaeological studies on post-Roman Britain
- Discussion Topics:
 - How does Cornwell's portrayal of Arthur differ from traditional legends?
 - What does the novel suggest about the nature of leadership and morality?
 - How does the blending of myth and history enhance or complicate the story?

By delving into Bernard Cornwell *The Winter King*, readers are invited into a vivid reimagining of Britain's mythic past—one that honors history while exploring the enduring power of storytelling.

Bernard Cornwell The Winter King

bernard cornwell the winter king: *The King Arthur Trilogy* Bernard Cornwell, 2015-10-06 Bernard Cornwell's internationally bestselling King Arthur Trilogy tells the mythic saga of King Arthur and is the work of a magnificent storyteller at the height of his powers. *THE WINTER KING* The novel is set in Dark Age Britain in a land where Arthur has been banished and Merlin has disappeared, where a child-king sits unprotected on the throne, where religion vies with magic for the souls of the people. It is to this desperate land that Arthur returns, a man at once utterly human and truly heroic; a man who loves Guinevere more passionately than he should; a man whose life is at once tragic and triumphant. *ENEMY OF GOD* Having defeated the last holdouts of civil war in southern Britain, Arthur has secured Mordred's throne. But he must still face raging conflicts between the old ways and the new, as well as foes more powerful and more dangerous—because they pose as friends. *EXCALIBUR* The unforgettable tale of Arthur's final struggles against the Saxons and his last attempts to triumph over a ruined marriage and ravaged dreams as forces both earthly and unearthly threaten everything Arthur stands for. Peopled by princesses and bards, by warriors and magicians, *Excalibur* is the story of love, war, loyalty, and betrayal.

bernard cornwell the winter king: *The Winter King* Bernard Cornwell, 2007-11-01 FROM THE NO. 1 BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF WAR LORD COMES AN EPIC RETELLING OF THE ARTHURIAN LEGEND 'THE BEST King Arthur adaptation I've ever read' 5***** Reader Review 'An absolute winner from the master of historical fiction' 5***** Reader Review 'Outstanding. The best take on the iconic Arthur story I've read or watched' 5***** Reader Review In the Dark Ages, a legendary warrior arises to unite a divided land . . . _____ Uther, the High King of Britain, is dead. His only heir is the infant Mordred. Yet each of the country's lesser kings seek to claim the crown for themselves. While they squabble and spoil for war, a host of Saxon armies gather, preparing for invasion. But no one has counted on the fearsome warlord Arthur. Handed power by Merlin and pursuing a doomed romance with the beautiful Guinevere, Arthur knows he will struggle to unite the country - let alone hold back the Saxon enemy at the gates. Yet destiny awaits him . . . From the epic and bestselling author who has gripped millions. _____ PRAISE FOR BERNARD CORNWELL: 'Strong narrative, vigorous action and striking characterisation, Cornwell remains king of the territory he has staked out as his own' SUNDAY TIMES 'Like Game of Thrones, but real' OBSERVER 'Blood, divided loyalties and thundering battles' THE TIMES 'The best battle scenes of any writer I've ever read, past or present. Cornwell really makes history come alive' GEORGE R.R. MARTIN 'He's called a master storyteller. Really he's cleverer than that' TELEGRAPH 'A reminder of just how good a writer he is' SUNDAY TIMES 'Nobody in the world does this better than Cornwell' LEE CHILD

bernard cornwell the winter king: *The Winter King* Bernard Cornwell, 1997-04-15 It takes a remarkable writer to make an old story as fresh and compelling as the first time we heard it. With *The Winter King*, the first volume of his magnificent Warlord Chronicles, Bernard Cornwell finally turns to the story he was born to write: the mythic saga of King Arthur. The tale begins in Dark Age Britain, a land where Arthur has been banished and Merlin has disappeared, where a child-king sits unprotected on the throne, where religion vies with magic for the souls of the people. It is to this desperate land that Arthur returns, a man at once utterly human and truly heroic: a man of honor, loyalty, and amazing valor; a man who loves Guinevere more passionately than he should; a man whose life is at once tragic and triumphant. As Arthur fights to keep a flicker of civilization alive in a barbaric world, Bernard Cornwell makes a familiar tale into a legend all over again.

bernard cornwell the winter king: The Winter King (Book One) Bernard Cornwell, 2017-02-28 From the No. 1 bestselling author of WAR LORD comes an epic retelling of the Arthurian legend, from the bestselling Last Kingdom series In the Dark Ages, a legendary warrior arises to unite a divided land . . . Uther, the High King of Britain, is dead. His only heir is the infant Mordred. Yet each of the country's lesser kings seek to claim the crown for themselves. While they squabble and spoil for war, a host of Saxon armies gather, preparing for invasion. But no one has counted on the fearsome warlord Arthur. Handed power by Merlin and pursuing a doomed romance with the beautiful Guinevere, Arthur knows he will struggle to unite the country - let alone hold back the Saxon enemy at the gates. Yet destiny awaits him . . . Combining myth, history, and thrilling battlefield action, fans of Game of Thrones, The Last Kingdom, Conn Iggulden and Merlin will be captivated by this gripping epic. _____ 'Of all the books I have written these are my favourites' Bernard Cornwell 'Spellbinding realism' The Times

bernard cornwell the winter king: Warlord Trilogy Bernard Cornwell, 2010-02

bernard cornwell the winter king: The Winter King Bernard Cornwell, 1996 In Dark Age Britain, a land from which Arthur has been banished and Merlin has disappeared, a child-king sits unprotected on the throne, and it is up to Arthur to preserve the lonely embers of civilization in a barbaric world

bernard cornwell the winter king: The Warlord Chronicles, Novels of Arthur Bernard Cornwell, 1999-08

bernard cornwell the winter king: Excalibur Bernard Cornwell, 1999-07-16 In The Winter King and Enemy of God Bernard Cornwell demonstrated his astonishing ability to make the oft-told legend of King Arthur fresh and new for our time. Now, in this riveting final volume of The Warlord Chronicles, Cornwell tells the unforgettable tale of Arthur's final struggles against the Saxons and his last attempts to triumph over a ruined marriage and ravaged dreams. This is the tale not only of a broken love remade, but also of forces both earthly and unearthly that threaten everything Arthur stands for. Peopled by princesses and bards, by warriors and magicians, Excalibur is the story of love, war, loyalty, and betrayal-the work of a magnificent storyteller at the height of his powers.

bernard cornwell the winter king: Works by Bernard Cornwell Source Wikipedia, 2013-09 Please note that the content of this book primarily consists of articles available from Wikipedia or other free sources online. Commentary (works not included). Pages: 24. Chapters: Novels by Bernard Cornwell, Short stories by Bernard Cornwell, Gallows Thief, The Winter King, Harlequin, The Starbuck Chronicles, The Last Kingdom, The Lords of the North, Sharpe's Tiger, The Pale Horseman, Sword Song, Sharpe's Skirmish, The Grail Quest, The Warlord Chronicles, Sharpe's Rifles, Enemy of God, Excalibur: A Novel of Arthur, Sharpe's Christmas, Sharpe's Ransom, Stonehenge, Azincourt. Excerpt: Azincourt Azincourt is an historical novel written by Bernard Cornwell . The book relates the events leading to the Battle of Agincourt, through its protagonist Nicholas Hook. In the United States, it was published under the title Agincourt. Publication Film adaptation Screenwriter Michael Hirst is said to be writing a screenplay based on Cornwell's book, with filming scheduled to begin in 2010. References (URLs online) A hyperlinked version of this chapter is at Enemy of God Enemy of God is the second book in The Warlord Chronicles series by Bernard Cornwell . The trilogy tells the legend of Arthur seen through the eyes of his follower Derfel Cadarn .Plot introduction Arthur, against all odds, has achieved peace among the warring British Kingdoms and is soon set to turn his attentions against the Saxons. Merlin arrives with a dangerous and near impossible quest into the lands of the most terrible of Britain's enemies in an attempt to recover an ancient relic which will help him restore Britain to its former glory. All the while, Arthur's enemies close around him, ready to destroy his world for their own aims...Plot summary Chapter One: Enemy of God starts off where The Winter King left off. Arthur tells Derfel that he plans to marry Lancelot to Ceinwyn, and Derfel does not reveal that he is in love with Ceinwyn and wants her for himself. Derfel speaks with Merlin, and Merlin...

bernard cornwell the winter king: Enemy of God Bernard Cornwell, 1998-03-15 Having achieved a fragile peace with the Saxons, Arthur turns his attention to more dangerous enemies,

those who pose as friends.

bernard cornwell the winter king: *The Holy Grail* Juliette M Wood, 2012-09-15 The Holy Grail is one of the most fascinating themes in medieval literature. It was described as the vessel used by Jesus to celebrate the first Eucharist and it became the object of the greatest quest undertaken by King Arthur's knight. This book examines the traditions attached to the Holy Grail from its first appearance in medieval romance through its transformation into an object of mystical significance in modern literature and film. It is a journey filled with knightly quests, mystics and holy relics, poets and novelists, outlandish speculation and serious thought.

bernard cornwell the winter king: *The Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction, Second Edition* Joyce G. Saricks, 2009-01-01 Experienced librarian and coach Ruth Metz outlines a focused and results-oriented plan for achieving the best results from staff members through a coaching style of management.

bernard cornwell the winter king: *The Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction* Joyce G. Saricks, 2009-04-12 Experienced librarian and coach Ruth Metz outlines a focused and results-oriented plan for achieving the best results from staff members through a coaching style of management.

bernard cornwell the winter king: *Arthur* Christopher Fee, 2018-11-15 For fifteen centuries, legends of King Arthur have enthralled us. Born in the misty past of a Britain under siege, half-remembered events became shrouded in ancient myth and folklore. The resulting tales were told and retold, until over time Arthur, Camelot, Avalon, the Round Table, the Holy Grail, Excalibur, Lancelot, and Guinevere all became instantly recognizable icons. Along the way, Arthur's life and times were recast in the mold of the hero's journey: Arthur's miraculous conception at Tintagel through the magical intercession of his shaman guide, Merlin; the childhood deed of pulling the sword from the stone, through which Arthur was anointed King; the quest for the Holy Grail, the most sacred object in Christendom; the betrayal of Arthur by his wife and champion; and the apocalyptic battle between good and evil ending with Arthur's journey to the Otherworld. Touching on all of these classic aspects of the Arthur tale, Christopher R. Fee seeks to understand Arthur in terms of comparative mythology as he explores how the Once and Future King remains relevant in our contemporary world. From ancient legend to Monty Python, *Arthur: God and Hero in Avalon* discusses everything from the very earliest versions of the King Arthur myth to the most recent film and television adaptations, offering insight into why Arthur remains so popular—a hero whose story still speaks so eloquently to universal human needs and anxieties.

bernard cornwell the winter king: *Sutton Companion to the Folklore* Alexander Barrie, 2005-11-24 Britain's rich and varied folklore, legends and beliefs provide an insight into the island's history. Every invader, refugee or settler has helped contribute some new element or twist to the complex pattern of our national heritage. This volume provides a comprehensive companion to legends and customs in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

bernard cornwell the winter king: *Arthurian Literature XVIII* Keith Busby, 2001 Epitomises what is best in Arthurian scholarship today. ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR ROMANISCHE PHILOGIE This latest issue of *Arthurian Literature* continues the tradition of the journal, combining critical studies with editions of primary Arthurian texts. Varied in their linguistic and chronological coverage, the articles deal with major areas of Arthurian studies, from early French romance through late medieval English chronicle to contemporary fiction. Topics include Béroul's *Tristan*, *Tristan de Nanteuil*, the Anglo-Norman *Brut*, and the *Morte*, while an edition of the text of an *extrait* of Chrétien's *Erec et Enide* prepared by the eighteenth-century scholar La Curne de Sainte-Palaye offers important insights into both scholarship on Chrétien, and our understanding of the Enlightenment. The volume is completed with an encyclopaedic treatment of Arthurian literature, art and film produced between 1995 and 1995, acting as an update to *The New Arthurian Encyclopedia*. Contributors: RICHARD ILLINGWORTH, JANE TAYLOR, CARLETON CARROLL, MARIA COLOMBO TIMELLI, RALUCA RADULESCU, JULIA MARVIN, NORRIS LACY, RAYMOND THOMPSON.

bernard cornwell the winter king: If you meet George Herbert on the road, kill him

Justin Lewis-Anthony, 2013-01-17 Priestly ministry in the Church of England needs a radical rethink... George Herbert died in 1633. His legacy continues. His poems are read and sung, and his parish ministry remains the model for the Church of England's understanding of how and where and why its priests should minister. But there is a problem. The memory of Herbert celebrated by the Church is an inaccurate one, and, in its inaccuracy, is unfair on Herbert himself and his successors in the ordained ministry. This is a book of the long view. It sets out to assess realistically the context of Herbert's life and to explore the difficulties of parish life today. By examining the status and role of parish clergy since Herbert's time and today, it draws on the work of historians, social anthropologists, psychologists and theologians, and presents their ideas in a readable and passionate style. It argues that the future strength of parochial ministry will be found in a recovery of historic, renewed understandings of priestly ministry, and concludes by outlining more sustainable patterns of practice for the future. In a climate of uncertainty for the future of the church, it will be an encouragement for priest and people, and welcomed by both.

bernard cornwell the winter king: Plot Versus Character Jeff Gerke, 2010-10-19

What's more important to a story: a gripping plot or compelling characters? Literary-minded novelists argue in favor of character-based novels while commercial novelists argue in favor of plot-based stories, but the truth of the matter is this: The best fiction is rich in both. Enter Plot Versus Character. This hands-on guide to creating a well-rounded novel embraces both of these crucial story components. You'll learn to: • Create layered characters by considering personality traits, natural attributes, and backgrounds • Develop your character's emotional journey and tie it to your plot's inciting incident • Construct a three-act story structure that can complement and sustain your character arc • Expose character backstory in a manner that accentuates plot points • Seamlessly intertwine plot and character to create a compelling page-turner filled with characters to whom readers can't help but relate • And much more Filled with helpful examples and friendly instruction, Plot Versus Character takes the guesswork out of creating great fiction by giving you the tools you need to inject life into your characters and momentum into your plots.

bernard cornwell the winter king: Queen of Fury Natania Barron, 2024-12-03

One by one the kings of Braetan kneel before King Arthur under a banner of peace. Hwylfar, eldest daughter of King Leodegraunce and famed libertine of Carelon, has returned to Avillion to find her father ruined by madness and a usurper poised to take the throne. Reluctantly she takes the mantle of Queen Regent to protect her kingdom, but she'll need an army—which King Arthur pledges to send her, providing she marries one of his knights and surrenders the crown. Arthur's forces arrive under the command of Gawain of Orkney, who Hwylfar remembers as a brute; but she comes to realise he is not the man she thought he was, and finds herself irresistibly drawn to him. But Arthur has plans for her, and has commanded Gawain to keep well away—and in Arthur's court, without the King's blessing, love is treason. Hwylfar and Gawain must navigate both a world of ancient forests and corrupt magic, and the political machinations of two courts, if they have any hope of escaping Arthur's ever-tightening grasp.

bernard cornwell the winter king: A Faraway, Familiar Place Michael French Smith,

2014-11-30 A Faraway Familiar Place: An Anthropologist Returns to Papua New Guinea is for readers seeking an excursion deep into little-known terrain but allergic to the wide-eyed superficiality of ordinary travel literature. Author Michael French Smith savors the sometimes gritty romance of his travels to an island village far from roads, electricity, telephone service, and the Internet, but puts to rest the cliché of "Stone Age" Papua New Guinea. He also gives the lie to stereotypes of anthropologists as either machete-wielding swashbucklers or detached observers turning real people into abstractions. Smith uses his anthropological expertise subtly, to illuminate Papua New Guinean lives, to nudge readers to look more closely at ideas they take for granted, and to take a wry look at his own experiences as an anthropologist. Although Smith first went to Papua New Guinea in 1973, in 2008 it had been ten years since he had been back to Kragur Village, Kairiru Island, where he was an honorary "citizen." He went back not only to see people he had known for

decades, but also to find out if his desire to return was more than an urge to flee the bureaucracy and recycled indoor air of his job in a large American city. Smith finds in Kragur many things he remembered fondly, including a life immersed in nature and freedom from 9-5 tyranny. And he again encounters the stifling midday heat, the wet tropical sores, and the sometimes excruciating intensity of village social life that he had somehow managed to forget. Through practicing Taoist “not doing” Smith continues to learn about villagers’ difficult transition from an older world based on giving to one in which money rules and the potent mix of devotion and innovation that animates Kragur’s pervasive religious life. Becoming entangled in local political events, he gets a closer look at how ancestral loyalties and fear of sorcery influence hotly disputed contemporary elections. In turn, Kragur people practice their own form of anthropology on Smith, questioning him about American work, family, religion, and politics, including Barack Obama’s campaign for president. They ask for help with their financial problems—accounting lessons and advice on attracting tourists—but, poor as they are, they also offer sympathy for the Americans they hear are beset by economic crisis. By the end of the book Smith returns to Kragur again—in 2011—to complete projects begun in 2008, see Kragur’s chief for the last time (he died later that year), and bring Kragur’s story up to date. A Faraway Familiar Place provides practical wisdom for anyone leaving well-traveled roads for muddy forest tracks and landings on obscure beaches, as well as asking important questions about wealth and poverty, democracy, and being “modern.”

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