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The Dragon Queen: Tales Of Guinevere Vol 1



Par Alice Borchardt
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Par Alice Borchardt : The Dragon Queen: Tales Of Guinevere Vol 1 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Dragon Queen: Tales Of Guinevere Vol 1:

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Description : Description du produitArthur turned and strode toward us. He was magnificent, and I will never forget that, in that moment, I first loved him. And I believe--had I known what the future held for us: all the trouble, torment, battle, and grief of our lives--I still believe that I would have yielded my heart into his keeping as I did then . . .In a sweeping epic of the imagination, Alice Borchardt enters the wondrous realm of Arthurian legend and makes it her own. The Dragon Queen is the first volume in a trilogy of novels that boldly re-imagines Camelot--and casts Guinevere as a shrewd, strong-willed, magical warrior queen.Born into a world of terrible strife, where war is constant and weapons are never far from the hands of men or women, Guinevere, daughter of a mighty pagan queen, is a threat to her people and a prize to the

dreaded sorcerer Merlin. Sent into hiding, she grows up under the protection of a shapeshifting man-wolf and an ornery Druid. But even on the remote coast of Scotland, where dragons feed and watch over her, she is not safe from the all-seeing High Druid Merlin. He knows the young beauty's destiny, and he will stop at nothing to prevent what has been foretold. For if Guinevere becomes Queen and Arthur, King, they will bring a peace to the land that will leave the power-hungry Merlin a shriveled magician in a weary cloak. Yet Guinevere possesses power of her own--dazzling power to rival even that of Merlin. Summoned from her home by forces she cannot fathom, she travels from the Underworld to an Otherworld of the Past, at each step calling on ancient powers to aid her way. When young Guinevere proves her mettle to an embarrassed Merlin, even her faithful dragon protectors cannot prevent the evil that the sorcerer rains down. Seeking revenge, Merlin banishes Arthur to a world from which the only escape is death. Now Guinevere must face Merlin's wrath without him--and prove that she is worthy of being Arthur's Queen. From the glass-roofed Great Hall at Tintigal to the lush garden forts of Wales, Alice Borchardt details the travels of Guinevere in a rich fabric of prose. *The Dragon Queen* is a novel of great emotional depth, timeless romance, and soul-stirring adventure.

Prsentation de l'diteurIt is that time known as the Dark Ages, the Romans have abandoned Britain's shores, leaving behind a brutal, fear-filled twilight world where magic and superstition, strife and warfare hold sway. Into this world is born the daughter of a pagan queen. Her name is Guinevere and to the all-seeing, power-hungry sorcerer Merlin, she represents a grave threat. Sent into hiding in the remote north, she grows up under the protection of a shape-shifting wolf and a wayward druid, watched over by dragons - yet through his dark arts, Merlin tracks her down. He knows her destiny and will stop at nothing to prevent what has been foretold. For if Guinevere becomes queen and Arthur, king, together they will bring a peace to the land that will leave the sorcerer but a shrivelled and empty old magiciaian in a weary cloak. What Merlin doesn't realise is that Guinevere has inherited dazzling powers of her own. With Arthur trapped in a netherworld from which the only escape is death, Guinevere must call upon the ancient, primal spirits and beings who walked this earth when it was still young to help her in her final confrontation with the High Druid himself...Dark, exciting, highly original and utterly compelling, *THE DRAGON QUEEN* is set in a brutal, grittily and historically authentic Celtic world where the Pagan and the Christian battle for supremacy. Full of wild magic, both benign and malign, romance, superstition, wonder, bloody battles and wonderfully well-wrought characters, and written with a fresh, contemporary voice, this novel turns the legend of King Arthur and his mercurial queen well and truly on its head.ExtraitCornwall, EnglandTintigal, Year of our Lord 470THE SHIP PULLED UP TO THE QUAY.Above the fortress, rock frowned down on the two men standing on the deck. It has never fallen to assault, the captain told Maeniel.This I can believe, Maeniel said, studying the formidable stone and wood walls at the top.Even Caesar did not care to besiege it, the captain continued. Or so it is said.Though spring had come to the continent, the wind in Britain still had a bite to it, especially the sea wind. Maeniel pulled his mantle more tightly around himself. He knew the captain was eaten alive with curiosity about him and his mission. He had declined to say more than absolutely necessary about it to the man. The people he served needed as much protection as they could get. Not simply from the imperial tax gatherers but also from the barbarian warlords who so willingly served the interests of those who monopolized the remnants of Roman power. The captain probably had friends in every port where the Veneti called. A man now might be hard put to get a letter to Rome within a year, but gossip spread like a brush fire.I was surprised when they gave me permission to bring you here, the captain continued.I have business with Vortigen, Maeniel said.The captain laughed. I love the way you say that, as though you were a man stepping out to a fair to purchase a horse. A small matter of business, nothing extraordinary. Vortigen is the high king of Britain, and he seems to know your name. Oh no, my lord Maeniel, nothing unusual about this situation at all. Big doings up there tonight, though. I have been ferrying important people out here all day, one after another. You will be the last. Enjoy yourself at the feast, my lord.Maeniel nodded and smiled.High king or not, I hope he knows what hes doingall those Saxons, the captain said, spitting the word Saxon.One of the sailors reached out with a hook and pulled the boat up against the quay, while two others began mooring her fore and aft to iron rings set in the stone.No! the captain shouted. Dont. We will sail with the tide. I wont remain here. Not tonight at any rate. He looked up at the fortress through narrowed eyes.The man holding the boat to the dock gave him a puzzled glance. I thought you enjoyed the kings hospitality.Not tonight, I wont, the captain said. And dont ask me any questions about why.Maeniel jumped over the gunwales to the stone quay. You are returning to Gaul, then? he called back to the captain.Yes.Come, the

man said. All this trouble for nothing. We could at least stay the night. We might pick up a cargo.No, said the captain. We will be in Vennies by sunrise. Id prefer it that way.A dozen men were at the oars. The mate shrugged and pushed off with the boat hook.Put your backs into it! the captain shouted to the crew. We will be home by morning. You married men can chase your wives lovers out the window and get some sleep. We were paid in gold for this days work. Everyone will have a share.Then they were gone, drawing away on the evening tide.Maeniels eyes closed. The sea wind brought a mixture of odors to his nostrils: salt, roasting meat, and other savory cooking smells; pitch from the torches being lit on the walls above him; the human odor of infrequently washed bodies living in close quarters on the rock, perspiration and perfume, the diverse odors of linen, silk, and wool. This was going to be an aristocratic gathering.And something else was borne on the wind to him, something he didnt want to intrude on his consciousness just now, a warning. Yes, a definite warning. Sometimes humans sense things also. Yes, hed paid the captain in gold to bring him to Tintigal in the kingdom of Dumnonia, but the man might as well have remained and tried to pick up a cargo. In fact, the captain had not done too badly once Maeniel was in Britain, picking up other travelers along the coast and ferrying them out to the rock. But come nightfall, he began to grow nervous. Maeniel knew the signs very well. The hair on the back of the captains neck began to stir, as had Maeniels when he first saw the fortress. And the captain didnt know why any more than Maeniel did. Left to himself, Maeniel the wolf would have cleared out. He wouldnt have run exactly, but that not right feeling, when it wouldnt leave yet wouldnt be resolved, was something the wolf wouldnt have wanted to play around with. But humansas he was nowwith their predetermined appointments and planned meetings left little room for a response to the shadowy awareness that haunted him, that haunted the wolf.A serving man appeared at his elbow. He bowed. My lord. He was responding to Maeniels silk woolen tunic and heavy velvet mantle. My lord, are you here for the feast?Maeniel nodded.The stairs are to your left. They will bring you to the citadel; but before you go, if you would be so kind, I must have your sword.Maeniel felt even more uneasy. He was tempted to say no, but in the growing gloom he saw two indistinct figures behind the serving man and realized they must be part of the kings guard. Will I be the only one who must yield up his weapon?The servant bowed again. No, my lord. No one may bring a weapon to the kings board, not tonight. They will be held in the strong rooms under the fortress and will be returned in the morning. They will all be under guard through the night.Maeniel unbuckled his sword belt. I want to see where you take this, he said.The servant smiled, a little bit patronizingly, but said, Certainly, sir.Then his eyes widened slightly at the sight of the hilt. It was wrapped in gold wire. A lot of gold wire, more gold than the servant had ever seen in his life. It looks old, he said.It is old, Maeniel answered.The hiltThe hilt is nothing. The blade is everything. So saying, Maeniel drew half its length from the sheath. The torchlight shining down from the ramparts above woke rainbows in the steel.The two soldiers behind the servant peered over his shoulder to look into the blade, for indeed, they could see their reflections there.Only the gods could make such a weapon, one of them said.Maeniel looked down at it sadly. Not the gods but men made and wore it before the Romans came to Gaul. But no matter, please take care of it. He handed belt, sword, and scabbard to the servant. My teacher bestowed weapons on me. I cherish them.Then he turned and began climbing the stair. The servant walked ahead with the sword, the soldiers behind.From the stair, Maeniel could look out over the ocean. The sun was only a salmon glow among the purplish-blue clouds on the horizon, but since a feast was in the offing, torches blazed everywhere. The serving man paused before they reached the top.The fortress was built in the form of rings, each higher level above but inside the lower.Here Maeniel encountered magic. He always seemed to do so when he least expected it. This ring had a broader area of open ground than the others, and it had been turned into a garden. Large square clay pans held food crops, and giant urns housed small trees and shrubs. A waist-high wall surrounded the garden, and the trees and vines flowed from troughs at the edge, hanging down so far that they almost reached the next level. There were rosesmany roseswhite, yellow, and red. Pomegranates, hazel trees, and berry vines, their long thorny canes draped over the rail. They were not in fruit but in bloom, white flowers scattered like stars among the vines. The clay pans were filled with herbsrosemary; mints, which will grow anywhere if they have water and sun; pennyroyal; spearmint and the hairy apple mintsonions, leeks, garlic, cabbages, and mustards, their cross-shaped yellow flowers open to the night wind and sea air.A garden in the sky, Maeniel said.Yes. Are you then an adept?Adept? Maeniel said, mystified. Adept at what?Magic, sir, the serving man answered, then pointed to the soldiers. They were climbing the last flight of stairs to the inner keep above. They dont even know we are not with them, though they will announce your presence to the king. He will thank them for it. He is always polite and will not warn them that they are deceived.Most cant see this garden at all, and those who

can only think it is a quaint concept of the high king to keep a few pots of flowers and vegetables near his front door. I will conduct you to the hall of weapons. Yes, Maeniel said. Beneath the rose. Behind it, the serving man corrected, for there were pots of white roses all along the inner wall. Maeniel saw the wall and the entrance hidden by magic, and he and the serving man by now Maeniel was sure he was no ordinary servant stepped into it. Was it morning or was it evening? He couldn't be sure, and the wolf did not inform him. The sun was just over the horizon, driving long shafts of light into the mists drifting in the vast hall. Vast, Maeniel thought. Why vast? The drifting mist was so thick he could barely make out the doorw... From Publishers Weekly Magic rules in this first volume of a trilogy that focuses on the fabled Guinevere's adventures before and after she comes to Camelot. Borchardt (Night of the Wolf) paints a vivid portrait of the future queen, who is no pale Pre-Raphaelite princess. Suckled by a she-wolf, this child of power is protected by a Druid, Dugald, and the Gray Watcher, Maeniel, not to mention a shape-changing wolfman. Daughter of a pagan queen, this warrior beauty takes control of her own destiny. Bold, courageous, prophetic and possessed of powers that enable her to communicate with dragons and wolves, as well as with a shrunken head, this Guinevere enchants and engages the reader immediately, even as a spindly toddler thrown into a wolves' den. A fine, lyrical storyteller, Borchardt reinvents familiar characters, including a young Arthur and an evil Merlin, who seeks to control the once and future king of Camelot. This dark sorcerer may dismay some Merlin lovers, as he would rather see Guinevere dead than as Arthur's queen. It's an interesting concept in a long line of derivative explorations of a mysterious character who has long enchanted Arthurian fantasy devotees. In the prologue, Guinevere writes: "I am myself a creature of the dance, the imitation of the movements embraced by the dialogue between earth and sky," and readers will be eager for the dance to be continued in the next installment. Borchardt further stakes her claim as a writer of breathtaking eloquence, reminding all, once again, that she is more than just Anne Rice's sister. (Oct. 2) Forecast: The popularity of Arthurian romance and the author's high name recognition would alone ensure strong sales, but good word of mouth should give this a long shelf life. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.