



Wrath-Bearing Tree

James Enge

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Gods Clash with Gods, and the powers beyond gods, as the origin story of Morlock Ambrosius continues!

The masked powers of Fate and Chaos are killing gods in the land of Kaen, facing the Wardlands across the Narrow Sea.

Vocates Aloë Oaij and Morlock Ambrosius cross into the unguarded lands, seeking to uncover the reasons for the godslaying, and to avert any threat to the lands the Graith of Guardians has sworn to protect.

After crash-landing on the hostile coast of Kaen, the two Guardians confront vengeful frightened gods, a calmly murderous dragon, a demon called Andhrakar, and a bitter old necromancer named Merlin Ambrosius.

Amid these dangers they find that they can trust no one but themselves—and each other.

Wrath-Bearing Tree Details

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Author : James Enge

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From Reader Review Wrath-Bearing Tree for online ebook

Eric says

Another entertaining, mythological, and atmospheric novel by James Enge. This continues to be one of my favorite ongoing series.

Michael Cummings says

Readers of Ovid looking for something with a little more sex and magic would do well to dwell in these pages. Like *A Guile of Dragons*, *Wrath-Bearing Tree* is a book whose mood implies it is best savored on a stormy summer afternoon, or from the comfort of a stuffed chair on a cold and bleak autumn night. Continuing the early adventures of Morlock Ambrosius, *Wrath-Bearing Tree* begins by giving us a taste of life in the kingdom of Kaen and how easy it is for one of the many city gods of this continent to be replaced by an usurper. It stands to reason, then, that when Morlock is thrust into the middle of this, his only way out is to kill a god and return home to the Graith.

But no sooner is he home than he is sent back to Kaen. Something more is going on on that scary continent, and more information is needed about the Two Powers, believed to be behind the fall of many of the city gods of Kaen recently. While readers of *A Guile of Dragons* will remember the role of the Two Powers in the return of the dragons, this second volume was still approachable as a stand alone novel. Before the novel ends, Morlock and his companion will face warring gods, living machines that grant apotheosis, and a wintry father figure named Merlin driving a sleigh led by eight tiny demons.

Morlock and his companion's journey reads like a medieval travelogue, cataloging the strange customs and unusual creatures and beliefs found along the way. I enjoyed the book, though it was a bit more graphic (NSFW) than expected. Enge again delivers a well written story set in a mythos that is so familiar to us, painted with the elements that have defined the landscape of fantastical stories for centuries, and yet delivered in a fresh and entertaining story.

David Marshall says

A very disappointing sequel to *A Guile of Dragons* with poor attempts at humour in this subVancean fantasy.

<http://opionator.wordpress.com/2013/1...>

Kelly Flanagan says

Yet again Mr. Enge has written an excellent book following the old tales of Merlin's son, Morlock. The whole series is a great read and I really like that he has pulled these obscure tales out and re-released them into our hearts and minds. Recommended to everyone.

Cape Rust says

Wraith-Bearing TreeFate and Chaos are fighting again. These two mysterious powers have decided to go on a killing spree, and their chosen victims are the little gods that permeate the land of Kaen. The people of the Wardlands, just across the Narrow Sea, fear that this wave of deicide could be the precursor to a Kaenian invasion of their country. With this in mind and a little internal treachery, Vocates Aloe Oaij and Morlock Ambrosius are dispatched to Kaen to find out just what Fate and Chaos are up to and to defend the lands they have sworn to protect as Graith of Guardians. After yet another at-sea disaster, the two guardians must confront and often kill many frightened gods. They must even face a murderous dragon who has been promised much power if he delivers the head of Morlock to the two powers (Fate and Chaos). If this wasn't enough, they must fight a demon summoned by none other than Morlock's absentee father, the necromancer Merlin. Oh yeah, and love is in the air...

I was glad that this book was broken down the way it was, but it almost could have been listed as more of a collection of interrelated quests rather than a single book. Enge is a student of history and is well versed in the legends surrounding Merlin and his ilk. I think he tried to capture this and, in 90 percent of what he did, he was spot on, but rather than breaking the book into five parts I would have preferred to see it broken into several novellas. This storyline reads like the old epics, and the title of the book ends up being misleading because of it. This book is called The Wraith-Bearing Tree, but said tree is really mostly in the beginning of the book and mentioned later on, but it isn't important enough to be the title, so I almost felt misled. One other complaint I have about the book is the cover. The cover illustration is well done—an eye catcher—and it made me want to read the book. The problem I had is that Morlock looks nothing like his description; the guy on this cover looks like he could double on a bodice ripper, not the crooked-shouldered almost anti-hero that Morlock actually is. He is an amazing character and part of his amazing comes from the fact that he isn't dashing. The guy on the cover actually lessens who Morlock actually is.

I really enjoyed reading this book. A Guile of Dragons was my first encounter with Enge and Morlock, and while I liked that book, this one felt more fluid and really let me get to know Morlock better. He is a man of few words and many thoughts. He is one of those characters that is full of surprises, but isn't surprising. Enge didn't make Morlock a super hero or even an anti-hero—he made him a normal-minded guy in extraordinary circumstances with some amazing abilities. Morlock always uses those abilities in non-self-serving, practical ways. Even with his gruff manor, his lack of pride makes him very likeable, even loveable. In fact, love is a recurring theme in this book, and throughout the book Morlock's love for and with Aloe was interesting to watch.

Enge did get a little Penthouse Letters with a few descriptions of initial couplings, but after that things settled down a bit. I think he could have cut out a few details, and the acts that were performed would have seemed more like acts of love and affection rather than pornographic. The love interest parts of the book didn't detract from the overarching story—in fact, they enhanced it. I can see where the sex scenes would appeal to many readers, but the language used and their almost graphic nature hardened them rather than conveying what I think was Enge's true intent. One thing that these scenes did show was that Morlock is a giver.

The love scenes were not the only times during these stories that Morlock proved this, but in love I think it really hit the spotlight. Morlock is such a contrast to his father Merlin, and watching this play out toward the end of this story was lots of fun. I expected each of them to act the way that they did, but that didn't detract from the Jerry-Springer-like interactions that they had. Aloe was no slouch herself; she came in just right. She was tough, but not too tough; she was smart, but not oversmart; and she did plenty of really "manly" things while maintaining her femininity. She didn't feel like a character just thrown in to get more female readers or to appease feminists. She had her ups and downs, but she felt real, and she is most definitely someone I want to read more about. I hesitate to say that she is an emotional foil for Morlock, because too

often that is exactly what some female characters are used for. I think saying she is the polar opposite of Morlock would almost do her more justice, but in many ways they are much closer emotionally than it seems. They both feel passion, they both get angry—they just express it in very different ways.

This is a fun *Odyssey*-like story. It harkens back to the epic tales of old, with supernatural parts that got a bit strange a bit quick, but Enge is an expert on tales from the Merlin cycle and his ability to adapt them to this format is no small feat. I enjoyed his hints at this story taking place in a world that might be long after ours, but still being fantastic. This is a good book, with very interesting characters, that will keep you reading long past lights out.

Note this review first was posted at www.koboldpress.com

Andrew says

More about Morlock. This time: his first crush. This book is solidly in the weird-tales Lankhmar-ish tradition. I'm still not convinced the worldbuilding adds up to anything, but the episodes are fun.

Lawrence says

++++++*

2:53pm

Linda says

I am ambiguous. I don't really know whether I liked it or not. Somewhere in the middle of the book, I found myself lost without connection to plot or characters. In fact, reading *Wrath Bearing Tree* was proving to be a chore; so I put it down, unsure whether I would finish it all. I read a couple of other books and then yesterday started where I left off and was thrilled to find I was enjoying the last quarter of the book and cheering for the characters and read straight through to find out what happened. I guess that explains my ambiguity.

I didn't dislike it but I don't think I would continue in the series. Again, the author is a good writer and the story is unique but maybe just not my cup of tea.

Skut L says

Deeply philosophical throughout and Enge writes with a keen sense of the world and its inhabitants.

Henry Lazarus says

James Enge has another tale of the youth of his hero Morlock Ambrosius, son of Merlin. Someone is killing the very real and appalling Gods of Kaen, a problem not only for embalmer, but also for the Graith who rule

the wardship who fear a potential attack on their land from the Two Powers. So Morlock and Aloe Oaij go to Kaen where they find love and face multiple gods including a one day war between a sheep and a goat god, a dragon, the machine that makes gods for Kaen, and finally with Merlin, himself, face the Two Powers beneath the Wrath-Bearing Tree. Mr. Enge has a sardonic wit for this episodic tale which can easily stand alone. I always look forward to Morlock's adventures. Printed by the Philadelphia Weekly Press

Hwango says

I feel like we're going downhill fast, which is a shame.

I accidentally started reading the Morlock books at #3 with *The Wolf Age*, and mostly enjoyed it - enough to start at the beginning once I realized my error. Books #1 and #2 were even better, and I really enjoyed them. The first volume of the prequel "A Tournament of Shadows" series was okay...it seemed to lack something of the other books, and was a bit grimmer. Still, I was very much looking forward to *Wrath-Bearing Tree* being published, hoping for a return to earlier form.

Alas, this time around we suddenly have a lot of creepy and/or graphic sexual content. If I hadn't felt invested in the story and the characters I would have quit the book. Instead, I started skimming aggressively over parts that made me uncomfortable.

That's really no way to enjoy a book, though, and I'm left feeling uncertain about how to handle "A Tournament of Shadows" #3, which at the time of this review comes out in a couple of weeks. I guess I'll give it a shot, but I'm not looking forward to it nearly as much as I would have expected a few books ago.

Michael Natale says

Another solid installment in the tale of Morlock the Maker. I'd compare Enge's fantasy and its hero to Moorcock's high fantasy world that Elric lived in. Definitely a thinking person's fantasy series. Can't wait to start the next one.

Clay Kallam says

"Wrath-Bearing Tree" (Pyr, \$18, 376 pages), the second in the *A Tournament of Shadows* series, is perhaps the best of Enge's many works about Morlock Ambrosius, the son of Merlin Ambrosius, who battles the agents of darkness on an unnamed world filled with gods, magic and strange allies and enemies. Enge also deepens his characters by fleshing out the backstories instead of fleshing out the inevitable pre-industrial skirmishes with precise descriptions of hacked bones, severed sinews and dripping blood

Oddly, though, this series precedes in time a previously published trio of books, so really the best place to start is with "A Guile of Dragons," and then eventually move on to the Morlock the Maker series that begins with "Blood of Ambrose."

Regardless, though, wherever you start you'll engage with one of the most interesting writers in modern fantasy, not to mention one of the most taciturn yet fascinating protagonists. Don't miss out.

Stacey O'Neale says

This review was written by Michael Cummings, senior reviewer with the Fantasy Book Addict website.

Readers of Ovid looking for something with a little more sex and magic would do well to dwell in these pages. Like *A Guile of Dragons*, *Wrath-Bearing Tree* is a book whose mood implies it is best savored on a stormy summer afternoon, or from the comfort of a stuffed chair on a cold and bleak autumn night.

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You can read the rest of the review here: <http://www.fantasybookaddict.com/2013...>
