



Stormbringer

Michael Moorcock

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The epic tale of Elric of Melniboné, albino prince of ruins, moves to its awesome conclusion - with the whole of the natural and supernatural world in mighty conflict - the final conflict, Armageddon. Elric holds the key to the future: the new age which must follow the destruction. To turn that key he must sacrifice all that he loves and risk his very soul.

Fixup of the following novellas:

Sad Giant's Shield (1964)

Doomed Lord's Passing (1964)

Dead God's Homecoming (1963)

Black Sword's Brothers (1963)

Stormbringer Details

Date : Published November 15th 1977 by DAW (first published 1965)

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Author : Michael Moorcock

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From Reader Review Stormbringer for online ebook

David Sarkies says

Short, Sharp, and Pretty Good

10 May 2013

I just browsed through another review of this book and I think that the writer of that review pretty much describes Moorcock's style perfectly. He is an ordinary writer with big vision and is able to tell a story in a short book that can be pretty much read in a day. In fact I am tempted to go down to Northcote and actually try to get my hands on some of the Moorcock books again because of the fact that they tend to be a very short and quick read.

Compare them to say 'Wheel of Time' where the book gets so bogged down into detail that by the time you hit the seventh book (and I think I need to add the seven books of the Wheel of Time up as well, and I think it was seven that I read because by the eighth book I had read at least a third of the book and nothing had happened) pretty much nothing happens for the most part. With Moorcock though, by chapter two you might have already had a city burnt to the ground and demons running around destroying things.

I actually like books that can be read quickly, though on the other hand there are some big books out there that are simply so good that you cannot put it down and in the end you find yourself reading it until you have finished. In fact there are some books that I get so engrossed in that I will literally dawdle home from work, sitting in pubs and drinking beer, simply because the book is so good (though by the time I get home I tend to be plastered).

Moorcock is not the best writer out there, and I must say that I did end up getting bored with some of his Elric books, but when I first discovered him (thankyou Ally, who gave me a copy of a Moorcock book for my birthday) I was instantly hooked. What was interesting though was that my English teacher, who hated us reading what he considered to be airport trash, was happy that I wrote a response to a Moorcock novel (though I am not sure what grade he gave me, and I remember that it involved Elric going mad, killing everybody around him, and then killing himself – no, actually it wasn't Elric it was his sword – Stormbringer is simply one awesome sword, in fact I have never known a sword more awesome than Stormbringer).

Evgeny says

The conclusion of Elric saga is here. The book starts with events mentioned in the epilogue of the last book: Elric's wife is kidnapped by forces of Chaos. Elric's patron god Arioch also happens to belong to Chaos, so the poor albino has to fight his own patron. This kidnapping also happened to be a minor detail of the all-out war between Law and Chaos in which Elric becomes involved in spite of himself.

This is a good conclusion to the series. My only question is: I thought this was the final book from the way it ends, so why are there three more books in the series listed? The book and the whole series deserve solid four stars. Highly recommended to the people who would like to see that the fantasy classic used to be; this one is free from the influence of J.R.R. Tolkien which was very rare in its time.

Algernon says

Great movements on the Earth and beyond it; great destinies being shaped, great deeds being planned and, marvelously, could it just be possible that in spite of the Lords of the Higher Worlds, in spite of the Cosmic Hand, in spite of the myriad supernatural denizens that swarmed the multiverse, that Man might decide the issue?

Even one man?

One man, one sword, one destiny?

I have been hearing about Elric's great destiny, about his tragic fate and about his doom laden sword for five books now. I got to thinking the endgame better be good after all this foreshadowing, and I am able now to report now that Michael Moorcock delivered the goods in the end (admittedly with some hiccups and lesser offerings along the way). The sixth and last of the original saga of Elric unleashes the promised storm to end all storms, the Armageddon slash Ragnarok slash Apocalypse Now that will end the world as we know it, either to usher in a new Age or to unravel Earth for eternity.

- I have an impossible choice, Sepiriz. If I give up Stormbringer I can probably survive on herbs and the like. But if I do give it up for Zarozinia, then Chaos will be unleashed to its full extent and I will have a monstrous crime upon my conscience.

- The choice is yours alone to make.

The final volume is structured similarly to the preceding episodes : a collection of four novellas that were published initially out of sequence in specialized magazines, yet are linked together into the ongoing saga of the albino sorcerer (I recommend reading the six books in chronological order, to get the best experience out of the epic adventures of Elric). The endgame is initiated when Elric is brought out of retirement by the kidnapping of his nubile wife Zarozinia. Reunited with his symbiotic sword named Stormbringer, Elric sets out on a quest that reveals the meddling of the gods of Chaos and Law into the affairs of the Young Kingdoms. A helpful entity from the distant past named Sepiriz (he and his companions are a sort of Riders of the Apocalypse) plays the role of oracle, explaining to Elric exactly how the coming battle will develop and why he and his sword will play the key role in determining the outcome.

By now I have become familiar with the balancing act Moorcock has been performing between the expectations of fans of sword & sorcery raised on a diet of Robert E Howard, Fritz Leiber or Edgar Rice Burroughs, and the revolutionary ideas of the younger generations of writers. Elric is unique among the brawny and cocksure heroes of fantasy both in his physical feebleness and in his introspective, manic-depressive temperament. The worldbuilding is similarly original and memorable in its decadence and psychedelic tonalities.

The sea was moving like a living entity thrashing in nightmare-filled sleep.

The main attraction though is the fulfillment of the promises made in the very first volume, when Moorcock created a legend, a warrior like no other before him, a hero for the ages that embodies in one person the eternal struggle between light and darkness.

His name was Elric of Melniboné, king of ruins, lord of a scattered race that had once ruled the ancient world. Elric, sorcerer and swordsman, slayer of kin, despoiler of his homeland, white-faced albino, last of his line.

The author sees in Elric an avatar of the Eternal Champion, a mythical figure conceived in the mould set by Joseph Campbell in „The Hero With A Thousand Faces“. Throughout the journey, Elric steps from one world to another, from one timeline to another, meeting other incarnations of the Champion, The last book is no exception (view spoiler).

The last battle, the apotheosis of the reluctant swordman is everything a fan of sword & sorcery could wish : gore, laughter in the face of disaster, dragons, demons, gods messing in the affairs of men, doomed love stories, heroic deeds and more special effects than a modern summer blockbuster. All presented in the compact prose that Moorcock excels at: powerful imagery, intense action, desperate moods. Yet, I have a feeling I will not remember the actual events surrounding the last battle between Law and Chaos for long. What will probably stay with me is the inner struggle of the hero, the still unresolved issue between destiny and free-will.

Elric let his mind drift about in time, encompassing past, present and future and forming it into a whole – a pattern. He was suspicious of pattern, disliking shape, for he did not trust it. To him, life was chaotic, chance-dominated, unpredictable. It was a trick, an illusion of the mind, to be able to see a pattern to it. He knew few things, judged nothing.

There are evil kings and dangerous sorcerers, demons from other dimensions and unreliable allies – all conspiring for the destruction of the world of Elric, yet the battle is consistently referred to in metaphysical terms, making the actual characters just pawns on a giant chessboard, an impression reinforced by the ruthlessness with which the author removes one piece after another from the board. One by one, Elric's friends and allies are swept clear away, until the prophecy is fulfilled and one man stand alone to decide who will have dominion, an impossible choice since no matter who wins the delicate balance will be destroyed:

That the twin forces complemented one another was now plainer than ever before, and for either to gain complete ascendancy over the other meant entropy or stagnation for the cosmos. Even though Law might dominate the Earth, Chaos must be present, and vice versa.

After six novels of rebellion against his fate, Elric is just about ready to give up and accept the fact that a man's life moves on preordained tracks. Even Moorcock seems at times undecided on where to tip the balance: early on in the series, it was clear to me Elric is supposed to be the champion of free-will, but in this last novel everything seems already preordained, the only question left unanswered being the exact manner of Elric's demise at the hands of gods. A closer examination of the text though will find enough clues on where the author's sympathies lie, and the final scene was both surprising and satisfactory in its solution of the dilemma (view spoiler)

„Who told you that the world was just? [...] Man was not born to a world of justice. But he can create such a world!“

and,

If we are the toys of gods – are not perhaps the gods themselves mere children?

With the last novella in the collection titled „Doomed Lord Passing“ I don't think it is much of a spoiler to reveal that Elric is not granted a happy ending. The whole series points in the other direction – a direct highway to Hell. But there is something majestic and timeless in the way Elric stands at the crossroads of decay and rebirth, of growth and destruction, of Law and Chaos, knowing that he is the only one who can decide which path to follow. Such scenes make up for all the shortcomings and clunky segments of the epic:

For the mind of Man alone is free to explore the lofty vastness of the cosmic infinite, to transcend ordinary consciousness, to roam the secret corridors of the brain where past and future melt into one ... And universe and individual are linked, the one mirrored in the other, and each contains the other.

I'm not sure I can recommend the Elric Saga without reservations. I loved it, with some reservations, but I can also understand how some readers might be baffled by its enduring popularity. It is very much a product of its times, a bridge between the classical heroes of Sword & Sorcery (Conan, Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser, John Carter) and the modern crop of anti-heroes, grimdark or other shades. It swings from the pulpy adventure format to the highly stylized, mythical roots of existence. It is old fashioned in presentation and modern in its concepts. Best thing to do I guess is for the new readers to just pick one of the books in the series, try one of the stories and see how they feel about it.

Nicolas says

J'ai du un peu louper mon ordre de lecture d'Elric, puisque j'ai encore un tome à lire avant celui-ci qui est évidemment le dernier.

En effet, c'est dans ce tome que le Chaos, par l'entremise des sorciers de Pan Tang, tente de prendre le contrôle total de la Terre. Et le Chaos, ici, c'est la mutation et la plus abjecte des stagnations. Franchement, c'est un destin dégueulasse.

Heureusement, Elric est là, et au prix de tous les sacrifices, et après bien des péripéties, sauve la Terre, et notre histoire, du Chaos.

Ce tome est assez chouette, et l'histoire ménage son lot de rebondissements, de sacrifices épiques, et de méchants ... vraiment pas sympas.

Mais ce qui en fait surtout le talent, c'est les dernières pages qui voient le terme sacrifice prendre tout son sens. J'avais beau le savoir avant d'entamer cette relecture, j'ai quand même été ému par cette conclusion. Et c'était chouette ! Bravo à Moorcock de réussir, à trente ans d'intervalle, de me faire revivre ces émotions aussi fortes que tristes.

Manny says

When I was a student at Cambridge during the late 70s, the Cambridge University Science Fiction Society had an evening every week at one of the local pubs. They were sufficiently well-known there that they had managed to persuade the bartenders to add a few SF-themed cocktails to their repertoire.

The favourite was the Elric of Melnibone, which, I recall correctly, consisted of vodka and milk, with two maraschino cherries floating in it. Now what the I Have No Mouth And I Must Scream? I'm pretty sure that ice-cream was involved...

William King says

It's hard for me to write objectively about this book. It blew me away when I first read it as a teenager and the memory of reading and re-reading it stays with me still. It's a doomy, angst-ridden tale with a bleak ending and some very haunting scenes. To this day, forty years later, I can remember the mighty skyscraper sized Chaos fleet sailing across land and sea with its crew of the damned. I'm not sure it would have such impact if I read it for the first time now. Don't care. My angst-ridden teenage self gives it five stars!

J.G. Keely says

"I think of myself as a bad writer with big ideas, but I'd rather be that than a big writer with bad ideas." - Michael Moorcock

With this simple sentence, Moorcock reveals something troubling and endemic to the fantasy genre: that not enough fantasy authors start out with fantastical ideas. There are a lot of big writers out there (with really big books) who don't have very big ideas. But perhaps that shouldn't surprise us, since their ur-inspiration, Tolkien, has a remarkably vast amount of skill sadly limited by a very small vision, while Moorcock is the opposite: a man with grandiose visions who is sometimes limited by his meager skill.

Certainly, Moorcock is capable of some pretty, frilly prose, and shows in this story, as in the tale which opens Elric's saga, that he is capable of providing a consistent tone and driving plot. But, at his core, he is still (at least through the early Elric stories), a pulp writer, and he admits as much in the introduction to 'Stealer of Souls', talking about how many of the stories were rushed, how some were written for money, that many disparate stories were combined to make saleable novels, and how most of these stories were explorations of ideas that he would only fully develop in later series.

I admit I appreciate this straightforward humility much more than the pretension of many in the genre, and as usual, it is the most humble author who tends to produce the best work--it is almost as if some level of restraint and self-awareness was vital to being a skilled writer. Though not all of his experiments work out so well, like Leiber, the earlier writing seems to have the most drive and vitality. While this dark, mythic vision of Ragnarok might be the conclusion of Elric's tragedy, it actually comprises some of the earliest stories.

Like the introductory story of the series, this one has a consistent arc of plot and tone, and is much more concerned with Elric's psychological struggles than some of the others, where he is more standoffish and archetypally mythic.

There is also an interesting crossover here between Elric's story and the historical myths that inspired him--namely the Song of Roland, and it is an interesting choice on Moorcock's part to create a literal connection to his inspirations instead of merely a symbolic, allusive one. It is another sign of his authorial inventiveness and boldness to delve suddenly into pastiche and give his mythic world a very real connection to his reader's reality.

Once again, I am struck by the fact that, reading the entirety of the original Elric tales, I have glossed about eight-hundred-fifty pages, and in that space, have gotten a character's life: his several loves, many companions met, befriended, lost, and mourned, empires destroyed, mythical realms explored, and a worldwide war begun, waged, and concluded. In many other fantasy series, I might still be waiting for the

plot to actually pick up.

Already I have gotten a depth and breadth that exceeds many longer works, and that is despite the fact that several of the Elric stories are experiments that never quite concluded, and thus acted as filler. I know that Elric is not quite an 'Epic Fantasy' (though it does have some epic scope), but it seems to me that too few authors actually have enough ideas to actually fill a series the length of the average epic.

Moorcock does have a wealth of ideas, many of them promising and unusual, and it's unfortunate that Moorcock never quite explores them all, though he has said that for him, the Elric stories were just the opening forays for concepts he would develop more fully later, and so I look forward to reading those later books and seeing how his promising concepts play out when he has the opportunity to put more time and thought into them. One complaint I had with the stories was that the interesting magical cosmology of the world never seemed to manifest in the characters, who tended to be more mythical than psychologically complex, and if, in the future, Moorcock is able to rectify this, it would deepen his fantasy immensely.

The conclusion is impressive, and if all of the stories had the same drive, continuity of tone, and depth of psychology, it would be a much stronger series. As it stands, it is an interesting experiment, an exploration of fantastical concepts that, if not as focused as we might hope, at least present a unique, inspiring vision of what fantasy can be.

My List of Suggested Fantasy Books

Derek says

If you look at the order of publication (see the website of Moorcock's Miscellany for details), this is the second collection of Elric stories, preceded in the U.S. by *The Stealer of Souls*, and this is the first one to tell a cohesive, novel-length story. Taking these two as the essential body, you have something different than the flabby construction adorning several large collected volumes today.

The situation has shifted from the first set of stories. They had smaller scope and focused on the personal relationship between the deficient Elric and the viciously evil Stormbringer, and on redemption through love and self-worth. *Stormbringer* is an apocalyptic tale, telling of the passing of the world through an Armageddon and out the other side. The battle of Law and Chaos, mentioned only in passing previously, is here the center of the story, as Law attempts to gain or regain a foothold in a world invaded and ruined by elemental Chaos.

The writing and imagery is stark, of a world consumed by madness and where nature itself is warped and cast down. There's some powerful ideas about a set of entities or vehicles which corrupt everything that approaches, and of the horrific monstrosities that are the Chaos Lords.

There is notably no mention of such things as the "Eternal Champion" or the "multiverse", although the cosmology has expanded to include the ideas of alternate planes of existence and creatures that may straddle the realms. At times the language feels more like metaphysics than mythology. I would be curious to see how the notion of Eternal Champion spread over Moorcock's writing once introduced.

Jacob says

So tragic, so sad, so beautiful.

Jack says

Strong finale to the Elric saga. I enjoyed how Moorcock set the result of the battle of Law vs. Chaos as a determinative event to the future of the world and mankind. You can read this as a mythological prelude to our current and actual world, a future world after our current humanity cycles to an end, or on another earth, perhaps a multiverse earth.

Also noteworthy is the status of certain warriors (including the Eternal Champion, perhaps) as figures that will return from death or slumber to save the world when needed, which I read as an analogy to the legends of King Arthur's messianic return.

Neal Romanek says

I've delayed reading any of Moorcock's fantasy novels until now. Shame. This book was everything I was looking for as a fantasy obsessed D&D playing teenager - no surprise, because Moorcock's work is the source material - as much or more than LOTR - for all those D&D fantasy worlds I inhabited in my high school years.

Stormbringer is dark and tragic and painted in bold, psychedelic strokes. Like a lot of my favorite fantasy fiction, it doesn't pretend to realism or character subtleties. It exists in a world of archetypes and symbols, dreams and hallucinations. Elric is a great figure, carefully constructed from contradictions - the product of an awesomely powerful line of sadistic sorcerers and emperors who is weak and powerless and willing to believe in law and goodness. His only means of gaining power and strength is through the black sword Stormbringer which sucks out the souls of its victims. Stormbringer is itself a creation of evil. As Elric fights evil (or Chaos as it is represented in the book), his sword Stormbringer grows in evil power. Is Stormbringer Elric's tool, or is Elric Stormbringer's?

Bill Kerwin says

With *Stormbringer*, Michael Moorcock brings a superior fantasy series to a formally effective and emotionally satisfying conclusion.

I love the Elric series, and sometimes wonder if I rate the books too highly. After all, the prose—ranging from workmanlike to vigorous, is often evocative but rarely poetic, and the tales themselves run to cliché, with too many love-besotted sorcerers, too many queens with hidden agendas, and too many marvelous towers—chock full of monsters and demons—appearing at the conflux of the time streams.

Here, however, Moorcock is at the top of his game. His prose is unusually concentrated and disciplined, and

many of the plot elements he introduces are both surprising and pleasing. (My favorites? The quest for Roland's horn, and—even better--the Sad Giant and his shield.)

But the best thing about this book is the seriousness with which Moorcock treats his hero, his hero's destiny, and the startlingly original universe—a world torn between Chaos and Law—in which his hero lives. For it is the brooding Byronic character of Elric himself, fated to kill those whom he loves, and the unique philosophical realm which determines the nature of that character, that together are the twin source of the Elric fans' delight, making it easy to excuse the patches of mundane prose, the occasional narrative clichés.

In fashioning *Stormbringer*, Moorcock has shown great courage, not flinching from the demands of fate or the requirements of his chosen universe. He brings the Elric series to its inevitable conclusion, and, in doing so, has crafted a thing of harsh beauty, as heartbreaking and bleak as Arthur's battle at the plain of Camlann.

Michael says

I have heard or read many good things about Moorcock's Elric series, and, one evening, when I fancied a piece of quick science-fantasy action, I picked up *STORMBRINGER*.

Now, a little way into reading it, I did some research and discovered that *STORMBRINGER* is actually the last in the Elric series, although it was the second written, originally comprising four linked novellas or novelettes, now worked more into a single narrative. The entire Elric series has a complicated history; the internal chronology of the stories were written at different times in Moorcock's career, ranging from 1963 right through to the 1990's. The original stories comprised *THE STEALER OF SOULS* and *STORMBRINGER*, and Moorcock went back later and filled in the gaps.

Anyway, *STORMBRINGER* is a staple of the genre, a real classic, and is an excellent example of New Wave science-fantasy. The imagination on show here, the vast plethora of ideas that burst from every page is impressive. Moorcock's early style races through the story; the books are all plot, and action; there is no fat here, Moorcock described things simply and plainly, so much so that modern readers may think his writing a bit simple; however a modern long-winded author could get full chapters from some of Moorcock's sentences, a novel from each chapter. The art of concision is a literary skill that many of today's writers do not possess.

Elric is among the last of an ancient race of once-immortals from Melniboné, in Earth's distant past, whose destiny is inextricably tied up with the Gods of Chaos and Law, and also with his demon-haunted sword *STORMBRINGER*. Elric is a weak albino, hardly a warrior, but gains immense power from his magic sword, which drains the souls from those it kills, and channels part of the vitality into Elric. He is forever fighting against Chaos, although both he and his sword are from a Chaotic lineage, and often it seems the sword has a mind of its own.

This book begins with foul creatures of darkness kidnapping his wife, from which point Elric, and his compatriots, get mixed up in a vast and destructive war with the agents of Chaos. Cue stories of great battles of dragons, tigers and giant owls, fantastic and bizarre monsters, strange sorcery, exciting sea battles with hell-crewed ships, trips to the future, the intervention and warring of ancient Gods, and ultimately the cataclysmic destruction and re-making of the world, all in less than 200 pages. The staccato images that are conjured, with economical prose, linger long in the mind and are of prime fantasy weirdness; the overall atmosphere is awesome, and the richness of the world is reminiscent of the best of Leiber, Vance and Clark Ashton Smith. One of my criticisms of early Moorcock was his lack of character development, and that is

here in part; the sheer punch and pace of the story washes away clear motivation and psychology, although Elric himself is better described than Hawkmoon ever was; he is a classic character, an anti-hero, unhappy at his destiny.

This is yet another book I should have read as a teenager; I suspect I would have absolutely loved it. Even now, though, at 35, it was great colourful fun, with some excellent sections [I particularly enjoyed the sea battle, and the giant owls, the octopus-God, etc...], and a grand atmosphere of awe and weird fantasy.

Mehdi Jemaa says

Après 6 tomes, un puissant lien munit à Elric, ce personnage fictif a une place au sein mon coeur; ça mélancolie a laissé une empreinte en moi, ça m'arrive rarement de m'attacher autant à un personnage fictif, mais cette saga d'Elric est tout simplement puissante, écrasante comme le carnage qui existe entre la loi et le chaos.

certes "I think of myself as a bad writer with big ideas, but I'd rather be that than a big writer with bad ideas."
-Michael Moorcock

mais ses idéaux sa vision, sont a coupé le souffle ses talents d'écrivain sont limités mais il a réussi moi à me transporter dans un univers des plus somptueux il m'a bourré le crâne d'image brutale et exceptionnellement belle, mais il a surtout réussi à insuffler en moi sa vision du monde, du pouvoir et des responsabilités qu'il incombe.

Elric est un damné curieux et doué d'une conscience qui le domine et sa curiosité et sa conscience m'ont éclairé.

Ahmed Mahdi says

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Edward Rathke says

Finally finished the epic story of Elric of Melnibone!

I struggled a bit through the novel, but not because I didn't enjoy it. I think it was a headspace thing, yeah?

Anyrate, I love this story and the stories that populate Elric's life. This is a pretty grim ending to a bleak story but it ends with a great deal of hope.

I don't know, there's a lot I could say. This novel has a lot of big ideas that are kind of shoved in, which is problematic, but the overall effect of the novel, and the series of novels, is pretty great.

A fantastic end to a series of six novels. I know more have been written since these originals, but I probably won't ever read them, because, well, I have all of Elric's story now in my head, and the 1,200 pages of episodic adventures was more than enough for me.

Wanda says

The strongest feeling I get from Moorcock's Elric series is melancholy. I understand the lure of that state, as I get it when I read my beloved King Arthur books or at the end of a Shakespearian tragedy. But I feel like Moorcock does it with smoke & mirrors instead of through masterful story-telling. In *Stormbringer* (and the other Elric novels to be sure) I get this feeling from a combination of atmosphere and setting, but Elric himself leaves me cold. It's pretty hard to root for the guy who is portrayed as the lesser evil. The details of each novel are tiresomely repetitive—Elric tries to resist using his demonic sword, Stormbringer; without it, he is too weak to be of any use in macho pursuits; he returns once again to using his soul-sucking weapon.

One simple word, repeated several times, was also jarring to me. Elric keeps saying "thanks," which to me feels like a very modern usage and out of place in this rather archaic setting. If he said "many thanks" it would have grated less for me. Likewise, a number of times contracted words were used, when I thought that spelling out both words would have been more true to the ancient atmosphere, not to mention matching with the other language used. I guess I expect more precise language in a pseudo-archaic world.

I can't say that I'm unhappy to be finished the Elric saga.....in many ways, it has felt like reading the same book six times.

Book 203 of my science fiction and fantasy reading project.

JJ says

[(and the,

Negar Bolboli says

Wow, I love Elric! His brooding, vindictive character, pale skin and unusual tormented eyes, combined with existential agony makes for a - bluntly putting- sexy badass! He's the type of dark prince you want rescuing you from rich sadistic merchants! okay, enough fantasizing now!

It is the end, the world is writhing with war and Chaos Lords are out seeking total sovereignty over the plane of earth. In the midst of turbulence and nature's revolt, Elric finds answers. Fate's servants are awoken and call to Elric to fulfill his destiny and Elric, though more saddened and tragedy stricken, accepts his role. In learning of his destiny, Elric is also given knowledge of how cruel and unjust the course of life really is; In the beginning He is an outcast, driven from his homeland seeking some sense of belonging that would remedy his alien nature, He is inclined, at first, to question the ways of his fathers, to, at least mentally,

experiment the more humane ways which are unnatural to his race and that is why he sets sails towards other lands. To find out if he is truly singled out in his peculiar dispositions. But His attempts at mercy and moderation fail and ultimately brings about destruction. He becomes stricken, failed and the evil in him is nurtured as he realises that, despite trying to be good natured, he cannot control the tide of events. He tries to find some pattern as to how the world operates, how things come to pass, if his presence in this world is meaningful now that he is most certainly not his own master. Who is it that pulls at the string? Is there some force that is compassionate? That will hold him firmly after his struggles are over? And to what end? Anything that would give meaning to his being where he is, when he is, who he is ... anything that flickers with even a faint light of an end.

After committing many acts of evil, is there anything that will be of consolation? Elric is not unrealistic, however, and knows the gravity of his deeds (or does not expect to simply be rid of the weight on his conscience) but he sees himself as 'driven' and in accepting that he ravages many things. Still, corrupted as he is I find that he is very understandable; not merely the nature of the questions that plague him (which I am sure will be a reminder to most people, of some bleak periods in their own lives) but how he responds to these forces, how he can be impulsive and evil...He still allows himself be possessed of Stormbringer despite loathing it and joyfully kills and destroys. He is by no means a man of pretense and does not try to be righteous, does not seek the human ways anymore but stays true to his emotions. Perhaps that is why I don't consider him entirely evil but in being what he is, he seems to be even more human.

Stormbringer (book VI) brings the most plausible answers regarding the nature and functionality of its world and Elric's place in it, answers that wouldn't stand on a bulky incongruity in Moorecock's world and turn his universe into a pleasant meal for the faint hearted.

Evil must fight Evil until good is strong enough to take hold. Thousands of years that have come to pass are merely an intro to exiatance, true civilization and nothing more. And The only thing that will comfort a turbulent mind is the smallest of hopes: We can only be assured that by being where we are, we - inadvertently - leave somethin behind and the earth will inherit it from us. It is a well -understood fear of mine; That we suffer and perish and all for nothing;

"Elric said: "but what are all our strivings for if we are doomed to die and the results of our actions with us?"

"That is not absolutely the case. Something will continue. Those who come after us will inherit something from us.""

This alone, is enough to convince Elric that he has to fight, even if he and the world to which he belongs must come to an end and be made as if they never existed. maybe it is all that can be offered, all other expectations are uncertain.

To attain this new horizon in the history of the earth (as the bringer of a new Era) he must fight himself; Chaos are the enemies and that is what he is also, different as he was from his people, his Melnibonean blood still runs hot. He must fight his very own nature and bring destruction to all and himself.

The final piece not only decides the fate of our dark protagonist, but also illustrates the working of different astral forces, how they all have been incorporating their will upon the plane of Earth and the effects of their cosmic struggle through the end. The configuration of the multiverse, the rules and physics governing it, the entirety of its definition is a major component of the Saga and despite seeming rather experimental than fully worked out, is engaging, thought-provoking and has a monumental scope.

This finale is magnifque; action packed, emotional, philosophically rich and graphically powerful. there are still a lot I have to say about this great series.

Petros says

Notice: I have made a review for every book of this series and they need to be read in order since they are

supposed to feel like an on-going impression. So if you read the second without reading the first will feel rather off.

I am mostly focusing on the style of storytelling and a lot less on if it reads well or something sophisticated like that. For the same reason I tend to have lots of SPOILERS which means that if you read this text you will know THE OVERALL PLOT and how much I DIDN'T like it. So be warned that this is a mostly negative opinion for the whole trilogy which tends to reveal in detail why I didn't like it. Better be read after you have read the books or if you want to avoid a not-so-smart series. YOU HAVE NOW BEEN WARNED and I can now initiate the slaughter.

--- Storm Bringer ---

(Most boring title for an Elric story)

It begins with Elric's slut of a wife getting kidnapped. Veeery easily. And Elric doesn't even summon a god to chase the kidnapers. How convenient Moorcock! By the way, isn't that a rehash of the first book where Erlik needs to save Cymoril?

And what is that? One of the dying attackers says there is a prophesy Elric needs to fulfil? Oh crap, here we go again with the automatic win BS! So he tells him where his wife is held and that it's his destiny to go find her. Because if it wasn't Elric would dump her? Silly Moorcock...

So Elric needs to invade the nation where his wife is held and for some reason he doesn't summon a god to just wipe them all out or use a gizmo of mass destruction as he did before, things that are sooo easy for him to do. He instead gathers all the armies of all the nations he didn't destroy so far and attacks at once. The enemy is surprisingly that powerful that every nation Elric didn't destroy so far was now slaughtered for joining him in battle. Furthermore, a warrior-wizard manages to beat Elric in a duel yet doesn't kill him (oh what a surprise) because the prophesy says it is not him who is destined to kill him. Great way to save your hero Moorcock...

After that Elric escapes the battle and confronts a rebel army who explain that his sword can kill even a god. They also tell him that the prophesy is about him going to a specific place to save his wife. AGAIN WITH THIS PROPHECY PULLING ELRIC BY THE NOSE??? How about some investigation or free will Moorcock?

And hold on a second, if Elric could just go to a light guarded place to save her all alone, what was the point of raising all the armies of the world? You have no idea what you are doing Moorcock...

So he goes there, along with an ally of his who yields the second cursed sword... Hey wait a second, wasn't this sword thrown to limbo after Yrkoon was killed ... again? How the hell do they keep losing and finding it every time Moorcock feels like it? Thanks for the explanation you idiot!

Elric confronts the God who tells him that if he dies, the entire world will be destroyed along with him and reality will change to that of a completely new world. Elric in the meantime is completely deaf because all he wants to do is save his slut. So he slays him and then gets surprised his world is about to be erased despite being warned about it. Oh you horny little devil, you destroyed the world for some pussy...

Anyways, Elric seeks guidance and more people Moorcock uses as means to pull him by the nose with the excuse of the prophesy, appear and tell him what to do. He finds this seer who tells him that it's his fate to kill all the gods of chaos in order for the world to be remade in a more harmonic way and that it is ok to do

so since YOU CAN'T ESCAPE FATE! Elric agrees, even when he knows that this way, he, his slut, and all the other faceless crowds Moorcock has filled this world with will be destroyed and forgotten. So what does he have to gain from all this? Death as means of finding peace? Well he is forcing everyone else to just go along with it even if they disagree. Hell, he decides to kill all his patron deities when up until a few hours ago he was their fanatic supporter since the first book. Oh but I forgot, the only character with a personality in this series is Elric so there is no problem as long as he does his emo stuff.

What is even more facepalming is that the gods were helping him with the excuse to NOT kill them when the time comes. Well excuse me you idiots, when a prophecy is telling you that you will be killed by him then you do not aid him in doing so. You refuse to help him and you let him get killed; thus the prophecy is averted. How hard was that to figure out?

After that he faces the gods and their archbishop, and despite their efforts to tell him to stop with the reward of him becoming a god as well, he attacks them anyway. Normally he is now toast because he can no longer summon gods to aid him, since it's the same gods he is fighting. But no worries; he learns this new summon that will make a thousand swords like his own to rain down from the sky and they are supposed to be powerful enough to beat even them. Jesus, so he even summon swords??? Then who needs gods in the first place? Moorcock, did you just admitted that Elric never really needed them and that his sword was enough?

Anyways, for reasons not even Moorcock knows, Elric does NOT use the summon. He chooses to go for something smaller first, as if it would make a difference. He summons a few weak monsters to attack the gods and then he chases after the archbishop. He captures him and instead of killing him he starts to chat long enough for the gods to have won and to attack him. And THEN he summons the swords. WHY DID HE DO THAT NOW AND NOT RIGHT AWAY??? What is wrong Moorcock, did you need to waste a few pages so the book will look big?

Anyways, the gods are vanquished and he loses his power, so he is now captured by the archbishop. This wouldn't have happened if he had killed him right away instead of chatting. The archbishop does NOT kill him (oh what a surprise) and instead he ties him on a flagship to witness the world being conquered by an evil army. As you probably guessed right away, Elric escapes by summoning back his sword.

After that he needs to find a magic shield that will negate the powers of chaos. Oh I see, so he does need a super gizmo after all. Why didn't he go for it in the first place if his sword was not enough and the seer knew about it all along? Looks like fate makes no sense.

During his quest he and his allies are attacked by monsters so they fight them and kill them, the only thing Elric does with anyone he meets. His sword once again flies off on its own and kills the Red Archer and Elric goes emo again. Moorcock dear, it was tragic the first time and a bit the second. After a dozen times I don't care anymore. And you also gave him those herbs that make him be able to live without the sword; there isn't even any black irony at how he needs to kill in order to live anymore. Thus you just killed a character with zero emotional response.

After that he goes to fight another god he missed the other day and finds his slut turned to a monster by him. She doesn't feel like living as a monster so she jumps on the sword and dies too. Moorcock, what did we say about useless deaths? I DON'T CARE! In fact, I don't even understand why they kidnapped her in the first place. As bait for Elric to come to them? That is exactly why you were all killed you stupid idiots! Just like Yrkoon in the first book, you dug your own graves; he would never chase after you if you didn't take his woman. And what's with the transformation to a monster? Was that supposed to make him lose faith in his quest to kill you all? You just enraged him and now he will kill you ten times more horribly you retarded

gods! That goes for you too Moorcock; your characters are all retarded and you are a terrible scriptwriter.

After that he goes to fight the archbishop in the ruins of Melibone and he feels all nostalgic about it. Oh how nice were all the slaves he tortured, all the women he raped, all the nations he destroyed. He really missed those times and it's a shame some asshole ruined the place... Oh that's right; IT WAS HIMSELF WHO DID IT! Because he didn't stay home, didn't kill his cousin, didn't summon a god to stop him and instead just KILLED EVERYONE! Yeah, that makes sense; I would feel nostalgic too... Not.

After that, a long line of ontological dialogues take place as he and his remaining allies ponder about the meaning of life. The evil army attacks to take over the world but Elric finds a magic horn that can summon other gods (oh how original) to battle his ex patrons. As usual, no matter how many millions of soldiers an army has, only its deities matter so it's just a battle about them and all the rest dying fast and miserable. The battle ends and the old gods are now defeated and the world is now remade into something else that I have no idea how different it is than before. So Elric and his few allies are the last creatures of the old world, destined to die soon so he pretty much kills them and then falls on his own cursed blade as means to reunite with all those it absorbed. Oh how romantic. Too bad that place is Limbo and the souls are horribly tormented before fading to nothingness. Not exactly the best place to see old friends.

So only Storm Bringer remains in this world and it too takes a human shape and flies away to space or something, saying it was a million times more evil than Elric. Cocky little bastard.

Ok the final part of the book was exciting for having Armageddon taking place and all the heroes getting philosophical. The ending is otherwise a "kill them all" finale which leaves you a bit hollow inside since all that seem to have been done for nothing. But hey, no matter how good it was it could never make me savour the series, since I found a ton of BS in it.
