



Warriors

George R.R. Martin (editor) , Gardner Dozois (editor) , Cecelia Holland (Contributor) , Joe Haldeman (Contributor) , Robin Hobb (Contributor) , Lawrence Block (Contributor) , Tad Williams (Contributor) , Joe R. Lansdale (Contributor) , more... Peter S. Beagle (Contributor) , Diana Gabaldon (Contributor) , Naomi Novik (Contributor) , Steven Saylor (Contributor) , James Rollins (Contributor) , David Weber (Contributor) , Carrie Vaughn (Contributor) , S.M. Stirling (Contributor) , Howard Waldrop (Contributor) , David Morrell (Contributor) , Robert Silverberg (Contributor) , David Ball (Contributor) ...less

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From George R. R. Martin's Introduction to *Warriors*:

“People have been telling stories about warriors for as long as they have been telling stories. Since Homer first sang the wrath of Achilles and the ancient Sumerians set down their tales of Gilgamesh, warriors, soldiers, and fighters have fascinated us; they are a part of every culture, every literary tradition, every genre. *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *From Here to Eternity*, and *The Red Badge of Courage* have become part of our literary canon, taught in classrooms all around the country and the world. Our contributors make up an all-star lineup of award-winning and bestselling writers, representing a dozen different publishers and as many genres. We asked each of them for the same thing—a story about a warrior. Some chose to write in the genre they’re best known for. Some decided to try something different. You will find warriors of every shape, size, and color in these pages, warriors from every epoch of human history, from yesterday and today and tomorrow, and from worlds that never were. Some of the stories will make you sad, some will make you laugh, and many will keep you on the edge of your seat.”

Included are a long novella from the world of Song of Ice and Fire by George R. R. Martin, a new tale of Lord John by Diana Gabaldon, and an epic of humanity at bay by David Weber. Also present are original tales by David Ball, Peter S. Beagle, Lawrence Block, Gardner Dozois, Joe Haldeman, Robin Hobb, Cecelia Holland, Joe R. Lansdale, David Morrell, Naomi Novik, James Rollins, Steven Saylor, Robert Silverberg, S.M. Stirling, Carrie Vaughn, Howard Waldrop, and Tad Williams.

Many of these writers are bestsellers. All of them are storytellers of the highest quality. Together they make a volume of unforgettable reading.

Contents

- 11 • Introduction: Stories from the Spinner Rack • essay by George R. R. Martin
- 21 • The King of Norway • novelette by Cecelia Holland
- 53 • Forever Bound • [Forever War] • novelette by Joe Haldeman
- 85 • The Triumph • novelette by Megan Lindholm [as by Robin Hobb]
- 119 • Clean Slate • [Kitty Tolliver] • novelette by Lawrence Block
- 145 • And Ministers of Grace • novelette by Tad Williams
- 177 • Soldierin' • novelette by Joe R. Lansdale

201 • Dirae • novelette by Peter S. Beagle
225 • The Custom of the Army • [Lord John Grey] • novella by Diana Gabaldon
287 • Seven Years from Home • novelette by Naomi Novik
321 • The Eagle and the Rabbit • novelette by Steven Saylor
351 • The Pit • novelette by James Clemens [as by James Rollins]
377 • Out of the Dark • novella by David Weber
457 • The Girls from Avenger • novelette by Carrie Vaughn
489 • Ancient Ways • [Emberverse II] • novelette by S. M. Stirling
521 • Nineslando • novelette by Howard Waldrop
543 • Recidivist • shortstory by Gardner Dozois
561 • My Name is Legion • novelette by David Morrell
589 • Defenders of the Frontier • novelette by Robert Silverberg
619 • The Scroll • novelette by David Ball
649 • The Mystery Knight: A Tale of the Seven Kingdoms • [Dunk and Egg • 3] • novella by George R. R. Martin

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Download and Read Free Online Warriors George R.R. Martin (editor) , Gardner Dozois (editor) , Cecelia Holland (Contributor) , Joe Haldeman (Contributor) , Robin Hobb (Contributor) , Lawrence Block (Contributor) , Tad Williams (Contributor) , Joe R. Lansdale (Contributor) , more... Peter S. Beagle (Contributor) , Diana Gabaldon (Contributor) , Naomi Novik (Contributor) , Steven Saylor (Contributor) , James Rollins (Contributor) , David Weber (Contributor) , Carrie Vaughn (Contributor) , S.M. Stirling (Contributor) , Howard Waldrop (Contributor) , David Morrell (Contributor) , Robert Silverberg (Contributor) , David Ball (Contributor) ...less

From Reader Review Warriors for online ebook

StoryTellerShannon says

Read some of the novellas in here a good sixty days or more past. **I mainly picked this up for Martin's first installment of the Hedge Knight.** It was good but not as good as the first one which was my favorite by far. More interesting, though, was exposure to some new authors, as well as familiar ones. The familiar ones that were done well: David Ball (nice combinations of Europe meeting Muslim North Africans in conflict; check out IRONFIRE first); David Morrel (WWII in which the French Legion is pitted against one another; check out PROTECTOR) . . . the new ones that impressed me enough were Joe Haleman, S.M. Stirling and David Weber. **OVERALL GRADE: B.**

Now for my GRRM review (using pics from the graphic novel):

This tale takes place about a hundred years before THE SONG OF ICE AND FIRE series by George R.R. Martin during the height of the Targaryen Monarchy. What makes this novelette engaging is that it focuses upon a not so bright but do the right thing hedge knight (if even that) who works at being a true knight unlike most of the other knights in the realms of Westeros.

In this tale, a knight with no lord to follow joins a tourney in the hopes of securing fame and fortune (i.e. winners in medieval tourneys sometimes got to keep the armor and horses of opponents which would be the value of a house today). He falls for a female woman who is being beat up by a Targaryen Prince and his hirelings. After defeating them he discovers him to be the grandson of the high king and in these regions it's death to touch such royalty.

His only hope is a trial by combat, and, in the tradition of their seven gods, there will be 7 on each side. The hedge knight must then find 6 others to fight in his name when he has absolutely no reputation and is a stranger amongst powerful lordlings. The characters are all wonderful even those with sub roles but the legendary Baelor "Breakspear" Targaryen is amazing and has a badass scene at the very end of the tale.

STORY/PLOTTING: B plus to A minus; CHARACTERS/DIALOGUE: A minus; KNIGHTLY THEMES: A minus; OVERALL GRADE: A minus; WHEN READ: 3 days ago (4th reading).

Dakota Kemp says

Warriors, a collection of short stories and novellas by some of today's best fiction authors, is a captivating and wonderful compilation of twenty unique tales (and an excellent, thought-provoking essay by George R. R. Martin detailing the evils of genre categorizing). Obviously, some of these stories are better than others. Most are very good, some are undeniably awful, and a few are truly fantastic. Since Warriors is not a "novel" but an anthology, I'll address each story individually with a short blurb about its contents, author, and my

opinion of the work.

Introduction: Stories from the Spinner Rack, by George R. R. Martin

Why even bother with the introduction, you ask? Because it is one of the most brilliant essays I've ever read. I didn't read it once. I didn't read it twice. I didn't even read it thrice. I read it four times. It's that good, and it perfectly sums up everything I've ever thought about genre division. Yes, genres can be a good thing, but in today's world, they have begun to block the expansion of the world's collective reading mind. Of course, we all have our favorite types of tales, but we shouldn't lock ourselves away in what we prefer and lose sight of what is really important – a good story. Those can come in any shape, form, and, yes, genre. George R. R. Martin explores this concept flawlessly, and any reader will be better for having experienced it.

The King of Norway, by Cecelia Holland

Cecelia Holland is a renowned historical fiction author, and she sticks with what she knows on this story of adventure, peril, heroics, and bloody battle, set during the heyday of the Viking domination of the northern seas. It ranks somewhere in the middle of the stories in this novel for me, which is not a bad thing, since the majority of these tales are well worth reading. It was a good start to Warriors, and, factoring in my love for works of adventure and battle (not to mention Vikings. I mean, who doesn't like Vikings?), it made for an enjoyable read. One con that comes to mind: the main character seemed a bit flat to me.

Forever Bound, by Joe Haldeman

From the science fiction author who brought us the classic novel *The Forever War* comes another look at the future of warfare in *Forever Bound*. Surprisingly, most of the story is about sex, not combat, which normally would irritate me. But Haldeman's characters, settings, and mindsets are inextricably bound up with physical contact – in essence the sex, and their reasons for engaging in the particular coupling occurring in the story, is essential to the situation and the overall plot. That being the case, I didn't have a problem with the sexual nature of *Forever Bound*. (When sex is just thrown in for "HEY, SEX!", then it rankles me. I don't need or want flesh shows for no particular reason. That's just pandering to horny people to read your stuff. If you're a reader looking for pornography or bodice rippers, go watch/find those. There's plenty out there. Don't write a story filled with sex just to have sex. If it advances the plot, character development, etc. I'm fine with it.) Anyway, a decent story overall, but, as most of the stories in *Warriors* are better than decent, nearer to the anthology's lower end.

The Triumph, by Robin Hobb

The Triumph was another decent read, so not quite on the better end of the stories in *Warriors*. It was one of several that concerned Rome/Carthage. In this case, we see from the point of view of an ex-Roman Legionnaire, who has to watch his friend and commander suffer in a brutal public execution. In particular, it addresses issues like loyalty, friendship, patriotism, defiance, and, most important, learning when it is time to rest from conflict and hang up your sword. While wonderful issues to ponder in a story, unfortunately they were explored through a series of flashbacks about a giant snake the Legionnaire had confronted with his commander in the past. The flashbacks weren't particularly engaging or effective in my opinion, and they made the story and themes suffer. I've not read anything by fantasy writer Robin Hobb, but based upon this story, I'm on the fence as to whether or not I'd pick up one of her books.

Clean Slate, by Lawrence Block

Here we come upon one of the more intriguing and exceptional stories of the volume – as well the most disturbing. Lawrence Block is an accomplished mystery/thriller writer, and he brings us to a dark and disconcerting place in Clean Slate. Once again, we have another highly sexual story, this time concerning incest and – I’m unsure what to call it – willing molestation, perhaps? Yeah, like I said, a highly disturbing story, but no less impossible to put down for all of that. What is most explored is the effect, mostly psychological, of sexual abuse. I couldn’t put Clean Slate down, but it did make me feel like I needed to shower after reading – repeatedly. Fans of the television series Law and Order: Special Victims Unit would find it highly appealing, I’ve no doubt. You’ve been warned. Read at your discretion.

And Ministers of Grace, by Tad Williams

Is it just me, or are all of fantasy writer Tad Williams’ stories about religious indecision? I can’t help but think the guy must struggle constantly with his own spirituality, because he writes about characters who can’t decide if God exists or not CONSTANTLY. Frankly, I’m getting tired of the same ol’ theme, Taddy. This one is about a religious assassin from a god-fearing society who is fighting a war against a purely atheistic society. Repetitive theme reminiscent of Tad’s The Burning Man. Story is “shrugs” OK. I think this is a wonderful and potent theme to work with, but Mr. Williams has done it to death. Time to move on, sir.

Soldierin’, by Joe R. Lansdale

This one is about the frontier’s Buffalo Soldiers during the wars with the Plains Indians – in this case, the Apache. This was a decent read, with some funny humor – and some that missed the mark, straying into borderline degrading. I enjoyed it, though, and Lansdale managed to tell his tale without getting too preachy about racism or slavery. Soldierin’ is good historical fiction that includes humor, survival, and a look at the lives and motivations of black cavalry soldiers on the frontier in the late 19th century.

Dirae, by Peter S. Beagle

Beagle’s short work in Warriors is a bit out of the box, and it’s pretty good because of his asymmetrical thinking. It details the brief, violent existence of a powerful girl, who doesn’t know who she is or why she exists. I figured out what was happening fairly early on, but the unique concept didn’t suffer too much because of the decidedly clairvoyant attempts at mystery. A fun and...invigorating read. It made me feel like sometimes everything does happen for a good reason.

The Custom of the Army, by Diana Gabaldon

First, I had better point out that I have a clear bias against Diana Gabaldon. I hate her stories. Remember that stuff I said about throwing sex into a story because why the hell not? Sex sells! That mindset is incarnate in Mrs. Gabaldon, and it drives me nuts that her novels (The Outlander series) are as popular as they are. This story is another novella about her popular side-character Lord John Grey. He is an English military officer in the 18th century – and he’s gay. Don’t forget that part, because Gabaldon surely won’t let you. In his every tale, he is going to find some other secretly gay guy (somehow), he’s going to know instinctually that he’s gay (somehow), and they’re going to hook up by the end of the story. It’s maddening. Not only does coupling like that not happen even to straight people, who can reasonably assume that they have a wide playing field of options around to score with, but homosexuals in the 18th century would have had a much more difficult time of such because they would be afraid of being caught. Homosexuality wasn’t tolerated in that century, and while Gabaldon acknowledges that, somehow Lord Grey still manages to find a sexual partner in every story without giving himself away to others. Admittedly, other than the inexplicable gay sex, I find Lord Grey to be a compelling character, and this particular story was much better than many of his

other adventures. (Though he does hook up with a gay Indian before the Battle of Quebec. Seriously, Gabaldon? A gay Indian? Can we get any more implausible in our quest for sex scenes to serve our readers? Palm slaps face. I'm not saying an Indian couldn't have been gay in that time period, I'm saying that the odds of something like that happening in 18th century America between an English gentleman and an Iroquois scout while surrounded EVERYWHERE by British soldiers is slim to...nope it's just an impossibility.) By the way, I don't want to rag too much on the gay scenes, because Gabaldon does this with straight sex scenes too. In her works (of any length) there are going to be copious sex scenes, often with no reason for them, and many times, there is just NO WAY they would occur. It just, ugh...Sorry, moving on now.

Seven Years from Home, by Naomi Novik

This story was not in any way unique. Novik uses a form often used but rarely well, in which the narrative is presented by way of a journal, and it is the result of the protagonist's integration into a culture alien to her own. Dances with Wolves, anyone? The Last Samurai? Avatar? (There are countless others.) Despite falling into a boorishly used trope, however, Novik's tale does manage to entertain, and by the time I turned the last page, I realized I had become as enthralled in the chain of events as I had in almost all of the previous stories, in spite of my first inclination toward irritation at the preference of delivery. Just goes to show that when you think you've seen, heard, and learned it all from the old and much-used, it can surprise you and teach you something new. This was a good one.

The Eagle and the Rabbit, by Steven Saylor

I'm not sure how I feel about Saylor's contribution. It is another of the Rome/Carthage based tales, this one from a Carthaginian's viewpoint. It takes place after Carthage's final fall, and details the eradication of all peoples of Carthaginian blood by way of death or slavery. It was an intriguing look at the psychology of the broken mind, but the conclusion was a bit lackluster.

The Pit, by James Rollins

The Pit is about gladiators. Not gladiators of ancient Rome or any of the other savage contests conducted throughout history between men. In fact, it isn't about men at all, but it is about warriors. Warriors of a different kind, perhaps, but warriors all the same, with courage, ferocity, and will-to-live equal to any contest of man. My one complaint, which we see a lot in today's fiction on screen and in books, is that Rollins did some major projecting of human concepts, emotions, and ideas onto animals, which is great to see – occasionally. This has been WAY overdone in the past thirty years, and is starting to grate on my nerves.

Out of the Dark, by David Weber

I really liked this story at first, then it started to drag a bit in the middle, and finally the end killed the plot for me. Out of the Dark had an interesting and inspiring concept, but then Weber attempted to mix myth with a world already well established as "normal" (Normal for sci-fi, anyway). The result was an unsatisfactory conclusion that felt like it came out of nowhere and had no place in the story. I did find Weber's specific concept of a galactic community made up and divided by different species type (carnivore, herbivore, omnivore) to be exceptionally interesting, though.

The Girls from Avenger, by Carrie Vaughn

I can't say that the plot was incredibly entertaining, but I did enjoy being introduced to a piece of history

with which I was ignorant. I never knew that female pilots were used in World War II, and I found the idea behind the story (the actual history and struggle with sexism the female pilots faced) to be both well presented and somewhat inspiring. Learning about these largely unknown American heroes was a treat.

Ancient Ways, by S.M. Stirling

I had never heard of S.M. Stirling or his alternative history novels, but thoroughly enjoyed this short story, so I may have to pick up a book of his. *Ancient Ways* takes place in a future in which a technological apocalypse has occurred. No machines or mechanical devices work anymore, and on the steppes of Russia and around the Black Sea, a young Cossack can hardly imagine the world being any other way. Our Cossack protagonist runs into a warrior very different from himself – in more ways than one – and sets out with him to save a princess. The concept might sound hokey, but I assure you, this doesn't feel like a Disney movie – at all. You'll enjoy every minute of it.

Ninieslando, by Howard Waldrop

I have only a few things to say about *Ninieslando*. 1) It made no sense. 2) Other than some interesting passages about life in the trenches during World War I, it was incredibly boring. 3) The main character was unbelievably flat and had no personality. 4) It made no sense.

Recidivist, by Gardner Dozois

I can't say I enjoyed this much. *Recidivist* takes place in a world in which humans have been overthrown by AIs who have almost no interest in them and who do things seemingly at random. The plot wasn't incredibly coherent, and the ending was not great. Dozois' theme was perseverance, even after you've already lost. Great in theory – now I need something to make me believe it.

My Name is Legion, by David Morrell

Even if it was a bit predictable, *My Name is Legion* was a great read. Detailing some of the French Foreign Legion's actions in the Second World War, Morrell's story shows how much "Honor and Nobility" (the FFL's second motto) cost men of the Legion. It is poignant and stirring and is only slightly tarnished by the main character's insistence that not only was God punishing him, but that God should unquestionably do so. This is one of the better stories of the entire volume.

Defenders of the Frontier, by Robert Silverberg

Robert Silverberg's tale of estranged soldiers long dedicated to their cause but long forgotten by their people (or worse), was stimulating. Its presentation, style, and mystery were sufficiently captivating to have me fully drawn into the plot – until the conclusion. For such a good read, *Defenders of the Frontier* had a dismal ending that concluded nothing and left off almost right where it started (or behind where it started). So, naturally, I was disappointed by Silverberg's story, because it promised much – specifically, some answers – but didn't deliver. I'm still mad about that, but I can grudgingly admit it was one of the better additions to the volume.

The Scroll, by David Ball

The Scroll managed to be both darkly satisfying and utterly unappealing at the same time. I don't know how to describe it. I hated the antagonist for his cruelty. I hated the protagonist for his cowardice. I hated the

events that happened. I hated its conclusion. And yet, David Ball managed to keep me immersed in the plot the entire time, despising what was happening, drowning in the brutality – but absolutely caring that it was happening. And that is the sign of a great story, is it not? When it makes you feel something? When it makes you care about the events and the characters and the people despite its fiction? I hated this story – and I loved every minute of it.

The Mystery Knight, by George R.R. Martin

We have come not only to the last story, but also to the best one. Three cheers for the return of Dunk and Egg! For those of you haven't read Martin's A Song of Ice and Fire series, you're missing out. For those of you who have, but have not experienced The Hedge Knight novellas, you're missing out even worse, because you came close but never touched Martin's stories of true genius. The Mystery Knight is the third installment detailing the adventures of Ser Duncan the Tall and his squire, Egg, following its predecessors, The Hedge Knight and The Sworn Sword. I first read The Hedge Knight in the fantasy anthology *Legends*, and have been in love with Martin's Westeros of 100 years previous to *A Game of Thrones* ever since. Don't get me wrong, I love our heroes from Martin's wildly popular fantasy cycle, but his big, slow-thinking, honorable hedge knight from generations before will always be my favorite champion.

And there you have it. The Mystery Knight caps off a wonderful collection of adventures of all different sizes, shapes, lengths, types, genres, and quality, but overall, I feel vindicated in testing the waters. *Warriors* is a success, in my humble opinion. I've heard that the new sequel to this volume is now out, called *Rogues*. After this experience, I'm sure to give it shot.

Kathy Davie says

An anthology of twenty short stories about warriors from every genre — paranormal to historical, western to science fiction to...

In 2011, *Warriors* won the Locus Award for Best Anthology.

Series:

"Custom of the Army" (Lord John Grey, 2.75)

"Mystery Knight: A Tale of the Seven Kingdoms" (The Tales of Dunk and Egg, 3; Hedge Knight, 3)

The Stories

Cecelia Holland's "King of Norway" is a heroic look at an honorable Viking warrior who holds his king and his leaders to account. Tricky little ending!

Joe Haldeman's "Forever Bound" is a futuristic look at soldiering in the army. Reminds me of John Ringo's enhanced soldiers in his Posleen series. In this case, Haldeman's soldiers are a lot more tuned in to each other and the trauma hits harder. Very well done. Another new author for me!

Robin Hobb's "Triumph" is truly a different sort of triumph in the proud, very slow death of a Roman Consul seen primarily through the eyes of his friend, an escaped slave who remembers their lives together from their childhood through the defeat of the Roman army. Excellent and so very sad. Another new author for my list.

Lawrence Block's "Clean Slate" turns out to be a gruesome glimpse into a psychotic's mind...a shrink would have a field day with this one!

Tad Williams' "And Ministers of Grace" is a look from the other side in a religious war. It was surprisingly easy to empathize with Kane and his religious fervor until Williams turns the tide on us with fresh perspective. The Covenant's enemies have my favor. Another author to add to my list.

Joe R. Lansdale's "Soldierin" is a snapshot at a group of Buffalo soldiers caught in an Apache attack in the frontier with a snippet about how they got their name — fascinating.

Peter S. Beagle's "Dirae" is excellent. An odd beginning and a barely understood ending that kept me reading at speed. I must read more Beagle!

Diana Gabaldon's "Custom of the Army" is a mini-adventure for Lord John Grey from the electric eel attack to his brief Indian affair to General Wolfe's successful attack on Quebec all with the purpose of upholding his old friend, Charlie Carruther's honor when he is accused of not preventing a mutiny...with cause.

Naomi Novik's "Seven Years from Home" was an excellent story incorporating underhanded political maneuvering by a government wanting to colonize a new planet and how one of the sides outmaneuvers them. Go TEAM! Nice bit of ecological underpinning in this.

Steven Saylor's "Eagle and the Rabbit" is a tale of honor and betrayal when Carthaginians in hiding are captured by slavers. Their captain plays psychological games with them but honor wins out.

James Rollins' "Pit" is the most depressing tale of two puppies kidnapped for a brutal dog fighting fate. Rollins tells this tale from the perspective of the dog and while the ending is good, the bits in between will make you feel murderous.

David Weber's "Out of the Dark" has a strong flavor of John Ringo's Posleen invasion as dog-like beings decide that Earth is ideal for their purposes. Their low-level of development makes them an easy conquest with their emperor able to benefit from the humans' obvious ingenuity. Hah! I'm wondering if Weber is a Karen Chance fan with his incorporation of Mircea Basarab as the Romanian soldier Master Sergeant Stephen Buchevsky encounters after he and his team are stranded after the invaders initial attack. Great ending!!

Carrie Vaughan's "Girls from Avenger" tells of the dreams and frustrations of the WASPs who ferried warplanes for the military during World War II. The focus here is on the death of one of their own and its military coverup. Very good!

S. M. Stirling's "Ancient Ways" is an excellent little adventure for Sergey Ivanovitch when he encounters a lone Kalmyk, Dorzha, racing from pursuing Tartars. Turns out Dorzha, bodyguard to the Princess, has lost his charge to Tartars and is attempting to rescue her. Anxious to escape the harangue he faces at home, Sergey joins Dorzha only to go further than he had planned. Nice little surprises at the end! Stirling's going on my reading list.

Howard Waldrop's "Ninieslando" is an odd little twist when a dying soldier knowing Esperanto gets rescued by an unsuspected group of revolutionaries hiding beneath the trenches of World War I.

Gardner Dozois' "Recidivist" is a post-apocalyptic tale of men subjugated by machines. While the AI are planning a little earth-shattering entertainment for themselves, a small group of humans are plotting an assassination. Interesting...another new author to explore.

David Morrell's "My Name is Legion" is a sad look at how the French Foreign Legion operates and how their honor clashes in World War II as seen through the eyes of one of the legion.

Robert Silverberg's "Defenders of the Frontier" is another sad tale. This one of abandonment as we eavesdrop on the conflict between 11 remaining soldiers out of thousands still protecting a fort despite 20 years of no communication from their superiors.

David Ball's "Scrolls" is well-written and absolutely disgustingly depressing story of an engineer is forced to take lives by Moulay Ismail in order to save many others. Enslaved, tortured, and tormented until Ismail pushes too far.

George R. R. Martin's "Mystery Knight: A Tale of the Seven Kingdoms" is a tale of stumbling good luck by Ser Duncan the Tall and his squire, "Egg". On their way to Winterfell, Ser Duncan decides to try his luck at a tourney being held for the wedding of Lord Butterwell only to discover a plot to overthrow King Aerys.

The Cover and Title

The cover is fairly plain with a central gradient of yellows fading out to golden browns with a sword athwart the front. Nice job on the sword the way it fades in the center to allow the text to show through.

The title is extremely apt as every tale is of *Warriors*, whatever their sex.

Chris says

The book as a whole is a good, solid 4.5 star anthology. As with most collections, it has its hits and misses. Happily, more of the latter.

"Stories From the Spinner Rack" - introduction by GRRM. A nice look into the early reading habits of GRRM and his early influences. Reminds me of Dreamsongs I. I need to go back and read Dreamsongs II. 4 stars for the intro.

"The King of Norway" by Cecilia Holland. Nice Viking story that was pretty interesting. The characters seemed pretty good too, or would have with more development. Her style is dry though. If she'd liven that up, I'd be more interested in what happens. 2.75 stars.

"Forever Bound" by Joe Haldeman. Set in the *Forever War* universe, which I haven't read. But I loved this story, so I'm sure I'll rectify that eventually. His writing is excellent and his universe seems very interesting. 4.5 stars.

"The Triumph" by Robin Hobb. Another top notch story, by the dependable Hobb. It's different for her, as it's a historical piece about Romans in Carthage, but her writing is very good and the story has some cool twists. 4 stars.

"Clean Slate" by Lawrence Block. Another winner. This is the second Block story I've read from anthologies

this year, and as with the first one, I was very impressed. I love his twisted protagonist villains. An intriguing modern thriller, I'm not sure it really fits the theme of the anthology except in the literal sense. The main character thinks of herself as a "warrior" though that's more of a psychological tag than a real one. Still, a very good story and one of the better ones so far. 4.75 stars.

"And Ministers of Grace" by Tad Williams. Tad always delivers interesting short stories, and this is no exception. The main character here is a holy assassin in a future universe where there is a war between those of the Book and those that are not. A nice take on the future of religion and colonization. 3.5 stars.

"Soldierin" by Joe R. Lansdale. This is an engaging and often humorous look at the military service of a former slave recruited to join the Union Army in a post-Civil War area of West Texas. He is placed in an all-black regiment and this tells what happens when they come across some pissed off Indians. 3.75 stars.

"Dirae" by Peter S. Beagle. Weird is how I describe this. It does start to make sense as it gets going but it takes awhile. A very cool concept that's odd in execution and probably would have worked better in a novel. 3 stars.

"The Custom of the Army" by Diana Gabaldon. Novella length story that's one of the better ones so far. This is an adventure of Lord John Grey, from her Outlander universe. The story is very engaging as we see Lord John's experiences first in London, and then in Canada as he's assigned up there. He's called to look into the situation of an old friend's impending court-martial. I really enjoyed this one, but felt a bit let down by the end as everything seemed to wrap up too quickly and conveniently. This is another one that would have worked better as a longer novel. Still, 4.25 stars.

"Seven Years From Home" by Naomi Novik. I've never tried this author before, though I've heard about her stuff for a few years now. Well, this will probably keep me from trying her novels. This story pretty much sucked. Here we have a future colonization going on with a feud between two factions on a world that the "Confederacy" is looking to bring into its fold. The narrator character gets drawn into this conflict and this story serves as her account/confession of what transpired. The concept was intriguing but the execution was not. The narration was dry and uninspired. I kept fighting sleep and forced myself to finish this one. It was a struggle from the first page to the end. I'll give it 1.5 stars though. It really should have 1 star, but I'll be generous and give it another half because the concept was cool enough to consider that. 1.5 stars.

"The Eagle and the Rabbit" by Steven Saylor. Once again we visit ancient Carthage, though many years later than Hobb's story. This time, we see a slice of history through the eyes of a Carthaginian as he deals with the conquering Romans. It's a great mirror image of Hobb's story, showing that in war there is often brutality regardless to what side you're on. Some of the plot turns were predictable, but no less entertaining for that. It had very nice progression and a satisfying ending, and what more can you hope for from a short story? 4.5 stars.

"The Pit" by James Rollins. Wow. Here we get a gladiator story, but not one we'd expect to find in an anthology like this, or anywhere for that matter. There are twists and turns in this story as well, and they're not nearly as predictable. This is the best story in the bunch, so far. I could give more details, but that would spoil the reader's delight as they read a few lines and discover what it's *really* about. 5 stars.

"Out of the Dark" by David Weber. Here we have a near-future alien invasion, with some really unexpected twists. I like the concept and I love the scope that Weber approaches this from. I've seen that there is now a novel-length expansion of this story. I think that would work nicely, as this has huge potential for more in-depth global coverage. I'm undecided on reading it soon though, as the core of the story was pretty much

played out in this novella. Still, one for the TBR. 4.5 stars.

“The Girls From Avenger” by Carrie Vaughn. Carrie tells a story about the WASP pilots during World War II. WASP stands for Women Airforce Service Pilots. These women filled the flying jobs required by the army in the US while the men were overseas in combat operations. They weren’t highly regarded at all, and that’s a shame. Carrie shines some light on what they might have gone through in this story, and I’m glad she did. I always love Carrie’s smooth and reader-friendly writing style and this is no exception. 4.25 stars.

“Ancient Ways” by S.M. Stirling. This was my first experience in reading of Stirling’s Emberverse, though I’ve been eying it for awhile now. This story pushes *Dies the Fire*, the first novel of the Change, up on my TBR. This was an intriguing look at a future post-apocalyptic Earth, where technology has been stripped away and society is back to the basics. Stirling’s take on that theme seems very original in execution and world building, if this story is any indication. 4.25 stars.

“Ninieslando” by Howard Waldrop. Here’s a weird little story set during World War I, right at the front lines between the British and German forces. There is the ominous No-Man’s Land that separates the trenches where the two armies are entrenched, a kill-zone full of barbed wire and landmines. Of course, there’s something quite unexpected and strange down in there as well. Enjoyable, but too short to fully develop and a little on the implausible side. 2.5 stars.

“Recidivist” by Gardner Dozois. This is the first solo work I’ve read by Dozois. Wow! This one was too short. By that I mean, I wanted more. The story itself was a good length for what it had to tell, but this future post-weird-shit-happens world is amazing. I would love to read a novel about this, and Dozois’s prose is very smooth. Definitely wanting a novel expansion to this one. 4.75 stars.

“I Am Legion” by David Morrell. Here is a story of the French Foreign Legion during the early days of World War II. The premise is good, though the plot is quite predictable. There is a lot of buildup to a climax that you can see coming from a mile away. The execution was ok, but not the most exciting of this collection by any means. 2.5 stars.

“Defenders of the Frontier” by Robert Silverberg. This is almost a “Wow!” story along the lines of the Dozois or Stirling ones, and would be if it wasn’t so dreary. The setting is slightly similar. What I like about this one is the premise. The military saying of “hurry up and wait” is pretty literal here, when the waiting just keeps going on. But with everything, eventually something does change. 4 stars.

“The Scroll” by David Ball. This was a deliciously sinister story, set in 15th century Morocco. What happens when an engineer of war machines gets captured by the Moors and brought to the Emperor’s slave work gangs? It gets interesting when he catches the Emperor’s attention. 4.5 stars.

“The Mystery Knight” by George R.R. Martin. A return to the land of the Seven Kingdoms, in the form of a Dunk & Egg story. The third novella in the Hedge Knight series, this was a great read. It was so good to get back to Westeros and see a tournament, along with the usual GRRM underhanded behind the scenes plotting. 5 stars.

Carolyn F. says

I only read 2 of the short stories. I requested it from the library for the Diana Gabaldon story, skimmed the others and ended up reading one other.

The Custom of the Army by Diana Gabaldon was very good. It should really be the prequel to Echo in the Bone because some of the same characters are in this story. Murder/mystery with a sad death and a short romantic scene between Lord Grey and an Indian named Manoke that was sweet. Enjoyed this story. I found with the other Warrior book it was a short story that was put into Echo in the Bone with Jamie and Claire and when she amputated his finger. So maybe this story will be incorporated into the next Lord John book?

Clean Slate by Lawrence Block was a very good psychological thriller that I didn't figure out until towards the end. I've never read anything by this author and really liked this story.

Eric says

The stories I read from this collection are:

'The Triumph', by Robin Hobb:

Reading this reminded me why I love Robin Hobb. What a great story from a great story-teller.

'Clean Slate', by Lawrence Block

Lawrence Block writes serial killers so well, it makes me seriously wonder about his personal life.

'The Mystery Knight', by George R.R. Martin

This is the first thing I've read by George R.R. Martin, and I really enjoyed it. I only wish I started with the first short story featuring the characters Dunk and Egg, 'The Hedge Knight.' I am definitely going to get the two Legends anthologies to read the first two Dunk and Egg short stories, and I'll probably get the graphic novels they were turned into, also.

Clay Kallam says

George R. R. Martin and Gardner Dozois have put together a massive tome straight out of "Gladiator" and "Star Wars": It's called "Warriors" (Tor, \$27.99, 736 pages), and it's a collection of short stories and novellas with warriors as the central theme – but the real stars are the writers, who are a scifi/fantasy/genre fiction A list.

It starts with Martin himself (the best piece in the book, not surprisingly, is his "The Mystery Knight," set in the Song of Ice and Fire world), but from Cecelia Holland (a magical realist historical fiction writer of the highest order – start with her early stuff and just keep reading) to Robin Hobb to S.M. Stirling to Diana Gabaldon to Steven Saylor to Robert Silverberg. Some are flat-out winners, but there are few misses in this long book, and even at worst, the writing is crisp and the angles are often unusual.

I was wary of the heft when I picked up "Warriors," but it was worth the effort. Of course it's heavy on the

blood and violence, but even so, it's the most successful collection of this sort I've read this century.

Terence says

I primarily read The Warriors because of the short story The Mystery Knight by George R.R. Martin. I must say the story did not disappoint. It was great to see Dunk and Egg again a little older and more competent. The story really showed a lot of aspects that make A Song of Ice and Fire so compelling such as political angling, strong characters, and thrilling action sequences. The story itself is challenging to review without spoilers, but I'll just say this is a can't miss story for anyone who has already read other Dunk and Egg tales.

Some other stories that caught my attention in this book for varied reasons were The King of Norway by Cecilia Holland, The Eagle and the Rabbit by Steven Saylor, and The Scroll by David Ball.

I personally have yet to completely enjoy any Anthology. The reason being with so many varied stories I find I generally only enjoy a few of them.

Dawn says

I hoped to like this a lot more than I did. I liked a few of the stories, but in general, they were kind of dry and boring. Most 2 stars, a couple 3 stars, maybe one or two edging on 4 stars.. I'm going with 3 stars for my rating, but it's really barely 2.5. Definitely not my favorite short story collection.

Robert says

In his Introduction, George R. R. Martin describes "Warriors" as a 'spinner rack', which is an apt description for an anthology that includes stories of every ilk from historical fiction, fantasy and sci-fi to a Western, mysteries, "some mainstream", and "a couple of pieces that I won't even begin to try and label." Besides diversity, "Warriors" is also rich in quality with every story in the anthology well-written and deserving of inclusion, even if I enjoyed certain pieces more than others. For me, George R. R. Martin's "The Mystery Knight" was easily the highlight of the anthology, but there were several other stories that I loved including contributions by Tad Williams, Robert Silverberg, David Weber, Joe Haldeman, James Rollins, David Ball, and Steven Saylor, while there were only a few pieces that I felt were forgettable. Negatively, for all of its variety, the anthology is nevertheless dominated by historical fiction pieces and stories on soldiers and war, and if there is ever a second "Warriors" anthology, I hope the editors will shoot for even greater diversity. Despite this one complaint, "Warriors" lived up to expectations delivering a diverse, entertaining and rewarding reading experience that I will not soon forget...

Jared Millet says

Don't skip the introduction. George Martin's "Tales from the Spinner Rack" sets the perfect mindset from which to approach this (a little over-large) collection of short stories and novellas by recalling the disordered

paperback racks of drug stores and supermarkets, where you never knew what you were going to get. In a sense, *Warriors* is a lot like Gaiman & Sarrantonio's *Stories* in its grab-bag approach to fiction, but the mandate in *Warriors*'s title steered its contributors heavily toward genre, and not so much literary.

The stories divide pretty evenly between fantasy, science fiction, and historical, though quite a few of them surprise by seeming to be one genre and then switching to another. I didn't even read these in order (I usually do) and it took me so long to piece my way through the collection that it's a little hard to think back and pick out my favorites. Cecelia Holland's Viking opener "The King of Norway" is pretty strong, as are Joe Lansdale's "Soldierin'", David Weber's "Out of the Dark," and Carrie Vaughn's "The Girls from Avenger."

the_cat says

- The King of Norway by Cecelia Holland - 4
- Forever Bound by Joe Haldeman -3
- The Triumph by Robin Hobb -3
- Clean Slate by Lawrence Block -3
- And Ministers of Grace by Tad Williams -3
- Soldierin' by Joe R. Lansdale 3
- Dirae by Peter S. Beagle - 4
- The Custom of the Army by Diana Gabaldon - 3
- Seven Years from Home by Naomi Novik - 3
- The Eagle and the Rabbit by Steven Saylor - 4
- The Pit by James Clemens - 2 (Nothing new here)
- Out of the Dark by David Weber - 2 (Are you kidding me?)
- The Girls from Avenger by Carrie Vaughn - 4 (Quite good about the Wasp pilots during WWII)
- Ancient Ways by S. M. Stirling - 3
- Nineslando by Howard Waldrop - 3
- Recidivist by Gardner Dozois - 3
- My Name is Legion by David Morrell - 3
- Defenders of the Frontier by Robert Silverberg - 3
- The Scroll by David Ball - 5 (Just wow. I plan to check out this author. Never heard of him before)
- The Mystery Knight by G R R Martin - 4

Average: 3.25

Mat Domaradzki says

To be fair, I only read the short story "The Mystery Knight" by George R.R. Martin. That being said, I really had a high bar set for this story because "The Hedge Knight" is my favorite short story ever, and "The Mystery Knight" follows up after that story (with "The Sworn Sword" in between). In fact, "The Hedge Knight" got me into reading the Song of Ice & Fire series by George R.R. Martin to begin with.

Unfortunately, "The Mystery Knight" fell flat. Maybe I'm getting older, but the story was predictable and nowhere as good as anything else George R.R. Martin has written. Sloppy I would say. Maybe George R.R. Martin has too many other things going on. He's writing these short stories, doing all sorts of weird other novels, now advising on a HBO TV adaptation to the Song of Ice & Fire series AND still writing his

bestselling novels from the Song of Ice and Fire. I hate to tell George R.R. Martin what to do with his life, but as a fan of his Song of Ice & Fire series that I've invested so much time in, I don't think it's too much to ask him to focus on finishing the series. He hasn't garnered a huge fan base because of his other works (I think writing novels that got onto bestselling lists did more than anything else in getting him fans), and while not making light of Robert Jordan's passing, it does point out what can go wrong. Robert Jordan wrote just as an amazing series, but halfway through the series, it lost focus and became a chore to read. Then Robert Jordan found out he has an illness that may end his life soon, he churns out one last amazing novel, and passes away, leaving the series without an end. Someone else has picked up where Robert Jordan left off to finish his series, but I believe it just won't be the same. I would REALLY hate to have the same thing happen to George R.R. Martin's Song of Ice & Fire series as well.

Amy says

I cannot praise this book more. I skipped a few stories here and there as I read through it but as I got near the end I realized that the ones I had read were so good, I couldn't skip any of them. So I went back and made sure to read them all. There's stuff from a lot of different genres here: SF, fantasy, historical, and some not so classifiable. Admittedly, some I liked more than others, but they are all good. My favorites: *Dirae* by Peter S. Beagle, *The Pit* by James Rollins, *Out of the Dark* by David Weber, *The Scroll* by David Ball, and *The Mystery Knight* by George R.R. Martin. The editors actually warn you that *Dirae* has a strange beginning, and it does: incoherent as the narrator coalesces into existence. But if you stick with it the payoff is wonderful. *The Pit*, told from the point of view of a fighting dog, literally reduced me to tears. *Out of the Dark* has a left-field twist ending (though not a real surprise since it was clear a certain character was fishy the moment they were introduced) but on a whole is a great story about a present-day alien invasion of Earth. *The Scroll* stuck with me due to the appalling horrors perpetrated by the story's villain. As a fan of Martin's Song of Ice and Fire, *The Mystery Knight* was the reason I bought this book in the first place. Another great installment in the Dunk and Egg stories.

September says

The King of Norway by Cecelia Holland. 3*

I must say that was the most gruesome story I've ever read, written by a woman. Not that that was a bad thing. Just a surprise. I was rather disappointed with the too simple wrap up. Who does that?!?!

Forever Bound by Joe Haldeman 3*

The Triumph by Robin Hobb 4*

Clean Slate by Lawrence Block 4*

And Ministers of Grace by Tad Williams 4*

An intriguing read, especially as I'm also figuring things out for myself.

Soldierin' by Joe R. Lansdale 3*

Dirae by Peter S. Beagle 4*

This story left me with so many questions. I wish this was a complete book with the idea fleshed out. Very intriguing.

The Custom of the Army by Diana Gabaldon 4*
I always enjoy Gabaldon's work.

Seven Years From Home by Naomi Novik 4*
What interesting culture & technology Melida had!! It would definitely take some getting used to to live there.

The Eagle and the Rabbit by Steven Saylor 4*

The Pit by James Rollins 4*
Oh my. This was gut wrenching to read as it was full of animal cruelty. I almost didn't finish.

Out of the Dark by David Weber 4.5*
The ending alone brings it up that extra half star. Awesome!!

The Girls from Avenger by Carrie Vaughn 3*
I can't help but ask, 'what was the point?' I don't know what else to say.

Ancient Ways by S. M. Stirling 4*

Ninieslando by Howard Waldrop 3*

Recidivist by Gardner Dozois 3*
Interesting premise. I wish it had been turned into a full fledged book.

My Name is Legion by David Morrell 4.5*
Excellent short story.

Defenders of the Frontier by Robert Silverberg 3*

The Scroll by David Ball 3*

The Mystery Knight: A Tale of the Seven Kingdoms by George R. R. Martin 4*
I love the stories of Westeros. Even a short story of the land is complex.

A great collection of short stories. I didn't think I was a fan of anthologies, but this book really changed my mind. It's been nearly a week & still several of those stories come to mind in the middle of the day. Come to think of it, some short stories I read in high school, I still recall. I think I've given short stories a bum rap. I really enjoyed this collection.
