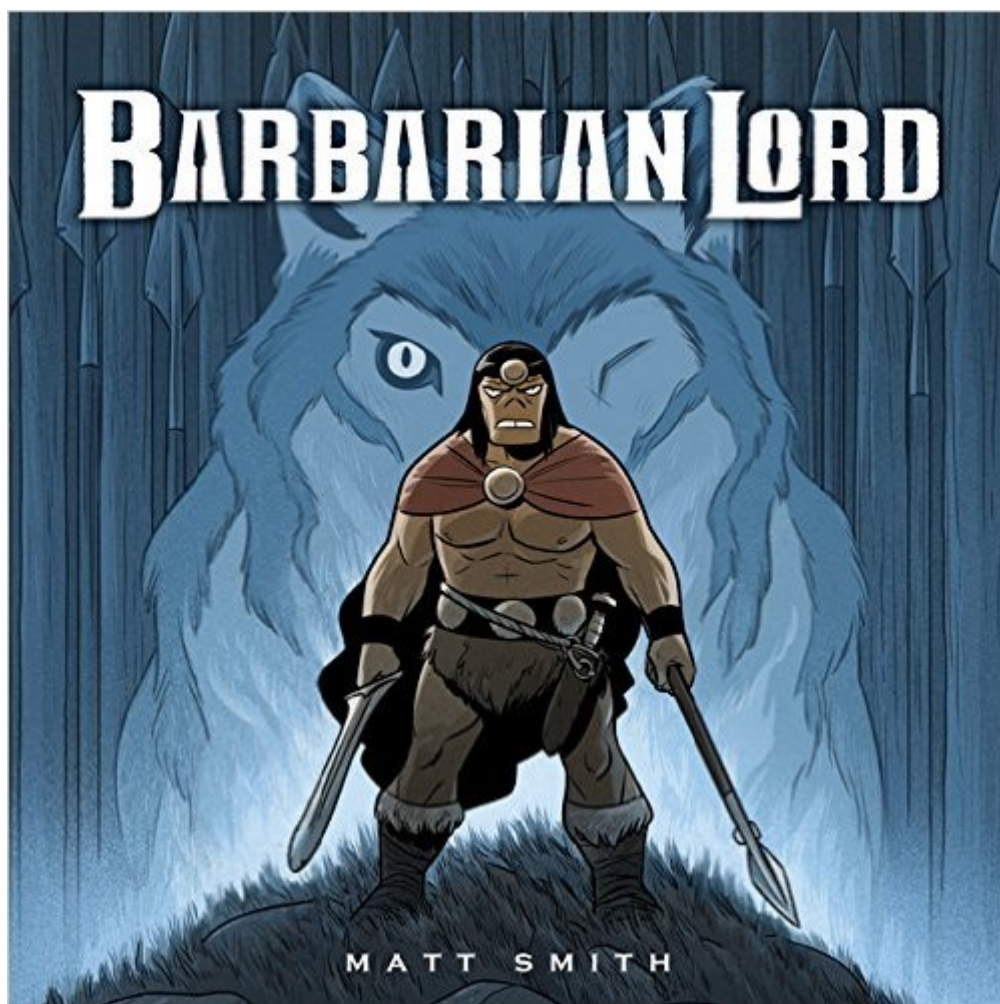


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Barbarian Lord



Synopsis

"A sword untried is a sword untested," says one raven to another as they set out to witness the fate of the finest farm in Garmrland and its owner, Barbarian Lord. When he is cheated out of his lands and banished, Barbarian Lord begins a quest for allies and for justice, encountering monsters, ghouls, gods, and mediocre poets along the way. Combining the rich traditions of the Vikings and Nordic lore with sword-and-sorcery-and slyly understated humor-this graphic novel introduces an original hero with classic flair, brought to life in Matt Smith's beautifully drawn, detailed, and action-filled black-and-white illustrations.

Book Information

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Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (43 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Barbarian Lord fell into a nice sweet spot for me. One, it was released on my birthday and I just had to get a present for myself. Two, I'm a sucker for Norse sagas. Three, I grew up on a steady diet of Tolkien, Thundarr, He-Man, and Conan; things the author was inspired by and that I seen little influences of inside this graphic novel. I spent a lot of time looking into each of the panels. The author, Matt Smith has a simple, but complex art style. The choice to go full black and white with grayscale was a good one. Even though a coat of drab color (does any other color exist in Garmland?) would help the reader visualize the story, I think the grayscale palette helps give it an almost dreamlike quality. Imagine yourself closing your eyes as someone recants the epic of the

Barbarian Lord and you'll 'see' what I mean. Unlike most Barbarian heroes, the lead in this story is a warrior-poet... More Egil's Saga than Conan (well, maybe a little more Conan). The dialogue is fantastically written and the story is paced very well. Again, I got the feeling of listening to an old warrior recounting the story of his past than of just experiencing it as it happened to him (another Howard influence). Although I just finished it, I can't wait to read it again.

This sword sage combines Nordic myths with Robert E Howard's Conan lite to make this graphic novel saga a semi bloodless sandal and sword epic. The vile villain of this period remind me of Skeltor from He-man and The Masters of the Universe. The hero is a He-Man and Conan composite. The way the art is drawn, it looks like a simpler version of Jack Kirby art. The story seems like a Roy Thomas or a Barry Smith idea gone bad. Matt Smith's Young adult graphic novel is an adventure tale. It is well written. He also knows his myth and exploits it fully. However this story should be one than one volume. In a way, I felt as if I had been dropped into the middle of the story..it needed a preface to lead the readership into the story. I want to see what else Mr. Smith would come up with. Bennet Ponerantz
AUDIOWORLD

I laughed out loud at the dry wit, while also marveling at the illustrations and creative melding of Icelandic tradition and Conan. The author's note about 'kennings' enhanced my appreciation of the text. The author clearly had a lot of fun not only drawing, but writing this. His choices for onomatopoeic words were hilarious and inventive . . . and really spot-on. That's exactly what getting hit with a barbarian club would sound like. I'm sure of it. This was a fast and hugely enjoyable read. I can't wait for the next one. We bought extra copies to give as gifts.

With all the barbarian lore out there writing a story about another one had me curious, especially in light of the cover art making it seem like it was aimed at readers of Jeff Smith's Bone. The writing style, at first, makes it a little hard to get into. It's brevity and terse tone didn't exactly flow for me. That didn't dissuade me from giving it a go. There's a dry wit to this that doesn't feel intentional. That's how it's supposed to feel but it's too readily apparent to be an accident but it works very well. Barbarian Lord has a fascinating stoicism and taciturn demeanor that works because despite the action in this book and colorful characters who surround this unamused warrior it's like the world works with him and not for him. There's the wit of this thing. He may be the star but he's as much a catalyst for change others need as he is a player. He's the perfect example of the right man at the right time stumbling into luck he has no right or desire to call on. He's also tough as nails and

stubborn. I particularly like the birds through the whole tale. They seem to be the relayers of history and topical events to each other. Troll, witches, lethal ghosts and a sea serpent all play their part. Matt Smith has been in the graphic narrative business for a long time and this looks like he had fun doing it. This spare style is rich in design, it's different from his earlier work in comics, but still clearly showcases his skill at storytelling and his love for drawing. The story relies on a lot of things I've seen before but tweaked and arranged in a way that feels almost new and very satisfying. This is a fun summer read when you've got an hour or less to kill. A reread would be fun too because there are small things happening that can be missed. I hope there's more to come.

Throw together the magical, mystical lands from Dungeons & Dragons, the adventures of Conan, comedic styling of Hellboy, add a dash of loose Nordic mythology, and you have Barbarian Lord. After being outlawed from his homeland for his crude and oftentimes violent ways, by his fellow Garmrlanders, and the silver-tongued Skullmaster from Skullheim (who has his eye on Barbarian Lord's farmland), the Barbarian Lord sets out on a quest for revenge to regain his farm, and home from the conniving plots of the Skullmaster. These adventures lead him across the ocean to the land of a king, and into fierce battles with trolls, ghosts, and sea serpents. Matt Smith is a top notch cartoonist whose designs simultaneously carry both the levity and grim surroundings of the Barbarian Lord's world. Smith's page flow is easy to follow and his plot keeps a good continuous pace throughout. All the art is black and white with grey scale shading which while well done, seems like an odd choice with a target audience of preteens. It shouldn't stop an older crowd from recognizing the work, but may stop a younger reader from initially gravitating to this book. Barbarian Lord is filled to the brim with sword fighting barbarian action, monsters, and even some poetry that are sure to leave your sword and sorcery entertainment needs (in a summer overflowing with science fiction work) quite fulfilled.

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