

Legacy of the Archbishop: Volume 3 of The Myrridian Cycle

Debra Killeen

Helm Publishing (2009)

ISBN 9780982060513

Reviewed by Ron Standerfer for Reader Views (12/08)

It is a case of power run amok, pure and simple; and unless Aldric, a consummate purveyor of black magic is stopped, life in the Kingdom of Myrridia will never be the same, and thousands of innocent lives will be lost. This is the basic premise of Debra Killeen's latest book, a gripping and well written work of fiction and fantasy entitled "Legacy of the Archbishop."

The setting for this tale is during the Eleventh Century, presumably in England, although the countries described all have mythical names. In that context, the dialogues and descriptions of everyday customs and habits ring true enough. But wait! A few of the characters are heard using slang that is decidedly 21st Century. Could it be that the author stumbled into a time warp and momentarily lost her bearings? Or, are there some time travelers enmeshed in the plot? As it turns out, it is the latter, much to my relief.

The book drew me into the story immediately, although I confess that it took me a while to sort out all the characters. There are a lot of them, after all. But is that a bad thing? Not really. I've had that problem for years reading books written by the likes of Tolstoy and Chekhov. Meanwhile, the story took me for a colorful ride amongst all the things that make for a good yarn, namely: lies, betrayals, deceit, murder, violence, love, romance, and even a little bit of sex. If I missed anything on that list, it was probably there too!

As the tale unfolds and Aldric has his way wreaking murder and mayhem wherever he goes, it becomes evident that he must stopped - But when, how, and by whom? Aldric's powers are enormous, and appear to come from the Devil himself. Some have the courage to confront him, but not the magical powers; while others have the power but perhaps not the courage. In the end, it falls on Bishop Edward Fitzroy, the Primate of Myrridia and an old seminary rival of Aldric's, to face him in a confrontation where the magical powers of each will be tested in a final battle between the forces of good and evil, a contest that is arduous, surreal, and richly described by the author. So who wins this epic battle? The good guy? Don't be so sure. You need to read the book to find out.

Book reviewers use the term "a good read" a lot; but what does that term really mean? To me, a good read is any book that pushes me firmly into my easy chair and refuses to let me get up, even when it is bedtime. "Legacy of the Archbishop," by Debra Killeen is the third of a series that will run for a total of five books and that is a very good thing for her readers. It is a good read by my standards and I suspect it will be a good read by your standards as well.