

(2008)

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***Trance Warriors: The Siege of Scarn***

Robert C. Auty

Apex Publishing Ltd (2006)

ISBN 9781904444596

Reviewed by Olivera Baumgartner-Jackson for Reader Views (3/08)

Robert C. Auty's "Trance Warriors: The Siege of Scarn" is the first in the hopefully very lengthy series of Trance Warriors books. While I am usually not a fan of warfare and bloodbath books, I have to admit I've enjoyed every page of this book and I honestly hope to see the sequel(s) as soon as possible. Although it is filled with blood and gore in copious amounts, this never distracted from the storyline.

Connor, an outlaw, sets out to kill the King, believing the King has been responsible for killing the entire Connor's family. Due to some strange twists of fate Connor soon realizes that the King is not the real enemy. Connor discovers many hidden truths about himself and his family as well as his role in the upcoming key battle between good and evil. Aided by many friends, both new and old, Connor assumes his rightful positions and leads the combined forces of good in the decisive battle against evil in the Siege of Scarn.

The losses on both sides are tremendous and it is quite clear that the war is not over yet. Who will come out of this victorious? And at what cost?

Robert C. Auty's writing style is extremely engaging and fluid. His descriptions are vibrant and colorful. The situations he puts his characters into, although placed in a fantasy world, have enough parallels in the "real" world to make this an appealing read. The conflicts and struggles encountered by Connor, Janice, Stort, Cheryl and all of their friends will draw the reader in extremely fast and the author's insights into those characters will continue to hold the reader's interest until the very last page. Believable, yet never predictable nor boring, this is a powerful book.

The whimsical fantasy world of "Trance Warriors: The Siege of Scarn" is inhabited by many familiar figures, yet most of them are presented in a new light or with some unusual twists. The elves, the dwarves, the braves and the gods fighting a fascinating array of evil creatures are all compelling and strangely believable. The heroes' characters are well developed and convincing. Filled with fresh ideas, such as the time-warping Trance Warriors and the Sundering of the Elves, this flight of the imagination will remind you of the Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" and it will be a certain hit with anybody who enjoys well written, intelligent fantasy.