



The Eternal Champion

Michael Moorcock

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The Eternal Champion Details

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From Reader Review The Eternal Champion for online ebook

Carolyn says

I found it a little jarring at first getting used to the way the sentences were formed, but got really into the story and character after a bit. Loved the philosophical tones of the human condition presented.

Richard says

just didn't work for me

Bill says

This story stands out from the fantasy of Moorcock (of whom I'm fond generally) because it is a potent and memorable example of ultimate character development: the story of a true shift of loyalty and a rediscovery of one's own fundamental values. If all mythology and modern fantasy has, in some sense, the goal of showing the ideal of personal transformation, I can think of very few books besides another favorite (Hesse's *Magister Ludi/The Glass Bead Game*) that do it as well.

Which is not to say it's an uplifting book, as it's clearly a bitter (not to say unsympathetic or singleminded) look at race relations, nationalism, and nuclear armageddon.

Pavlo Tverdokhlib says

"The Eternal Champion" is a classic. The trilogy that deals with John Daker who becomes Erekoz? and then goes on to become another hero at another world, all the while namedropping the myriads of other incarnations is an old-fashioned "hero goes to another world fantasy" with a twist or three.

Unlike "Von Bek", I'm not particularly interested in breaking down the stories in this one, as it reads like a single trilogy, with a recurring main character. As such, I will review the whole trilogy as one work. Keep in mind I've previously read the first two parts, and had a very vague recollection of how the first story ended and how the second began. The third was completely new to me though.

trying to avoid spoilers, in "Eternal Champion" Moorcock lets his imagination run wild. Erekoz? travels ALOT and the places he goes are VERY different. The places, and the cultures that arise in them are probably one of the highlights of the book.

In terms of the "bigger picture": "The Eternal Champion" does a great job setting up the Multiverse. It builds on concepts mentioned in "Von Bek" (which become significant in the third story), and does it well--the first story introduces the concept of Eternal champion, the second is largely about the Champion's relationship to his Sword, and the third, where Erekoz? is sent to a mini-system of the worlds the Wheel, containing 7 interconnected realms brings out more about the cosmology--The Law v Chaos, the role of Balance, as well as introducing what I understand may be some characters common on the Champion's adventures in various incarnations (think Hoid in the Cosmere... although I could be wrong, but that's the impression I'm getting

right now).

The Book is well-paced. it deals with interesting themes, and Erekoz? constantly struggles against the "Good v Evil" definitions he is expected to follow. The fact that the Balance will sometimes require the Champion to fight for Chaos to prevent Law winning was, I felt, a clever concept, and I look forward to seeing it built upon.

Characters were mostly interesting, albeit many were fairly archetypical. The story didn't have too many unpredictable twists, but it was really all about the journey and showing the reader the worlds Moorcock creates, so I didn't mind too much.

Overall, a solid book. I felt the conclusion was fitting. Curious to see if there will be many references to events from this boo in further ones. I did notice 2 important cross-references to other books to come. I'm guessing that finding these is half the fun of reading the series

John Devlin says

A nice tie-in to the Elric and Corum stories.

Amy Wolf says

I think I read most of the Moorcock Eternal Champion/Elric books at some point. Really like Moorcock: he's one of the more inventive sf/fantasy writers around, and he can WRITE, as opposed to merely having cool ideas.

Kurt Rocourt says

While it's not my favorite story of the Eternal Champion it does remind me of the journey you go through when reading a story. Some parts are good and you enjoy them. Some parts drag out and really suck. That's this book for me. The stories are good but sometimes you fight through some chapters. I would recommend this book to anyone. It has high adventure and danger. It has love found and love lost. All the tropes you'd expect in a fantasy novel. I look forward to the next novel in the series but I'm in no rush. I'll enjoy something else for now just like the writer intended.

Saul the Heir of Isauldur says

The Eternal Champion: 3 or 3.5 stars. It's pretty predictable and a little rushed sometimes, but it's fun and has some epic sequences. It doesn't quite reach the heights of Elric or even Corum.

Phoenix in Obsidian: 3 stars but barely. It's dark and has a lot more atmosphere than the previous novel, but it's a little disjointed and all over the place. The revelations about the Eternal Champion and the Multiverse are certainly helpful for later, if one plans to continue reading Moorcock's multiverse series, but overall it's dark, depressing and falls a little flat.

The Dragon in the Sword: 3 maybe 3.5 stars. More cohesive than its predecessor, but not quite as straightforward as the first novel in the trilogy. It's fun most of the time, and it offers a lot of cool looks at the core of the Balance and the struggle between Law and Chaos. Sometimes it drags, but the pacing is better than that of the previous two. I found von Bek unnecessary in this, and I felt like Moorcock just wanted to excuse his presence near the end where von Bek does something "important." Still, I enjoyed it.

Overall, if I were to rate this omnibus as a single novel, I'd probably go as high as 3.5 stars, but wouldn't round up. It's fun, sets up the multiverse, but I'd recommend starting reading Moorcock's series elsewhere. Maybe the first three Elric books, or the first Corum trilogy.

Philip says

The 3 stars are only for the eponymous novel, "The Eternal Champion". While paving the way for the entire Eternal Champion series and concepts, it is one rather disturbing book. It will be changed when the entire omnibus is over.

"Phoenix in Obsidian" got 4/5 stars (Read from August 07 to 18, 2014). "The Dragon in the Sword" remains to be evaluated, as of August 18.

And finally, "The Dragon in the Sword" is a solid 4,5/5 stars, so overall the omnibus goes to 4/5. The most important here, apart from the development of the entire Eternal Champion idea, is the obvious evolution in Michael Moorcock's writing, and how he gradually tones down the whole angst and nihilism, filling his early works, while improving his plot and character creating abilities - John Daker in "The Eternal Champion" and John Daker in "The Dragon in the Sword" are very different personalities. And, the ending does not contradict the one of "The Quest for Tanelorn".

LordOfDorkness says

I've owned this for 14 + years, yet never got around to reading The Dragon in The Sword. I will fix this one day...

R.M.F Brown says

This is where it all begun.

When one takes an objective look at Moorcock's work, one cannot help but be impressed by the verve and energy of his writing, the breadth of ideas, and the sheer imaginative power that goes into them.

True, it doesn't always work, but when he's good, there are none better.

To review the eternal champion in this day and age of fantasy being sanitised, homogenised, and commercialised, it's difficult to relate to how ground-breaking a lot of Moorcock's books are. What may seem standard fantasy fare in this day and age, was ground-breaking stuff in the 1960s/1970s.

The first volume of the Eternal Champion series is no different. Like a tragedy from Norse mythology, John

Daker finds himself dragged through time to become a doomed champion - cursed by a black sword, cursed to lose his one true love, and cursed to destroy humanity.

Heady stuff, and not something Tolkien could ever aspire too, even though both he and Moorcock drunk from the same well of Norse myth.

Pulpy, fast paced, packed with ideas, and a damn good boot to read. Moorcock's place in fantasy literature's history is assured.
