



# Frostflower And Thorn

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## **Frostflower And Thorn** Phyllis Ann Karr

The hot-tempered, impulsive swordswoman Thorn has gotten pregnant. The gentle, celibate sorceress Frostflower wants a child, and can bring a baby from conception to birth in an afternoon. Though the pacifistic sorcerers are feared and hated outside their mysterious mountain retreats, Frostflower persuades the suspicious warrior to let her magick the baby to term. But when the sorceress's actions arouse the wrath of the ruling priests, Frostflower and Thorn find themselves outlaws under a death sentence.

## **Frostflower And Thorn Details**

Date : Published November 1st 1980 by Berkley (first published 1980)

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Author : Phyllis Ann Karr

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Genre : Fantasy, Fiction, Feminism, High Fantasy, Science Fiction Fantasy, Heroic Fantasy, Sword and Sorcery

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## From Reader Review Frostflower And Thorn for online ebook

### Heather says

This ISBN does not match the cover, publisher, or any other details listed here. The book I have with this ISBN has a yellow cover with a misty picture of some woods in the center, is published by Wildside Press, and is trade sized and 275 pages.

That said, the worst thing about the book so far, and the reason I wanted to be specific about the edition, is the publishing. It looks like someone photocopied a paperback onto trade sized paper. Often you will find distorted text consistent with photocopying. If the book hadn't come from Amazon I'd wonder at it's origins/legality.

The tale is a good one. There are some upsetting scenes of rape and torture, but I am not familiar enough with this genre to know how common that is. I borrowed the book from my husband. The book is quite good. I normally read romance and I found plenty to satisfy me here though it was far from the focus. If you can find a decent copy and not the painful to read version by Wildside Press that I stumbled on I would highly recommend it.

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### Alexandra says

1st in series.

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### Kaila says

I took too long to read this. It was my "carry it around with me everywhere and only read a page when I'm waiting in line" book for like 6 months. It has a very disturbing rape scene. The friendship between Frostflower and Thorn was nice, but the rape scene kind of overruled everything.

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### Olga Godim says

Nothing spectacular. An average sword and sorcery featuring two female protagonists.

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### Brenda Clough says

A great fantasy novel, not one of your usual thud and blunder swordfests. Feminist in tone!

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### Althea Ann says

I know I've come across short stories by Phyllis Ann Karr before, but this was the first novel I'd read by her.

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An early entry into the sword-and-sorceress genre, it's a tale about two very different women: Thorn, a foul-mouthed, sex-loving, polytheistic warrior - and Frostflower, a virginal, vegetarian, monotheistic sorceress. With the topics of abortion and religion featuring significantly in the plot, I kept worrying that the story would veer into moralizing - but it gracefully steered clear, maintaining a respect for both women and their different points of view, while telling a fun and entertaining story.

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### **Chris says**

You should be glad there isn't a book cover image on hand, is all I'm saying. It's better than the cover (some interesting feminist stuff, good world-building of a place I NEVER EVER want to visit), but it had serious pacing problems.

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### **Katherine says**

I think this may be out of print; I found it used and yellowing. Nevertheless it's a fine example of the swordswoman/sorceress genre encouraged by Marion Zimmer Bradley, back in the day. The story provides a glimpse of a pretty neat world in which the sorcerers apparently occupy a sort of self-imposed lower class, and the warriors are rough, tough women. The ladies are not to be messed with, but they still take a definite second place to the priests and the lords. Probably pretty groundbreaking when it was first written. As for the story, it gets three stars due to clumsy characterization and a too-predictable deus ex machina near the end. Still, an enjoyable and riveting adventure tale.

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### **Aelin says**

Like the sequel (which I for some reason reviewed first, probably because I just finished it), I read this originally as a teen, and I was pretty surprised that it held up as well as I remembered it. It's definitely 80s sword and sorcery a la Marion Zimmer Bradley's *Sword & Sorceress* anthologies, but for me, that's a major selling point. I was SO HAPPY to find that the duology has been reprinted in ebook format. (And I want more, please!)

Thorn is a foul-mouthed warrior woman who wants desperately to be rid of an accidental pregnancy. This is actually something I didn't quite pick up on when I read it initially; she starts out looking for an abortionist. She then meets Frostflower, a sorceri who wants a child -- except the sorceri can only adopt because their powers are tied to their virginity. (Although this is something addressed and questioned later in the book.) While she's not actively looking for a child (she is out in the world to learn more to enhance her powers), she runs into Thorn, which is just perfect. She magically speeds up the pregnancy so that she can birth and have her child immediately (and so poor Thorn doesn't have to go through months of pregnancy herself, which would affect her ability to work as a warrior).

(Also, can I just say that I LOVE reading a book in which abortion is treated not as something shameful but as something practical for Thorn. She doesn't want a child, and pregnancy would affect her ability to support herself. Even before Frostflower enters the picture, Thorn treats it like it's no big deal, and I love that. It's so very rare to read a portrayal of abortion like this.)

The worldbuilding is exquisite and deeply interesting. I wish there were more about this world. But even

more than the worldbuilding is the characters. Thorn is acerbic, blunt, and sometimes not totally likable -- but I couldn't help but love her. Frostflower is much more mild-mannered, thoughtful, introverted, curious, and questioning. You would think that they would be like fire and ice, but they actually strike a deep bond, which is, I would say, the focus of the story.

I won't go into more detail because that would be spoilers (all that I have mentioned happens in the first chapter or so, so I don't feel it's too much a spoiler), but suffice it to say, I loved the storyline. There's adventure, and some very deep and emotionally intense stuff that happens. Karr isn't afraid to go places other people wouldn't.

I rate it 4 stars because there are some pacing issues, but I think this was Karr's first novel, so that's not too surprising. (And a lot of sword and sorcery books, I find, have similar pacing issues.) It's a very feminist book, very focused on the women, their relationships with each other, and Frostflower's recovery from an extremely traumatic event is well-handled. I was worried that wouldn't stand up to a re-read as an adult, but I loved it, and very much wish there were more.

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### **Robert says**

The name fooled me: "Frostflower and Thorn" sounded too much like Snugglepote and Cuddlepie to be a truly adult book, but it turned out to be a story I would not pass on casually to a ten year old at all. The fatuity of religious rites and dietary taboos, the cruelty that can be imposed by theocracies are only part of the picture. What I found interesting was that, although this is largely a male-dominated world, almost all the characters and all the violent characters are female - a different way of looking at things. I'm not sure what it was I liked in this tale of doom in a rather gloomy world, but I found it hard to put down.

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### **Amethyst says**

Couldn't end it. Rape and too much violence did not agree with me.

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### **Cissa says**

The best part of this book is the world. Karr really thought it out- the social classes, the magical systems, the theologies, and the economics. It's basically a spin on feudal, but with the towns more independent. The prejudice against the sorcerers is rampant, partly because their theology differs from most (most are polytheists; the sorcerers are monotheists), and because of their power. The sorcerers are feared, even though they are utterly non-violent.

The sex/gender egalitarianism is also a surprise. ALL the soldiers are women; men are not seen as suited to that lifestyle... and soldiers have a social status higher than that of merchants, etc.

So- the world is fascinating, and well-worth visiting.

The characters are distinctly drawn, sometimes in an exaggerated way, especially with the swordswomen. The plot hinges on choices various well-described characters make.

I'm giving it a 4, though, because some of the violence, and the carefully described tortures, were shocking. OK, maybe that's a good thing... but it's not necessarily what I want to read unless I'm pre-warned.

Also, some of the action got repetitive. Escape from the pursuers kept going around in circles, and it felt stuck. Eventually things resolved... but only after a LOT of static circling. Karr tried to raise the stakes each time, and did- but it still felt static to me.

It's worth reading for the world, if you are prepared for the ugliness. (The ugliness was not exactly gratuitous, but I'm not convinced so much of it was necessary, either.)

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### **Elizabeth Wallace says**

I first read a short story about the characters Frostflower and Thorn ("The Garnet and the Glory") almost 20 years ago, and loved it. I enjoyed the full book about them, but I think Phyllis Ann Karr does much better in the short story format. Being forced to move the story along quickly does wonders for the pacing, because in the book whole pages would go by while the character considered every possible step and every possible outcome...you have to admire how THOROUGH Karr is in coming up with every possible facet of a plan, but you also find yourself going "Yes yes come ON let's GO.."

If I'd read the book first I'm not sure I would've liked the characters as much. Thorn is much more blunt in the longer format, and Frostflower WAY more naive. (Which is a piece of work, considering how naive she was in the short story.) But both characters are likable, and it was fun, after all these years, to see how they met. Haven't figured if I'll read the next book, but I'm not sorry I read this one.

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### **Scheherazade says**

the truth is I read this book in my teens and when it was reprinted read it again recently. it still held for me the magic and adventure it did the first time. I really enjoy the strength and resolve the main characters exhibit and the action is lively. I recommend this book to chick lit readers whom have been waiting for an adventure story for girls. Enjoy!

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### **Bridget says**

I first read the sequel to this years and years ago, and it was a good quick read with really great worldbuilding. I saw this in a used bookshop the other day, so I picked it up to read the beginning of the story. It has the same lovely worldbuilding, but it was a good deal more violent than Frostflower and Windborn. And I just don't think I was really in the mood for this story right now.

Also, I completely love the dated cover featuring the warrior and sorceress. It's kind of the best part of the book.

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