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Born in the fires of battle, Conan of Cimmeria lost his father and village when they were slaughtered by the cruel warlord Khalar Zym. Wandering the world alone, Conan was forged into a peerless warrior by hardship and bloodshed.

Years later, he crosses paths with Zym and his armies. But before Conan can exact vengeance, he must contend with the warlord's daughter-the seductive witch Marique-and a host of monstrous creatures. Only then will Conan's quest bring him face to face with Zym in an epic battle to avenge his people and save the world.

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Conan the Barbarian Details

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Author : Michael A. Stackpole

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From Reader Review Conan the Barbarian for online ebook

Greg says

I thought this a pretty good book that did homage to Robert E Howard's Conan. If you've read the original Conan books, you'll enjoy this one. I really enjoyed how the author weaved in references that you'd only know if you'd read the original books.

I found this a fast read and hard to put down.

One thing that struck me though, toward the end, was that it reminded me a video game. Mini boss fights leading up to the main boss fight. But then again, that was also how the original tales were too, so... lol

It was also pretty obvious that this was a novelization of a movie. All the standard plot devices where there and the plot was pretty linear and didn't have many/any surprises. But again, neither did the original Conan story plots, so... :)

In short, I thought this a pretty good read, a great sword and scorcey tale, a, well, a Conan story!

Amy Wolf says

OK, we all have our pulp vices and Robert E. Howard is mine. I love the imaginary, fantastic worlds he creates based on ancient history. The Godfather of S&S, Howard knows how to engross the reader & keep the action coming! He actually used to write standing up, screaming out his stories. I will defend him against Edgar Rice Burroughs any day. Conan can whip Tarzan's butt!

Steffanie says

I bought this book because 1. I missed it in theaters and am in love with Jason Momoa (the guy who played Conan) and 2. It was less than \$2.00 because I found it on one of Border's last days of being in business. It was a \$2.00 well spent. :)

It is pretty clear that the movie came first, and the book was written based on the movie. So, I never expected it to be some literary work of genius. The writing is actually better than I expected, but with books like this, that are based on movies/TV, there are blaring problems with the editing that I can partially attribute simply to the haste in publishing. Books that want to ride on the coattails of movies, and vice versa...they definitely have their problems.

As far as the actual story goes, it is not un-interesting. The whole book is kind of a cliché. I feel that Stackpole spent far too much time on Conan's upbringing, and not enough on the adult Conan. Perhaps that's how the movie was too.

The main gal fell in love with Conan much too quickly. That always annoys me. And the dynamic between the two evil characters was creepy in not a good way. The malicious duo is a warrior father and a mystical

daughter. Their relationship crosses into Electra Complex territory. It was difficult to discern who Stackpole wanted me to hate more-the dad or the daughter. And for their weird relationship to be explored so much, I would have hoped to have something at the end that reflected the relationship. I would have hoped for something like one of them clearly betraying the other, rather than Conan just coming in a saving the day. We get a little bit. But never quite enough.

Not a bad book. Probably a bad movie, but Jason Momoa is still the sexiest thing on the planet. No more TV-->book reading for a while. Need some actual literary genius, so moving on to Murakami. <3 <3

Jono Wong says

Conan the Barbarian is about a child who grows up to become a man, during times of war. His villiage is destroyed when he was young, his family killed, and his happiness taken from him. When he grows up, he seeks nothing but revenge! I really liked ts book, because of the great plot and the language used throughout the book. I disliked the time skips, that left many questions and stories unexplained and unanswered. Reminds me of Eragon, in the way the book describes sword fight. I reccommend thus book to everyone of ages 12+, who love action type novels!

Steve says

A good take on the Conan Saga. The author did a good job of character development while keeping the pace of the book up. The first 260 pages are really good, but the final 30 pages are a let down. One wonders if the final 30 pages were made to match the movie and not flow from the author's own creativity. Something seemed amis in the last scenes when compared with those throughout the rest of the book. I know the Conan book would be violent, but the author embraced the violence without being too graphic.

Christine says

After the first viewing of the movie I really wanted to read the book. I wasn` t able to find it in hard copy but found it in ebook format, well after I started reading it there was no way I could put it down. Its based on the movie, however there are a lot of differences. I loved this book as much as I do the movie and I am so glad I bought it. I finished it in two days, fasted I` ve ever read anything. I recommend it for anyone, but be warned it is dark in some parts

Kevin says

Fairly entertaining read over a few flights. I'm not sure how much Conan nostalgia influenced my rating thought. Worth the short read.

Darrell Reimer says

I seemed to have more fun watching this movie than most of its reviewers did. Mind you, much of the fun involved speculating which of the jarring shifts in scene and tone were in the script, and which were made on the fly.

Conan fans and the morbidly curious are encouraged to read **Michael A. Stackpole's** novelization, that increasingly rare product which entertains and enlightens, as it aligns closer to the screenwriters' original vision. While it, too, has flatfooted moments (the transition into the third act is a howler, both on screen and in print) it yields much more satisfying character motivations than the final on-screen product did -- resulting in an emotionally charged finale.

Best of all, Stackpole proves himself a capable pulp stylist, embracing its enthusiasms without overindulging its purple excesses. He's got my money if he ever decides to write a follow-up to this adventure.

April says

(Originally posted @ CSI:Librarian.)

4.5 Stars - *Note:* This review contains mild spoilers for both the movie novelization and the film itself.

I can't remember the last time I read a book based on a movie and enjoyed it this much. Everything about Conan the Barbarian was done in a way that paid excellent tribute to earlier works and to Robert E. Howard's impressive albeit brief writing career. Stackpole breathed an amazing amount of life into Conan, pulling from and referencing the original Robert E. Howard stories in a really great way. I really liked the mentioning of the events in "The Tower of the Elephant" and that Stackpole made significant mention of Bêlit from "The Queen of the Black Coast." I also liked the various Lovecraft-inspired touches from the tentacled Mask of Acheron to the mentioning of Dagon during a summoning spell because Robert E. Howard was very impressed by "The Call of Cthulhu" and they did write letters to one another and yes I am a really big geek and I'll stop now.

Anyway, the little details in this movie novelization made me so incredibly happy and I think I was at exactly the right point in reading Conan stories to appreciate the best parts of the book. Those were the ones which focused on Conan growing up to become a Cimmerian warrior with the aid of his father and then his grandfather. The story of a boy destined for greatness while wielding a sword is not uncommon, but it is a very entertaining one. I really loved Corin and Connacht as mentors and role models. I especially liked the details about Conan's mother and the fact that Conan was born on a battlefield while she was fighting right alongside the rest of their people. So basically the early sections of the novel just felt particularly well-crafted and reading them was a delight.

My least favorite parts of the book were focused solely on the original characters created for the movie or moments that Conan wasn't really a part of, but then that's hardly too surprising. And I suspect some of my lack of interest in these other characters stemmed from my dismay in realizing that the movie won't be borrowing too heavily from actual pieces by Howard or those who wrote with or after him. Still, I thought the villains had sort of a cool if over-the-top method and rationale to their madness even if I did have one issue with the main female protagonist, Tamara. I didn't mind much that she was a special orphan with

special blood or a female warrior monk, but the fact that she also became a love interest caused me a decent amount of eye-rolling. It wasn't unexpected, of course, but it was irksome. I greatly preferred the brief moments Tamara and Conan spent together where they were more like potential allies than potential lovers.

Thankfully, Tamara's special specialness wasn't a primary focus in of itself. Instead it was overshadowed by Conan being completely unimpressed with anything magic-related as well as his desire to get things done or people killed. I also loved that Stackpole added in a lot of moments of Conan reflecting on Bêlit, his first love, who would have made for a really awesome character if only someone had thought to put her in the film. In addition, having read "The Queen of the Black Coast" recently, there was simply no way Tamara could measure up to Bêlit.* But I digress.

Ultimately, what appeals to me about the Conan stories is not the really the villains or the women he may or may not meet so much as it is the character himself and his reactions to the circumstances he stumbles upon. So what mattered to me above all else was that Conan was handled properly, and he really, really was. Stackpole didn't ignore or dismiss Conan the Warrior/Barbarian/Freebooter/Cimmerian as a joke or a stupid thug, but treated him in much the same manner that Howard did. I could not have been more pleased with his characterization or the way his world was presented from beginning to end.

In conclusion, Conan the Barbarian was really, really great and worth the read. Stackpole gave this novel a lot of substance, thought, and care than I could have anticipated or expected. That said, I have no idea if the movie will be able to articulate anything nearly as well as this particular author. I do hope some of the better lines in the novel and references to Howard's stories are from the movie itself... but I guess I'll have to wait until August to find out!

* Bêlit the pirate queen was simply a more intriguing if sanity-lacking character than Tamara. Both her song and her personality reminded me of H. Rider Haggard's She and thus endeared her to me forever. It helps that she had her own ship, her own crew, and took Conan as her consort rather than the other way around too.

J.R. Murdock says

I was not given my copy of the book. I was not asked to or paid to write this review.

I consider myself a Conan fan. I've read many of Robert E Howard's books. I read the Marvel comics. I even read a couple of Robert Jordan's Conan novels. And of course I've seen all the movies.

I'm a fan, not a fanatic. I know much about Conan lore, but I couldn't recite the Hyborian Knowledge as many could. I just enjoy a good read and Conan can provide that.

I'm also a fan of Mike Stackpole. I enjoy his works and his writing style. I have read several of his books and have more on my to read pile.

I saw that the Conan movie was about to come out and I knew that Stackpole was going to write the novelization. I grabbed it for my kindle as soon as it was available. I love technology. I didn't, however, start reading until after I had seen the movie. Too many times I've been disappointed by a movie after reading the book.

Sadly the new Conan movie was lacking. It was a shallow representation of Conan lore. It seemed like a

minor transition from big fight scene to big fight scene. There was little development of the character. At least with the Arnold movies we had a running dialog to fill in many holes.

I worried that the book would also be lacking, but knowing Michael, I dove into the book. At first I was confused. It didn't start where the movie started. I didn't mind though. I didn't need a long explanation of Conan being born on the battlefield. In great Stackpolean fashion, he brought Conan's birth into the novel through conversation. Something the movie lacked a lot of was conversation and Michael brought that into the novel.

He also brought us the Conan history that Howard always had in his stories. That background needed to fill in so many gaps left in the movie. Where the movie failed, the novel succeeded. I finished the book quickly, finding it difficult to put down. It was such an enjoyable read. I can only hope that Michael Stackpole is allowed to revisit this universe and continue on the Conan tradition. After reading this book, he's earned the right.

Mily Lou says

The book is actually very similar close to the movie...a few parts are a little different here and there that literally could have been in the movie, for that matter. The plot, theme, characters, locations are the same.

The book is pretty good. I like the action parts of the book. Other than that the book needed some more work. I know pieces of certain characters life but others I had no idea. I wish I knew more about there childhood to understand why they are doing what there doing in the book.

Overall, an enjoyable book if you like the barbarian hack-n-slash. If you're looking for in-depth character and plot development, you'll be disappointed.

I give this book three stars *** =).

Michael Haspil says

Better than the film by a lot. I would like Stackpole to get a crack at writing his own original Conan story. He was hampered by having to do a film adaptation.

Roark says

I actually never sought out to read this book. My wife had checked it out and I was desperate for something to read and I picked it up.

This book is based on the screenplay of a movie. I saw the movie (which was gosh awful terrible) so I was pleasantly surprised that I enjoyed the book. Michael Stackpole is a good writer and he turned a pig's ear of a movie into a silk purse.

I have not read any of the original Conan books but I am tempted to try them now. While this is by no means

one of my favorite books I think it did justice to the Conan legacy.

Jorge de la Vega says

I may be among those few weirdos who actually loved the Conan the Barbarian remake back in 2011. Momoa's Conan, unlike Arnie's, felt a whole lot closer to the classic character in terms of balance between strength and wit. Arnie's Conan is a brute, no other way around it, whereas Momoa's is cunning, calculating and savage. The movie might've had its shortcomings, but I certainly enjoyed seeing a Conan that was more than just brawn and blade. Likewise, this novelization goes a little in deeper than the movie, with some extra content that clears up some of the murkier aspects of the film, un-hams the characterization of the villains (Stephen Lang is awesome, but he does make for quite the campy villain whenever he shows up as one), and overall moves at a much steadier, smoother pace while remaining thoroughly entertaining. A good read (no pun intended) to start a new year: no pretense, no snobbery, just good old-fashioned mayhem.

Marko says

Stackpole makes a valiant attempt to fix the unfixable by adding meat and logic around the script written for the Conan the Barbarian (2011) movie. As a result there are passages and sections in this novel that are very nice to read. These include, for example, Conan's reminiscing about his lost love, Belit, who was never mentioned in the movie.

In many places, Stackpole manages to bring logic to bridge the obvious gaps in story that we witnessed in theatres (such as why the pirate ship was suddenly waiting for Conan and Tamara under the cliffs when they jumped down and how the evil people managed to find Tamara later on) and downplays or rewrites the ridiculousness of some scenes (sand men, using a catapult to launch a man at Khalar Zym's land ship etc.).

Unfortunately, the main story itself is still as un-Conan as the one in the movie and it could not be fixed without coming up with an entirely different story. I cannot bring myself to blame Stackpole for this, however, as he was forced to follow and adapt the script, rather than write a decent new Conan story.

It is a valiant effort, for sure, but not enough to make the story enjoyable. It would be interesting to see what Stackpole could do when he is not hindered by a bad script.
