



The Seascape Tattoo

Larry Niven , Steven Barnes

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The Seascape Tattoo the latest spellbinding adventure in Larry Niven's acclaimed collaborations with Steven Barnes!

Aros of Azteca and Neoloth-Pteor are the deadliest of enemies: Swordsman and Sorcerer, locked in mortal combat, who have tried to kill each other more times than either can count. But when the princess Neoloth loves is kidnapped, there is only one plan that offers any hope of rescue . . . and that requires passing off the barbarian Aros as a lost princeling and infiltrating the deadliest cabal of necromancers the world has ever seen. They cannot trust each other. They will betray or kill each other the first chance they get. But they're all each other has.

The Seascape Tattoo Details

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Author : Larry Niven , Steven Barnes

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From Reader Review The Seaside Tattoo for online ebook

James says

It's a page turner with some enjoyable characters, but the background felt very pedestrian with Azteca and Mayan named as cultures but nothing other than the names show up. There's even a barbarian that swears by Crom err... Chron(Conan's going to haunt you). Also the ending had a few to many *ex machina* bits for me to be happy with it. A nice recreation of a Robert E. Howard novel from the '30s.

Blind_guardian says

A fine tale set in Niven's "The Magic Goes Away" universe, where magic is scarce and magicians cling to their last drops of power. One such wizard, Neoloth, finds himself forced to ask an old enemy for aid in rescuing a princess from a foreign nation. But there are nastier things afoot in Shrike than simple kidnapping, as Neoloth and Arose quickly find out.

Wilson Goodson says

Another in Dr. Niven's series that started in THE MAGIC GOES AWAY about an alternative history where magic worked but the energy for magic is running out. For readers of the series this book fits in right after THE BURNING TOWER without any connecting events or characters. It involves the moral dilemmas of what a magic user will do to maintain power and immortality, and particularly deals with the price of vengeance.

Bob says

This is another in the "Magic goes away" universe. It's not quite as bleak- or as lyrical- as the original novel "The Magic Goes Away", but it gives the reader a sense of what was lost when Humans used up the Mana- and the lengths they'd go to to maintain the status quo.

Chuck Ledger says

Very solid sword and sorcery tale told by two master writers.

Massanutten Regional Library says

Jessica, Grottoes patron, July 2018, 5 stars:

I hadn't read anything in the Fantasy genre for some time. This was certainly a fun read! Worthy of a review.

Text Addict says

Okay, that went places I never expected a Howard/Leiber/Moore pastiche to go. Seriously, I nearly put it down quite close to the start.

Then I didn't put it down all day.

And I'm really tired. Good night!

Mike says

Similar to the fabled little girl with the curl, when this story was good, it was very, very good.

But sometimes it wasn't good, riddled with small breakdowns or overplayed tropes or missing links, that just made this an "ok" Niven and Barnes excursion. But if you liked the magic lands of The Burning City or The Magic Goes Away, than this is a nice realistic buddy-heist swords-vs.-sorcerers HEA adventure.

SRC 2018 'TUM' (Fall) Task 10.7 based on "tattoo" being often misspelled.

(Did not check for other possible tasks)

Craig says

The Seascape Tattoo is a fine return to Niven's series about a fantasy world where magic is a natural resource that's being depleted. As one of the characters observes, "This place is a playground for a questing mind." It also re-examines another long-time belief of Niven's, that time-travel is fantasy, this time told from a heroic-fantasy viewpoint. As always, the characters are secondary to the concepts and plot, but it's a very fun book filled with big ideas and a sense of wonder.

Ian Cockerill says

Look, I like Larry Niven, particularly his earlier work. I understand that isn't fashionable, but I enjoyed him enough in my youth to still seek out his books. I would admit that his later work just isn't quite as good, but this effort, set in the universe of "the Magic Goes Away" (magic is a natural resource being used up in the same way that we are now worrying about fossil fuels) is just excellent sword and sorcery.

Reminds me of Conan written by a good modern author, complete with the expected Barbarian v Wizard tropes, with a modern day twist in terms of plot, writing and character.

Well worth a read if S&S is a genre you enjoy.

Ariel Metz says

The ending made me smile :) It was hard for me to get into it but it was still a good book!

Rachel says

I haven't read a Niven book since high school. Seeing this at the library took me back! It's fun, fast-paced and eventful. Like the book equivalent of an action-fantasy flick. Sometimes I just want to be entertained, and sword-and-sorcery fits the bill perfectly. I was also kinda happy that this is not the start of a long, drawn out series, like so many titles are. One and done is good occasionally!

Myke Edwards says

I love sword and sorcery. I love pirates/nautical fare. So imagine my surprise and happiness when I saw this on a random spinner at B&N. After reading the description, I saw many S&S tropes involved (magic is dying, advanced race vs. simple race, quest to beat the bad guys, etc.), I had to have this. I liked it. It was good! Not much telling and very little poor writing (something I notice more and more these days...), so it was a fun read. Star number 5 would have come to it if the ending wasn't so rushed and nice and neat. It felt like several threads were left open that could easily have been closed with maybe 20-30 pages more of writing. I get that they will be taken care of, but it felt like a deadline was approaching so the quick, fix it ending happened. About 2/3rds of the way through, the book takes a crazy turn, but I didn't mind. It reminded me of classic sci-fi, paperback craziness that might seem weird and f'd up, but it worked in the story and didn't ruin it. All in all, if like sword and sorcery and/or retro sci-fi, this is a great read.

Colleen says

6 stars. Magic is dying. The novel explores the poison of Revenge. Aros of Azteca has finally found a legally sanctioned living as a tax collector but his decades old enemy, the sorcerer Neoloth-Pteor, has finally found him. Wenching, brawling, sword fights, feasting, stealing, necromancy, shape-shifting, long distance seeing, and caring. Niven and Barnes push all your buttons. Drowning in storms, pirate raids, pitching off cliffs, trapped in creepy underground caverns, discovery when the invisibility cloak wears off, treachery, stronger and more numerous villains, conflicted motives, flawed allies. It's the perfect fairytale to read when you're watching your beautiful world fall apart in the hands of evil power seekers. And it's actually a very deep story. At one point in the tale Aros learns from a flawed mentor how to become his sword and the sorcerer learns what actually matters more than power. And how to end a war.

Nick says

For the most part, I really enjoyed this revisiting of the world of The Magic Goes Away. I did feel that the

Aztec and other Native American stuff felt kind of pasted on, because it almost didn't matter. Anything in the story could just as easily have happened in another setting, but the world itself may not be exactly OUR world, so I mostly forgave the authors for that.

The book had an odd tone, a sort of battle of wits between each of the major characters, that at its heart was what made the book so enjoyable. Old rivals turned into forced allies to rescue the good guys from the bad guys, only...the boundaries of who is on which side seemed kind of fluid, which also added to the story.

While not the best story by either of the two authors, if you liked some of the other Niven and Barnes collaborations, and if you liked The Magic Goes Away, then this is worth picking up and reading. Once I got into the book, I could barely put it down, because the story's details were a sort of response to traditional sword and sorcery stories. The main characters, and the reader, are left with enough things to think about that it was a lot of fun.
