



On Wings of Magic

Andre Norton , Patricia Mathews , Sasha Miller

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Contains the stories "We the Women" and "Falcon Magic."

Struggling with the decimation of their witch guardians when an invasion by Pagar of Karsten threatens their home world, the people of Estcarp find their only hope for survival in a young scribe who challenges the evil Hounds of Alizon.

On Wings of Magic Details

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Leo Blanes says

Witch world worthwhile additions to the series

Love the witch world series. These are co-written with another author. The stories are well written and add depth to the time after the turning in and around Escarp. Really worth reading.

Derek says

The first novella, *We, the Women*, is just incredibly, incredibly, bad. I know Norton wasn't really involved in the *Witch World, The Turning* series, but I cannot imagine how she could permit her name to be attached to this.

We have a village of Falconer women, at the time of the Turning, caring for a group of exiles (presumably from Karsten, except that that appears to be geographically impossible) and finding themselves completely incapable of understanding the gender dynamics of a patriarchal society. Nevermind that the women of the Falconer race live apart from the men, filling all the roles — except as warriors — that men in the surrounding societies would take: Falconer women must, of necessity, understand that men are not just "he-women" because they know (if only from their worst excesses) Falconer men. It's simply not at all believable.

As well, apparently the Falconer women have had secret villages as long as the Falconers have lived on the Estcarp border, so that the Falconer men only ever see the women in Potemkin villages. Does a herder not know when 90% of his herd is missing? Everything we've been told of Falconers, in previous Witch World stories, suggests that however despicable some (possibly even most) Falconers may be, they're not stupid — they treat their women as chattel, even routinely referring to them as "mares", and it is inconceivable that they're only seeing a small number of the women.

Then a group of Estcarp Borderers finds the Potemkin village after the Turning, offering to help rebuild it. One of the Borderer troop wonders what has happened to destroy the village so thoroughly, and only belatedly realizes "Oh. The Turning." Duh? [He was, in fact, wrong, but in a cataclysm that could raise new mountain ranges, how did he expect buildings to survive?]

The one glimmer of light in the story is the clear depiction of the Goddess Jonkara as the protector of women — where the Falconer men believe she was the Dark One who almost destroyed their race. Unfortunately, at no time is this resolved. Even in the Afterword (which I think *was* written by Norton), we're given just one more tiny clue, and left hanging.

Awful, awful, offal!

The second story, *Falcon Magic*, is much better, but still suffers from a great many errors of continuity and

lack of attention (e.g., at one point somebody escaping back to Alizon, when they're actually escaping from Alizon, trying to reach Estcarp; in another case a child is riding in front of one adult - and a paragraph later in front of another, without any suggestion that they'd stopped and exchanged; in both stories, the author's would seem to have benefited from ready access to maps of Estcarp and/or Alizon).

Two stars for *Falcon Magic* for at least being readable, <1 star for *We, The Women*.

Gail Morris says

this tale is good background for some of the peoples that inhabit Witch World.

Valerie says

I'm still debating whether to file this under 'O' (for 'On'), or 'W' (for 'Wings'). This isn't technically part of the trilogy it's shoehorned into, because it's actually chronologically previous to *The Magestone*. Also, there seems to be some arbitrariness in the matter of where to place books in 'trilogies'.

This actually consists of two (mostly independent) stories, with bits of other stories interlarded. The 1st half is a story of how a village of Falconer women deal with refugees. The second half is the story of the kidnapping of five child trainee witches, and the rescue expedition.

Both include Falconers, male and female. I enjoyed the description of the archives of the women's villages of the Falconers. I didn't much care for the abusive attitudes of the refugees--and even the scholars at Lormt weren't very responsive to the fleeing archivist's complaints.

The trainee witch whose parents try to rescue her, first from the witches' council, and later from the Alizondern, appears in at least one later book. By this time, the witches had realized that witches couldn't be entirely nameless, so they began to be given individualized nicknames.

Historical query--how did they manage before?

Locational note--this is the story in which the Toads of Grimberdale are revealed to be an atypical offshoot of a more traditional scientific expedition--who probably came in through a gate.
