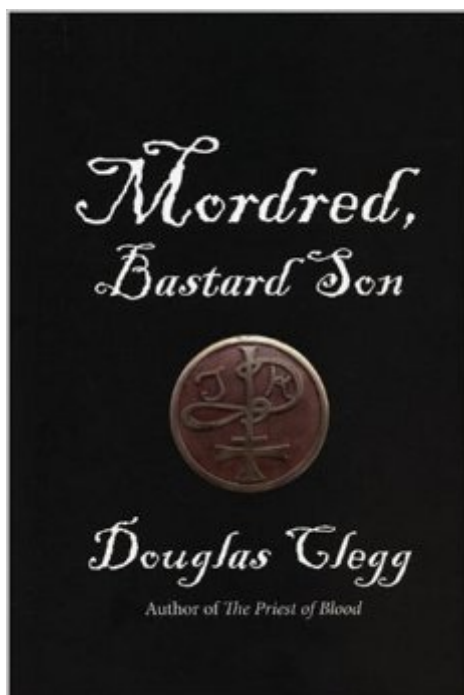


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# Mordred, Bastard Son (The Mordred Trilogy, Book 1)



## Synopsis

Stoker Award-winning novelist Douglas Clegg (*Afterlife*, *The Hour Before Dark*, and over a dozen other best-selling novels of contemporary horror) sets his rich imagination to the task of reinventing Arthurian legend, and the results are spectacular. A young monk becomes enthralled by the story a mysterious prisoner begins to tell as he tends to his wounds. The prisoner is Mordred, bastard son of King Arthur Pendragon and his half sister Morgan Le Fay, who has been arrested for murder and treason. His story is one of ambition, power, and betrayal, and it will change the monk's life forever. In Clegg's ambitious reimagining of Camelot, Mordred, the traditional villain of Arthurian legend, emerges as a heroic and romantic figure, torn between his powerful mother's desire for revenge against Arthur, his own conflicted feelings toward the father who betrayed him, and his passionate love affair with a knight in King Arthur's court: Lancelot. The first of a trilogy, *Mordred, Bastard Son* sets the stage for an epic adventure of love, friendship, magic, war, and betrayal, a fresh, dazzling chapter in the Arthurian canon. Douglas Clegg has been called "the new star in horror fiction" by Peter Straub, and *The New York Times* best-selling author Dean Koontz says, "Clegg's stories can chill the spine so effectively that the reader should keep paramedics on standby." He is the author of many books, including the bestsellers *Nightmare Chronicles*, *The Hour Before Dark*, *The Infinite*, and *You Come When I Call You*. He lives outside Manhattan.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

For gay men fascinated with the classics of myth and romance, there is often a certain level of gratification missing: the pleasure of reading the accounts of our own heroes and their place in the course of human history and myth. The author has successfully cast Mordred and another central character as being open to same sex love, and the tale is all the richer for it. After reading this book I couldn't imagine the story told in any other way, I FELT Mordred's longing, frustration and ultimate realisation of his special nature. His first unrequited love is recounted in a very tender and authentic manner, immediately recognisable to those of us who walked this same path in our youth. The ancient world of Arthurian legend is beautifully brought to life with numerous references to the Old Religion that will be appreciated by neo-Pagan readers. All of the original cast are included, with the addition of the author's special insight and sensitive treatment of the "gay angle". Not just a rewrite of the same old stock literary figures and synopsis, I fell in LOVE with Mordred, the person (not to mention the man he finds romantic passion with, but I won't give that away). The women in the story are healers, leaders, villains...passionate, fully-realised human portrayals of the characters we know from older works but now become believable as sisters, mothers, and priestesses in a world that humans can't always control or understand. One is often reminded that life is a mystery, there are no easy answers for any of us. Gay or straight, we all experience love and loss, pain and joy and ponder what it all means and why we're here at all. The author weaves these eternal themes skillfully into the narrative with generous doses of humour and occasionally profound sorrow. We'll have to wait for the next book, in the meantime I'll read this one again, perhaps a few times.

With the help of the mighty sword Excalibur stolen from the Lady of the Lake, King Arthur has forged a mighty empire. Centered in the mighty Castle of Tintagel, his power is unsurpassed throughout Britannia. But Arthur's supremacy is threatened, the divination of the prophet-wanderer Merlin tells of a great tragedy that will befall the King. Mordred, born bastard and heathen of an incestuous coupling of the bloodline pun-Dragon and the bloodline of the Fay, conceived from the brutal rape of Arthur's half sister Morgan LeFay, will be the instrument of the King's great unmaking, perhaps even the greatest unraveling of all. Fearing for their lives, the pregnant Morgan escapes Tintagel with Merlin, finding sanctity on the Isle of Glass where Mordred is safely born. From birth, Mordred is sheltered by his aunt Morgause and great aunt Viviane, as they gather around this great son of a King, steadily casting their prayers to "the will of life," offering up to him the blessings from the Great Lady of the Lake. As Mordred grows older, he learns the secrets of the earth and lakes, and trains with Merlin in the Eastern Arts of necromancy and war. He learns of the elements, the energies of the forest, and the "magick" of the faerie realm that invade the mind through scent and the invisible

boundaries existing in the world "unseen by men." It's a bucolic and tempered existence, but Mordred knows he is different: When he becomes physically attracted to his best friend Lukat, Viviane tells him he is like the "soldier-mages," those who love other men, "as some fear in this world who know not of such love." Mordred is consumed with adolescent sexual urges when one day, at the edge the desolate territory, he spies a wild hermit swimming naked in the Lake of Glass. Little does he know this man is the greatest betrayer; Viviane warns him to stay away from this knight, swordsman, and best friend of Arthur. But Mordred ignores them and soon he's caught up in the alchemy of love, a mingling of confusion with flesh and soul. This hermit, this enigmatic man, once told Arthur of the sacred place beneath the lake, where the sword of Excalibur lay buried in rock. And as Mordred learns more, he falls in love but is deceived into thinking he can live a life unaffected by the machinations of the outside world. For Morgause, dreams of vengeance, and remembers how she was once hunted like a dog by her half brother, who stole the sword and the thrones of the kingdoms from her. Betrayal also comes in the form of the seemingly loyal the Morgause, who has swallowed a life of servitude to King Lot and to her sons. Now full of vengeful fury she has captured the half soul of her sister, and is intent to battle a King who has been given the sacred tools of the greatest of kings. As Mordred becomes a man, he must deal with his guilt at his crimes of passion, and his longing for the world that had begun to remake itself around him. Author Douglass Clegg beautifully skewers the Arthurian legends; weaving a compelling story, single handedly reinventing Mordred's sexuality. He is no longer the betrayer, of Arthur, the knight Lancelot, and Guinevere Queen of the Britons; he is now the seductive and passionate hero, given the almost insurmountable task of finding the cauldron of rebirth - the Grail. Arthur is the greatest of all emperors, and Mordred longs to see him, despite the monstrous things he had done to his mother before his birth. This is a lawless, violent and random world, caught up in ancient superstitions, where the Kings and Druid priests, remember terrors of Roman captivity, and call out for Merlin, hoping that the ancient mage might save them from devastation. Those who worshipped the heathen gods have largely gone underground, and those of Christendom have sought sanctuary in the ruins of abbeys, monasteries, nunneries and the Roman villas. Mordred and his ilk remain tied to the rituals of the sacred midsummer rites, of the men of the tribes and the old ways of his people. But eventually, Mordred must leave the safety of Isle of Glass, for his destiny is predetermined and he is set on an irrevocable path that will become his life. In this first part of this adventure, our young and heroic prince achieves a type of erotic understanding, arriving from his breaking of the bonds of innocence. Yet as he saves a damsel in distress and witnesses his enemies gathering - in the form of a newly rejuvenated and vengeful Morgause - Mordred realizes that the debts of his life are only

just beginning. Mike Leonard May 06.

Douglas Cleggs, Wonderful Arthurian Tale, As Seen Through His Eyes and Imagination. I Loved This Novel and Found It Most Refreshing. It Is Filled With Tales Of Magick, Legends, and Fantasy. The Book Is About Mordred, Telling His Life Story and Adventures To a Monk After Being Caught and Imprisoned In a Cell. Mordred Talks Of His Adventures With His Father Arthur, His Mother Morgan, His Grandmother Yrainne, And His Mothers Sister Morgause, and Many Others In His Quest. It Is a Wonderful Adventure and Look Into The Days Of Old. Beautifully Written, and a Mustread. Read This Wonderful Tale To Find Out For Yourself The Magick Of This Novel.

I've been a follower of Douglas Clegg's fiction from his first book, "Goat Dance." Over time, and over the many books and short stories he's written, his writing has evolved as he's taken risks, reached for greater heights. Last year, he truly outdid himself with "Priest of Blood." It's a vampire story, a fantasy story, a historical story, a romance. Whatever your pleasure, you'll find it here. Have you ever dived so deeply into a book, it's hard to get out; has a book ever become so real to you, the "real" world vanishes? This is "The Priest of Blood." And now, "Mordred, Bastard Son." Douglas Clegg continues to amaze me with his range, with his ability to step into a completely different writing "niche" and pull it off so well. "Mordred" is the fantasy novel that so many writers aspire to, but so very few reach. This is what fantasy should be: edgy complex characters, riveting action, a world drawn with such feeling, such perfect detail, it makes you feel like you're actually there, and, of course, the ultimate anti-hero. The only downside is waiting for book two! But don't put off reading book one. If you demand excellent writing, excellent story-telling, "Mordred, Bastard Son" will leave you satisfied.

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