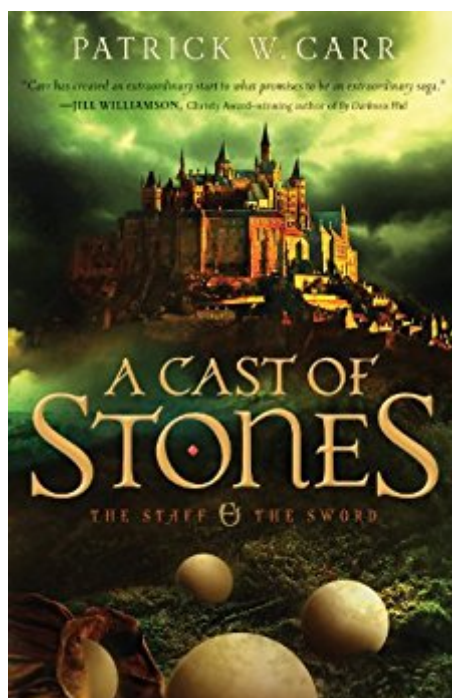


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A Cast Of Stones (The Staff And The Sword)



Synopsis

2014 Carol Award Winner for Speculative
The Fate of the Kingdom Awaits the Cast of Stones
In the backwater village of Callowford, roustabout Errol Stone is enlisted by a church messenger arriving with urgent missives for the hermit priest in the hills. Eager for coin, Errol agrees to what he thinks will be an easy task, but soon finds himself hunted by deadly assassins. Forced to flee with the priest and a small band of travelers, Errol soon learns he's joined a quest that could change the fate of his kingdom. Protected for millennia by the heirs of the first king, the kingdom's dynasty nears its end and the selection of the new king begins--but in secret and shadow. As danger mounts, Errol must leave behind the stains and griefs of the past, learn to fight, and discover who is hunting him and his companions and how far they will go to stop the reading of the stones. "With an engaging, imaginative world that bristles with danger, characters that keep you guessing, and a story that sticks with you, A Cast of Stones will keep you devouring pages until the very end. I highly recommend it!" --John W. Otte, author of Failstate
"Carr's debut, the first in a series, is assured and up-tempo, with much to enjoy in characterization and description--not least the homely, life-as-lived details." -Publishers Weekly
This fast-paced fantasy debut set in a medieval world is a winner. Both main and secondary characters are fully drawn and endearing, and Errol's transformation from drunkard to hero is well plotted. Carr is a promising CF author to watch. Fans of epic Christian fantasies will enjoy discovering a new voice. "Like the preceding series title, Inescapable, this tale of suspense offers a colorful cast of characters, small-town drama, and a hint of romance. A sure bet for fans of Hannah Alexander." --Library Journal
"[Good fantasy books] have to be excellent. Good storytelling and exceptional characters with circumstances that are easy enough to follow and wrap your brain around but keep you entertained and guessing... Cast of Stones has found itself firmly in that list of books. I absolutely, one hundred percent loved this book." --Radiant Lit

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a well-written fantasy novel. The plot is interesting, and the fantasy world is carefully constructed and believable. The hero, Errol Stone, follows a somewhat stereotypical hero's quest, but with some unusual twists. When the story begins, he is the village drunk, pretty much wasting his life. But we soon learn that there is much more than meets the eye. The plot is complex with unexpected twists. The dialogue is good, and editorial problems are few. The supporting characters are well-defined. In fact, there is much to praise and little room for complaint. I only see two weaknesses. The plot bogs down, for me, in the middle. There seemed to be some repetitive events that did not advance the story very much. And the ending did not really resolve many of the plot threads. Of course, there is a sequel, and that is to be expected. But a more satisfying conclusion would have been nice.

ReviewIn the novel A Cast of Stones, author Patrick W. Carr has created story that will intrigue both boys and girls. There is exciting adventure, fantasy, science fiction, and a bit of history all tied into one novel that comes out to tell the story of young Erroll Stone. This story is about how a young boy turns his life around from an immature youth, to learning how to fight with a long piece of wood and going on a journey that will lead him to manhood. Engrossing readers from page one, Patrick has shaped a daring story that will cause readers to continue reading this three book series. Series: The Staff and the Sword Genre: fantasy, fiction, adventure, historical fiction, science fiction Publisher: Bethany House Publishers Publication date: February 1, 2013 Number of pages: 432 Age: 13+ Grade level: 8th+ Other books in the series: 2-The Hero's Lot 3-A Draw of Kings

Cast of Stones was a great book, IMO. Was it Screwtape Letters? Was it Lord of the Rings? No. But

that is the essence of books like SL and LOTR. They cannot be topped, only matched and, even at that, it doesn't happen very often. Cast of Stones was a very good book....well worth reading and well worth paying for. The plot was good, the Christian analogies were firm and clear. The main character was easily relatable.....who of the "ordinary" among us doesn't long to have that spark of greatness, that heretofore unknown ability that is head and shoulders above the ordinary. Who doesn't wish Deas's hand on us? And who hasn't had that "oh, crap, I reached too far, I overstepped" feeling? Who doesn't recognize that terrible loneliness that washes over you as we realize we are all, ultimately, alone and loved, not for ourselves, but for what we can do for others? I think I'm a little in love with Errol :) All in all, a very good read that made me hate the bad guys and cheer for the good guys.....that is, when I could figure them out :)

There are some authors who can write gripping action/adventure, but cannot capture a real empathy for the main characters. And there there is Patrick Carr who goes far beyond great storytelling of action/adventure and fantasy into the realm of roller coaster emotional experience rarely offered to readers today. Hooray! Finally, a single main character and the story is told in third person completely from the main character's point of view! No head hopping, no head jumping, no wondering how did he/she know that. Excellent storytelling and superb character development. The story actually goes somewhere with a satisfying ending even though there are more in this series to come. You do want more, but still the ending is satisfying. Carr has mastered character development. He has done everything right in telling this story. He thanks Dave Long (editor) for helping him become a better writer. I've read several books edited by Dave, and I recognize the excellence of Dave's skill. However, an editor cannot make a bad story premise great, and cannot make a good writer better if the writer is unwilling to master the skills of writing. This is an excellent example of both author and editor in top form. We first meet Errol Stone as a small, drunken lad who had the misfortune of being an orphan. He was taken in by a stone mason but that man was killed, and Errol couldn't face that horror so he drowned the memories. Ever mindful of a way to line up tankards of ale in front of him, he did odd jobs for the people of his tiny village. The people knew the cause of his problem so didn't think too ill of him. So when Errol offers to take a message to a hermit priest through the gorge, Cruk assures the messenger that the message will get to the priest. But, an assassin follows Errol shooting whining arrows at him. Thus begins Errol's epic journey to the Green Isle, the conclave, and King Rodran. What I love so much about this novel, is that you can see Errol grow into a strapping young man, but his basic character is enhanced not transformed. The character development is along the same lines as Alexander Dumas' The Count of Monte

Cristo. If this book series does not become a classic, it should. It could proudly sit beside Lord of the Rings or The Three Musketeers. Cruik calls Errol "a good lad", and this is echoed by the healing woman, and others. Anyone who has lost a loved one, or who has experienced some life changing catastrophe, or who has lived through some kind of bullying will identify with Errol's lot and empathize with him rooting him on cheering his successes. There are acute disappointments as well, which makes the story's roller coaster so effective. I especially appreciate how Errol's wisdom grows. Well worth the money, and a keeper. This is a worthy book for anyone's library. It is excellent for adults and young adults.

From the first chapter, this book captured my attention. To me, this is a story of hope, no matter what life throws at you. I didn't realize the story line continues, so, will have to read the whole series. Very enjoyable, I love reading books that are not filled with foul language and sex. This book was filled with drama, and faith in our Lord, love for our fellow man, and the beginning of a little love story, nothing else needed. Would definitely recommend!

I enjoy a good fantasy, and A Cast of Stones provided an enjoyable read. It's the classic story of good vs evil as Errol Stone pulls himself up to become a hero for his people. The book's twists and turns kept me wondering how he'd get out of each situation. The author isn't Tolkien, but there's enough excitement to have kept me interested. The book was good enough for me to consider downloading the sequel.

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