



Son of a Witch: Volume Two in The Wicked Years

By Gregory Maguire

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The Wicked Years continue in Gregory Maguire's *Son of a Witch*—the heroic saga of the hapless yet determined young man who may or may not be the offspring of the fabled Wicked Witch of the West. A *New York Times* bestseller like its predecessor, the remarkable *Wicked*, *Son of a Witch* follows the boy Liir on his dark odyssey across an ingeniously re-imagined and nearly unrecognizable Land of Oz—a journey that will take him deep into the bowels of the
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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

With a voice that sounds a bit like Richard Dreyfuss on helium, Maguire does a solid if somewhat unconventional job of narrating his own novel. His pace, like his prose, is deliberate and thoughtful. His creativity and imagination shine in his ability to provide his strange characters (not a human among them) with equally unusual voices. It is not the tonal range that makes his delivery interesting, though; it's the cadence and timbre of the voices that win the listener over. Liir, who may or may not be the son of the Wicked Witch of the West, is read with a detached, depressed air, an adolescent with ennui looking for his lost half-sister, Nor. Candle, the Munchkin girl who becomes his sweetheart, has a voice that sounds almost like backwards masking. A short interview with Maguire is an added value on the final disc; he says he enjoys the recording process and that the inspiration for the book was twofold: the many letters from young fans asking what happened to Nor, last seen as a chained political prisoner, and seeing the Abu Ghraib torture photographs. This one-two punch left an itch that could only be scratched by writing *Son of a Witch*.

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From School Library Journal

Adult/High School—*Son* picks up where Maguire's highly successful *Wicked* (HarperCollins, 1995) left off, with the death of Elphaba the Wicked Witch of the West. She left behind a daughter, Nor, and Liir, who may or may not be her son. After her death, he enters into a decade of listless soul searching. He travels for a time and then joins the military, enjoying the structure it provides his life. But eventually his rearing by the Witch as well as his possible heritage catch up to him and he finds himself in demand to start a new revolution against the tyranny of Emerald City. An odd series of disfiguring murders starts occurring all across Oz. Liir discovers that the new Emperor sits behind the machinations and uses the strange killings to spread distrust among the various races of the land. Wielding Elphaba's flying broom and donning her magical cape, Liir makes some small but bold gestures that help the populace of Oz and replants the seeds of hope that Elphaba spread a generation before. *Son* is a tighter work than *Wicked*, making deft use of flashbacks and varying viewpoints to create a quicker pace. And Liir's quest—both to find himself and to save the people of Oz—is easier to believe than the motivations that drove the bitter yet heroic Elphaba. A well-written, well-crafted fantasy that can stand on its own.—Matthew L. Moffett, Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale

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From Bookmarks Magazine

The best-selling *Wicked*, Maguire's adult spin on L. Frank Baum's classic, became a Tony Award-winning Broadway musical; by contrast, this sequel is a typical middle book, a bridge to a better novel to come, perhaps. Maguire introduces powerful, whimsical, and cruel characters and adds ethical and sexual complexities to the original story—if you can keep all the characters, flashbacks, and plots straight. Although *Son*, which starts where *The Wizard of Oz* leaves off, has the same wit and complex moral themes of its predecessor, they fall flatter here. Finally, though some readers will welcome Dorothy's entrance, many will find the entire story too constructed for their taste. But the cliffhanger ending will keep them waiting for the third installment.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

John Harris:

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Leon King:

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