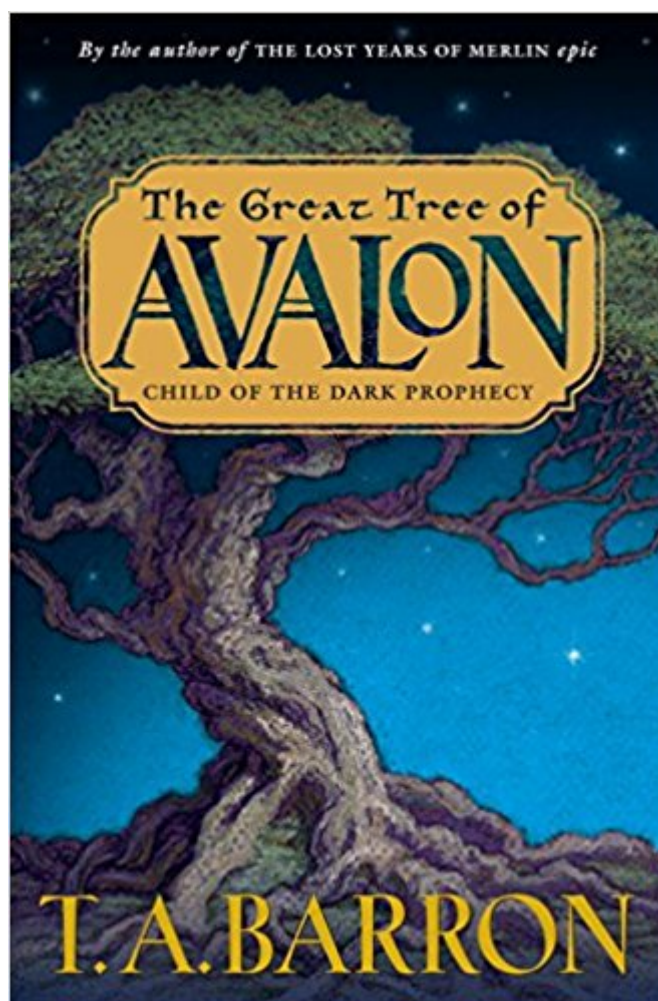


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# Child Of The Dark Prophecy (The Great Tree Of Avalon, Book 1)



## Synopsis

Long ago, the great wizard Merlin planted the seed that would become the peaceful world of Avalon. Now, though, Avalon is suffering from mysterious droughts. Then the very stars begin to lose their light, and it seems that the Lady of the Lake's dire predictions are about to come true. The fate of Avalon now rests with Tamwyn, a wandering wilderness guide; Elli, an apprentice priestess; and Scree, a young eagleman. One of them is the true heir of Merlin, the only person who can save Avalon . . . and one of them is the dreaded child of the Dark Prophecy, fated to destroy it. As in his acclaimed epic *The Lost Years of Merlin*, T. A. Barron has created a radiant, richly imagined world, full of high adventure and un-forgettable characters.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 6-9  
In this first installment in a new series, Barron reimagines the legendary world of Avalon as a gigantic tree, with a separate realm located on each of its seven roots and stars hanging in the unseen branches far atop its trunk. A crippling drought has brought the realm to the verge of warfare, and 17-year-old Tamwyn and his bickering companions seek the advice of the fabled Lady of the Lake. Tamwyn fears he's the child of the Dark Prophecy, foretold centuries ago as the one who would destroy Avalon, and he wants desperately to change his destiny and save his beloved world. With its mixture of high fantasy and slapstick humor, the tale resembles Barron's "The Lost Years of Merlin" series (Philomel) and Lloyd Alexander's "Chronicles of Prydain" (Holt). Despite loads of goofiness and violence, the plot moves rather slowly through lengthy introductions of the large cast and descriptions of the Great Tree. While the characters and setting are interesting,

this is clearly the prologue to a much longer saga: all beginning, with no middle or end. The story will appeal most to devoted fantasy readers, particularly fans of the "Merlin" series, who will recognize details from the earlier books and try to guess how the epics will converge. ãœBeth Wright, Fletcher Free Library, Burlington, VT Copyright ãœ Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

\*Starred Review\* Gr. 6-12. Barron builds on his popular Lost Years of Merlin saga, creating an elaborate, richly detailed world spread out on the seven roots of the Great Tree of Avalon, which grew from "a seed won by Merlin on his journey through a magical mirror." The story begins in Avalon's year 1002, when it appears that the Lady of the Lake's Dark Prophecy is coming true and the only hope of saving Avalon lies in finding Merlin's true heir. The fates of two boys born 17 years earlier and raised as brothers are intrinsically bound to the prophecy: Scree, the orphaned eagleboy charged with guarding Merlin's staff, and Tamwyn, who fears he is the Dark Child destined to destroy Avalon. Liberally laced with humor and wit, the first book in The Great Tree of Avalon series effectively introduces and fleshes out remarkable characters, both human and nonhuman. It also vividly sets the scene through the adventures of various beings who eventually come together in a desperate quest to stop the evil that threatens Avalon and its denizens. Even readers unfamiliar with The Lost Years will relish this fine debut of a promising new fantasy series. Sally EstesCopyright ãœ American Library Association. All rights reserved

This is written by my favorite author and is one of my favorites. The story is full of all sorts of exciting adventures that will keep any reader interested. The three star rating has everything to do with condition the book was in when it arrived. The description said "very good," but the cover was worn and slightly bent, there was writing inside, and the dust cover is all but destroyed.

Very visual book, I started reading it, but I haven't kept on with the chapters, but I have no complaints about the book

Daughter loves

Yes.

Sleepy and a good bedtime read.

Very good book series

Delivered on time. Gift for my grandson. Perfect

T.A. Barron created a sweeping fantasy classic in the "Lost Years of Merlin" series. Now he follows up with a brand new series, taking place eight hundred years after the creation of Avalon -- "The Great Tree of Avalon: Child of the Dark Prophecy," full of magic, chills and humor. As the book opens, legendary wizard Merlin rescues an orphaned eagleboy from a pair of mercenaries, and gives him to a flame-haired woman with a half-human baby. He also leaves his staff with the eagleboy. The boys are raised together, but are separated when a pack of evil creatures try to kill them. Now Tamwyn is on the hunt for his brother Scree, but is haunted by questions about his own past. There's a prophecy that that year, both Merlin's true heir (and grandson) and the Dark Child of a sinister prophecy will come of age that year. Elsewhere, a young priestess named Elli is accompanying her snobby superior to a meeting with the Lady of the Lake. They end up meeting with Tamwyn, who is beginning to believe that Scree is Merlin's heir -- and that he himself is the Dark Child. But an evil sorcerer is threatening all of Avalon, disrupting the magical waters that sustain it -- and Tamwyn, Elli and Scree may be the only ones who can save their homeland. It's hard to take the story almost a millennium forward, with an almost entirely new cast and new problems. But "Child of the Dark Prophecy" has a certain familiarity, since Barron explores themes of good, the potential for evil, doubt, power and love -- just as he did in the "Merlin" series. One thing that hasn't changed is that Barron's writing is vibrant and lush, without getting bogged down in the details. Not to mention his healthy doses of humor, such as the snotty priestess's face being turned green by her facial. There are strange creatures, ranging from little shapeshifting imps to giant mud-dwellers. The one flaw may be the villain; his motives are excellent, but they aren't even hinted at until the final showdown. But, for clarity's sake, Barron also includes a detailed timeline that explains the events of the past eight hundred years, including the marriage of Merlin and deerwoman Hallia, and the war that precedes this conflict. This is very helpful, although don't read it until the book is over. Familiar faces pop up here and there. Merlin himself appears for only a short time; the Lady of the Lake turns out to be an old friend, and half-deaf Shim shows up again (tiny once more). A familiar evil character also returns late in the book. But the book belongs to Tamwyn, nervous about his possible destiny and his growing magical powers, and fiery Elli, with her haunted past. Though initially they despise each other, their friendship starts to grow. Eagleboy Scree

doesn't get as much attention -- he spends most of the book in a cave -- but he's an excellent character when he reencounters his brother. Beautifully written and full of thrills, "Child of the Dark Prophecy" is a worthy follow-up to the "Lost Years of Merlin" series, yet will leave readers longing for the next book in the series. Another triumph.

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