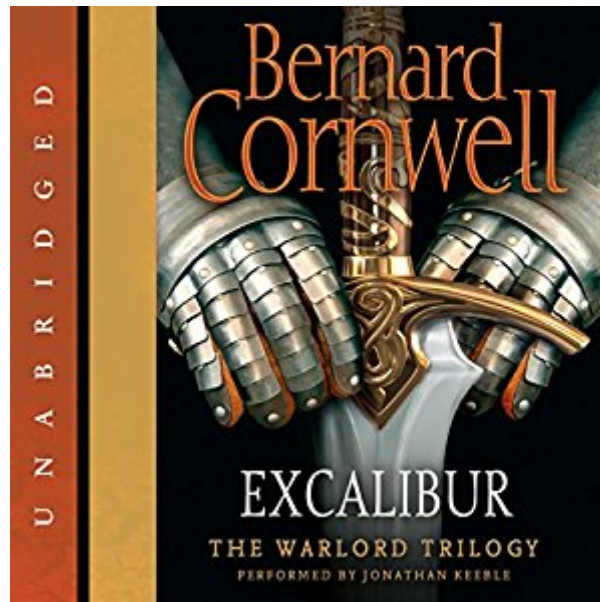


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# Excalibur



## Synopsis

With *Excalibur*, Bernard Cornwell draws his Arthurian trilogy to an exciting close that will have listeners gripping their headphones. If Arthur existed (and I am quite certain he did), then he was probably the great British war leader who won the battle of Mount Badon. No one knows where it was fought, or how it was fought, but we do know that the battle took place and it was the one great defeat inflicted on the English invaders of Britain. In *Excalibur*, we follow Arthur and Derfel to that enormous struggle and incredible victory. It not only throws the Saxons back, but reunites Arthur and Guinevere. He might hope now to be left alone, to have a time of peace after gaining a great victory, but new enemies arise to destroy all he has achieved. First is Mordred himself, the crippled king who owes everything to Arthur and now tries to kill his benefactor. Mordred's ally is Nimue who has come to hate her mentor, Merlin. And so the story ends as it has always ended, at Camlann... "and so my lord was gone. And no one has seen him since."

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 18 hours and 50 minutes

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## Customer Reviews

Bernard Cornwell did not disappoint with his final entry in the Warlord Trilogy. Just like the first two, the reader is treated to prosaic language that revels in its poetic beauty, mingled with the blunt, pragmatic realism of the soldier who is narrating the story. As the book opens, we find ourselves back in war-torn Dumnonia, which Arthur has just unified after Lancelot's rebellion. Merlin is preparing to summon the pagan gods of Britain in an endeavor that could split the country in two. And Arthur and Derfel prepare for the inevitable spring invasion of the Saxons. It is in this book that the climactic Battle of Mount Badon is brilliantly realized, the battle between the Britons and Saxons

for which the real Arthur (if he ever existed) was certainly responsible for. Those familiar with the previous two books in the series, "The Winter King" and "Enemy of God" know that Cornwell has taken a bold step with his take on the legend of King Arthur by giving the tale a new, more realistic approach. But unlike its predecessors, this book tends to include real magic, whereas in the previous two novels, genuine magic was substituted for clever tricks that preyed on a superstitious people. Merlin was therefore portrayed more as a sardonic trickster than as the genuine and powerful wizard he is more commonly shown to be in other variations of the legend. Many have complained that the book tended to confuse them due to the large amount of characters, most of whom have difficult-to-pronounce Welsh names (Culhwch, Caddwg, and Hygwydd come to mind). In Cornwell's defense, the Welsh names are very realistic and they reflect the fact that this Arthur story is set in post-Roman Britain, rather than the Anglo-Saxon England of the 11th century.

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