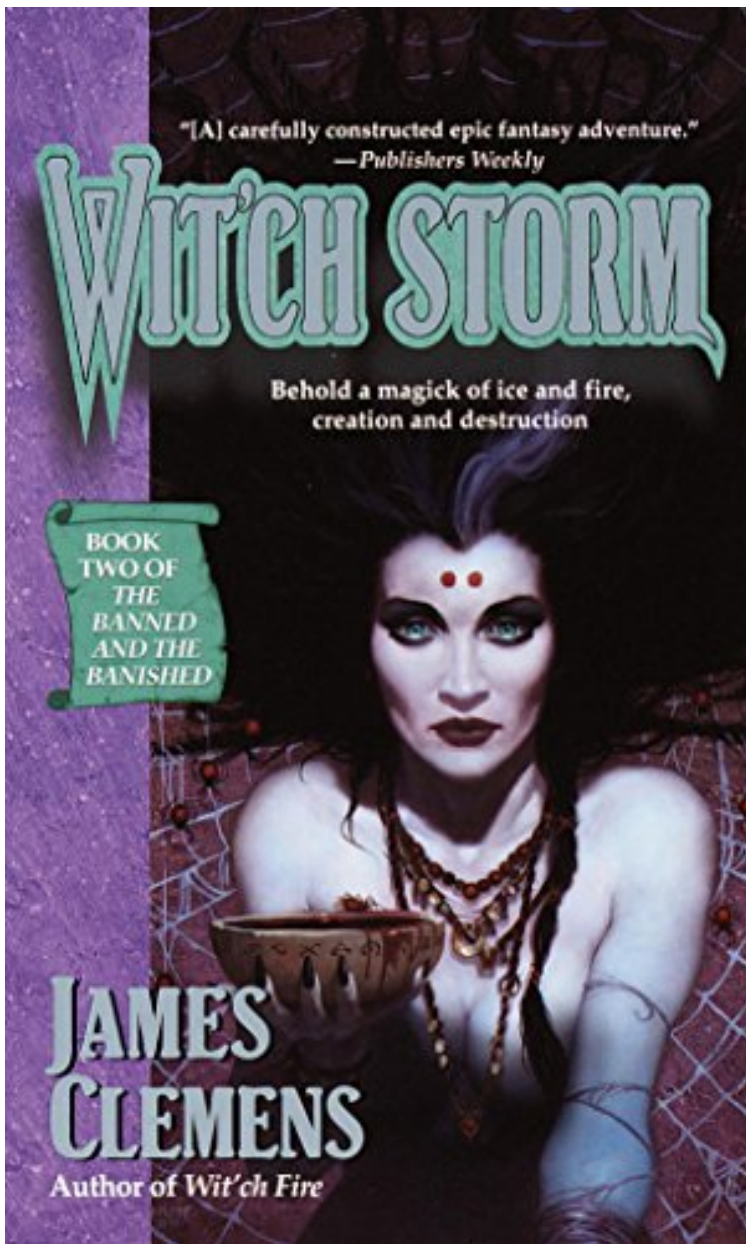


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Wit'ch Storm



Par James Clemens
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Description : Description du produitJames Clemens burst onto the fantasy scene with Wit'ch Fire, a remarkable novel as brilliant as it was original. Now in Shadow of the Wit'ch, the explosive sequel, his talents blaze brighter still, illuminating a war-torn world of dark magicks and darker destinies--where a last, desperate hope for the salvation of all that is good lies in a young girl's hands . . . and heart.Elena bears the mark of the wit'ch upon her palm, the crimson stain that testifies to the awesome power of unimaginable potency: wild, seductive, difficult to control. Only a mistress of blood magick can stand against the foul minions and all-corrupting evil of the Dark Lord. But Elena is not yet the mistress of her magick. Protected by an ageless warrior and a band of renegades, she quests for a lost city where prophecies speak of a mystic

tome that holds the key to the Dark Lord's defeat. But if the Dark Lord finds her first, Elena will become his most fearsome weapon. Sy-wen is a girl-child of an ocean-dwelling clan, bond-mates to the terrible and majestic sea dragons. But ancient bonds tie Sy-wen to the land she does not know, to a man she has never seen . . . and to a legend asleep in stone deep beneath A'loa Glen--a legend beginning to wake. Now, as Elena and Sy-wen converge on A'loa Glen from land and sea, will the forces they unleash lead to a future of freedom--or an eternity under the Dark Lord's yoke?

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Extrait Elena stepped from the cave, pushing aside the leather hanging that kept the warmth of the mountain folk's morning fires snug within the cavern. Even though spring was already a moon old, here among the peaks the early morning hours were still laced with whispers of ice from the mountaintops. Free of the caves, the air smelled crisp, scented with pine and highland poppy, and this morning, a breath of warmth even hinted at the summer to come. A sigh on her lips, Elena shook back the hood of her green woolen jacket and raised her eyes toward the mountains. Still tipped with heavy snow, they seemed to lean over her as if threatening to topple, and the roars from a hundred waterfalls echoed through the valley from the torrents of snowmelt. After a long winter, where both water and time itself had seemed frozen forever, the spring thaw was like a new birth. Smiling, she took a step forward--but, as if to remind her that winter had not yet completely given up its grasp on the highlands, her heel slipped on a patch of black ice. She cartwheeled her arms to no avail and landed on her backside upon the rocky trail. Behind her, Elena heard the rasp of leather on stone as Er'ril pushed aside the cavern's apron to join her. "Girl, we can't have you breaking your neck before we even leave the Teeth." He reached a hand to help her up. "Are you hurt?" "No, I'm fine." With her face burning hot enough to thaw the ice under her rump, Elena ignored his hand and struggled to her feet on her own. "I didn't see ... I slipped ..." She sighed and turned away from his stern expression. Under black brows, his gray eyes always seemed to be weighing her, judging her every action. And why was it that he only seemed to acknowledge her when she was burning a finger on a flame or snagging a toe on an unseen rocky outcropping? She wiped a palm over her gray trousers, searching for her dignity but finding only a sodden spot on her backside. "The others have been waiting a long time," he said as he slid past her, leading the way up the three hundred steps toward the pass where the rest of the party had gathered. "Even the wolf should be back by now." Fardale, in his wolf form, had left at daybreak to survey the trails that led to the distant valleys. Meanwhile, Nee'lahn and Meric had been assigned to tack the horses and ready the wagon, while Tol'chuk and Mogweed hauled and inventoried their supplies. Only Kral still remained below, saying his final farewells to his mountain clan. "If we hope to clear the pass by nightfall," Er'ril said as he climbed, "we must be off quickly. So keep your eyes on the stairs, rather than on the clouds." As if mocking his warning, a patch of ice betrayed Er'ril's own feet. His one arm shot out, and he had to hop two steps to keep his balance. Afterward, as he glanced back at her, his face was a shade darker than before. "I'll make sure I watch where I'm going," Elena said, her eyes bowed meekly--but she couldn't keep a grin from her lips. Er'ril grumbled something under his breath and continued forward. They managed the remainder of the stairs with care, each in a cocoon of silence. Elena, though, imagined both their minds dwelt on the same worry--the journey ahead, the long trek across the many lands of Alasea to the lost city of A'loa Glen. Somewhere in the sunken city lay the Blood Diary, hidden there by Er'ril centuries ago: a tome prophesied to contain the key to saving their lands from the black corruption of the Gul'gothal lord. But could they reach it, a band of travelers from different lands, each with his own reasons for pursuing this journey? With much of the last several weeks spent plotting, planning, and outfitting the band of travelers, a mixture of relief at finally being under way and dread at leaving the security of the frozen passes swirled in each member's breast. A heavy silence, like now, hung around the shoulders of everyone, except for-- "Ho!" The call from behind them stopped both

Er'ril and Elena near the head of the trail. Elena twisted around to see Kral squeeze his huge frame through what now seemed a tiny opening in the granite cliff face far below. He waved an arm the size of a tree trunk at them, his voice rolling like a boulder through the canyon. "Hold up there. I'll join you." From Publishers Weekly Clemens continues his carefully constructed epic fantasy adventure (begun in *Wit'ch Fire*) about Elena, a young farm girl destined to be the "wit'ch" of ancient prophecy who will save her land from all-consuming evil, or die trying. The novel opens with Elena and her companions setting off for the legendary lost city of A'loa Glen, to use the magic of the Blood Diary hidden there to defeat the dreaded Dark Lord. A motley and fantastic crew accompanies Elena, including an immoral warrior with a dark past, a half-breed og're, a silver-haired elv'in, a tree-loving nyphai and a pair of si'luran shape-shifters. As Elena struggles to control the magic of the scarlet Rose on her right hand, the adventurers are beset by minions of the Dark Lord and by internal treachery. Meanwhile, at A'loa Glen, Elena's brother, Joach, snatched by a demon in the preceding novel, has been magically enslaved to Greshym, who serves the Dark Lord by posing as one of the good clerics sworn to protect the lost city from evil. Another side plot introduces Sy-wen, a young ocean-dwelling mer'ai destined to fulfill an ancient prophesy herself: summoning A'loa Glen's protector, the mighty dragon Ragnar'k. There's a lot of character building, much of it expert, but a paucity of action in this installment. Hopefully Clemens will light a fire under the plot in the series' next entry. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.