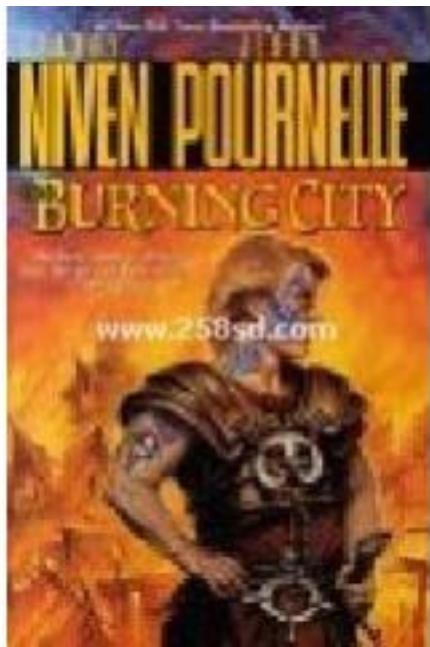


The Burning City



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Amazon.com Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle have created a unique and believable world set in the universe of Niven's The Magic Goes Away. The story begins nearly 14, 000 years ago in Tep's Town, located on the future site of Los Angeles. Tep's Town is a city held captive by the slumbering god of fire, Yagen-Atep. Awakening only occasionally, he commands selected men to begin Burnings by giving them the ability to start fires coupled with consuming anger. Whandall Placehold grows up in the stagnant, three-class society of Tep's town, part of a gang of thieves. No one gets in or out, since the town is hemmed in by a malevolent forest. But when Whandall is chosen by Yagen-Atep to start the Burnings, he resists the compulsion and, aided by Atlantean wizard Morth, escapes through the forest with a group of children he saves from certain death. As the years pass, Whandall builds an empire,

buys wagons and bison, and builds a trade route all along the California coast--except for Tep's Town. Life is good for Whandall and his bride, Willow, until they get a message from a desperate Morth: he convinces Whandall to return to Tep's Town and help eradicate, once and for all, an ancient magical being from Atlantis who has been trying to kill Morth for many years. The Burning City is a lively book that deftly integrates social concerns of today with the magic and mythology of yesterday. Cameo appearances by the Native American god Coyote and the Norse god Loki add to the mischievous nature of the book. With a well-thought-out system of magic, characters with depth, unicorns, and swashbuckling adventure, this book is sure to please hardcore fantasy readers and fans of Niven and Pournelle. --Robert Gately From Publishers Weekly Bestselling authors Niven and Pournelle (Footfall; The Gripping Hand; etc.) have produced yet another hefty fantasy (set in Niven's The Magic Goes Away series) sure to delight fans of sword, sorcery and male superiority. In the implausibly organized Tep's town, populated predominantly by a welfare/warrior class that steals from the Kinless artisan class and is given alms by the higher-class Lords, lives young Whandall Placehold. He is the son of a thief who was killed by the wizard Morth of Atlantis, during one of the town's many burnings, conflagrations that occur when the town's god Yangin-Atep possesses men and gives them command of fire and the rage to use it. As the god is losing his power, the fires are escalating in scope and duration, and the town is slowly turning to ashes. Whandall, who wants to grow up to be more than a short-lived thief, finds his path becoming inextricably tied to that of the wizard. When the opportunity arises, Whandall and Morth escape the town in the company of a family of Kinless ropemakers containing the inevitable beautiful, virginal, marriageable daughter. Years pass, Whandall breeds and becomes a warrior merchant, but he must return to the town of his birth in the company of Morth if his burgeoning family is to prosper. There, Whandall uses all his cunning and strength to aid the wizard in his battle against a magical nemesis from Atlantis. Fun in a formulaic kiss-or-kill fantasy kind of way, this adventure has enough swordplay, magic and unicorns to please those looking to tread the old, tired pathways again. (Mar.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. See all Editorial Reviews

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