



The Tears of Elios

Crista McHugh , C.A. McHugh

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Shape-shifters' Rule #1: Don't let the humans know you still exist.

Rule #2: If a human finds out about you, silence them.

Some rules were meant to be broken...

Ranealya ruthlessly plays by the rules and has outlived most of her race because of it. If she wants to survive, she'll have to stick to them, especially with a genocidal tyrant hell-bent on destroying all the non-humans in the realm. But everything falls apart when a human saves her life.

Gregor knows he's inviting trouble when he helps a wounded shape-shifter, but he can't pass up the opportunity to study one before they become extinct. She disturbs the quiet order of his scholarly existence, vexes him in more ways than he can count, and encourages him to break enough of the kingdom's laws so that not even being the king's cousin will save his head. The problem is, he's already lost his heart.

The Tears of Elios Details

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Author : Crista McHugh , C.A. McHugh

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From Reader Review The Tears of Elios for online ebook

Kristalia says

Final rating: between 3.5/5 stars

The Tears of Elios is the first book I have read by this author and as much as I liked it, this book had some flaws, one of them being an enemy which was not developed enough and some plot holes here and there (thankfully, the main ones have been addressed in A Thread of Magic, as well as the missing epilogue).

The world building was interesting and it was a good mix of elves, mages, shape shifters and humans, but i would have appreciated more details about the cultures, hierarchies, customs, etc. The story is mostly focused on shape shifters and their mysteries.

This book follows four characters (Ranealya & Gregor and Kira & Galen) whose fates are intertwined.

This book is not recommended for those who are bothered with interspecies relationships like (view spoiler).

STORY & CHARACTERS:

In the Elgean kingdom non-human races have been either driven or killed by the order of the king Anilayus. His demonic servants - called Azekborn - enforce his orders by killing whoever they come across.

Ranealya is a shape shifter who knows better than to meddle with humans and she is very distrustful of them. Because of the King's orders, she must be careful not to let herself be discovered as her whole race is almost extinct. Being a shape shifter, she can shift into any form she wishes - be it old man, giant wolf, an owl. But her eyes always give her away. When she gets wounded by the Azekborn, her life is saved by none other than a human. And now she is split between killing him to silence him, or spare his life as he saved hers.

Gregor is a human mage who wants nothing to do with other people, except with the servants in his house. Betrayed by the ones close to him, he shut himself in the forest and spends his time researching elven scrolls and other things that may be the clue to save races from the King's clearance. When Gregor and his dog find a wounded woman in the woods, he notices the differences on her body - and realizes that he came across a shape shifter. Gregor decides to heal her and keep her safe as much as possible, knowing that his kindness might cost him his head.

Kira is a gifted mage apprentice of Master Mage Tyrrus, but her gender makes things difficult for her - the Law says female mages are not allowed - so she must dress and act like a boy. From time to time, Tyrrus brings mysterious people who pass through the gate-portal in their home, but Kira does not know who they are or where they go. Left with many questions, she helps her master until she gets a vision of Azekborn - who soon attack their place. Both of them escape Azekborn by passing through the portal and shutting it down. Kira soon finds herself in the camp of the Resistance - a place where Elves, Humans, Dwarves and other races cooperate to make their own kingdom - and a place to live together.

Galen is the High Elf and a commander of Resistance - being a leader makes him wary of newcomers, but

his mind reader abilities help him most of the time. When he meets Tyrrus's apprentice Kira, he starts doubting her because he didn't succeed in reading her mind. And not only that - he sensed something strange when he met her - and she could be either their salvation or damnation. Their main goal is to find Tears of Elios, which can amplify magic and help the resistance be safe from the King's wrath once and for all.



Now that you have a basic info on the characters, I'll now describe how I felt about them.

Out of all characters I found myself liking Gregor and Ranealya the most and I loved their interactions and all parts with them.

Ranealya is pretty likeable heroine, a strong, independent and powerful, she finds in herself ability to trust a human who shoved her unexpected kindness. She is drawn by him, his clumsiness, his nerdness and the fact that even though he is a scaredy cat, he actually has a backbone. The thing I didnt like about her was her teasing and that sometimes she goes to far.

Gregor is a bookworm, also a talented mage and a scholar. He is also very curious and asks more questions than he should. Gregor is wary of humans - he prefers to be alone as much as possible - but Ranealya soon makes him feel that being alone is not so preferable. He was well developed and his story was interesting as much as Ranealya's was.

I have a split opinion on Galen and Kira. I liked reading about them but sometimes i rolled my eyes reading their sections and found myself wanting to get their parts finished as soon as possible.

Kira was sometimes annoying, but sometimes I really liked her as well. What I hated about her was how easily she (view spoiler). Galen was interesting and I mostly liked him, overall interesting character (but Gregor wins in character development).

The thing I minded the most is that we find out almost nothing about the King. While he did appear and speak, he felt bland, and worst of all, I felt like he was a villain who was supposed to be there only for the story to have a common enemy.

Other side characters were okay, and i wish i could have found out more about Jajus, Galen's best friend.

What this book needed was more character development, in my opinion for Galen and Kira and for other side characters, especially for the King.

So in short:

? **Standalone:** YES, but with A Thread of Magic that completes it.

? Point of View: third POV four characters

? Cliffhanger: (view spoiler)

? Triggers: (view spoiler)

? Love triangle: (view spoiler)

? **Supernatural:** elves, gods, magic, demons, dwarves, faeries, shape shifters...

? HEA: (view spoiler)

? Mature content: (view spoiler)

OVERALL:

This book, along with A Thread of Magic make a single story that can be read as a stand alone. I liked it and the ideas, but this book needed more character development and a bit more explanations about their world and the races living on it. The fact that it will have sequels makes me happy and i hope to read more about Elves and their cultures and about the other races as well.



REVIEWS RELATED TO THIS BOOK:

- ? A Thread of Magic (Elgean Chronicles, #0.5)
- ? The Tears of Elios (Elgean Chronicles, #1)

Tracy says

~* 3.5 Stars *~

An Ambitious and Expansive Debut

The Elgean kingdom is ruled by a tyrannical king intent on racial cleansing, but non-human races and their human sympathizers have formed a unique alliance, a gathered in a Resistance against the genocide. As Elgean forces are set to march against the Resistance, four people will rise up for the cause, going above and beyond to secure the freedom of all.

A shape-shifter named Ranealya breaks every one of her own rules for a human who showed her unusual kindness. That human, Gregor Meritis, lives a quiet, scholarly life in the woods, content with his studies until the wounded Ranealya drops into his life. Knowing her will change him forever.

As leader of the Resistance, High Elf Galen has more responsibility on his shoulders than many could imagine. It makes him wary and suspicious of strangers who could threaten the growing group of rebels he leads. When faced with the magician apprentice Kira, his reaction is dire and forbidding. She is a young human woman who stirs his suspicions and his desires and until he's sure of the one, he can't risk giving into the other.

Kira, overwhelmed by the Resistance stronghold after a sheltered city life, is tentative but captivated by the High Elf, but she's determined to give her aid. Even as she struggles to understand how Galen makes her feel.

The four of them will seek out the Tears of Elios in a desperate gambit that could kill them all. More than the hope of peace between the races is on the line. They fight for life, for the basic freedom from extinction. And they must not fail.

~*~

McHugh kicks off *The Elgean Chronicles* in this series debut, introducing her readers to an imaginative

world with a solid story, one that appealed to me on a lot of levels. It's an ambitious endeavor, creating a world, defining it, inhabiting it, and stirring up conflict for the plot, then setting that conflict alongside two separate threads of romance. That's a lot to accomplish in one book, and there certainly were a plethora of diverse characters and a wealth of story being told in this one. It ended up, for me, being a bit too ambitious.

With so much going on and so many things and people being involved, the book really could have used another fifty to a hundred pages to get into the sort of depth of plot and character development necessary to be completely successful for me. What's there is nice, and McHugh has a talent for creating intriguing, unique characters. It's a double edged sword for me in this book, though, because I wanted to spend more time with them and I wanted to know them better than I was given a chance to do.

The shifting focus and different points of view between Ranealya and Gregor's thread and Kira and Galen's worked well in this book. It provided a wide, panoramic view of what is going on in Elgean from several different perspectives and kept me engaged in the threads as they progressed. McHugh was adept in shifting story focus seamlessly and fluidly, drawing the reader along with her as she weaves the characters lives together until all four intersect.

In truth, though, I found myself more personally invested in Ranealya and Gregor. No disrespect intended to the other two, but I thought everything from the shape-shifter mythos and Ranealya's individual backstory to Gregor's talents and familial connections were original, imaginative, and enjoyable, and I liked seeing them learn to trust each other as their relationship evolved. I spent most of the book yearning for more of them even as I enjoyed what was there.

But that sums up my largest issue with the book as a whole. For all that I liked what was there, there just wasn't enough to fully flesh out the world, the characters, and the story that was being told. McHugh has written a tale that kept me guessing and drew me along, she created and maintained characters who fascinated me and engendered sympathy, but it wasn't quite the layered, rich, and vibrant reading experience that it could have been had there just been more of it. I do hold out hope, though, that the continuation of the chronicles, now that the introduction is over, will be.

***Disclosure:** A copy of this book was provided to me by the author for review. This rating, review, and all included thoughts and comments are my own.*

~*~*~*~

Reviewed for One Good Book Deserves Another.

Asta says

The idea behind this book is interesting but I found the timeline to be too aggressive which stunted character development and made the romance portion (which really this is a fantasy romance with some fantasy adventure - which I was hoping for the reverse) feel forced and unnatural. I don't mind romance, I just prefer it to make sense and not just be "because".

There are also races in the story that aren't really explained, like what are highmounts besides humans who I guess are similar to long ago Irish/Scottish clansmen? (There can only be one highlander!)

I also wish the author took more time to explain how magic worked in this world, what it meant to be born without it and if it was different within various races. Like is there a reason women magic users are frowned

upon if female humans? She mashed them all in there but they were all the same in regards to their abilities, so why have so many (exception being the lone (angsty) shape shifter - who I liked probably the most). The "evil tyrant" was also not really explained, I doubt he was just born evil or woke up one morning and thought "I shall exterminate all races sans humans" without something happening that caused his actions to take the turn they did. He needed a back story badly.

Last, geographically... Whhhhhat???? Are they on some huge continent that is completely deserted except for a few major cities/areas? Way confusing.

I'm sure there will be a follow up to this book as the author left it really open ended.

Abbey says

It took a while for this book to take off for me (about 80-100 pages) but once I got to that point, it was really good. I really liked the parallel story lines and how they eventually crossed. I liked how all of the characters grew throughout the novel, but in a natural way that didn't seem fake or rushed.

This was my first Crista McHugh book and I will definitely read another.

Vikki Wright says

I got this book because the reviews were so favorable, but after reading a little over a third of it I have come to the conclusion that they must either:

- a) All be friends, relatives, or in her critique group or
- b) Not be have anything better to read.

There are some books I can't make myself put down, this was one I just couldn't make myself pick up again. The main character was unlikable and weak and there was no reason I could find to care for her. I was bored by the writing and indifferent to the flimsy villain.

Kuddos to Crista for finishing the book. That's more than most people do, but perhaps she should get more honest first readers. With a lot more editing and rewriting it might have been good.

Angel Graham says

The Tears of Elois by award winning Fantasy and Paranormal author, Crista McHugh.

Before I begin this review, I want to state clearly in accordance with the FTC's new rules that I received an Advanced Readers Copy of this directly from the author in exchange for an honest review. No other compensation or consideration has been given.

Shape Shifters have two rules: Rule #1 is Don't let the humans know you exist. Rule #2 is If a human finds out about you, silence them.

Ranealya is a shape-shifter who follows the rules, and has outlived the rest of her race because of it. The

ruler of the lands where she lives is bent on destroying all non-humans, and that includes Ranealya. Then, the unthinkable happens. A human saves her life.

Gregor finds a wounded shape-shifter and takes her home to heal her wounds and allow her safety. It's also a chance to study a shape-shifter up close. Ranealya causes him discomfort in many ways, not the least of which is the attraction he feels for her. Though he is the King's cousin, is he willing to risk it all to save the shape-shifters life?

The Tears of Elois is a wonderfully complex story of not one but two couples.

Kira is the magician assistant to Master Tyrrus, who has been training her to use her magic wisely. They find themselves hurled into Gregor and Ranealya's world when the Azekborn, the King's assassins nearly capture them as they flee. Master Tyrrus has been a spy for the Resistance and helping other races to go to safety through a portal created by Kira. Is it infatuation she feels for Galean, the elf leader of the Resistance or is it something more?

Galean is an elf, who loves his sister Ranealya, but sometimes, it can be hard having a sister who is a shape-shifter, leading a mismatched band of refugees, and trying to keep everyone fed and alive. Kira brings out new feelings in him. Is she his Ruhisha, his soul mate, or is she only a passing fling?

How Ms. McHugh managed to weave together a story of not one but two couples and give them all more than enough length and breadth is beyond me. That's why she is the award winning writer, and I am not. A master story-teller, Crista McHugh takes you into both couples worlds, lives, and thoughts and you enjoy every moment of it. More action, magic, elves, dwarves and a few surprises along the way as they seek to reclaim the seven Tears of Elois in order to save the Kingdom from the tyrannical ruler will leave you breathless yet again.

We learn enough of each person and each couple to feel a definite pull for them as individuals and as couples. We share their anger, sorrow, and joy in each mind racing, page turning event crafted by the author.

I highly recommend this read and yes, again, another of Ms. McHugh's books gains the elusive KEEPER shelf from me. Along with receiving a 5-star rating on the oft asked for 1 to 5-star rating that I prefer not to use as a normal occurrence. Ms. McHugh's writing again shows us that independently published books can and many are of high quality and carefully edited. (Again, I found only one editing mistake, a misused word, where a was used, but of was the word that would have made the sentence understandable without a second and third read of it. I have found literally dozens in N.Y. Published books, so this is a huge plus to Ms. McHugh and her editor.)

Go read, and don't forget both books are the first of their series. Keep a look out for Crista McHugh's newest works.

P. Kirby says

"Orogeny."

I love that word. Sounds so dirty. I guess it is, given that it refers to the folding of the Earth's crust and subsequent upthrust to create mountain ranges.

If you know what orogeny means or have a smattering of knowledge of things science-y, the premise behind *The Tears of Elios* will make you roll your eyes so hard little eye ligaments will rip. That is, if the nauseating inter-species romance doesn't do that first.

The plot is driven by a genocidal king's desire to species-cleanse his land of all non-human folk--elves, fairies, dwarves, and shapeshifters. Especially shapeshifters. I guess he's suffered through too many lame shifter romance novels.

To counter evil king's plans, an alliance of elves, dwarves and sympathetic humans have formed a Resistance and come up with a plan. They will collect seven McGuffins, I mean Infinity Stones, I mean Tears of Elios, and use the stones' power to create new mountains, cutting them off from evil guy's army. This is the backdrop for the novel's not one, but two, "Let's go back in time, and channel a Valley Girl, because 'Gag me with a spoon,'" terrible romances.

When the idea of creating new mountains to block the enemy's access came up, I was like, "Really? You're gonna go there?"

The displacement of bazillions of tons of rock, soil and other material, suddenly, would have catastrophic impacts on the affected landmass, and possibly globally. We're talking cataclysm, apocalypse, Roland Emmerich-disaster movie-with-no-happy ending, bad.

Also, mountain ranges shape weather patterns. Which means, even if you ignore the tectonic implications of new mountains, there's still fun stuff like flooding and desertification. Basically, fucked-up weather means fucked-up crops and starving people and wildlife.

So...cataclysm.

Ignore all that, and you've got the socioeconomic impacts of the additional barrier. The Resistance's new kingdom probably cut itself off from a lot of trade, possible even mines and cropland.

This is where fans' of the book whine, "But it's fantasy and you're not supposed to think about that."

Bullshit. *The Fifth Season* melds magic and geologic science beautifully, making for smart fantasy worth reading. I emerged from university too far in debt not to think about science in everything, including fiction.

The romance(s) are a lengthy rant-worthy, but I'll shorten it to this. The love story between Kira, the naive teenage girl, and Galen, the ancient (but hot!) elf is the kind of twisted shit my teenage self--she of self-esteem and daddy issues--would have written. Right down to the weird, and totally unnecessary (plotwise) attempted rape by Galen while under the influence of fairy magic. Don't do fairy magic, kids! Makes you rapey. But seriously, the sexual assault was a dissertation-long discussion of awful gender dynamics.

The other romance, between Gregor, the human, and Ranealya, the shifter, is tolerable, depending on your opinion of endless bickering as a courtship ritual.

I'd file this under "Thank Dog it Was Free," but there's a chance I paid money for it. Ugh!

?Karlyn P? says

Wow, this was great fantasy romance tale with a medieval feel. Mages, elves, shape-shifters, dragons, griffins, fairies and humans battle again a powerful king and his evil empire set on their annihilation. A perfect read for young adults as the steam level is mild (kisses only).

The Tears of Elios is a compelling and highly imaginative fantasy story with two romances. The story switches back and forth between Galen's story, a high elf commander, and Ranealya, sister to Galen and a shape-shifter being hunted. Their stories mesh midway and together we learn all about the Kings wrath and their plans to save themselves at any cost.

Ranealya finds herself indebted to Gregor, a human mage living in isolation who has family connections to the evil King. Gregor saves her life from a brutal attack, and soon finds he will do anything to help her and her brother stop the king.

Galen meets Kira, a young mysterious human with extraordinary magical powers. He is drawn to her and soon begins to teach her how to harness her gift. While he tries to resist her, there is something that connects these two that he can't simply deny.

Both couples take a separate journey to find the hidden Tears of Elios, which has them meeting danger and all kinds of interesting and imaginative characters along the way. We learn that the Tears of Elios are necessary for a final battle of all battles, and the only way to ensure the King's own annihilation.

The romances were sweet and chaste (kisses only), and secondary to a great fantasy story and world building, but still very solid. There are HEAs, but with a slight caveat. (view spoiler)

This is book 1 in a series, so I imagine some of the other characters will get their own HEA and feature more prominently in future books.

I saw this book compared to one of my all time favorites Master of Crows, so I had to read it. And while I understand the comparison I didn't find it in the same caliber. MOC is a sensual and steamy romance among a dark and richly woven world, while TOE is a lighter story with a young-adult feel to it. Both were enjoyable, but uniquely different as well.

Julia says

(4.5 stars--not quite perfect, but very close)

This book hits the middle road between the Romance and Fantasy genres perfectly, and as a result, it is the first book in the Romance genre that I've truly enjoyed start to finish (maybe minus a few awkward overly romantic moments, but I suppose it wouldn't be a Romance without those, and they didn't drag on or consume the novel). Crista McHugh starts off with a basic Tolkien-inspired fantasy world (elves, dwarfs, goblins, men), throws in a hodge-podge of other fantasy elements (shape-shifting, faeries, dragons, god-myths, etc), and stirs it all together with a smooth narrative and well-developed characters. The climax began later than I would have liked (I was beginning to think the book would be anti-climatic), but once it arrived, it didn't disappoint.

The one true fault I found in the novel wasn't in the writing, the characters, or the plot, but the copy editing. I found errors (truly simple errors that any editor should have been able to catch--errors such as missing and extra words!) every few pages. Considering the book was wonderful in almost every other conceivable way, I found the lack of copy editing truly painful and sad. The story deserved better.

I'm looking forward to reading the sequel.

(I read the paperback version of this book, printed in 2011.)

Lenore Kosinski says

4.5 stars -- wow, this book surprised me with how much I loved it! In the end, that's why I rounded up, it was just such a pleasant bolt out of the blue....

I'm not a huge reader of fantasy, I tend to gravitate more towards paranormal or contemporary novels.... It's kind of funny, b/c since I don't read much fantasy, many of the races and their descriptions reminded me of Lord of the Rings (which I have not read, just judging from the movie)...but then again, some say Tolkein was the father of fantasy eh? OK, that was a total aside and really has nothing to do with anything.

Right, so I'm not sure what I expected...but I got 2 beautiful love stories, an epic...not quite adventure...not sure what, but it was epic. Suspense, drama, beautiful world building. Loved the shape-shifter bit and the teasers about how they came to be...made your heart break for Ranealya....though I *still* don't know how to pronounce that. Gregor had me on the fence...at times I just loved him, but gah he could be such a jerk sometimes...immature or damaged or something. I guess that made them fit together well though. On a side note, I *LOVE* Duke...."deer not deer hurt"....more Duke please.

The whole explanations of Drae, and demons, and what all was happening with Anilayus (shit, I probably didn't spell that right either) was not nearly enough, and makes me cranky that there is no sequel yet!! NEED SEQUEL PLEASE!!

Now Galen and Kira??? That was perfect. Just perfect. Such fabulous chemistry, such a difficult journey...yup, just made my heart smile. And I noticed there is a bit of an epilogue on the authors website, and you can bet I will be reading that in like no time.

Anyways, I need the sequel, but I enjoyed the authors writing enough I just may have to look through the rest of her books. :)

Tom says

Some Thoughts on The Tears of Elios:

You're first introduced to Ranealya, a very primal shape shifter, focused solely on her own survival. When she meets Gregor, a quirky and introverted mage, everything begins to change and Ranealya finds she is conflicted about humans and her purpose. Through all of the supporting characters you'll learn about the

trouble that's plaguing the land of Elgean, forcing non-humans and humans alike to form a resistance in an effort to save themselves from a mad king and obliteration. It's a hunt for magical talisman and a race for their survival as Ranealya and those closest to her face tough choices and personal sacrifice.

McHugh spins a very entertaining tale filled with plenty action, suspense and romance. The pace has plenty of ebb and flow with some heart pounding battle scenes mixed with moments between the characters that may choke you up a bit. Ranealya, has a very complex back-story that broadens her character as it flows with the plot. Gregor was also well developed with some interesting history of his own. Other characters could have been more flushed out though I would expect we'll see more of that as the series progresses. This is a quality fantasy novel that kept me interested throughout and looking forward to the next installment. Definitely a solid start for a new series – 4.2 stars.

Get your copy of *The Tears of Elios* today.

Tom Clementson is a blogger at [The Motley Chronicles](#)

Be sure to take a moment and leave your feedback and comments about the book on [Amazon](#) and [goodreads](#).

Jagged says

The editing was horrid.

Apparently, Gregor got up from his desk--within a *cave* that he stumbled upon.

Did he really find her fur covered breasts attractive? When was the last time he saw a naked woman?

Uh...yeah, about that. I found this line of writing to be borderline bestiality. And I also found it hard to accept that a man who had never seen a shapeshifter, would have found her feminine form, covered in fur, attractive at all. I would have accepted it a little better had the structure of their relationship been built first. That said, the romance was oddly paced. For both Ranealya and Gregor, and Galen and Kira. At times it was slow going, then all of a sudden things just happened out of nowhere, and then all of a sudden they were in love. Ranealya's romance with Gregor was slightly more developed than Galen and Kira's. But even then, their declarations of love were ill-fitting.

Ranealya was awful. She used every piece of information she came by of Gregor against him. She threw his kindness in his face. I couldn't believe that he was willing to stay with her after she shifted into his ex. I mean how cruel was that? She didn't even apologize for it.

Gregor had a back bone at times, but for the most part he just let her walk all over him, so I found it difficult to believe that she would have seen him as a worthy partner. Their matching just wasn't right.

Galen was a pompous asshole. Considering he was Kira's first romantic anything, I was annoyed that they were soul mates. He treated her poorly, so I'm not sure what she saw in him other than his looks. And that's not a good enough foundation for a relationship, and marriage. Just no.

He placed a bowl of gray goo in front of her and sat across the table. She sniffed it. Nothing too offensive. This would have to be my most favourite editing issue, ever. I just love it.

This was an interesting concept, for sure. I enjoyed the ideas behind the plots and subplots, it was just the execution left a lot to desire after.

I really would have liked to have known the king. I wanted to know more than just what I was told--very briefly--of him. He plays a major role in the actions undertaken in the book, so I felt he was an important story left untold.

I would have also liked to have known and seen more with the Azekborn. They were an interesting creature. I also would have liked to see more in this world. The appearances of other races were really mundane and short lived. Rather than getting really deep into the political aspect of the book, it's more subtle giving you just a hint at what was going on, without letting you become a part of the story.

Anyway. I give this book two stars because it really does have potential. I am on the fence about reading further.

Jess(ToTheMoonAndBackReviews) says

The first thing that came to mind upon finishing this book is " Holy Crap! Is that it?!" I did not want this book to end.

It was such a riveting read that I read it in a day, not to say the book is short, simply put it grabs you by the boot straps so to speak and hauls you into the story until you are helpless but to keep turning the page until you find out what happens.

It was the ending that completely threw me, while I applaud it, I still want to know what happened to a certain group. I am hoping that it will be explained in the next book.

I intend to buy the book and add it to my library so when I get the urge to read it again, as I know I will, it will readily be at my fingertips.

Each character has so much emotion and depth to it that you cannot help but sympathize with their problems.

Bart Palamaro says

Tough, tender, no false posturing among or between the characters, just damn good storytelling. Realistic responses and relationships that develop along unconventional lines. I loved these characters with all their flaws and faults and they do dumb stuff that people do, but rise above it anyway. Some pretty hot scenes too.

Becky says

When Gregor finds a wounded shape shifter in a nearby cave he finds himself wanting to help her. He takes her in, in part to learn about her species, even though it would be certain death if the King was to find out

that a human was helping one of the other species in the kingdom. Ranealya, one of the last shape shifters, has an extremely hard time trusting anyone. When Gregor heals her with his magic instead of killing her and allows her to stay with him while she heals, she finds herself truly enjoying his company. You wouldn't know it from listening to the hard time she gives him though. She's quite the spunky little trouble maker. It's not all fun and games though. The Azekborn, the King's demon hunters, have been tracking her for years and she's gotten a couple of close calls lately. With the King trying to exterminate the other species in the kingdom, a group of them have banded together to create The Resistance. Will Ranealya and Gregor be able to help Galen and The Resistance before they are all wiped from the realm?

This is not only the story of Ranealya and Gregor but also of Galen, the leader of The Resistance and Kyra. I loved both of their stories. They tie together about half way through the book giving you a full picture of what's going on. Ranealya is really the main Character in the book and I like how everything revolves around her rough existance. It was such a sweet story between the two of them, not the typical love (or lust) at first sight story. We also get a spin off story starting shortly into the book about a young human who is the apprentice of a master mage. It follows her through her escape from the Azekborn and as she enters The Resistance camp. It's here that she meets Galen, a high elf. Galen takes a quick liking to Kyra and takes over her training. I liked their story as much as I enjoyed Ranealya and Gregor's. This was a riveting tale of two couples and an amazing tale of Elgean and it's inhabitants. I hadn't heard much about this book so I was going into it without too high of expectations but I was certainly impressed. This is a quick read as the story just flew by. I will definitely be continuing this series if she writes more. The author left it with a cliffhanger that will have you ready for book 2. Not a "Fever Series" or "Mortal Instruments" kind of cliff hanger that will make you angry though I assure you. She wraps the stories of the couples up quite well. Overall a great read.

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