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The Battle Sylph (Sylph Series Book 1)



Synopsis

Solie finds herself kidnapped as a sacrifice for a dangerous battle sylph named Heyou, but she fights back and takes on control of him, an immensely powerful shape-shifter. Solie & Heyou flee death to seek sanctuary, and Heyou begins to fill Solie with desires that threaten to change the world.

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Customer Reviews

Half a star. Maybe a quarter. The "heroine" was irritating, and so was the hero for that matter. I won't read the second one because I just don't care about the world the author tried to create. There are plenty of great "alternate world" fantasy books out there - P.C. Cast (not her YA books - those are awful) and Melanie Jackson amongst others. Those authors really develop worlds with rich back stories, and the romances are fully explored. Where the heck do the sylphs come from anyways? It was so random. The main characters were immature and shallow, and the fact that the sex scenes were taking place between characters who did not seem to be adults (at least emotionally) was creepy. I really wanted to like this book because the idea sounded so fresh, but it was not to be, I

guess.

I was not expecting a romance-fantasy hybrid when I purchased this book, but that's more or less what I got. If I had known ahead of time I probably wouldn't have bought it and that would be my loss because I really enjoyed this book. The world-building is interesting - not as gritty as some of the others in the fantasy genre, but different enough to really hold my interest and keep me reading. Some of the relationships fall a little flat, but there are those (e.g. Ril & Leon) that had some real depth to them. Some of the dialogue was a little modern for the setting (something that other reviewers have noted too) and even some of the internal monologue seemed out of place. For example, at one point one of the antagonists has a thought that he couldn't "get it up". It threw me when I was reading it, but only for a moment. Moral of the story - it wasn't enough of a flaw in the writing to decrease my interest in the story. That said, the world of the Sylph's, the way they think and interact with each other and the humans they are bound to serve is what really got my attention. I do not exaggerate when I say I could not put this book down. If you are looking for a light and yet interesting fantasy read with a bit of romance, pick this up.

LJ McDonald has written a truly fabulous story here and I highly recommend that you read it. This will fulfill any urge you have for romance, fantasy, magic, wild landscapes, desperate tension, vengeful villains, tragic heroes, and whimsical creatures. You will laugh; you will cry; you will hate; and you will love. (NO SPOILERS in my review- so feel free to read on.) Definitely more of a fantasy than sci-fi or paranormal. I would classify it as a romance, but the romance is not the central theme. Instead this is a wonderfully woven fantasy of a completely different world and the plot is played out through the relationships of the characters as they try to survive and adapt in the face of adversity. Environment is largely outdoors making use of the wilds of a kingdom in a fantastic land. The romance is lightly written, emphasizing more sexual tension and longing for companionship than graphic love scenes. The primary couple, Solie and Heyou, are young- probably around 17 or so. Could very nearly be recommended to teens, but there are a few graphic sexual encounters and violence... who knows what teens read these days! NOTE ON COMPLAINT: At least one person complained about the immaturity of these characters. My view is that this was the point. The characters were actively growing through this story and this has left PLENTY of room for watching our young couple grow into the rulers they need to become. This didn't detract at all from the book for me. It was clearly explained right from the beginning who we were dealing with- a young girl running from an arranged marriage and a young sylph longing for a "queen" of his own. Far from

being just for a young audience, however, this was a very rich read. The characters are fabulous- all the supporting characters are very well developed, matching and, in some cases, surpassing our central couple. The bonds between family members, friends and the unique (and very clever) concept of a sylph that McDonald has written are vivid and compelling. The pacing is well done- it moves fast enough that I couldn't step away, but not so fast that the storyline was too thin. Events take place over the course of a season. Themes of women's suffrage, slavery, racial inequality and ignorance, love, lust, and societal rule & survival are touched upon with skill. It never gets too heavy, but there is nothing superficial about this book. It pulls you in and holds you without overwhelming you. The writing is very good- highly visual descriptions of the landscape, omniscient voice allowing insight into all characters. The creatures McDonald created and their relationship to the people are very, very cleverly done. This allows a wonderful platform for building tension of all kinds. There were moments I laughed out loud, moments of tears and others where I was biting my fingernails. I felt for these characters- all of them, including the ones who needed to be locked up and forgotten in a dungeon! I would say that the shifting voice did get a little disconcerting at times as it was hard to keep up and I found it almost too overwhelming to identify with SO MANY well developed characters. However, this does lend itself to creating a solid basis for a great series. If you have read this far into my review, I suppose I don't need to say it, but I will: YOU GOTTA READ THIS! Brilliant. Just brilliant. I can't wait for more.

I thought this book was AWESOME!! Yes it's a romance story but it's so much more. Which is why I loved the book. The plot doesn't evolve around two couples falling in love with each other who can't be together cuz they're different while longing for each other blah blah blah. No, this story was so much more intense than just your typical romance books. This book draws you in explaining different angles from different points of reference. Each angle neither dominates or detracts from the story. Everything is relevant: The relationship of all the Sylphs with their human masters, abuse these Battler Sylphs endure being bounded to do their bidding. The murders of dozens upon dozens of virgin girls to lure these Battlers. Elemental Sylphs used to move the earth. A young girl, betrothed to a man twice her age and size, who only wanted her freedom. A young Battler Sylph who got bounded to such a reluctant girl. A spoiled coward who wants the king's crown. A trusted captain of the guard who turns into a traitor. Friendships develop into the Fellowship of the Queen. Wounding battles. Need I say more?? I can't tell you everything but I can tell you this. This book was worth reading! There's no over-indulgence on descriptions or fillers. This author gets to the point not placating you with endless words of detailed descriptions that are irrelevant to the plot. There

are more important things to read and learn from each character. Like I said this book is worth reading.

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