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In Camelot's Shadow: Book One Of The Paths To Camelot Series (Prologue Fantasy)



Synopsis

From the wilds of Moreland to the court of Camelot, a woman searches for her true powers . . . Fleeing from the knowledge that her father had promised her to an evil sorcerer, Risa of the Morelands refused to be a sacrifice. Armed with her bow and her confidence, she swore to evade the wicked Euberacon's claim. And when she stumbled upon Sir Gawain, returning to Camelot to warn of a plot against the kingdom, she thought she'd discovered the perfect place to hide. Surely the sorcerer Euberacon would not approach her at court? Now ensnared with court and political intrigue, Risa is out of her element. And Euberacon has forced a strong transformation spell upon her. There might be one chance left to save kingdom and soulâ but it would take all the strength and power she had . . .

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I love the story of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere, but I'm always on the lookout for new angles on it. Finding Sarah Zettel's book on the shelf of my local bookstore, I bought it, eager to read about the story from a different point of view. I was, however, very disappointed by Zettel's attempt at a new take on the old tale. From the beginning, when the evil sorcerer Euberacon vows to save Risa's father's wife, in exchange for her firstborn child (Risa), the book seems less about semi-historical

fiction, and more about fantasy. I call the time period "semi-historical fiction," because although magic does play a large part, it is rarely the sort of flashy magic I associate with fantasy. Not so much here, but later on, Euberacon's brand of sorcery steps outside what could have worked with the historical time period, into something utterly fantastical and bizarre, that I would not associate with King Arthur. Zettel's attempts to create a believable female heroine in the time period fall flat. She gives Risa so many virtues and so few vices, Guinevere seems a boring and tedious housewife in comparison - not that I have anything good to say about Risa. She attempts to make Risa and Gawain's love semi-parallel to Arthur's and Guinevere's (without the whole Lancelot angle, of course, since Risa and Gawain will be together forever), in that tragedy seems to mar their perfect romance. I can appreciate writing that models the old writing, where ladies and their knights were without flaw, and love was pure, but every time I think this is what Zettel did intentionally, she has Risa or Gawain crack an inane joke, and they both start laughing. Her attempts to make Risa and Gawain more "human" fail, in my opinion.

From the summary, this book looks promising. Usually all we get to read about are the tales of Arthur, Lancelot, and Guinevere, and so I was interested in reading a tale about Gawain. The book centers around the young woman, Risa of the Morelands who flees her home in order to escape the evil wizard, Euberacon, and of course is rescued by Gawain. Immediately Gawain falls in love with the beautiful, brave, intelligent, perfect, amazing, adorable, magnificent Risa, and as the two head back to Camelot, Risa falls in love with the handsome, charming, witty, brave, one-of-a-kind Gawain. Upon their arrival, Gawain promptly proposes after what - a week or two? The rest of the book follows Risa who is at last captured by Euberacon who for some reason has decided that Risa is the key to killing the Empress Theodora, Empress of Byzantium (don't ask - I was confused to). Being the brave and romantic knight that he is, Gawain sets out to follow her, but gets side tracked by the green knight who he is sure, by some holy instinct, that the green knight has answers to Risa's location. While I can't tell you the sickly sweet ending, all of course works out, and they live happily ever after. I had many problems with this book. For one, Risa is the most boring main character I have ever had to "pleasure" to read about. She is perfect in every possible way, except for the fact that she breaks down in tears far too often (however, Gawain seems to like this as he spends half his time comforting her).

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