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Son Of Soron (Stoneblood Saga Book 1)



Synopsis

When tragedy strikes a young boy is forced to become a warrior. Soron and Velaina thought they could escape the dangers of their past—but they were wrong. Fourteen years after their escape from a perilous royal life, their son Nathan begins to show signs of possessing magical abilities that will put all of their lives at risk. Before they can share their secret past with their son, a tragic series of missteps by an ambitious duke leads to tragedy. Now alone in a world he doesn't fully understand, Nathan's quest pits him against deadly bandits, vicious mythical creatures, and a northern king who may stop at nothing to bring him death. (*July 2016: New re-edited edition*)

Book Information

File Size: 4073 KB

Print Length: 351 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publication Date: July 1, 2015

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B010TZD0GQ

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #13,399 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #4

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Customer Reviews

Interesting magical premise and potential for great character development, however it never really happened. The Son of Soron read more like a book report than an adult novel. It reminded me a little of some of the fantasy I read as a young teen. The story development was a little too simplistic for my taste and the time line for character development didn't make sense. The main character

grew in both physical maturity and skills in a matter of weeks. It might be a great starting novel for the fantasy genre for a young teen. It reminded me a little of *The Book of Three* by Lloyd Alexander in its feel and flavor. It also needs some editing, for some of the grammatical mistakes along the way.

Reader thoughts: This story felt disjointed. There were lots of plot holes, and the character never acted his age. The setting didn't feel realistic at all. The saddest part was? I thought it might be a 4 or 5 star book after the first few chapters. It seemed like it would be a fun, magical book with lots of secrets. It wasn't. (Other reviews mention grammar and typos. Since I listened to the book, I saw none of those. This book has bigger problems than that. Also, I tend to use Goodreads ratings, in which case a 1 star means I disliked the book. I wouldn't say I hated it.) SOME MINOR

SPOILER The parents lived in hiding? We find out later that both her family and his knew where they were. Plus, a count knew they lived there and who they were. Weren't the mom and dad supposed to be hiding from their own relatives and government officials because people disagreed with their mixed marriage? Why wasn't this the main conflict?? Why did none of those people try to find the couple (which would have been super easy)? Nathan's age. First, Nathan and Ava act 12, not 14. They joke and splash and play and act like all is a game. If they're really 14, wouldn't they be spending more time working and learning their trades not sitting by a pond all day? Later, they're still 14, and suddenly they act 16 with each other (kissing, talking about love, and Ava's friend asking her if they'd had sex yet). Plus, Nathan grows a LOT in just a couple months. He's suddenly treated like an adult, is 6 feet tall, and can do almost anything. Nathan's training. His father teaches him to fight after a bully beats up Nathan. A few days later, Nathan then beats up the bully (described as taller, heavier, and stronger). He beats him up easily, with confidence. Really? It takes more than a couple days or so to learn how to fight! Especially enough for Nathan to come out unscathed. He learns sword fighting and other weapons, too, enough that he's an expert. At least this takes a few months (he's still 14, and so it couldn't have been too many months). He also learns to ride a horse with no training. He learns magic from instructions ("in your mind, picture this" and Nathan does it the first try every time.) Is nothing hard for him? Does he not have any try-fail cycles? This lack of struggle alone would have kept the book from rising above 3 stars. Conflict. The first third of the book was interesting and had purpose. The middle third or so had no continuous conflict. Nathan meets his uncle. Nathan talks with Ava. Nathan learns archery. He and his uncle defeat bandits (easily). They travel. Nathan shows off his blacksmithing skills. They meet more relatives. Nathan gets a horse. They travel. Attacked by monsters defeated 2 pages later. Learn magic.

Travel. Talk. What's the point? Everyone is agreeable. They all agree on what Nathan needs to do (leave the north because it's too dangerous, although there is no evidence to support this). This is where I lost most of my interest in the book.

Horses. Nathan had never ridden a horse before, and the men around him say, "Put your foot there, and swing into the saddle. Now you're a horseman!" Really? He then rides all day. The second time he climbs onto a horse, it's an untrained stallion. He again rides for hours, and he complains only of a little soreness in his "posterior" and "buttocks" and "backside." Yes, his butt was mentioned three times without using the word butt. (And you'd think his thighs, calves, knees and the rest would also be sore, considering he's only ridden a horse once.) Why not just say "butt"? If the author is trying for a PG rating, why mention rape, sex slaver, and whores? Then teenage girls casually mention sex as if it's nothing? Throats are cut, a named character is raped, and many die. This is not a PG book. This is why the book dropped to one star.

Thorn. Nathan forms a bond with a random, untrained stallion. Does this magical bond let him learn the horse's personality? No. This magical bond lets Nathan order the horse around. Nathan approaches the horse and orders the horse to let him ride him and for the horse to not react when Nathan (an untrained rider) climbs onto the horse's back. He then tells the horse where to go and how fast. This is an insult to horses. They are not like cars! They have personality! I don't like magical bonds that turn horses into slaves. Then Nathan named him Thorn with no explanation of why.

The Duke. He's so dumb. He is not a good bad guy. First, he attacks an innocent village, which sparks the conflict in the first third of the book. We don't see him for the middle third of the book. And then he spends the last third of the book attacking more innocent people to cover up for his first attack. What? Is he even trying to be discreet? What is his long-term plan? None of what he does makes sense. Why does he leave some people alive? He kills some to keep word from spreading, and then he lets others live for no reason. Like, Ava, Susan, and Rose. He steals them to get Nathan's attention, but he just sends assassins after Nathan. What? It's not like he left anyone alive to tell Nathan the duke took the girls. The duke seriously just writes a note saying he has them, which he could have done if he had killed them.

Magic. There were a couple mentions/hints in the first few chapters, and then nothing until over halfway through the book. Suddenly, they're like, "Nathan, you're magical, you should get trained." He hardly used this magic, and it seemed like it might have been useful more often. He's basically an earth mage and animal mage together with some telepathy. But how does he fight in the final battle? With a bow and sword.

So, what was good? Nathan had to learn to control his temper (he had to practice this two or three times, which is better than everything else that only takes him one attempt to master). The good guys won in the end. Yep, I think that's about it.

Writer thoughts: Mostly, see above. Also, making everything too

easy for Nathan meant he had no chance to show his personality. These last two categories are problem from my writer side more than my reader side. POV. This jumped from person to person between paragraphs. Not often, but it was just enough to be annoying. It was never too confusing, though. This alone would have removed a star from the rating. Telling vs showing. All the characters' feelings are told rather than shown. Nothing is left to subtlety but explained to the reader directly. This may have been okay if this was a MG book for 8-12 yos, but the graphic death and proximity to rape firmly put this book in the YA genre.

Young man coming of age to overcome evil while developing his magical powers. Even better when he starts as a blacksmith. With the standards in place what distinguishes this book are the characters. Engaging and even compelling this was a nice find. I went right away to book two and liked it almost as well.

I enjoyed this tale and the characters in it. I say that right up front because I do not want to give the impression that it was not a fun read. Now comes the "but" part. There were many mistakes of tense, articles left out, and extra words thrown into a sentence. Maybe I should volunteer to proofread a chapter or two. Whoever you have doing it now is missing too many simple, obvious mistakes. I do not presume to say I could write a better story, but the grammar should be corrected.

Several typos and a few inconsistencies, but overall this was a great read. Though slow paced it was never boring, & it held my attention throughout. I'd definitely read the next one to see where Nathan's adventures take him this time.

Unfortunately could not give more stars, this is my 2nd series of this author and hope there are many more to come only problem find it hard to stop reading so books usually last a day as the stories are very addictive and characters have personalities that can you can connect with magnificent fantasy novels and hopefully many more

First part of the story was very good, Enjoyed the slow pace and easy read! Would recommend for teen readers!

I am greatly enjoying the Stoneblood Saga and urge everyone that has not read it to try. You will not be sorry because it flows real well and, at least so far, is a great story line and fun to read.

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