



On Fire's Wings

Christie Golden

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She was born without caste or position in Arukan, a country that prized both. Then a chance encounter led her to a better life. But it also brought her to danger and destiny. Because Kevla Bai-sha's fevered dreams - looming threats to their land and visions of dragons that had once watched over her people - held the promise of truth.

Now Arukan - shadowed by mountains and myths - might be overcome by eternal darkness. Kevla, together with Jashemi-kha-Tahmu, rebel prince of the ruling household, would defy all law, all tradition, to embark on a daring quest for the half-forgotten elementals that will save the world.

And so Kevla must sacrifice *everything* only to be reborn in dragon's flames.

On Fire's Wings Details

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Author : Christie Golden

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From Reader Review On Fire's Wings for online ebook

SpringLea Henry says

In Dungeons and Dragons, Christie Golden would absolutely be the bard, and On Fire's Wings is an amazing example of her craft! This book is captivating end to end. It's the story of Kevla: Outcast, lost princess, and something so much more. The book includes themes of magic, reincarnation, good-vs-evil, dragons, superstitions, and how people can have influence, even if they aren't the chosen political leader. It's also about the courage to be one's self. I don't feel like I can say more about the plot without giving too much away, so I'll focus instead on how this book shines as a fine example of the Craft of Storytelling. Golden's point-of-view choices, pacing, and world-building make this work stand out as one of the best books I've ever read.

I found it such a relief to read a book that relies on pure storytelling over audience manipulation. Our current culture revolves around the cliffhanger. End a chapter or episode of a show with such a big question that the reader/viewer will feel like he or she will just DIE if they don't come back for more but then not giving a very good payoff for coming back by dawdling around with other characters or making the cliffhanger based on a false perception from one character or lie from another. This tactic creates a choppy rhythm that messes with the classic storytelling arc of rising action, climax, falling action, and it's why I have learned to not follow shows like Revolution that seem to promise "all questions will be answered" with every commercial. As I read On Fire's Wings, I noticed myself coming to the end of each chapter with a sense of trepidation--feeling like the action was about to swing away from the current storyline. But she didn't do that to me. She stuck with the protagonist's story until natural pauses appeared and only switched to other characters as needed. And while there were minor conflicts and resolutions within the story, they were just enough to keep it interesting. She did a good job of not straying too far away from the main plotlines, and she did an even better job of burying the long-arc (the one that will continue into the rest of the series) until late in the story. We get hints at it all along, but it isn't until the last third of the book that we realize all those hints are actually direly important to the long-arc. Like building up the subtle layers of a painting, Golden's scenes create a rich tapestry that flows smoothly end-to-end.

I found her pacing tied into this dynamic equally well. Even though we cover the protagonist's life from around age 10 to around age 22, I didn't feel that she glossed over any important events. She swung from important event to important event like a child going across the monkey bars--a natural, easy rhythm that didn't leave me feeling like the next "bar" was either too close or too far for my grasp. I never felt impatient with the story, wanting characters to age faster, and I never felt like something significant had been missed. This is tough to do when covering many years' worth of action, and I am awed by how well she did it here!

What stands out best to me in this book is the world itself. Golden covers it all: Politics, economics, animal life, a few words of a new language, gender roles, food, and religion. But by giving us a natural introduction to the culture through the eyes of someone growing up within it, we discover it as if we were growing up in it ourselves. I particularly like that not every last person subscribes to the "rules" of this society, as I have seen in other books. Conversely, the only exceptions are not the protagonist and central cast. There are some extras who go against the grain, just as in real life, not every rule-breaker is a hero; some just go to jail. This book is a *STELLAR* example of what it means to show instead of tell. If there were any blocks of exposition about this culture, I didn't notice them. I feel like I learned all I needed to know from the lives of the characters, which is how it should be. I really don't want to read a travelogue of another world; I want to live there for a while, and Golden gave me a first-class ticket with companions who felt as real as any of my friends. I cheered for their successes and even shed some tears. I actually gasped out loud at one point and

had to put the book down for a bit so I could process what I'd just read.

The only place this book left me wanting was in the dreams some of the characters had about other lives. She gives some nice montages of glimpses into those lives, but the details are just tantalizers, not full stories. However, since those other lives were supposed to represent other iterations of this world, I feel like Golden made the right choice to withhold a lot of that. To give me more would be to "tell" this story rather than show it, so I'll have to live with those hints and hope for maybe a more of that in the next book.

All in all, this book did something that's very hard to do: It made me stop being an editor/publisher and just be a reader. I went all the way back to the magic I felt at age 13 when I read Dragonflight, Dragonsong, and A Little Princess all in the same week. Each of those books was lovely in its own way, but each left me wanting more. On Fire's Wings is very much the "more" for which I have longed, and I am so looking forward to the rest of the series.

Thank you, Christie Golden, for being a great bard! You rolled a natural 20 with this one! <3

mirba says

Very intense reading, difficult to put down. The story builds up to its final and it is quite grand

The world building is good. Set in a simil Muslim desertic country with quite peculiar rules of behaviour and life (it's almost like muslim but men can marry only one woman and wine can be drinked)

For all that it is written as a young adult but it goes to adult quite quickly and like many others I found the sibling thing quite disturbing and not really necessary for the storyline. I do not understand the reason for writing that honestly.

Diana Tenoh says

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Laura says

I liked the Luna line immediately, fantasy with romance and strong female leads? Great! This book doesn't deserve to be in it. The premise is good and the first half is very promising. Then, it sours. I understand why the incestuous relationship was needed for the plot, but in a novel in a line that promises romance, it is quite souring. When I read the next book in this series, I realized that it follows the same formulaic plot and I could even do the "who matches up with who" in my head that makes me think of tired Harlequin novels or fanfiction. Having one book for each dancer is really stretching it and honestly, it feels like a ploy for more money.

amanda Beeks says

this book really takes you for a journey. It was a book that was hard to put down. I cannot wait for the next book.

Kerry says

I have been checking out upcoming Luna books from the beginning, and when I originally read the blurb for this one, I decided it wasn't for me. I don't remember exactly why now, but it was a decision I was perfectly happy about. After the sequel, "In Stone's Clasp" came out, I pretty much ignored it, because of the original decision not to read the series.

Then, more recently, I started hearing good things about the series. I asked around and had it recommended to me. So I looked at "On Fire's Wings" again and through maybe I would read it - if I could find an affordable copy. This is not easy in New Zealand, so the whole idea languished again for a while. Until I found a nice, cheap copy in an Amazon zShop and decided to take the chance.

I'm glad I did, as I thoroughly enjoyed the book. Kevla is a good character, and her supporting cast are generally all solid and well rounded. The character development could have been a bit deeper and stronger, but their characters as written don't detract from the book. There just could have been a bit more. I had seen a warning on a message board just after I had started the novel, that there was a major taboo broken - incest - and that it was simply sad, rather than icky. I was far enough into the book to figure out the characters involved and trusting enough to keep reading and see for myself. That poster was right. There are forces at work beyond humanity here - things like fate and destiny and bonds through time - and they must see themselves through regardless of human beliefs. In this case, other characters decisions in earlier years leave only one way for destiny to take. It is indeed sad, and in its own way beautiful and almost right. If handled differently, this relationship could have been disgusting or icky, and certainly gratuitous. Golden makes it none of those things; she sets up the situation neatly and resolves it with care and compassion.

So if you've heard about that aspect of the book and been put off, don't me. Instead, give Golden and her characters a chance and I think you'll be pleasantly surprised.

This is a setup book; we only begin to have an inkling of what the world and characters will be facing by the end. I now have book two in transit to me and I look forward to seeing where the story goes from here.

As for the dragon, he's just totally cool as a dragon should be.

And the covers are very much of the pretty - as most Luna covers are - and I'm hanging out to see what the last three will look like.

[Copied across from Library Thing; 17 October 2012]

Christiana says

What a page turner. Enjoyed a lot of it. Can suspend disbelief & enjoy the story. Enjoyed a lot of the world

building.

Amanda says

a very interesting series. But before i review it more I want to warn anyone new that it's not actually a trilogy and the author can't write more until she gets the rights back.

As for the storyline unique take on a fantasy save the world premise. The writing isn't necessarily the greatest out there but its still good. the characters are great they've got flaws and seem quite realistic. I've written about a spoiler and what is my biggest issue with the book below. ive kept it vague but you may be able to figure it out so you've been warned.

??????Spoiler???????

beware of some incest its subtle and not a big plot point exactly but it is there. I had no idea going into the book and likely wouldn't have read it if I'd known. Despite it though the book is tasteful and the taboo is discussed and you won't feel too grossed out after. Although i think it could have easily been written without it, it's at least talked about and isn't idealized or really accepted by other characters. not even one half of the 2 characters involved.

Brittany Pesch says

'On fires wings' is a story of Kelva's life as a daughter of a Haalan (slut) and her unknown father Tahmu, lord of the clan of four waters. Kelva was taken from her mother at the age of ten by her father, at that time she didn't know that Tahmu was her father. She doesn't know about that until the end of the book. I believe the intended audience is young adults or Teens. It's about battles between clans, and the battle for the end of the world. At the end of the book, it is made clear that Kelva, or Flame Dancer, is one of the five dancers.

There's Stone Dancer, Air Dancer, Water Dancer and spirit dancer. Together the dancers have to make a final stand that will decide the fate of their world. As stated in the front of the book 'twice won, twice lost. This is the final dance' it's telling the audience that the Dancers are an important part of this story and their Lorekeepers, or the people who the memory. The lorekeeper, Jashimi, was Kelva's younger half-brother and lover. He is killed by a sudden outburst of Kelva's powers during intimacy. After that, Kelva tries to find who she really is after Jashimi yelled 'Kelva, my love, you are fire!' She finds her self at the bottom of mount bari, the home of the great dragon. She learns from the great dragon who she really is and that her powers are nothing to be feared by herself. The great dragon is the Flame Dancers companion. With the help of all the united clans. They face the enemy, at the end Kelva and the Great Dragon leave to find the other dancers.

I would recommend this book to people, their a great plot and interesting characters. Everything fits into the story lines one way or another. 'on fires wings' is a Fantasy, for there's magic in the story. All in All, this is a very good book that I think many people would love.

Youkomix says

[read in french so my review is in french]

Histoire

Kevla, enfant d'une prostitué, chante et danse sur les marchés afin d'attirer des clients pour sa mère. Un jour particulièrement difficile, elle attire l'attention du grand khashim, le leader du Clan des Quatre Eaux.

Tahmu reconnaît alors rapidement en elle l'enfant qu'il a eu avec une femme qu'il aimait, mais qu'il n'a pu épouser. Afin d'offrir à sa fille une meilleure vie, il décide d'emmener Kevla au sein de son clan. Près de lui, il espère veiller sur elle et lui offrir une meilleure vie, mais à aucun moment Kevla ne doit connaître la véritable raison de Tahmu.

Entre la vie au château et son amitié avec Jashemi, le fils héritier de Tahmu (donc le demi-frère de Kevla), elle commence à remettre en cause sa destiné. En effet, nuit après nuit, elle entend la voix du grand dragon Arukan.

Mon avis

Les décors sont merveilleusement bien décrit et on imagine facilement gambader à l'intérieur du palais des Quatre Eaux guidé par Kevla.

Les personnages sont approfondies, même les rôles secondaires et on comprend rapidement les sentiments de chacun.

La romance et le côté fantastique de l'histoire se mélangent avec aise. On est plongé dès le premier chapitre dans l'histoire et on ne fait que tourner les pages, impatient de connaître la suite.

La légende du dragon est LE livre qui m'a le plus marqué pendant mon adolescence. Je me souviens encore être sur la plage en train de dévorer les chapitres les uns après les autres, juste pour savoir ce qu'adviendra de Kevla. Comme quoi, on n'a pas besoin de télévision pour passer le temps, ce bon livre est bien mieux que toutes les émissions télévisuels.

En bref: Un excellent livre que je recommanderais sans problème.

Kelly says

Pros: the world building, the mythology, the slow build to an epic final battle

Cons: incest, this is the first book of a five book series in which the last two books may never be published, lame death of character, poorly justified incest.

This started as an interesting concept but took some really stupid wrong turns along the way. The overall mythology is that this is the fifth and final world and battle. The good side, the dancers, and the bad side, the Shadow, have fought over four previous worlds. Each side has won twice and lost twice. If the Dancers win this round, this world and the two previous worlds live. If the Shadow wins, everything gets destroyed.

The Loremasters and Dancers were an interesting concept. She had some unique flora and fauna. She built a complex belief system for her characters: religious, interpersonal, political, socioeconomic.

The incest was just unnecessary. She could have written that another way. And everyone asking how he died was just cringe worthy.

Ayah A. says

Reading a story where the male lead sacrifices himself to help the female lead discover who she is and empower her had a profound effect on me when I read this years ago. Read it again, and it still does.

Limecello says

Yo. Yooooooooo yo I cannot. So @BronwynK recommended this series to me, promising it was adult high fantasy romance.

Well ... yes. It was good and I quite enjoyed it, but for some OH MY GOD HOLY SHIT WHAT THE FUCK - NO REALLY WHAT THE EVER LOVING FUCKING FUCK.

FIRST OF ALL. There's incest. THAT'S THE ROMANCE. INCEST. WHAT. THE. FUCK.

The heroine and ... uh ... hero? `_(?)_` are half siblings. She's a bastard (poor girl) - and he's the son of an uber chieftan. He knows they're related. She has no clue. (He's slightly younger than her.) ... As children they're never really allowed to be together - her father gets her when she's 11 to "raise" her in his household ... as a servant.

Granted, the beginning of the book has her hawking her mother/being one of those "sign people" basically singing and dancing to attract attention at the market TO DRAW CUSTOMERS FOR HER MOTHER THE PROSTITUTE. But, I'm an open minded gal - I figured "ok, that's a little creepy skeevy, but I can accept that - they're desperate and have no choice. She does what she has to, and is just a child." It's also clear her mother is pretty abusive so ...

But then the developing incestuous romance? WHAT?!

SO.... spoilers. (view spoiler)

I can only so thank god this wasn't much of a romance - and/but then after she finds out she all still thinks of him and is all "oh I love you" and ...

inhales and exhales

Yeah no.

D

It'd be a C or even C+ read because it was really good EXCEPT FOR THE INCEST WHICH OBVIOUSLY RUINED THE WHOLE GODDAMN THING.

And you know the whole (view spoiler)

So ... Yeah. >>>.<<<

Fuck.

Marta Dec says

While at the beginning this book looked promising, the second half of it most definitely ruined my expectations. The plot, at first seeming well thought out, gets more and more forced with every page. The main character also gets quite annoying after a while - she's far too perfect and tragic to actually like her. Despite some twists in the storyline that might have been interesting, overall "On Fire's Wings" is tedious, full of very stereotypical threads and repetitive patterns.

S.L. says

I have finally read another Luna. I've had some of these books for a very long time, it seems. They've been stacked up waiting, sort of pathetically. It always makes me feel good to clear one of them off the TBR Range.

And some of them, naturally, are better than others. This one, On Fire's Wings falls into that category.

Kevla Bai-Sha is the daughter of a *halaan*, a prostitute, and one of the many male clients she's taken over the years. Kevla's job is to sing and dance in the marketplace to attract new customers for her father. The job doesn't thrill her, but, eh, it's a job.

Until the day the *khashim*, or leader, of the Clan of Four Waters finds her in the marketplace. Upon discovering that she is his daughter by a woman Tahmu (the clan leader) loved but couldn't marry, he takes her back to his house to serve as a servant. He promises she will have a good life.

Kevla's destiny, however, is not to serve her father unknowingly. She has a greater purpose, one that has been hers over four lifetimes. One she must fulfill, for better or worse. One that will bring her face to face with the Great Dragon of Arukan.

I loved this book. I was a fantasy reader before I was a romance reader and this is the sort of fantasy that I like. There's a well-constructed, immersive world. There are well-rounded characters that are so three-dimensional that you can honestly root for or rage against them. Even the minor characters made me care. The storyline was exciting and engaging. I kept turning pages and charging through words to see what would happen next.

There's just one thing that gave me pause. It was a big enough thing that I almost put the book down and walked away. I will spoiler it below:

SPOILER:

Tahmu has a son, Jashemi. He's Kevla's half-brother. He *knows* he's Kevla's half-brother, while she doesn't

know that they're related. And they have sex. It's a taboo in their world, just like it is in theirs.

END SPOILER

I read that bit through my fingers, essentially. Skimmed it, turned pages faster. I'm glad I didn't put the book down because it really is a fantastic story, but man. Not something I expected to read from a Luna. Then again, I've read the Spice Briefs and been surprised more than once there, too.

Oh. I did notice editing errors in this book. I don't know, if I didn't write and such on my own, whether I would have noticed them, but there were enough to be a little distracting.

Anyway, an excellent book, a great read and highly recommended.
