



# The Ruin of Kings

*Jenn Lyons*

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**The Ruin of Kings** Jenn Lyons

**There are the old stories. And then there's what actually happens.**

Kihrin is a bastard orphan who grew up on storybook tales of long-lost princes and grand quests. When he is claimed against his will as the long-lost son of a treasonous prince, Kihrin finds that being a long-lost prince isn't what the storybooks promised.

Far from living the dream, Kihrin finds himself practically a prisoner, at the mercy of his new family's power plays and ambitions. He also discovers that the storybooks have lied about a lot of other things, too: dragons, demons, gods, prophecies, true love, and how the hero always wins.

Then again, maybe he's not the hero, for Kihrin isn't destined to save the empire.

He's destined to destroy it . . .

**Uniting the worldbuilding of a Brandon Sanderson with the storytelling verve of a Patrick Rothfuss, debut author Jenn Lyons delivers an entirely new and captivating fantasy epic. Prepare to meet the genre's next star.**

## The Ruin of Kings Details

Date : Published February 5th 2019 by Tor Books

ISBN : 9781250175489

Author : Jenn Lyons

Format : Hardcover 560 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Dragons

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# From Reader Review **The Ruin of Kings** for online ebook

## **Alaina says**

*I have received this ARC from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.*

I was so pumped to dive into *The Ruin of Kings*. Especially after getting accepted for this but, unfortunately, I ended up disappointed. Honestly, it could've been the format (since I read this on my phone) but it's just like.. ugh, nope.

At first, the characters were interesting and I wanted to know more about them. BUT, ugh, I couldn't stand the backstories anymore. One and done people! I didn't need to know what people had for breakfast 500 years ago or whatever. It's not something that actually happened.. just an example!

Other than the interesting characters, the demons, magicians, and long lost princes were what kept my engaged. Oh lord, the demon was freaky, weird, and honestly made me laugh. Probably not supposed to laugh when a demon is yelling at a character in all caps... but I did. It was hilarious.

I wish I liked it more than I actually did. Might try to reread it.. but no promises right now.

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## **Beth says**

The **The Ruin of Kings** was not for me. I do like complex fantasy. I enjoy great world building with descriptive storytelling. And here comes the BUT. But the story is presented in a very original way but I found convoluted and quite confusing way that lead to me developing zero character connections.

I received this ARC copy of **The Ruin of Kings** from Macmillan-Tor/Forge. This is my honest and voluntary review. **The Ruin of Kings** is set for publication Feb. 5, 2019.

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## **Stefan Bach says**

Angsty orphan with his head in the clouds didn't get his happy story so he decides to destroy the world? Orphan with his name so conspicuously similar to Krillin's?

And then even the blurb is so filled with bullshit that they go so far to compare the worldbuilding with Sanderson's and prose with that of Rothfuss' (which is basically like they compared her with Robin Hobb, modern Mary Shelley)?  
Give me a break.

I see where this is going.  
GR, when you finish hyping this book out to heavens and beyond, and couple of years passes by and everyone forgets it - I will read it in peace.

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## Emma says

Kihrin is many things: orphan, thief, long lost son of a prince... destroyer of the world? Whatever else he is, he's also having a really bad time of it. Everything he's ever believed is lies, truths only discovered through violence and death. But since his new life involves evil magicians, a death cult, a war between gods and demons, the kind of family that epitomises the whole keep-your-enemies-closer philosophy, and dragons.... well, his chances don't seem like they'll be looking up any time soon. After all, he's in prison when we meet him.

Right from the outset it's clear this book isn't set up in the usual fashion. Kihrin languishes in a jail cell, bullied by his captor into narrating the events that led him to this point. Into a magic rock no less. His tale is told in alternating chapters, while his jailer, Talon, accounts for the other. But here's the hook, she has some very particular skills that means the story she's telling is also his, adding parts of the plot not only on a different timeline, but from varied perspectives too. If that isn't complicated enough, the resulting recoding (magical rock, remember?) from which this book is supposedly drawn is then provided with somewhat snarky commentary in footnote style from a whole other character who is also involved in the story at various points. It's an interesting premise, but one that nevertheless has its own challenges. When it works it creates an escalating tension as the chapters flip, each one ending on a cliffhanger, so that it's impossible to put the book down. The chapters are short, high energy, and thrilling.

But that's when it works. The dual storyline of Kihrin in first person and then in third from differing perspectives sometimes created a strange dissonance, almost like it was two different people, and not just because of the character development acquired in one half or the other. There's a constant need to remember which Kihrin knows what and when he learned it, especially because the overarching plot is seriously convoluted. Not only is there high stakes politics, ethnic and religious wars, and familial infighting on an epic scale, there's bodyswapping. So people might not be who you think they are. Or were. Or whatever. To say it brings about some dodgy familial connections is a bit of an understatement. When the format fails, bogged down in detail and unnecessary complication, things end up needing to be explained a bit too much by one person or another, making it feel unnatural. Even if, because of the complexity, they probably really do need to work through it themselves. This happens a bit too much at the beginning and then again with the finale, which felt rushed and threw in some curve balls to conform to the prophecies that supposedly underly the action.

So at this point you might be wondering how it got 4 stars at all? Let me go back to the whole 'when it works' thing I was talking about before. Parts of this book are blindingly good. As in, 5-stars-are-not-enough kinda great. Pretty much all the middle in fact. If you're one of the people that read the preview, it starts right at the end of that and lasts all the way till the stories converge in the final segment. This is where Jenn Lyons' creativity shines. From beginning to end, the worldbuilding is excellent, layered and intricate, developed by an author who knows everything about the place she's created. It's never less than believable, from the systems of government to history, cultural norms and values to religion and magic. There's diversity of all sorts, including both underlying and overt dialogue about sexual identity/choice that surprised and pleased me. Of course, it's not all hearts and rainbows, variation brings hostility and this is a dangerous world. All of the abhorrent aspects of human society are here: slavery, racial wars, rape, incest, murder, human sacrifice. People have dark stories and even darker motivations. Even our lead has a real attitude, though considering his circumstances I can understand where he's coming from, and in any case it's done with comedy rather than angst. It's not just him either. The book had the same kind of humorous banter and

point scoring backchat that reminded me much more of UF. The exchanges between Kihrin and Teraeth were exceptional, transforming from genuinely funny to moving and emotional and back again with ease. Such humour provided a very necessary lightness in pretty dire circumstances and gave Kihrin the kind of appeal accorded to those who respond to the shit shovelled in their direction with two fingers and a smile. Yet he's only one of a whole cast of memorable characters, so well conceived and vibrantly portrayed that they carry the book even when the plot loses itself a bit. Most of the true character development came predominantly in that middle section and was by far the best part of the book, managing to maintain momentum whilst deepening the relationships between characters and expanding our knowledge of the world. I raced through it, loving every minute. There were questions answered and even more asked, a labyrinthine game that has been played for thousands of years. And even though the ending didn't hold quite the same thrill, it brought enough surprises, enough *possibilities*, to whet the appetite for more.

Despite my quibbles, I'm intrigued about where this will go. The dual storyline format doesn't seem to be one that can be successfully repeated, potentially giving the next book an entirely different feel. Certainly, the final scenes include some you-can't-do-that moments that I can't wait to see explored. If you thought things were going to hell here, the future seems like it's already on fire.... and I'll be there to see it burn.

ARC via publisher for [fantasybookreview.co.uk](http://fantasybookreview.co.uk)

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## **Eon ?Windrunner? says**

3.5 stars, maybe 4 - may change as I review the full book upon publication.

***Who are you again??***

**So sweet of you to ask. I'm Talon. I'll be your murderer tonight.**

I recently finished reading this preview available on Netgalley of *The Ruin of Kings* by Jenn Lyons and enjoyed it very much. I did have some problems with the chosen narrative style which did not help the story, but the book was fascinating enough to keep me glued to the pages.

Our story starts off with the protagonist stuck in a prison cell and his formidable captor watching over him, preventing any chance of escape. His captor is bored and demands (threats are made) the protagonist tell her the tale of how exactly he got here. Thus we find out what has transpired, but from chapters told through alternate viewpoints. One from the protagonist, Kihrin, and the other from the jailor, Talon. These alternating viewpoints then also have different timelines and every time a viewpoint switches it is almost a mental exercise in remembering what is going on. There is also another complication with the viewpoints, as one character can see from multiple viewpoints, but I will leave it at that. See why I mentioned the confusing narrative style?

Young Kihrin is a talented thief who witnesses something he should not have, which then sets in motion events that will eventually lead to him being claimed against his will as the long-lost son of a treasonous prince, as mentioned in the blurb. The Kihrin we find languishing in the jail cell though, seems to be a very different version of the character and I can only wonder at all the changes in him and the events that

transpired to result in his incarceration.

I have not read Jenn Lyons before, but apart from the confusing narrative I enjoyed her writing. Worldbuilding was solid, characters were interesting and the story riveting. As mentioned, this was just a preview though, so I cannot judge the entire book but only comment on what I have read so far. The thing is that this book would likely have been amazing without all the extra complication of the viewpoints and timelines etc. When it was good, it was SO good. But the narrative choices take so much away from the story. I am not sure if the rest of the book gets less complicated as it continues, but the story being as fascinating as it is, I hope that the next book takes a simpler approach. The preview ended just as things got REALLY interesting, so I am pretty much clueless as to what's next but still VERY eager to find out where this is going. I have hope, friends. Another (part of a) book on the TBR list.

The Ruin of Kings releases February 5th 2019

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## **Sherwood Smith says**

The next big blockbuster fantasy series, at least according to the massive publicity push.

There are three narrative threads switching back and forth, sometimes with lightning speed: there is the present-day, in which our handsome hero, Kihrin, is in prison, telling his story to Talon in first person.

Then we get Talon's narrative intrusions explaining Kihrin's past, interpolated with a mysterious narrator who also adds footnotes.

It's clear that the author is having prime fun with narrative devices; the footnotes veer between mordant-toned commentary and casual worldbuilding nuggets. The result is a snarl of time and place and POV that the reader must constantly adjust to, but there is enough cleverness in the prose, and vivid imagery (sometimes too vivid for my wimpy self) to make it worthwhile-- if one likes this type of fantasy.

And a lot of people will. It's intelligently written, with wildly inventive worldbuilding stitching together the usual fantasy tropes of kings, demons, wars, and priests doing blood magic, etc.

The book should do super well as there is enough torture, blood, guts, brothel-forced sex, incest, rape, and agony (while still preserving Kihrin's fabulous looks and nascent powers) to satisfy the *Game of Thrones* fans who go into fantasy expecting astronomical body counts.

Since this was a preview, ending on a thousand mile drop of a cliffhanger, there is no predicting how this first book of a projected five book series hangs together, but judging by the exhilaratingly wild ride of this glimpse, I expect it will do what its fans want most: entertain.

Preview provided by NetGalley

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## **James Lafayette Tivendale says**

We did this (myself and Emma) as a combined review for Fantasy Book Review which can be seen here.  
<http://www.fantasybookreview.co.uk/Je...>

These were my thoughts following on from what Emma had already written.

I received a limited edition proof copy of The Ruin of Kings in exchange for an honest review

Additional notes by James Tivendale - I think Emma summed up most of the points perfectly.

I agree with what Emma said about the point of views switching between 1st and 3rd person sometimes being confusing and the reader having to readjust. The beginning and middle I rated 10/10. The ending occasionally felt forceful and rushed until the final 30-40 pages which I found absolutely stunning. There are a lot of characters and many of which have very similar names and there are very complex family trees. Lyons kindly includes a Dramatis Personae as well as explaining difficult or uneasy context to help us understand the deepness and complexities in her amazingly crafted world.

Following on from there being many characters it does get confusing with the two timelines. One being Kihrin's 1st person perspective which is his recent antics and the other being his jailor Talon's descriptions of what happened before his sections. Many of the cast are in both timelines and with short, sharp and often very thrilling chapters and I believe only 4-years difference between the action of both segments it does sometimes take a few minutes to work out, or it did for me if this is before or after what happened last. First of my two further negatives is that I didn't really grasp the reasons for the whole prophecy about our main character and I never thought he wasn't the hero as the tagline states. Also, the 80-90% section of the narrative is too swift, and however amazing it is, pardon my french - it's a bit of a 'head-fuck.'

I sound like I've been negative here but I'm really not. Emma summed up perfectly what I enjoyed about this book. I still believe this will be an instant classic and TOR have got an absolute winner on their hands. My comments might have been the harshest but I've pushed the rating up because of how great I think this book is, albeit including minor issues. The Ruin of Kings will be in many top-10 lists next year and I cannot wait to see what comes next because I'm 100% here for the whole ride.

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## **Liz Barnsley says**

This book was one you have to commit to being a tome but the read just flies by because it is utterly fantastic. In fact I wouldn't have minded a bit more...

A good fantasy novel lives and dies on its world building and characters and Jenn Lyons has an intricately imaginative eye for both – a rich tapestry that offers up new insight every time you look at it – a complex and highly intriguing setting with multiple levels that inform and affect the characters you meet there. The story is told over different periods of time by our possible hero or possible reluctant villain Kihrin and by Talon, who I'll leave you to meet for yourselves. It is impossible to describe in review the intelligent plotting and extraordinarily fascinating tale that unfolds so I won't even try but it was completely gripping and the writing is beautifully immersive first page to last.

Also it has dragon's, sea monsters, demons and magic, heroes and villains that are occasionally interchangeable and an addictive quality that is second to none.

Loved it. Highly Recommended.

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## **Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says**

I don't like the sprayed edges on this one. It looks like they might have been trying to do a grey color from the grey book (which I like better and am going to get) or maybe a light blue.

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## **Jessi (Novel Heartbeat) says**

### **DNF @ 150 pages**

The storytelling was tedious and made me want to bash my skull into a wall. It flip flopped back and forth between Khirin's story - in first person, at point B in the timeline; and Talon's story - in third person, talking about Khirin/Rook, at point A in the timeline. I think it would have been interesting if it had been done just a certain way, but this one sooo did not work for me.

There were a lot of names and places being thrown around - names that sounded like my cat decided to galavant across my keyboard, might I add - with little to no explanation (except for the mind-numbing useless facts in the footnotes that did absolutely nothing for the readers' comprehension or story line, which I'll get to in a minute) and it made the world confusing and hard to follow. I do hope the final copy will have either a map or a glossary (or both, preferably).

Which brings me to the utterly useless footnotes that made me want to rage quit after two chapters of reading them - I ended up skipping them altogether after a few chapters and I'm pretty sure I missed exactly nothing. There was "world building" in them on occasion, but it was irrelevant drivel that didn't add to the plot in any way, shape, or form. To further my point, here are some examples of said footnotes:

*The vane's eyes glowed.* \* (\*footnote: One presumes not literally.)

*Most folks just assume it must be a diamond.* \* *Hard as a diamond, anyway.* \* YES THAT'S TWO IN THE SAME FREAKING SENTENCE (\*footnotes: It's not a diamond. /// \*Harder.)

Like I said: utterly. useless. I think maybe the author was going for a Nevernigh-esque thing with the footnotes, but most definitely failed. If you're going to drag me out of the story, at least make it worth my while.

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## **Eric Allen says**

A friend of mine who is still in the business sent me an extremely well-worn ARC of this book, saying that, literally, everyone I used to work with when I was still writing and editing articles had already read and completely loved it. I used to work with some extraordinarily hard to please critics, so if they all loved it, it



must be pretty good. I've been looking for new fantasy authors/series to follow lately. Seems like there's a lot of buzz about this book, so hopefully, it'll live up to all of that.

TL;DR - READ THIS BOOK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! It does have a bit of a slow start, but it's not the boring kind of slow, it's more the author carefully setting everything up so she can burn it all down sort of slow. Any complaints I may have about it are barely even nitpicks. No book is perfect, but this one is about as close to it as a book can get.

You can find my random ramblings as I read it below if you so desire to read through them.

10% in:

Thank god it's not written in present tense. There's been a lot of newer authors bringing that bullshit from Dystopian over into Fantasy lately. The beginning of this book is a bit slow. Not the boring sort of slow, just the setting things up in interesting ways sort of slow. It does jump around quite a bit, which could have done with a bit more editing to smooth things out more, and make scene transitions a bit softer rather than the complete 180, shovel to the face, what the hell is happening, breaks that may confuse people who aren't used to having to pay too close attention to what they're reading. It's just a minor annoyance, but it is an annoyance. The book is written like a book of history piecing together different accounts of events, blending first person and third person accounts together in a pretty seamless way, with the author of the history making aside comments every now and then, often to add a bit of exposition or humor. I find the little comments to be amusing and to add a bit of personality to the story that otherwise wouldn't be there, but I can also see it annoying some people too. I enjoy the main character, he's the sort of bitter, sarcastic type of character that can usually make me laugh, without straying into emo, edgelord territory (yet) and the mystery surrounding him, and how he came to be in his current predicament are intriguing. All in all, I'm enjoying the book, and the writing style, despite a few minor annoyances.

20% in:

Okay, once you figure out that there's a pattern to the chapters (not a hard thing to do) it feels like it's jumping around less.

50% in:

You know what I like about this book. It's a story that's not told in a conventional way. This may annoy some people, but I find it kind of refreshing. It's still a story. It's still about things. It still has characters that learn and grow, and mysteries that are slowly being unraveled. But it's told in a way that you don't normally see. It kind of reminds me of the movie Memento in the way that it's pieced together. A certain other large-egoed fantasy author who attempted to tell a story in an unconventional way, who shall remain nameless, could learn a few things about how to do it the right way by reading this book. It's essentially two separate stories about different periods of one person's life being told simultaneously, and sometimes not all in the right order to avoid events in one story spoiling events in the other. It also helps that both stories are good, avoid most of the common fantasy tropes and cliches, and have likable characters. Also, Talon, one of the coolest freaking villain henchmen ever! When the book does use a fantasy trope, it usually mocks itself either through the narrator making an aside comment, or the characters laughing at it, which is a really entertaining way to do it. I think my favorite was, "There's a prophecy. No. Really. Stop laughing." I'm really liking this book, mostly because it feels like something new and fresh, and it's pretty well written on top of it. Also, Talon, dudes and dudettes. She is freaking amazing.

100% in:

So, yeah, I loved this book. It has some really good world building. Some very entertaining characters. A

story that is incredibly epic in scope while still managing to be focused on where it's going and what it's doing. A great sense of humor, especially when dealing with overused fantasy genre tropes. It doesn't follow normal storytelling conventions, but still manages to actually tell a story, be about something, have characters that learn, grow and develop, and come to a pretty climactic end--I'm looking at YOU, Rothfuss!!!--and it's amazingly well written. Jenn Lyons is a very talented writer and storyteller, and I can't wait the next book of this trilogy. It's hard to summarize the plot without giving away spoilers that could potentially ruin the experience of having it unfold before you while reading, but let's just say that the publisher's summary does not do this book justice AT ALL. And HURRAY, my favorite character made it out alive... for now. We'll see where she ends up after the trilogy finishes up in a few years.

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## **Holly (Holly Hearts Books) says**

### **Have you ever been to denial town? Currently visiting and it sucks....**

The Ruin of Kings has been on my radar ever since it was announced in 2018 being compared to Joe Abercrombie (one of my favorite authors), Patrick Rothfuss, and Brandon Sanderson. It sounded so good - a heavy dose of epic fantasy with all the usual nastiness and morally-grey characters. But I could not connect with a single character or event in this book no matter what I did. The convoluted storytelling DID NOT HELP. In Fact I skimmed the last half of this as fast as I could....

I'm sure the right sort of reader will eat this up and add it to their favorites list. It does seem to be garnering a lot of positive attention. At least the publisher is making it seem like that with those heavy words **"Prepare to meet the genre's next star."**

Page 1 begins with an ominous scene. We're introduced to a boy named Kirian as he is in a jail cell with a "demon" named Talon who is leaning on the outside bars begging for a story to be told on how he got there.

And so he begins.

And so does she.

That's right. We are forced to follow not one but two different perspectives of the same story being told. We have two narrations here! There's Kihrrins 1st person perspective talking about his recent events and then there's Talons 3rd person perspective talking about what happened before the events he's telling.. uhhhh. So yes, Talons chapters aren't about her. They're also about Kihrrin.. in 3rd person.. but his name is Rook..

Which would have been incredibly unique and interesting but I found it to be confusing and hard to follow. OH YEAH! There's also footnotes throughout the whole book...

Not like I don't enjoy a complex story, I freaking do! Like give me all the complexity! But with the writing style, body swapping (where characters are actually not the characters you think they are) and the 10 page glossary in the back of the book of smash-your-face-on-keyboard names (including multiple nicknames for multiple characters) made up slangs for gangs, and kingdoms and faraway lands. This quickly became a chore. Adding insult to injury, I found the the main character Kihrrin very unlikeable and did not enjoy reading the story he wanted to tell.

I think if we had a linear plot line, it would have been much more enjoyable. It's so frustrating that its

convoluted because there is a wonderful story and world that's sort of obstructed by the time and perspective jumps. The world building is beautiful and the rich history/cultures were \*insert grabby hands\*

But all in all, I am left in a puddle of disappointment. Like I said, I skimmed the fork out of the last half of this book. I was over it but I feel like I have a good mindset on my rating.

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## Petrik says

*ARC provided by the publisher—Tor Books—in exchange for an honest review.*

**Convoluted and complex are probably understatement, but I don't have any other words to describe the main attributes of this debut.**

For those of you who don't know, *The Ruin of Kings* have been the fantasy debut that Tor has been promoting heavily for several months now. This novel has been advertised as the debut of the year that's targeted "For fans of George R. R. Martin, Robin Hobb, Joe Abercrombie, Brent Weeks, Brandon Sanderson, and Patrick Rothfuss". I'll be completely honest here, if any publisher or author decides to put all of these giant, super high profile fantasy authors' references into a debut work by an unknown author, it seriously better be a masterpiece. I'm one of those readers who had their interest for this book sparked by that bold claim, and I jumped at the chance of reading and reviewing it early; expecting it to be a debut that will go down into my 'best of all time' lists. Unfortunately, it didn't. Although I liked spending time with this book, I didn't love it. And honestly speaking, despite the chaos and questions which arose from the ending sequences, I doubt I'll be continuing with the series.

"A hero who has never had a bad thing happen to him isn't a hero—he's just spoiled."

*The Ruin of Kings* is Jenn Lyon's debut and it's the first out of five books in *A Chorus of Dragons* series. The main story revolves around Kihrin, who in the present timeline is in jail retelling all the events that have happened to him which eventually led to his capture. Now, here's where it immediately started to get complicated. Kihrin's narration doesn't begin from his actual beginning but halfway through his journey; the first half of Kihrin's story is instead being narrated by his jailor—Talon. This means there are three main timeframes to follow. First is the present timeline in which Kihrin is in jail telling his story to Talon. Then, the second and third timelines—where the majority of the book takes place in—deal with Kihrin's past. These chapters are told in a see-saw method, consecutively switching back and forth with each chapter progression in the first person (Kihrin's narration) and third person (Talon's narration) perspectives. There are also a lot of footnotes added by another character, because everything you read about Kihrin—in both timelines—was actually done in written format by this character. Not only the unconventional storytelling makes it very easy to lose focus on who's who or what, many of the characters—and believe me, there are a lot of names to remember—have multiple nicknames, and also similar-sounding names. For example: Teraeth, Terindel, Therin, Tyentso, Kelindel, and Kelinos, just to name a few. To add even more confusion, there were also elements of body swapping, which meant some of the characters you encounter may not be who you think they are.

My main problem with all these is that even after finishing the whole story, it all feels like it was

unnecessarily convoluted. I truly believe *The Ruin of Kings* would've been an amazing debut if it was told in a linear and chronological structure. Talon's narration which began from Kihrin's true beginning was so much more engaging than Kihrin's narration due to its natural sense of story progression and characters' development. Kihrin's narration began halfway throughout his flashback. Think of it like this. When you're reading a book, you start reading from the first page and flip through it one at a time. In *The Ruin of Kings*, not only do you start from the first page, but at the same time you also have to start from the 50% mark; then you continue your progress from each starting point by switching back and forth between two different time frames. I thought there would be a good reason for using this unconventional storytelling style that will result in a huge impact, but there was none. There was no epic convergence or anything like that at all. In the end, it all seems like this unconventional style was included for the sake of making things more complex than necessary. Every chapter became a constant battle of readjusting information gathered in your head due to the different timeframes. Plus, Kihrin in all timeframes sounded like totally different characters due to this storytelling method - the main character's development became disjointed and abstract rather than natural. When a chapter was great and I was interested to find out what happened next, the narrative forced me to read another chapter from a different timeframe first. And this happened regularly.

This doesn't mean that I don't enjoy complex epic fantasy, I've read and utterly loved *Malazan Book of the Fallen* and other massive fantasy series. However, *The Ruin of Kings* didn't really work out for me, as I felt it was deliberately more complex than it needed to be. I strongly advise readers to check out the preview chapters kindly provided by Tor on their website, or NetGalley before getting this book. For the reasons I mentioned above, I truly believe that you have to truly know what kind of storytelling style you're getting into here; you can't rely only on the blurbs and advertisements. I'm saying this so that the book will attract the right audience too. I always try my best to read a book that has my interest with as little information as possible. Most of the time it worked absolutely well, but sadly this was one of those rare cases where it didn't; I should've read at least a few chapters before requesting for the ARC.

I know I have sounded really negative and critical so far but believe me that it wasn't all bad. The world-building, in particular, was spectacular. Lyons implemented her world-building gradually and there wasn't any info-dump. The world that Lyons has built in *The Ruin of Kings* was huge in scope, full of rich history, brimming with dangers, politics, gods, demons, and massive dragon. Lyons also has a superbly engaging prose that even when the story became too convoluted, I was never bored with it and was still intrigued to continue. Finally, the side characters were incredibly well-written. I didn't find myself invested with Kihrin, but his interaction and banter with the side characters were humorous and entertaining to read. Every side character have their personality well fleshed-out and their own distinct voices. Galen and Doc were two of my favorite characters from the book. I do want to say though, that this book is not for YA. It deals with a lot of heavy and dark topics like rape, incest, slavery, and prejudice that I think is not suitable for a younger audience.

“Real evil is an empire like Quur, a society that feeds on its poor and its oppressed like a mother eating her own children. Demons and monsters are obvious; we'll always band together to fight them off. But real evil, insidious evil, is what lets us just walk away from another person's pain and say, well, that's none of my business.”

My rating speaks for itself; that I liked *The Ruin of Kings* and I think this was a good debut. Overall, I just didn't find the book to reach the level of grandeur promised by the very high claims. In my opinion, *The Ruin of Kings* was a good debut that could've been amazing if it follows a more linear and chronological

storytelling style. Although in the end this didn't really work out as much as I hoped, I recommend *The Ruin of Kings* to readers who are looking for complex epic fantasy with an unconventional storytelling method.

**Official release date: February 5th, 2019 (US), February 7th, 2019 (UK)**

**You can pre-order the book from: [Amazon UK](#) | [Amazon US](#) | [Book Depository \(Free shipping\)](#)**

*The quotes in this review were taken from an ARC and are subject to change upon publication.*

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## **Esmerelda Weatherwax says**

I have no idea how I'm going to rate this. It's one of the rare books where there are parts I truly love, and some that I seriously hated. That always makes coming up with a score/rating particularly difficult.

This had really neat world building that had some very cool ideas, there was a lot going on, politics, mysteries, non human races, dragons.... but it had horrible pacing and very odd structure choice.

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## **Dianne says**

What a preview! **THE RUIN OF KINGS** by Jenn Lyons looks to be a fabulous fantasy read with all of the action, the quests and the outstanding characters that have hit every one of my must read buttons!

My only regret is that I didn't realize this was only a preview but I do appreciate the length of it! There is enough to be more than just an info dump.

I received a complimentary PREVIEW edition from Tor-Forge! Expected publication date for the entire book is February, 2019.

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