



Forsaken Kingdom

J.R. Rasmussen

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At his kingdom's darkest hour, the lost heir returns. A pity he can't remember who he is ...

To save his people and the forbidden magic they're sworn to defend, Wardin Rath surrenders his birthright and his past. For seven years he's held at the court of his deadliest enemy, oblivious to all he's lost. Until one day, the spell that stole his memories begins to crack.

On the heels of a harrowing escape, Wardin's quest for answers leads him to the last magistry, where he studied magic as a boy. But he'll find no safe haven there—or anywhere. Plagued by threats and suspicion, hunted relentlessly by the king who will stop at nothing to crush him, Wardin is soon battling for his life, his home, and the survival of magic itself.

And this time, the enemy will take no prisoners.

Forsaken Kingdom Details

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From Reader Review Forsaken Kingdom for online ebook

Laura says

Wow, this was a beautiful book with an amazing story and very good characters. Finally a story with young people, nineteen years old, who don't act like children, but think and act like adults.

Lukasz says

Forsaken Kingdom is J.P.Rasmussen's debut novel. What initially caught my attention was synopsis - I'm a huge fan of magic learning and I hoped there'll be quite a bit of hidden knowledge rediscovery. In a way, I wasn't wrong.

Wardin Rath is the last heir of the Kingdom. To save his people and the forbidden magic they're sworn to defend, he allowed the bad guys to erase his memories magically. Oblivious of his past, he's been serving for seven years at the court of his deadliest enemy. One day things start to change - Wardin starts to have dreams, and he feels an inexplicable affinity toward the silver inkwell he spotted on King Bramwell's desk.

Soon, an attempt on his life is made, and he's on the run. He returns to the last magistry, where he studied magic as a boy. Unfortunately, even there, he won't be safe. The king wants to crush him.

The plot is rather simple and straightforward, and it draws heavily from well-known tropes (heir of the kingdom fighting for his birthright, faithful sidekicks, there are mentions of the enchanted sword). I have nothing against the tropes as long as they're used well, and J.P. Rasmussen writes them in an entertaining and easily accessible way.

Wardin is believable as a character. While we've all seen similar heroes in the fantasy literature, I have to say I like him. He has good dynamics with his "sidekicks" - twins Arun and Erietta. Each of them is skilled in one of three forms of magic known in this world. Also, each of them is nicely fleshed out. They feel real. I think the most interesting character is the bad guy - King Bramwell who can be both cruel and brutal but also believably touched by sentiments.

Magic system is neat. There are three kinds of magic. Battlemagic is physical, Sage magic affects minds, and Contrivance influences the imagination. Each form has to be balanced by its opposite - Battlemages have to do mental work after the expenditure of magic, contrivers do simple menial tasks, and sages have to do some physical work. Becoming out of balance isn't advised - it leads to catatonic states and madness. Apart from human-mages, there are also magical dogs known as blackhounds. I think it's a neat magic system, although I'm still not sure what determines whether the mage can perform magic or not.

The story is focused on the quest and action, and there's not much world-building or lengthy descriptions of flora and fauna. The pacing is uneven - at the beginning of the book, I struggled with the story as everyone seemed to have the same voice and the story felt a bit slow. It changed fast, though, and the flow improves significantly.

My issues with the story are a bit spoilery - I feel like characters motivations aren't fully explored. Truth be told, I don't understand Bramwell's decisions (to keep Wardim alive, then to kill him, to kill all his rivals in the past, etc. - was it just because he has no magical powers? That would be petty for such an interesting

character).

The plot is linear and straightforward - characters move from point A to point B to progress the storyline. At times, it feels a bit too convenient. One of the characters is saved by someone who happens to arrive from far away and at the right time. Again, too convenient, too simple.

The final battle was a bit of a letdown to me, but I can't elaborate on it not to spoil things for you. Suffice to say, the resolution felt anticlimactic and disappointing.

Overall, the book is well written, entertaining and quick to read. It uses tropes but does it with skill and some measure of restraint. I'm not sure if I'll read the sequel, but it's possible. The book gets three stars from me and it means that I liked it. There are some flaws, but it's a promising debut.

I read the book as part of **the TBRind** - An Indie Author and Reviewer Matching Service created and maintained by The Weatherwax Report.

Judy Miller says

Good read.

Has all aspects that I enjoy. Beginning to end was well thought out. I enjoyed the interaction among the characters. Ready for the next series book.

Laura says

4.5

LOVED this book, I had a really hard time putting it down. Well written, nicely paced, good characters, well woven plot. It really kinda had it all.

I have one complaint.

Book 2 is not yet out. Nor do I see a projected date.

sigh

Yet another series not yet finished that I can add to my "I'm hooked" list. I really need to learn. ;-)

matthew furrer says

A very good read!

I admit that I'd never heard of the author, though I wouldn't weight that detail too greatly in a genre pool as richly populated as Fantasy Fiction. The read was engaging and entertaining. I haven't gone through a book so quickly in some time. As a seasoned reader of magic worlds, I could criticize some details. I choose not to

however, and only mention it so that others might expect to find the same and know that it doesn't subtract from the story in the slightest. Now onto the next book before I have to sleep!

Angel says

I received an ARC of this story through Hidden Gems and this is my honest and voluntary review. Wardin Rath is a prince studying magic at the magistracy while his father is at war with their own family over control of the kingdom. Wardin's father is killed and the best plan Wardin can come up with is to turn himself over to the victor, his cousin Bramwell, before he is found at the last surviving magistracy so he does not bring destruction upon it. Bramwell then has Wardin's memories blocked and replaced with a life of mediocrity and complacency as the rest of the world settles and magic becomes a legend... and eventually, the story really starts from here. When Wardin's memories return, and his old companions find him, it begins his grand quest, in traditional epic fantasy style. The story can seem a bit slow at times, but what true epic fantasy isn't (ie what felt like years of walking in LotR lol) ? This wasn't a fast read, but it was a good one and I can't wait for the next in the series!

coby I Weber says

Great read!!!

I gave this a five star. Want to find out what happens next. Writing was very good, descriptive, no grammatical errors, a little mystery, and intrigue. Fantasy is my main read, would recommend this book.

Gea says

Warden and Erietta take on the battle to keep the magic alive.

Bramwell has something against them, thinks anyone with magic might challenge his ruling.

There's a mysterious sword no one has seen yet, which might make the ultimate change, if they can find it.

I think it's realistic when wielding magic it has to be balanced out. Otherwise the wielder will go mad. I can't help thinking if that's what happened to Bramwell or if it something else entirely?

I received a free copy and this is my honest review

Malyix0013 says

I thoroughly enjoyed this book! I was a little confused by some details in the beginning, but my patience was eventually rewarded with answers. The story held my attention and I couldn't put it down. I absolutely loved the dynamic between the three main protagonists. I liked that they were young enough to make mistakes, but old enough to accept and consider the consequences of their actions.

Well done!!! On to the second book!

Katheryn says

Great Book. I love the characters and the plot. I think the author hit the nail on the head when describing the book as Aragon meets Harry Potter.

Jeffrey A. Dewey says

Magic or no

Treachery, warring kin for the throne with magic used to forget. Action packed with swords, daggers, magic and torture of prisoners.

Matt Wand says

Excellent book!

This was a great read and a very interesting and exciting new world. The villains are depraved and the heroes are inspiring both in humility and tenacity. I can't wait to continue the series.

Pauline Ross says

This book has all the elements of epic fantasy that I've poked fun at in the past. You know the sort of thing - the lost heir to the kingdom, the enchanted sword (which has a name, naturally), the school for magic, the trusty sidekicks... I should have hated it, but instead I inhaled it almost at one sitting. Why? Because it's so much fun. And there are positively no boring bits.

The book starts in the most awesome way imaginable. Wardin Rath is a prince, whose uncle and father have just lost a war. Wardin is the last of his line, and will be the object of the victorious king's searches until he's found. And then killed. But Wardin is somewhere very special, the last Magistry in the kingdom, the sole remaining repository for magic in the land. If Wardin is tracked down there, not only his own life will be lost, but the Magistry too, and with it all magical knowledge. So, at the age of just twelve, Wardin does something amazingly heroic: he leaves the Magistry, and allows himself to be caught by his enemy.

Needless to say (because the book would be very short otherwise) he isn't killed. Instead his memories are magically erased, and he's held at King Bramwell's court as a royal tutor. Now, this requires some suspension of disbelief, because Bramwell is a hardnosed warrior and battle campaigner, and his motives for this action are dubious to say the least, but let that pass. Inevitably, the spell is eventually fractured, and so begins the main part of the story, with Wardin, now all grown up, trying to work out just who and what he is as bits of memory drift back to his mind, and eventually returning to the Magistry and his old friends.

I liked Wardin very much, and he's believable both as the memory-wiped tutor and as the prince who is obviously destined to be a great leader of men (by book 3 of the trilogy, I predict). I liked the two sidekicks, too - Erietta and Arun, twins, and between the three of them they cover all three kinds of magic in this world. Battlemagic is physical, moving things about. Sage magic affects minds. Contrivance is about the imagination. And - here's the really nice touch - each form has to be 'balanced' by its opposite. So battlemages have to do mental work after the expenditure of magic to balance themselves, sages do physical work and contrivers have to do mundane work, like scrubbing floors. This is very elegant.

The world-building isn't excessive. The map at the front of the book is fairly minimalist, but I suspect that more places may be added as the trilogy progresses. For anyone (like me) who got a bit muddled about the family relationships, there's a family tree along with a hires map at the Cairdarin website (Cairdarin is the world/continent name). But even if the world itself isn't quite as detailed as an Ordnance Survey map, everywhere felt totally real and I could picture the settings perfectly in my mind, specially the awesome Magistery, nestled in the mountains, with its secret entrance.

The story rattles along, and there's absolutely no filler. When Wardin sets off on a journey, there's no meandering through the scenery, describing every tree and rock in loving detail. No, we jump straight to the next point of action, or sometimes the destination, with barely a moment to catch our breath. Sometimes these transitions felt a bit abrupt, but mostly I was glad to be spared the saggy bits.

As you'd expect, there's a grand confrontation at the end, resolved very elegantly, which neatly sets the scene for the next book in the trilogy. I can't wait. Highly recommended for fans of traditional epic fantasy. Five stars.

John Maynard says

Good book

A very good book. Well written with a good plot and characters. I look forward to the rest of the series.

L.Logan Boswell says

Entertaining

This story was mostly entertaining and fast-moving. The characters are pretty well written with the main characters being the most fleshed-out. The trials the main character goes through are sometimes hard to believe but mostly plausible I would recommend this book to most epic fantasy Raiders.
