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Posted on 06 August 2019 By Rena Barron

!READ BOOK ? Kingdom of Souls ? PDF or E-pub free

!READ BOOK ? Kingdom of Souls ? Magic Has A Price If You Re Willing To PayBorn Into A Family Of Powerful Witchdoctors, Arrah Yearns For Magic Of Her Own But Each Year She Fails To Call Forth Her Ancestral Powers, While Her Ambitious Mother Watches With Growing DisapprovalThere S Only One Thing Arrah Hasn T Tried, A Deadly Last Resort Trading Years Of Her Own Life For Scraps Of Magic Until The Kingdom S Children Begin To Disappear, And Arrah Is Desperate To Find The CulpritShe Uncovers Something Worse The Long Imprisoned Demon King Is Stirring And If He Rises, His Hunger For Souls Will Bring The World To Its Knees Unless Arrah Pays The Price For The Magic To Stop Him I m bias, of course This story is deeply personal to me and explores themes that have shaped my life I hope readers enjoy it too Now that Kingdom of Souls is officially out in the world, I want to include content warnings for those interested in reading the book The story includes blood magic, an intentional infliction of self injury in a ritual, challenging familial relationship, death of a child, death in battle scenes, mention of animal sacrifice not on page , animal possession, mind manipulation, and an act of a sexual nature that occurs when a character tricks another character while disguising their appearance.Lastly, there is a World Guide for Kingdom Of Souls which includes terms and definitions that appear in the book Plot 5 5Characters 5 5Writing 5 5Kingdom of Souls was a tale of epic proportions set

in a West African fantasy world full of magic and mystery It was a captivating but also a very dark and heavy read that made me feel all of the emotions possible and it was so intense that at one point I just had to put the book down and process my turbulent feelings. Arrah was born from two powerful witchdoctors but had no magic to call her own no matter how hard she tried or how much she wanted it But when children started to go missing and an ancient evil began to resurface Arrah was prepared to make a great sacrifice to gain magical powers and protect the people she loved. I liked Arrah's determination and courage even though she didn't always make the right choices she had the best intentions at heart It was also great to read a book about a character who wasn't the chosen one, who didn't have power and glory handed to them on a plate and who had to pay a steep price for the power they desired. Arrah didn't quite know where she belonged and she was trapped between two worlds and cultures that both made her feel like a disappointment and I felt really bad for her as she tried so hard to live up to what she thought was expected of her She was consumed by a need to possess magic and prove her worth, but it was ironic that when she finally achieved her goal she wished she could go back to her life without magic and appreciated all the things she didn't before. The other characters were all well developed and endearing too Rudjek was really cute and I loved his relationship with Arrah, and the whole ill fated lovers who the world has conspired against trope was done very well Sukar and Essnai were also very kind, supportive friends. I also liked how the villainous characters like Arti or The Demon King were presented as multi faceted characters with complex motivations I even felt bad for Efiya, who was simply awful, because I think she was just a product of the environment and circumstances she grew up in. Overall, Kingdom of Souls was a superb book full of rich, sprawling word building and a story that will sweep you away It's a book that I highly recommend and I am so excited to read it's sequel Thank you to HarperVoyager UK for providing me with this gorgeous proof copy in exchange for an honest review All opinions expressed are my own. This was a deeply complex, rich and dark fantasy that had me intrigued from the very first page I do like my epic fantasy daaark and this definitely delves into that side of magic, with witchdoctors gone rogue and demons breaking free and strings of murders It's not without hope, though As Arrah, even though she's magicless, will stop at nothing to defeat this darkness We stan a Gryffindor heroine Let's go West African inspired mythology I am so so here for ownvoices fantasy It fiercely focuses on Arrah and her relationship with magic aka she has none and her mother a powerful witchdoctor with PTSD from being tortured for years by her predecessor and how children start to go missing and no one seems interested in looking into it. I always find fantasies overwhelmingly intense at first as you find your footing amongst the world building I do admit this had a lot of characters and as someone who barely keeps up with a cast of 3 I suffer ok I don't remember my 4 nieces names I did struggle with the characters AND the amount of gods and tribes to all keep straight But I appreciate the complexity of this world and all the building It felt like it was done with a lot of love and care, lots of depth And

of course there s tons of dark witchdoctory magic, rituals, trading of years for magic, and dangerous cursed shenanigans that were super intriguing to read plot Super super intense It s not actiony all the time, but there s a LOT going on It crams a lot in to the 500pgs charactersOk Arrah was precious and I did love her so much instantly She strives so hard to be enough but is always found lacking by her mother, and infamous cold and powerful woman I also loved her friendship with Rudjek It has a bit of a Romeo x Juliet vibe, since Rudjek s father is Arrah s mother s enemy And I really shipped them but ahh Stressful ship view spoiler I also really loved the relationship Arrah had with her demon sister I think it needed page time though I loved that Arrah wanted to save her before condemn her though And creepy powerful kids are my faaave hide spoiler So this book apparently has not been announced yet, but it s being pitched as Wonder Woman in a West African inspired world also, it s about a girl with no power trying to defeat her sister with power sign me up. I don t really like this cover the US one but whatever Still gonna read this The UK cover though isn t that bad so that s cool The ARC is so much beautiful This book is definitely worth the freaking hype This was one of my most anticipated reads of the year I mean look at that cover It s delicious Kingdom of Souls is the story of 16 year old Arrah Despite stemming from a highly esteemed witch doctor of a father, and extremely powerful high priest of a mother, Arrah herself, possesses no inherited magical traits Because of this, she is treated as a pariah in the magical tribal lands, and devoid of love from her own incredibly influential mother Though she has the love of her father and her grandmother, the Chief of Tribe Atari, Arrah craves magic than anything She covets power and validation, and the only way to achieve both, is through magic However, the price for acquiring magic is steep, and unforgiving Arrah is unwilling to let herself stoop so low, as to become a sharlington But when her kingdom is in turmoil, and children start to go missing, and the new threat of demons arise, Arrah becomes willing to sacrifice anything Even if that means wrecking herself in the processes and committing the ultimate taboo of blood magic What I liked The world building was unique and intricate and I could practically immerse myself in the tribal lands and the kingdom The creatures, desert landscapes, and ruins were all so whimsically described I could feel the magic of the world pulse under my skin, and I loved it The west African themed backdrop was much appreciated and reminded me of Children of Blood and Bone which is a good thing Arrah was an incredibly level headed and self assured protagonist She knew what she wanted out of life, and was willing to do anything to accomplish it I totally adored Arrah s relationship with her father It s rare that we see so much interaction between parents in fantasy novels, and I love that her father was so inclusive in her life Great representation I also enjoyed the dynamics of the relationship between Arrah and her mother There was a strain and complexity to their relationship, that was tangible and heartbreaking I felt Arrah s inferiority and anguish about not ever being good enough for her mother The religious aspect of the boom was phenomenal and I loved the Pantheon of Gods and the role they played within the story Korre was a darling and her

enigmatic personality was fun to read about The demon king because obviously I also enjoyed the complexity of the plot but It was also one of the things I disliked I also loved all the plot twist despite all the whiplash it gave me Though I did manage to guess one of them, it didn't ruin the story for me Things I Disliked The complexity of the plot was also a reason I took off a star The book is compact, and feels like several stories strung together Arrah's group of friends played no real active role in the story, and served no purpose to move the plot forward They were just added props to me, and could've been deleted altogether. I loved the initial villain She was powerful and her motives and reasonings behind her actions were realistic, however that all changed during the second half of the book A new villain is introduced and she's a freak cartoon character, bereft of all the complexity of the prior villain I also could've done without Arrah's obsession with her love interest, I felt no real chemistry between the two and felt they were better off as friends Overall I loved the book and give it a solid 4 stars I can't wait to read the next installment

KINGDOM *of* SOULS

The Last Witchdoctor



RENA BARRON

This was billed as a YA African inspired tale but I didn't pick up on either very much. Barron has established a rich, complex fantasy world that other than having witch doctors didn't scream Africa to me. That is by no means a bad thing. I've just read enough fantasy that elements like tribes and pantheons blended in to general fantasy world building than anything else. This was very complex and dark for a YA book. Other than the main characters being 17 to 18, I wouldn't consider this a YA book, but just general fantasy. I know labeling as YA probably sells copies. The majority of this book is mostly world building, setting things up for the future. I did feel like the last 100 pages jumped to what could have been the end of the series. After slowly developing the world over the first half of the book, events escalate quickly. There was a huge leveling up of the characters' abilities at the end that I thought would have taken place over the course of the trilogy, but Barron decided to take the book in another direction. Arrah is a young woman hoping to come into her magic. When children start disappearing, she decides to force the issue doing something drastic. This kicks off events that will change her world irrevocably. Received a review copy from Harper and Edelweiss. All thoughts are my own and in no way influenced by the aforementioned. I am so impressed by this book. It was a lot darker than I anticipated and the world was so rich with mythology and magic. I loved that the main character was one of the only people in this world without magic. She comes from a very powerful family, both her parents have very strong magical lineages. Instead of being the special one she was completely unspecial and had everything working against her but despite that she had ambition and hope to become something greater. This also heavily featured a mother-daughter relationship that was unlike any I have read before and had so many layers. Every time I thought I had figured them out something new was revealed. The family dynamics in this book were very complex. The reason why it's not a full 5 stars is because the pacing was a little off at times. It is quite a long book and there were moments that dragged a bit. But overall it was such a fantastic start to a series and I can't wait to see where it goes from here. Trigger Warning: Kingdom of Souls contains scenes of violence, sacrifice, blood magic and parental abuse. Proceed with caution. For she will rise from the ashes alit in flames. For no water will ever quell her pain. For no redemption will befall her. For we will never speak her name. Song of the Unnamed. Nothing I will ever write will give you an idea of how truly wonderfully written and amazing Kingdom of Souls by Rena Barron is. I was lucky enough to be part of the traveling book initiative in which a single ARC was sent from hand to hand in order for readers to join in on the KOS hype train before release. If it hadn't been for work and other daily annoyances, I would have finished this book a lot faster than the three days it took me. But when I did finish it, at 11 o'clock at night with The Big Bang Theory playing quietly in the background, I couldn't help thinking I could never read another fantasy novel the same way again. I clutched this book to my chest for an hour, wanting to scream about it from the rooftops but not finding the words to describe how desperately you all need this novel in your lives. Coming from a family of powerful witchdoctors, Arrah can't wait for the

day her own magic presents itself But after failure after failure in calling for her own powers every year, Arrah is willing to try one last thing trade her own life years for magic. When the kingdom's children begin to disappear, Arrah is desperate to find the culprit using her own powers. Alongside friends, she makes powerful sacrifices and takes a dangerous journey in discovering who she is and what she was born to do. I'm gonna say this now this book would not have been this fantastic if it had been written by a white woman. Barron threads her own experiences and history into the story, weaving a web that does not fail to capture its audience. Arrah is steadfast and headstrong, determined to make a difference in the world and I felt that right in the core of my being. Who doesn't want to make a name for themselves? Who feels like they're failing when they don't seem to be moving forward? I know I do. Not only are the characters so well developed that they leap off the page, but the kingdom itself is pure magic. The writing brims with power as Barron describes the city Arrah lives in, the marketplace she visits, the tight family bond she has with her father. It's impossible to not fall in love with the world built upon the pages of Kingdom of Souls. Make no mistake, though Kingdom of Souls is not an easy book to read. There's blood and violence a lot of the magic relies heavily on blood magic and a lot of dark topics are explored that may make you uneasy, so please proceed with caution. Preorder this book. Rave about it. Buy it for your mum and your grandparents. Buy it for your dad and your uncles. Buy it for your colleagues, your new date, your best friend who doesn't really read much. There's a little something for everyone in Kingdom of Souls, and it should not CANNOT pass under the radar.

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