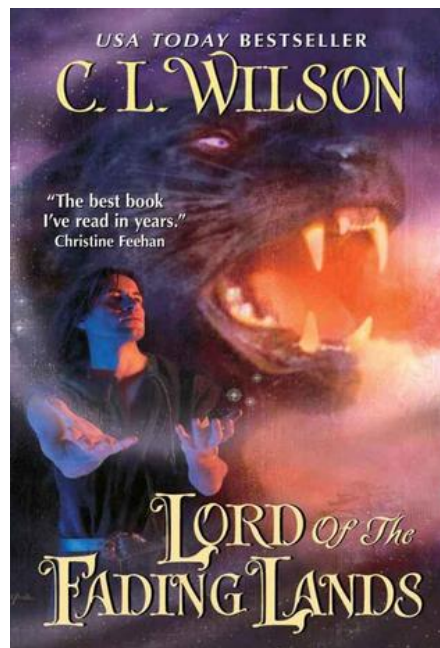




Lord of the Fading Lands

C.L. Wilson

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Lord of the Fading Lands C.L. Wilson

Once he drove back the darkness.

Once he loved with such passion his name was legend.

Once, driven wild with grief over the murder of his beloved, the majestic Fey King Rain Tairen Soul had laid waste to the world before vanishing into the Fading Lands. Now, a thousand years later, a new threat draws him back into the world—and a new love reawakens the heart he thought long dead.

Ellysetta, a woodcarver's daughter, calls to Rain in a way no other ever had. Mysterious and magical, her soul beckons him with a compelling, seductive song—and no matter the cost, the wildness in his blood will not be denied.

As an ancient, familiar evil regains its strength, causing centuries-old alliances to crumble and threatening doom for Rain and his people... he must claim his truemate to embrace the destiny woven for them both in the mists of time.

Lord of the Fading Lands Details

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From Reader Review Lord of the Fading Lands for online ebook

Angie says

I waited for this one to become available at the library for quite awhile. It was always checked out and that, coupled with the rather rave reviews I'd read, made me excited to get my hands on it. The cover is decidedly hokey, but I've come to regret bouts of cover-snobbery many a time before. So I resolved not to let it get to me this time. Besides. I finished the book and still can't wrap my mind around what the tairen actually look like. So the creature on the cover is as good a rendering as any, I'm sure.

Essentially, it is a Cinderella story. One in which the prince is actually a king. A massively overbearing, centuries old king at that. Rain Tairen Soul is well-known throughout the world as the man who almost destroyed it all when his beloved was killed. His rage was of such a magnitude that it nearly scorched the world. Thousands upon thousands died as a result. This all took place nigh unto a thousand years ago and Rain has spent the intervening years basically trying to hang onto his sanity and not give into his anger and sorrow. Enter Ellie--found on the side of the road as a child and taken in by a woodcarver and his wife. In a moment of utter terror, her soul cries out and Rain's hears it. He comes immediately to her rescue and the two of them attempt to make sense of what has happened to them. And what has happened is that they are soul mates. That's right. Rain has love thrust upon him centuries after he thought he was through with it for good. And Ellie has it swoop down upon her for the first time in her life. It's all very anguished and touching.

Except it's not.

I don't know if it's just that the story's been done before and in more compelling ways. Or if it's the he's older than Methuselah and she's a spring chicken ick factor. But it didn't do it for me. It's like the whole time the story was telling me, I am So Epic. Bask in my epicness! And Rain was storming around yelling at me, I am So Tortured. Revel in my anguish! Meanwhile, Ellie was tip-toeing around in his wake whispering, I am fragile but with a Core Of Steel. Underestimate me at your peril! But none of it felt real. It just felt like the veneer of epicness and torture and steel cores. There was also a string of women drugged and manipulated against their will which really rubbed me wrong. And did anyone else think Ellie should totally be with Bel? Or was that just me? Now the story certainly had its sweet moments. How could it not? At just over 400 pages, it never gets beyond the courtship stage of Rain and Ellie's relationship. But even then, I didn't feel like they got to know each other well. But I didn't feel like I knew them either so it wasn't that great a loss. I do have to say that this book (and series) is dearly beloved by many so, clearly, your mileage may (and probably will) vary. It may very well fly for you. But, for me, it never got its feet off the ground.

Michele (Reading Lark/CanadianTwiMom) says

My review can also be found on Reading Lark After Dark: <http://readinglarkafterdark.blogspot...>

As an addendum to my review, I have to start off by saying that I have read the entire series and it IS utterly SENSATIONAL and EPIC!

This first book in the Tairen Soul series is pretty awesome... and it's only the beginning. It's a love story of EPIC proportions between a seemingly ordinary young woman and a Fey King.

You have to first accept that this story is pure fantasy... where ordinary humans live in a world where the Fey

and their magic is real, but more often feared than embraced. The setting is fictitious and set in a time where there is no modern conveniences. The theme of this tale revolves around the deep connection between the Fey and the Tairen... a race of huge winged panther-like-cats that are very much tied to the Fey.

Ellysetta Baristani is the seemingly unremarkable adopted daughter of a woodcarver. She is kind, understated, and very loving towards all whom she cares for. Much is made of Ellie's plainness at the beginning of the story. She is twenty-four and not yet betrothed, which her parents have started to worry over. Yet Ellysetta will soon have her world turned upside when the legendary King of Fey, Rainier vel'En Daris (Rain Tairen Soul), claims her as his truemate. Despite the total fantastical aspect of the story, Ellie is a very relatable character and one of my favourite heroines...EVER.

Ellie has been fascinated with the Fey all her life. She is also quite adept in fey lore and poems. Conversely, throughout her life, she has suffered from powerfully scary nightmares and seizures... to the point where her adoptive parents thought she was possessed by demons and attempted to have her exorcised. Despite this shadow over the Baristani's, she has a very loving family.

Her adoptive parents, Sol & Lauriana, found Ellysetta abandoned in the woods when she was just a baby. Sol Baristani is an amazing father and one of my most favourite parental figures I've ever read. He's protective yet puts a lot of trust in Ellie throughout the story. Lauriana is a 'gods-fearing' woman and a bit too protective at times but her heart is always in the right place. Ellie also has two younger twin sisters who lend an endearing factor to this story, as well.

Rain vel'En Daris is painfully -- and of course masculinely -- beautiful. He is not only the King of the Fey, he is their strongest and oldest warrior and is also a Tairen Soul. Only the most powerful of Fey warriors are called to be a Tairen Soul, where they can shapeshift between Fey and Tairen. The Fey and the Tairen cannot live without each other but the Tairen are dying, and therefore, the Fey are dying as well. Rain is the last and only Tairen Soul left in the world.

The Eye of Truth (described as a large, all-knowing, magical crystal ball) tells Rain that his answers to saving both races lie in Celeria -- with a woman donning flame red hair and green eyes. Ellysetta Baristani's soul called out to Rain in a moment of despair and he answered... and with that, their incredible love story begins.

Rain has been hiding in the Fading Lands (land of the Fey) for over a thousand years, since he scorched the world in a fit of rage after his first mate, Sariel, was murdered by the evil Mage during the war between The Mages of Eld and the Fey. Rain went mad with remorse after very nearly decimating the world and hadn't been seen outside of The Fading Lands since, until he sets out to Celeria to find the woman that is supposed to help him save his race. But how can a human woman be the savior he is seeking, and his truemate?

Rain's devotion to Ellie is just... well... it's the stuff of epic love stories and induces butterflies in your stomach and makes your heart melt (and that's just the reader). He is fierce and gentle all at the same time. The Fey are an extremely passionate people... in every way.

Passionate love is one thing, but they are also extremely passionate about their oaths and duty. Rain's five fiercest and best warriors are instructed to guard Ellysetta, because she is now in grave danger from Rain's enemies since attracting his attention. You almost expect, with the Fey warriors' devotion to Ellie, that they would soon be fighting over her -- but it's nothing like that -- they literally revere her and guard her with their lives... without an inkling of trepidation. What I also loved about the members of Ellie's Quintet was that each had a wonderful and unique personality and strength and became stand-out characters in their own right. I found I truly cared so much for each of them. They also lend some lightness to the story as well with their camaraderie and humour. I simply loved each of them! (Since Rain is spoken for... can I have Bel??)

Seriously... there is so much to love about this story... it has everything that appeals to me... fantasy, an epic love story, surprising twists and turns, evil, suspense and humour. There is nothing that I didn't like about this story so far. Even the evil Mage spurns a lot of emotion through the author's awesome writing.

C.L. Wilson's fantastical story will set your heart soaring. Where else can you melt into a world where a Fey King literally drops out of the sky to claim his TRUEmate? Thank goodness the series is already out as I'm off to read the next installment right away!

Viktoria Winter says

It might be overly ambitious to review five books at once, but considering I binge-read this series over the course of one week, I think this will have to do.

While I had been looking for a fantasy romance book at the time, I didn't want one that was completely about the lovers or, for lack of better terms, a porno. C. L. Wilson ultimately surpassed my expectations for the Tairen Soul series by giving me exactly what I didn't realize I'd wanted: ferocious romance, a power struggle, and morally corrupt characters set in a medieval landscape where dragon-like creatures roam wild and the Fey aren't akin to anything you've ever read about before.

Rainier vel'En Daris, a Tairen Soul and King of the Fey, once scorched the world with his Tairen's fire after the death of his mate by the hands of his enemies, the Mages, some thousand years ago. Mad beyond reasoning, Rain fled his realm and flew across the seas to try to reclaim his crumbling sanity. However, he returns home centuries later to find that his Tairen kin?large feline creatures with wings? are dying from an unknown ailment. With nothing left to loose save for his kingdom, Rain consults the Eye of Truth and demands answers for a cure. He sees a young girl with vibrant red hair and green eyes, and he knows what he has to do.

Ellysetta Baristani, the adoptive daughter of a woodcarver, is nearing the end of her marriage-eligibility. At twenty-four years, she is the wayward child of a "modestly poor" household. But Ellie's social status isn't what keeps her from being wed off, rather it's the rumors that she has witchery in her blood. Young enough to remember her torment, Ellie had been put through various exorcisms, which had thus forced her family to relocate many times, making it hard for her to make any friends. But when she is proposed to by the local butcher's son, Den Brodson, her mother immediately agrees, knowing that another proposal is less than likely.

As to follow tradition, the shei'Dalin Marissya, a well respected female healer, campaigns with her true-mate into Celieria to uphold a peace agreement. Untraditionally, the two are accompanied by the Feyreisen, the King of the Fey, as he scopes out the girl he saw through the Eye of Truth. His appearance causes chaos amongst the crowds, for everyone is familiar with the tragic story of the earth-scorcher and his lost mate. They fear him. And they fear him even more when he finds Ellie and races to her aid after she had been hurt amongst the forming mob of peasantry. Everyone flees from her as Rain transforms back to his Fey form and offers her a hand. Thus begins our brutal story of love and war.

I won't go into a synopsis of every single book, because quite honestly that would be impossible AND Goodreads as a word limit (I know this because I reached it while reviewing a Sarah J Maas novel...oops). But ultimately, the series only grows stronger.

For starters, the world-building is crazy good. There are so many different terms and locations, I swear it felt

almost like reading Game of Thrones again (with surprisingly less death and more focus on romance). The imagery is beautiful, specifically when it comes to the introduction of the Elves in the third and fourth installment. You'd think the Fey would aesthetically be written as these ethereal beings who reside in trees and sing tales of death and destruction to the fading moon while harvesting strange fruits and keeping the secret of humankind to themselves. Well, C. L. Wilson DOES incorporate those elements in her books...just not with the Fey. Rather, those scenes are saved for the Elves, whereas the Fey are described to be medieval warriors wearing garbs of chains and holding sacred battle oaths to the highest authority. While I did enjoy that, I would have liked more of the original Celtic versions of the Fey. I feel as though the word "Fey" could have been misplaced with "warlock" at any time and we'd really never notice the difference save for the primal, possessive nature (of which makes the romance and battles so great).

In addition to the imagery and world-building, Wilson created an original language for her Fey characters that I felt really added to the fantasy aspect of the story. It wasn't overdone to the point where I'd be wondering what the hell was being said, but it also wasn't lacking.

Romantically, this book kicked ass. Ellie and Rain share a maddening, lustful, all-encompassing bond that has nothing to do with the future of the realm. Although being true-mates, Ellie has yet to complete their bond because she hasn't accepted all of her own nature in order to give herself to Rain. Rain, however, has accepted the bond since the moment he found her, meaning that if she rejects him...he will die. And while this would be incredibly cataclysmic for our story, the realms would go on. It is Ellie alone that can stop the Elden Mages from destroying the Fey and Mortal realms, whether she accepts the mating bond or not. I find that to be an amazing addition to both her characteristics and the romance between the pair.

This series is certainly not without its side characters. I say that because there's an overwhelming amount of them (not quite as many as Game of Thrones like I've mentioned before, but you get the gist of it). And what makes these characters worth reading is that they can uphold our attention without even needing the main plot! They're all unique and lovable, even the morally corrupt ones...especially the morally corrupt ones. Ha.

C. L. Wilson has created an amazing story full of adventure, loyalty, and romance that will leave readers wondering where this series has been all their lives. If you enjoy the Throne of Glass series by Sarah J Maas, Game of Thrones by George R.R. Martin, or anything remotely reminiscent of gruesome fairy-tales, then this story is definitely for you.

Elise ✕ a.k.a Ryder's Pet ✕ says

"Ver reisa ku'chae. Kem surah, shei'tani. Your soul calls out. Mine answers, beloved."

The book was a bit heavy, but it was still good. Some of the...language was sometimes incredible hard to understand. But other than that, the story was good. Though not much happened. I mean, the timeline was weird, and they managed little in the short timeline the book had, if you know what I mean.

"I am not a good man, shei'tani," he corrected. "I never have been. But for you I will strive to be better."

I liked **Rain Tairen Soul**, may even love him, but since we didn't really get to see all of him, I can't be sure.

Reason for not seeing all of him is mainly because of the damn main female heroine **Ellysetta**, who was annoying at times. Though sometimes strong and independent, kind and bright, she was incredible naive and weak at times, specially when it came to her *truemate*. It annoyed me that she didn't...accept Rain fully. In fact, it made me mad. I hate when the female wants to change the male. Why cannot they just accept them for who they are? Other than that, it was good :)

“Surely it’s just a song. I, for one, wouldn’t want any of you dying for me.”

“It is the greatest of honors to die in the defense of a shei’tani,” Kiel protested. “Such a warrior will be born to this world again, to find a truemate of his own.”

I did actually cry a bit in the end there...those two wonderful warriors...:(My heart breaks for them. (view spoiler) I loved **Belliard** (my favorite after Rain), **Kieran**, **Kiel**, **Rowan**, and **Adrial**. They were awesome side characters, and I hope we get to see much, much more of them! I hope **Queen Annoura** dies or gets what she deserve, painfully and I actually **King Dorian**. He was cool. I hope he stays that way :)

“Hope was a fragile flicker that he wanted to cup with both hands to protect against the harsh winds of reality.”

Rate: 3.5 stars.

Pamela says

I mooched this after reading an excellent review over at Smart Bitches Who Love Trashy Books, and I'm really glad I did. I had a moment of trepidation at the beginning, when I realized that I'd gotten myself into a soulmate book. I'm a bitter old bitch and think that soulmate stuff is crap, and I really don't like romances that hinge on characters falling in love within five minutes of meeting each other because it's their destiny rather than because they meet and grow together and find that they're compatible.

This is a soulmate book, but it's the best kind. The characters are linked by some crazy, mystical power, but that link does not equal automatic love. They work at getting to know each other and fall for each other slowly, and that's NICE. The characters are fascinating and yet not without huge flaws; half the time I couldn't decide whether I wanted to kiss or punch the hero. The world is richly developed, the villains are skin-crawlingly creepy, and most of the supporting characters are nicely fleshed out instead of being stereotyped movable furniture.

I think I'm going to have to go find the second book. I'm addicted. Last night, I actually dreamed about Wilson's world. :D

Helen 2.0 says

ReREreading this series specifically to spite my tbr mountain

Kristalia says

Final rating: 4/5 stars

Final rating - for the whole series: 5/5 stars

“Ver reisa ku'chae. Kem surah, shei'tani. Your soul calls out. Mine answers, beloved.”

After reading The Winter King by C.L. Wilson, I decided to finally read this series as well. It was recommended to me by one of my close friends, and she said that I would love it. She wasn't wrong, because yes, I do love it.

This is the first book in a series of five, and as expected, it had a very slow beginning. The first part mainly focuses on the romance between the two main characters, while in the background, the main plot starts revealing itself.

I have to say that I enjoyed the book, it made me laugh sometimes. Overall, I loved the idea for the story. Characters were interesting as well, especially secondary characters (there were many of them), because they weren't one dimensional, but rather, nicely developed as well. I loved that the author added POVs of the enemies as well, as well as of other secondary characters.

You might be scared by the number of the characters that appear and their names, but don't worry, you will remember most of them while you read.

This is a story of Mages, humans, Fey and Tairen. Fey and Tairen races are connected - they cannot live without each other. Tairen are large winged cats and sometimes a Fey which can shapeshift into Tairen is born. They are called "Tairen Soul" and they are masters of all elements: air, fire, earth, water and soul. But the problem lies in the fact that Tairen race is dying out, and because of their connection, the Fey race is dying out as well. Mages, however, are the natural enemies of Fey, and they want to destroy Fey, once and for all. The humans do not believe that they are in any danger from the Elden Mages, because they don't feel the rising power of the their darkness.

CHARACTERS :

♦ **Rain Tairen Soul:**

Rainier vel'En Daris Feyreisen, the Tairen Soul, King of the Fading Lands, is an ancient Fey, having lived for thousands of years. His mission is to save his race and Tairen race from dying out. A long time ago, while the Fey had been in war with Elden Mages, his mate Sarel died and Rain almost destroyed the world. Now, the evil that had calmed down is raising again, and only he can feel it - the Elden Mages are regaining their power but he has no proof of it. If they rise, it will be hard battle to win and there will be a lot of fatalities. But that is not all - Rain, broken and hopeless, as well as the last Tairen Soul - hears the call of a woman who turns out to be his truemate - literally another half of his soul. And she is the only one who can save them - or at least, that's what he saw in the visions by The Eye of Truth (basically a large magical

crystal ball). If only it were easy to bond with her....

Rain was interesting and loveable character, and considering what he went through, I understand his protectiveness over other people and his truemate. Having lost his mate in the War, it almost destroyed him. I love that he started out slow and didn't force anything, he was patient, caring and nice.

◆ **Ellysetta Baristani:**

Ellie is just a commoner, living her life like an ordinary human, or so she thinks. Sometimes, things happen, that even she cannot explain - so she just ignores them and moves on (like having very scary nightmares). She thinks she is just a human, but what she doesn't know is that she is unconsciously using magic (she's adopted). Ellie loves the stories of the Fey, read many books and poetry about them and is generally fascinated with their race. Her parents, Sol and Lauriana, found her abandoned in the woods but they think of her as their own daughter. But now, they are getting worried because she is still not married and she is getting older.

Ellie was kind and interesting heroine. Her life was turned upside down and she still managed to stay on her feet.

◆ **Other characters:**

Den Brodson is the guy who wants to marry Ellie. He is not an idiot, he noticed that Ellie is special, and he wants to possess her, no matter what. While Ellie's parents thought it was a good idea, they didn't know that Den is a very violent man. But what Den doesn't know is the fact that immortal Tairen Soul claimed her as his truemate (or soul mate if you prefer).

Baristani family consists of Ellie, the adopted daughter of Sol & Lauriana and their twin daughters Lillis and Lorelle. They are a very nice, functional family, and they all care for each other. They listen, they do what they think it's the best for their family and they are supportive. Lauriana though, fears magic. Sol is the woodcarver and protective of his children, but he also puts a lot of trust in them. The twins were just adorable.

Selianne Pyerson is Ellie's best friend. Her mother, Tuelis, is Eld by origin and both of them are scared of what would happen if Rain and his people found that out. Except for that, she really likes Ellie.

Queen Annoura and King Dorian are the rulers of Celieria, and they have a problem - should they indulge the Fey, or should they continue their trade with Eld. They are put in a very difficult position, because whatever choice they made, they might go in the war with other country - and Eld and Fey do not cooperate. Queen Annoura though was one of the queens who loves to use her position to her advantage, ordering around. What can I say, except that she was overjealous and irritating queen. Dorian, however, listened to reason, made good decisions and was rational king.

Among the other Fey that appeared, there were **Dax and his truemate Lady Marissya**, a shei'dalin, a powerful Fey healer and Truthspeaker. Belliard, Kieran, Kiel, Rowan, and Adrial are the Fey sent to protect Ellie and guard her with their lives. **Belliard vel Jelani** is the oldest Fey warrior, and Rain's friend, as well as master of Spirit. **Kieran vel Solande** is the son of Marissya and Dax and master of earth, as well as the last child born to the Fey people. **Kiel vel Tomar** is a master of Water magic. **Rowan and Adrial vel Arquinas** are brothers. Rowan is a master of Fire, and Adrial of Air.

Kolis Manza and High Mage Vadim Maur are the antagonists of this series. Being Mages of Eld, they want to bring down the Fey and destroy them once and for all. Preferably make them a very hated race as well.

Dahl'reisen are the lost souls - unmated Fey warriors who have been banished from the Fading Lands - "for breaking Fey taboos or for choosing to walk the Shadowed Path rather than committing sheisan'dahlein, the honor death, when the weight of all the lives they have taken in defense of the Fey becomes too great for thier own souls to bear". Among them is the brother of Marissya brother, **Gaelen vel Serranis** who couldn't get over his twin's death.

And in the end, there are **Sian and Torel** , Fey that were given the mission to find out Ellie's origins.

OVERALL :

Even though it's one of the Soulmates stories, i really enjoyed it. Why? Because nothing was rushed, and while they are soul mates, they have yet to understand each other and make a proper bond - meaning, they need to slowly fall in love with each other. So, nothing is done in rush, and that made me love it even more.

It was a nice beginning for the series, a bit slow, with a very detailed world building, which sometimes makes it hard to process. I was a bit confused at the beginning, but after a while, I understood everything. Anyway, a nice start for the series, although very slow, therefore only 4 stars.



MY TAIREN SOUL REVIEWS:

- ? Lord of the Fading Lands (Tairen Soul #1)
- ? Lady of Light and Shadows (Tairen Soul, #2)
- ? King of Sword and Sky (Tairen Soul, #3)
- ? Queen of Song and Souls (Tairen Soul, #4)
- ? Crown of Crystal Flame (Tairen Soul, #5)

Wendy Higgins says

Incredible. I immediately bought book 2 and cannot wait to dive in (though I must force myself to only read in the evenings so I may write during the day! Gah!)

This is an adult high fantasy romance series. I am blown away and so in love. So thankful Cora Carmack recommended that I read this!

valee says

First of all, I'm just gonna say that this must be the read that has given me the greatest surprise in my whole

life. I have found favorite reads before, but never one that completely took me by surprise as this one. I knew I would like the book because everybody has been recommending it to me forever, but never in my wildest dreams could I have imagine it would blow my mind the way it did. The truth is that once I started it, I just couldn't put it down. But not only book one... ALL OF THEM. For me this series was one really long read. I finished one book and immediately started the next one, not because I wanted to but because I simply couldn't help it.

I JUST HAVE NO WORDS AT ALL TO DESCRIBE HOW COMPLETELY THIS READ

TRAPPED ME. Since I started this book I could not focus my attention in anything else because I just kept thinking about the series... what would happen next, how would the characters resolve such huge and emotional problems in their paths, and all sort of related questions.

This is really ONE COMPLEX SERIES, kinda like Lord of the rings, with a whole new reality invented out of nowhere. Nothing is as we know it, be ready for new lands, unknown species, unpredictable events and SO MUCH MORE. And don't worry ROMANCE lovers, I was one of you, I completely postponed this read for too long because I thought it would be too fantastical and with too much fiction in it and not enough romance... well, rest assure because the whole series follows a destined powerful couple, one which has a love so strong that will save everything ever created. And not in the cheesy 'love conquers all' way, but in a real and emotional way. ****SIGH**, I just know I will never, EVER, find a couple to obsess me as this one did.

PARANORMAL ROMANCE AND URBAN FANTASY fans: If you follow my reviews, you know how much series like Psy-Changelling, Fever, Night Huntress, Lord of the underworld, Demonica, Dark Hunters, Guild Hunters, Midnight breed and others like those obsess me. Well, this one was so much more to me than those... this one completely changed the way I felt about those genres. I'm gonna miss this series SO MUCH now that I'm done with it. And I know I will be rating very poorly my next reads because of it...

As I found myself lacking in words right now, I'll use my favorite quotes to show you all what I'm talking about:

"Your soul calls out. Mine answers, beloved."

"They stood there by the Velpin for many long, silent chimes, the woodcarver's daughter and the man who had once almost destroyed the world, the man whose face was now drawn in lines of mingled joy and anguish."

She blinked in surprise. Since the moment she had put her hand in his and he had pulled her into his arms, she felt as if he knew everything there was to know about her. It was surprising and disconcerting to realize that, in fact, they knew each other not at all."

The path is different for every truemated couple, and it is never a simple one. Both Rain and Ellysetta will be tested, as will the strength of their bond, and they must prove their worthiness before the bond can be complete.

This is not a sappy, quick nor cheesy romance. It is one which oversteps all limits, it is one that goes beyond all knowledge, a romance that will prove true and survive it all. And it might be a pre-destined and foreseen love, but it still has to go through many steps and prevail. I adored that, while it's clear they adore each other, there is nothing given for sure, not obvious ending.

Cait • A Page with a View says

Well, that was highly entertaining. This book is basically like the budget soap opera version of ACOMAF...

The story starts with this super powerful ancient Fey lord named Rain swooping into a town because he felt his truemate's emotions. Ellie is 25, adopted, and has some kind of magic powers she is afraid of. Rain has black hair, lavender eyes, and makes the "territorial fae" stuff in Throne of Glass seem like nothing. Anyways, Rain is in town for some ceremony for Prince Dorian, so he swoops down and claims Ellie as his mate. She's the first truemate to be claimed in a thousand years and the first ever by the Fey king. He's the Tairen Soul, which means he can shift into a fire-breathing flying... cat. (I kid you not. Ellie even rides him with a saddle and everything).

Some local guy manipulated Ellie into being stuck in a marriage agreement and continues to be a pain by helping the evil guys just so he can get her back (basically he's a total Tamlin). Everything gets pretty complex with the threats from the Elden Mages who are trying to destroy both the Fey and human kingdoms. There are a lot of characters and side stories to the point where the romance isn't always the main focus.

Other things that might make ACOMAF fans smile: Rhys Rain has a friend who is basically Mor and an awesome cadre of Fey warriors (one of whom is named Rowan). They all wear what sounds like Illyrian fighting leathers and have super cool magic. The leader of the cadre blood-swears himself to Ellie and I'm pretty sure I shipped her with him more than Rain...

The medieval-type fantasy worldbuilding was strong and I was really into it! Even the characters were all well developed. I thought I was going to give it 4 stars for sure, but kind of lost interest towards the end. Everything that happened with the fey was treated like A Very Big Deal and the intense weight attached to every situation just got old. I wasn't taking the story *that* seriously. Rain is SO serious & on high alert 24/7 to protect Ellie. I mean, he spent most of the story trying to either rip everyone's head off or control his inner cat from mating with Ellie... and some stuff with Invisible Spirit limbs ensues?

So I was definitely laughing out loud in parts that were NOT meant to be comedy, but that was a huge part of why I liked this book so much! It's hilarious. There are some serious "wtf am I even reading" moments -- it gets SO weird and is just generally fun all around.

The romance parts would be cheesy if you take the book seriously, but I was just cracking up... Rain spends the first 3/4 of the book talking TOTALLY NORMALLY and then suddenly starts sounding like some Shakespeare guy with "whilst thou" and "wouldst thou." I don't even know what's going on but I love it.

Am I saying this book is really *good*? I don't know... but it's definitely super entertaining. Sometimes I just like silly stories when the writing is solid and the characters don't irritate me and that's totally what this is. Ellie is a strong, kind, and likable MC who didn't annoy me. The writing was good enough that it never took me out of the story. So it's still a fun read for people who like this kind of fantasy world!

Robin (Bridge Four) says

Re-read time

I think I liked it better the second time through. So time to round up instead of down.

3.5 Stars.

Is there such a thing as Female Fantasy? If there is this is it. The story is more of a set up of a fantasy world and a courtship between a Fey King and a mortal girl who might be more than she seems. The centralized story is the courtship between Rain the Fey King and last Tairen Soul (I'll get to what that is in a minute) and Ellie the Wordcarver's daughter. But swirling around that are the undercurrents of a Mage uprising, dangerous political maneuverings that could lead to a great war and a jilter suitor who wants back what he thinks belongs to him.

First there is Rain the Fey King and last Tairen Soul. HE IS AWESOME!!! When he lost his love over a thousand years ago he scorched the world and ended the war. He also went a little crazy and the Fey have been sequestered ever since. But now to save his the Fey he must venture out into the world again. What is a Tairen Soul? Well it is a big cat with wings and violet eyes.

There is a pride of Tairen Soul bound in some way to the Fey but only special Fey are granted the essence of the Tairen Soul and are able to change into the cat and Rain is it. He is the last one and if he dies they all die.

Second there is Ellie, she seems like a nice girl. She is a little awkward and doesn't seem to fit in her own skin very well. At twenty-four she is expected to marry soon or at twenty-five she will be considered a spinster. But when something bad happens to her Rain hears her soul call to his and for the first time ever a Tairen Soul has a truemate.

“Ver reisa ku'chae. Kem surah, shei'tani. (Your soul calls out. Mine answers, beloved.)”

Okay so truemate I'm like this is a lock then. I mean if their souls call to one another and Ellie is the other half of rain's soul than that is it insta-love. NOT AT ALL....it is an opportunity and a risk, because if the bond between them doesn't build into place then Rain will die and his people with him. It is the biggest risk ever. Rain must court Ellie and win her complete trust. They must find a way to accept every part of each other to be able to win the bond and there are a lot of obstacles in the way.

I loved the courtship and how Rain had to dig deep and get some of those Fey instincts under control so that he could court Ellie. The little gifts he makes and finds for her and the time he spends with her are fantastic. Her Fey guards the Quintet are so much fun and I wish truemates for them all although I hope they don't have to die to get them.

“Surely it's just a song. I, for one, wouldn't want any of you dying for me.”

“It is the greatest of honors to die in the defense of a shei'tani,” Kiel protested. “Such a warrior will be born to this world again, to find a truemate of his own.”

Ellie herself got on my nerves a little bit. She is so unsure of herself, for good reasons but I was told so many times that she was just a woodcarver's daughter and that she isn't special when it was clear that she was. The other thing that bothered me slightly is that Ellie is 24 but I forgot that so many times due to the interference of her family treating her like she was still a teenager.

The world builds and there seem to be a lot of fantasy creatures around but they haven't popped up yet but I'm excited to meet them. The beginning was a little clunky as I tried to figure out the Tairen Soul, Fey stuff

and some of the new terminology but I got it all right eventually. There is a lot of building momentum but mostly this entire book seemed like a set up for the rest of the series. But I have to know what happens next and I'm excited to see how Ellie changes over the course of this series.

Stacia (the 2010 club) says

Re-reading with Michelle, Ian, Becs, Val, etc. because I just love this series so much that I will probably re-read Tairen Soul any time someone shows a possible interest in wanting to give it a shot.

** Uh so the review below...I think this was the second attempt at a half-assed review of this book that I posted last year. I may try again after this re-read or I may not. **

So I feel like I'm doing Terry a disservice by letting her rep this series on a solo mission here.

My original review wasn't very convincing of just how epic this series is.

Let's see if I can do better. Tairen Soul is the absolute best in both the epic Fantasy and Romance genres. You get all of the payout of an epic/high fantasy : Descriptive world building, alternate races, conflict & wars, use of magic, etc. You also get the benefit of a timeless love story. It's so rare to find a couple as engaging as Rain and Ellie. There's even a little bit of the steam factor as the series develops. I even relished several scenes that made me chuckle. It's hard not to giggle at a scene in which the heroine unwittingly uses her magic to turn a royal dinner party into an aphrodisiac laced hotbed of a mess.

One extra little surprise of Tairen Soul is the added PNR factor : The main character is not only half fey, but he's also half Tairen (a race that turns into a FLYING CAT! - come on, that is all kinds of win and you know it).

Please, please, please ignore the cheesy cover. These books are chock full of so much goodness. As the story unfolds, you find more and more characters to love. I have never read any book series in which I have fallen in love with just about EVERYONE in the story, even little side characters. Wilson did such a fabulous job of drawing me into the world of Celiria and the Fading Lands. I could so live there.

Wendy Darling says

3.5 stars I'm not much of a traditional fantasy person, but I thoroughly enjoyed this book. It starts off a little unevenly and even had me giggling a bit here and there, but it gradually became a complex, epic story full of fascinating mythology and dazzling magic. All of the characters are extremely well-developed, in that all the ones who are good behave with honor and the ones who are evil believe absolutely in the rightness of what they are doing. I really like Ellie and Rain, whose relationship builds slowly and believably, and I love how protective both he and his men are of their future queen.

I'm not really sure how to categorize this book. Is it fantasy? Is it paranormal romance? Somewhere between the two, I think, as there's intricate world-building and politicking but also lots of tenderness and emotion. I normally have very little patience for fairy court business (so much talking and posturing), but everything that goes on here is well-thought out and fraught with potentially dangerous consequences. It'll be interesting to watch Ellie develop her powers and to see where the story goes next.

I've read through dozens of books that try to do what this one does, but none other that ever fully appealed to me. Ignore the cheesy cover and font and try this one if you enjoy this fantasy-written-for-women thing. I'll leave you with the words that sold me on the book: the king is a gorgeous half fey, half winged flying CAT.

M— says

Ugh. This book is so trite and clichéd as to be nearly unreadable. The nerveless bit of fluff who ranks as the heroine is a horrid mixture of syrupy sweetness and heavy-handed examples of sudden and unexpected displays of magical ability the likes of which her world has never before seen. The king of the Fey claims her as his soul-bonded mate immediately after first seeing her, the beautiful female characters in this book hate her, and her childhood bully is repeatedly thwarted in his attempts to rape her.

Oh, no. This plot is not contrived at all.

After the heroine bored me silly, I did spend a bit of time flipping through the book in search of interesting sex scenes with the faint hope that they might slightly redeem this as a romance novel. There were none. I advise you all to skip this book entirely.

Lover of Romance says

Ver reisa ku'chae. Kem surah, shei'tani. Your soul calls out. Mine answers, beloved.

Rain Tairen Soul is the King of the Fading Lands, and has survived for centuries, and after losing the woman he once loved, spent countless years bent on revenge against those who killed the woman who was gentle and kind and gracious. Now determined to find out the truth and the evil that threatens his people, he finds out that he has a truemate, the woman that is the other half of his soul. He never thought it possible he would ever have a truemate, but now that he has found her, he will never let her go. Ellysetta or also known as Ellie, lives in a mortal city known as Celiera, a place where she grew up. Her father being a woodcarver, she grew up in a simple yet loving atmosphere. her family is everything to her. Ellie knows that soon she will have to marry soon, and the man her parents would have her wed, leaves a bad taste in her mouth, she wishes more than anything to marry anyone but him. Ellie is not a normal mortal, she has suffered nightmares and convulsions all of her life. When Tairen Soul, king and the most powerful Tairen alive comes to their city, she is intrigued. All of Ellie's life, she has been fascinated with Tairen Soul and anything connection to the myths and legends he has left behind. The last thing she expects is for Tairen Soul to come swooping down and claiming her as his truemate. She wonders if his vision is impaired or is drunk. Ellie has always believed herself to be awkward, unattractive and not built in the way most men desire a women to be shaped. There is a part of her that can't resist Tairen, or his gentle ways with her. Even though the passion they share can be fierce, she finds her heart opening up to Rain and his protectiveness and fierce devotion.

I have heard about this series for a very long time and have always wanted to read these books, which I have heard stellar reviews on. So I decided it was time to try them out, especially since I do love fantasy romance. From the first few pages, I was instantly hooked, and I couldn't put this epic story down. I was blown away by the author's voice and the world building she does with the Tairen Soul series. Even though this is the only book I have read from this author, I am hooked, I can barely sit still with excitement to read what

happens between Tairen and Ellie. In the beginning I was a bit confused with what was happening, but that usually happens with this type of story, with a huge aspect of world building. It tends to take a little while to get adjusted and settled into the story. I am not saying I had a hard time getting into the story, (the very opposite as a matter of fact). However I do wish there was a bit more background to the story in the prologue. It did have some background information, but I felt like there may have been a bit more. However once the story picked up, I started to feel comfortable and everything seemed to come together pretty nicely only after a few chapters. It was amazing how well the author put the story together in such a way, that there was no confusion at all and the ease that came with reading Lord of the Fading Lands. So it starts off with Tairen Soul seeking the truth to saving his people, but instead finds out about his true mate, which is the last thing he would expect. It then jumps to Ellie, who along with her two younger sisters, is getting prepared for a visit from fey warriors. Then the first meeting between Tairen and Ellie occurs, and it definitely satisfied every romantic bone in my body. I just sighed at that point, definitely full of desire and intensity, and I could barely contain my excitement. We then see the King and strongest of his people, humble himself beyond reason in order to court Ellie, who is young and inexperienced but beautiful in spirit and soul.

Both of these characters I absolutely adored. Ellie is sweet and charming and very innocent, and has no clue of the power that resides within her. She is very protective and fierce when she needs to be, but is simple and has been raised in a home of love and wants that for herself. She doesn't just give in to Tairen and accept his claim hands down, she tests him, even though it was subtle, I had fun seeing Ellie warm up to Tairen. She does have self doubt about herself, but I think that con's to Ellie made her seem more real to me, and I felt it easy to relate with her. Tairen was beyond amazing, and he is going to the top of my list of hero's. Tairen is your typical Alpha Male, however there is much more to him than that. He does have a dominant and beyond possessive side. He also has a gentle and patient nature toward Ellie, that is guaranteed to pull at your heartstrings. The side characters were fun and exciting and charming. The relationship between Tairen and Ellie starts out like any relationship does, with stumbling blocks but I did enjoy the way they compromised with each other, and start to develop a deeper bond to each other as the story progressed. I definitely didn't want this story to ever end, and it ended way sooner than I would have liked. I did expect a cliffhanger of some sort, since this series is just about this couple (At least I think it is), but it ended on a good note, but just enough cliffhanger, to keep you thirsty for me, yet not frustrated, just hungry for the next installment.

Overall I would say this is one of the best books I have read ALL year!!! There was so many things I loved about the first in the Tairen series. Such a beautiful world C. L. Wilson creates for us. An exciting and enthralling tale of a epic love and a world with magic, paranormal creatures, and characters to bewitch you. BRILLIANTLY DONE!!!