



Resistance

Jaye L. Knight

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“Don’t you know? Animals like you have no soul.”

Could God ever love a half-blood all of society looks upon with such fear and disdain? Jace once believed so, but when a tragic loss shatters the only peace he’s ever known, his faith crumbles as the nagging doubts he’s tried to put behind him descend on his grieving heart. With them come the haunting memories of the bloodstained past he longs to forget, but can never escape.

Taken from home at a young age and raised to serve the emperor, Kyrin Altair lives every day under a dangerous pretense of loyalty. After her unique observation skills and perfect memory place her into direct service to the emperor, Kyrin finds herself in further jeopardy as it becomes increasingly difficult to hide her belief in Elôm, the one true God.

Following the emperor’s declaration to enforce the worship of false gods under the penalty of death, many lives are endangered. But there are those willing to risk everything to take a stand and offer aid to the persecuted. With their lives traveling paths they never could have imagined, Jace and Kyrin must fight to overcome their own fears and conflicts with society as they become part of the resistance.

(Christian Fantasy/Clean New Adult/No Magic)

Resistance Details

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From Reader Review Resistance for online ebook

E. Elizabeth says

(A spoiler-free review)

“We will stand for what is right and good and true. We will protect and aid each other and all those Elôm bring into our path. We will remain faithful to Him, even when it may cost us our lives, and we will stand firm against the evil that will soon surround us. We will not back down. Each of us, right here, right now—we are the resistance.”

I don't even know where to start with *Resistance*. I only half expected to like this book, but after finishing it I think I've found my new favorite fantasy series.

The messages in this book are beautiful: forgive others, forgive yourself, keep your faith steadfast in the face of fear, have courage, and trust the Lord. The faith aspect is genuine, pivotal to the plot but not shoved down the reader's throat. Fantasy elements coexisted seamlessly with elements of faith (i.e. no magic).

I know that *Resistance* is technically new adult fiction, but I still have to give it credit for breaking just about every young adult fiction stereotype I know. The story doesn't take place within three days. The heroine is not a sassy warrior goddess. Neither of the main protagonists is The Chosen One whom no one can get along without. No insta-love. No love triangles. It was refreshing.

I particularly loved how the relationship between the two main characters was handled. They don't meet until about two-thirds of the way through the book, allowing them to develop as individuals before they develop in relation to each other. When they do meet, they do not immediately fall in love (cue Hallelujah Chorus). They don't even immediately become friends. They slowly come to understand each other, like two normal people would. In fact, all the characters in *Resistance* are well-rounded and believable. People are described like actual people. No one is perfect, and nothing is (initially) black and white.

Resistance has original settings and races, as opposed to the overused elves, dwarves and orcs. For example, the members of one race have very sensitive lungs, and therefore have to avoid any sort of air pollution. There are also plenty of people of color (including some of the most intellectual characters), unlike many medieval-influenced fantasy books. It all seemed so *fresh*. The world of Ilyon is neither too complex nor too simple, and its intricacies are revealed gradually and naturally, sparing us readers the dreaded info dump. Knight didn't go overboard trying to create languages or invent a plethora of made-up animals, foods, etc. I liked this; fantasy languages and complex cultures a la Tolkien are hard to pull off, and usually just end up bogging down the writing and exhausting the reader.

In summary: I really cannot find anything wrong with *Resistance*, except that I have to wait a month until the sequel. I know I'm gushing, but this book deserves it. It is amazing. Go read it.

R.J. Rodda says

A fantastic read. This is an adventure fantasy story with a heart. Once I started it, I could hardly put it down. There are lots of plot twists and action here, but I especially liked the main male character Jace and found his

journey very compelling. He is despised by society in general as he is half ryrik (or monster) and therefore considered an animal. To make matters worse, he is a slave. He encounters a wanted man, Rayad, who is also a man of faith and thereafter his life changes for the better. Without giving too much away, this is a story of people with the courage of their beliefs against a hostile government as well as a story of personal redemption. God is called Elôm and those who serve him pray to him and seek to follow him but this is written about carefully, it does not take over or detract from the narrative but informs it. This is clean fantasy but it does have a violent edge with scenes of cruelty. Resistance is a well written and engaging and I'm glad I've read it.

Jane says

This book. I have so many feels over it. **Basically this book was a huge enthralling ride of lets-smash-all-the-emotions.** It was the sort of book that kept me epicly hooked from the very beginning. **It completely and utterly was up to any and all of the high expectations I had for it.**

Every single character had a backstory and a personality. **Jaye did an amazing job at taking my emotions and dashing them against a rock perfectly bending them to see the characters from Jace's or Kyrin's or others' points of view, and feeling the raw emotion they did.** Each character had flaws, balanced nicely with gifts and strengths, and so many realistic things that honestly made them like actual people.

Jace murdered my emotions several times of course. And I enjoyed it. His character is so heart-wrenchingly real and human. **Kyrin, too, was a brilliant character** (but Jace takes the prize of favourite) and her faith walk and growth was so amazing to watch and be included in as I watched from in her brain.

A moment for the tension. I could not put the book down. **So much conflict and high stakes and all that sort of thing that kept me completely oblivious to reality.**

There was a little bit of violence and some of that sort of thing. (view spoiler)**But nothing is badly graphic.**

And the faith aspects are really great. Amazingly well done. **It wasn't cliche at all, and was beautiful and inspiring.** How Jace struggles so much with the concept of having a God who actually does love him. And Kyrin's (and Kaden's) faith. It was so perfectly portrayed. **It was flawed, tough, and realistic.**

Would I recommend this book? **Yes.** Yes, I would. Everyone and their pet sausage should read it. **Mild warning: It will murder your feels, but dude that's okay, take some duct tape.**

m a r y l i z says

EXCUSE ME WHILE I GO AND SCREAM FOR 1,369 YEARS.

This book was pretty darn awesome.

Lovely Things:

- **The characters.** Um, let's talk about these fantastic peeps for a second. They. Are. Epic. All of them are

extremely fleshed-out and realistic; even "minor" characters jump off the page. (Reading this book can be dangerous...you have been warned. :P)

Jace: He's the one basically everybody and their pet hamster fangirls over. I have to say, I don't exactly *love* him, but I can see why people do. His fears and struggles make me want to just HUG HIM FOREVER and keep him safe. He's just so freaking protective of everyone, too, and it's the sweetest thing. I really, really liked him. Not a favorite but he grew on me a lot over the course of the book.

Kyrin: She's the other main character and I mostly like her? To be honest...she's a little bland, in my opinion. I admire her strength and faith, but I didn't really connect with her a ton. I don't know...I liked her, but again, not my favorite.

Kaden: If pressed to choose, I would say Kaden is my favorite. Because HELLO, adorably protective brother alert! HE IS EVERYTHING I WANT IN A FRIEND. Like pleaseeeee can I have him??

Liam: He's so precious and I just want to put him in a safe hobbit hole with blankets and books. <3 I will be VERY disappointed if Liam doesn't play a bigger role in the series - I NEEDS HIM, PRECIOUS.

Trask: YESSSSSSS. I loved him so much! I just want him and Lady Anne to be OFFICIAL. PLEASE AND THANK YOU. I love his sarcasm (#yes) and his easygoing nature. I feel like he would be a fun person to get to know.

Trev: I NEED MORE OF THIS GUY. He was so quiet, yet confident and strong. I loved what little I saw of him...and again, will be bitterly disappointed if he doesn't show up more. ;)

Others: I also really liked Rayad and Lady Anne, and I want to know more about Daniel. He was mentioned somewhat, but I feel like he could be a pretty pivotal character in the series. Maybe?? I'm just really curious about him.

- **The themes.** There were very strong faith elements that really hit close to home for me. They just felt so *right* and natural. I don't know how to explain it.

- **The setting.** I felt like this was rather underdeveloped in this book, but it's a six-book series so there's obviously room for growth. Honestly, it felt more like a historical, Old-Testament setting at times, with a few mentions of dragons to keep it "fantasy." Not sure if that's what the author was going for but y'know. xD

- **The writing style.** Just have to say: the writing is very solid in this book. The descriptions were never over-the-top or lacking, the perfect balance. The writing seemed to flow really well overall.

Not So Lovely Things:

- **The plot.** Okay, so let's talk about something here: this ENTIRE book is basically about people getting imprisoned and miraculously escaping execution. THAT'S IT. And while I was invested enough in the characters to keep reading, I felt that there should have been a more-engaging plotline...preferably with fewer people being imprisoned. :P Not to mention the fact that all the escapes felt pretty convenient. I was happy that the characters survived, obviously, but if the Emperor's security is so good, WHY THE HECK DID EVERYONE GET OUT?? So yeah, I had some issues with the plot, but I'm hoping the rest of the series gets a more solid plotline with fewer convenient plot devices. (It looks like the next book involves a quest so that should hopefully be more interesting.)

- **The length.** This book was almost like one big "introduction" to the real plot of the series. I get that it's necessary to establish things in the first book. I do. But 500+ pages?? It felt like it could have been cut down to about 350 pages (maybe cut out some of those imprisonments/escapes? xD) and still been great. Anyway, not a major issue; just something that bothered me a little.

CONTENT: the only concern I would mention is the violence. It gets pretty intense sometimes during torture scenes, and it may be too much for sensitive readers. I was fine with it for the most part...but some of the torture made me cringe. Probably okay for anyone 13 or 14+, in my opinion.

Overall, I DID really like this! The characters were phenomenal, the faith themes poignant, and the writing top-notch. I'm looking forward to reading the next book! (And crossing my fingers that my favorite characters have a bigger role in the rest of the series. ;))

4 stars!

Amanda Beguerie says

FIVE STARS! I would give it SIX if that was an option. (Goodreads, please take note!)

When I started Resistance, I was seriously skeptical.

For one, I've never thought I really enjoyed fantasy. I'm usually one to read realistic fiction and nonfiction. Now, I have never had really bad experiences with fantasy...it's just not my thing. Or so I thought. My main "problem" (well, not AT ALL with this book) with Christian fantasy is that so many times they mix our real God into the made-up world it and do not do it well, sometimes even unpurposefully seeming to mock God in the process...e.g. "Quick, let's pray for God to send his angels to rescue us from the dragon's mouth!" And I wasn't really interested in reading that kind of book. But Resistance was waaayyy different. God's name is Elôm, and has the same characteristics as our God, but there is nothing that would make me even slightly uncomfortable about having God (under a different name) in it. It just works.

Second, it's about 500 pages long...I didn't know if I really wanted to get into a "long" book during the school year and potentially not finish it. But in reality, I finished it within a week. I literally could NOT put it down.

Third, "it's an adult book. It has to be a little dry." By the end of the first page, I was hooked. So much for boring. All I wanted to do the week I read it was just that -- read.

What I loved about Resistance was...well, I loved everything actually.

I loved the reality and believability of all of the characters. There weren't any empty characters. By their descriptions and actions, you knew them for who they were, and it was amazing.

I love how Jaye writes. Occasionally, there was a word that I didn't know and when I looked it up, it was used perfectly. The imagery was fantastic. The vocabulary was very well used. I could picture everything.

I loved the brother/sister relationship between Kyrin and Kaden. It was...just perfect and sweet and real at the same time.

I loved the adoptive father/son relationship between Rayad and Jace. It just was great.

I loved the friendship between Kyrin and Jace. That you could tell it was heading eventually toward romance, but wasn't pushy in terms of time. Their friendship was built solidly on caring for each other. And I loved it.

In this book, the main characters must stand up for their beliefs. In Ilyon however, worship of any other than Aertus and Vilai (the moon gods) is forbidden. What will happen to the believers when faced with the decision between false worship or execution?

Kyrin Altar has much to face. Will she stand firm under major pressure, or cave? What will happen to Kaden Altair? Will he ever see his sister again?

What about Jace? When faced with the accusation of being a soulless killer, will he live up to that expectation or defy it?

All throughout Resistance, I was kept on the literal edge of my seat. I can't wait to read The King's Scrolls, and even more by Jaye L. Knight.

(Wow, this was the longest review I have ever written. That was fun.)

serena482* says

Resistance.... How can I even begin to explain how wonderful this book is!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Jaye L. Knight did a WONDERFUL job!!!! It's a fantasy. The main characters are Kyrin, her twin brother Kaden, and Jace a broken young man who used to be a gladiator. I love this book and there is like nothing I don't like about it!! I picked it up, and at times it was very hard to put down. It's a very adventurous book and a great story!!!!!! I wanted to write a totally epic review, but I'm just not good at that. So all I can say is that I adore this book, can't wait to read the next one, and recommend it to everyone 13 and up. It has a small amount of intense moments and I guess it depends on what the person can handle.

THANK YOU JAYE L. KNIGHT FOR WRITING THIS BOOK!!!! I AM HOPING THAT YOU WRITE MANY, MANY MORE BOOKS TO THIS SERIES!!!!!! LOVE LOVE LOVE LOVE THIS BOOK!!!!!!

Sarah Grace Grzybowski says

Haha, just realized it's been *exactly* a year since I last read this. XD

New review to come . . . sometime. :)

Exceptional! Probably the best indie fiction I have ever read. I loved the story, the characters, all of it. The characters were so well written and developed. You adored the "good" characters and hated the "bad" guys. I was hooked from the very beginning. It kept me on the edge of my seat, and I couldn't put it down! So amazing! Well done Jaye!

Olivia Jarmusch says

I finally finished! It took me a LONG time to read because I had the Kindle edition, but I'm looking forward to reading Book #2 in paperback. I'm not going to write a full-blown review because I know most of you have already read it and adore it. It's fun to see an adventure story with such lovely writing that is Christ centered. I'll admit, I did cringe several times while reading about the violence (because I'm just squeamish LOL), so if you're sensitive to violence, just be aware that there is some. Otherwise, if you're looking for a fun, encouraging, well-written, story, I would recommend checking it out.

Addy S. says

Just realized that this is my final read of 2018! What a book to finish off with!!

this book has it all! a captivating storyline, a mesmerizing cover, and wonderful, in-depth characters! before i go any further, let me give you the overview:

-Language: none. very happy about that!

-Romance: there is a side relationship between two people, but not with the main characters- Jace and Kyrin. Jace has a strong urge to protect Kyrin and he thinks about her often. I can just FEEL that they will get together in the future books, but that wasn't the case in Resistance! Loved their friendly relationship that formed between them.

-Violence: this is something I'd be cautious about. As this is a book featuring a lot of persecution, there is much detail. There is nothing gory and too detailed I couldn't read it, but a person nearly loses his eye, a finger is nearly cut off, and people are killed for their faith.

Blood/Gore: bloody detail in the scenes mentioned above.

This story is super inspiring to me! I loved every character (even Holden in the end). Well, minus the emperor and his men. Ugh. BOO DAICAN. And his creepy daughter. Even then, they were well drawn out!!

I fell in love with Jace from the start. He's been through everything, and he experienced nightmares and believed the lie that he was an 'animal'. I loved how Kyrin was pretty much the only one who could get past his well-built wall. It was hard to see him struggle with his past and the memories that haunted him. He nearly lost his faith in Elôm- but he proved himself a fighter.

Honestly, there was nothing that I DIDN'T like in this book! It was sad to see people getting persecuted, and reminded me of people around the world who are persecuted daily for their faith. It was so cool to see Kyrin and her brother hold so tightly to their faith.

It was hard to see Jace struggle with his past and the memories that haunted him. He nearly lost his faith in Elôm, but Kyrin helped him through.

Such a POWERFUL and BRILLIANT story that Jaye wrote!! *scurries off to buy the rest of the series*

100% recommend to lovers of Christian, clean fiction full of ADVENTURE, EVIL, and OVERCOMING IT.

younger readers be cautioned for the violence. ages 14+

now I understand why everyone loved this!!! GREAT JOB JAYE!!!

soli deo gloria

lisa elis says

FINALLY GUYS. FINALLY. I HAVE BEEN WAITING TO READ THIS SINCE I DISCOVERED THE BLOGGING WORLD (about ... oh idk one and a half years ago??) and the pressure this book was under to live up to hype was tremendous for ME. I am satisfied to announce that, while it wasn't EXACTLY what I had in mind, it blew me away.

The world building is marvelous - all the necessary info tossed in there in between with no info dumping whatsoever nor the holding back vital stats. It gave me vibes of Ted Dekker's Lost Books because of forest setting, and DragonKeeper Chronicles because of the fantasy races, and Red Queen because of rebellions and court drama, and Burning Glass because the girl is called to serve as an 'observer' to the king. Love the fantasy races, the portrayal of prejudice and hate, the cities, the rebellion, the court life and the confusing emperor.

Plot wise ...it was slightly slower than I expected, but nomatter. There were fights and dangerous secrets, escapes and resuces, fugitives, prisoners, rebellions, close calls ... all realistic and intense and heart stopping, in my personal opinion. Some of the happenings did border on predictable when looking back, but IT WAS DONE SO EXCITING-LY that I didn't even notice ha!

Characters are A+. I can fully understand why everyone adores Jace. (He's almost a male version of Celeste in Disowned.) He's this mix of sweet and kind and serious and reserved and tortured and hated and struggling and fierce and GAH SO MUCH POTENTIAL. I LOVE HIM. I FEEL FOR HIM SO MUCH. He's unique, so I believe you all will ADORE HIM too.

Kyrin ... I relate to her quite a bit, ESPECIALLY in how she relates to Jace. WANTS to be nice but has no idea HOW. She's so admirable from the outside, but reading her pov you can really understand how unsure and scared she is. Brave kid, really. I ADORE THE SIBLING RELATIONS BETWEEN HER AND HER TWIN BRO KADEN (plus her other brothers).

Side characters - SO WELL DONE. It is like I can totally visualize all of them having IMPORTANT roles in the future. I won't bother to name or list them all, but there are so many of them that I love and want to see more of ^.^ also Rayad is the best adoptive father ever ;D

The struggles the characters go through is so realistic and makes you really HURT for them. I love the fantasy representation of people persecuted for believing in God - I have read so many TRUE stories of this happening irl and that's why this book strikes a cord with me.

In essence - a beautiful world, a thrilling plot line, touching characters, marvelous friendships, realistic struggles, and resonating themes make this book a captivating start to what is sure to be an awesome series!

Content: some violence, including whipping, fight scenes where people die, beating as a form of torture, the

threat of certain bad guy going to gouge out a person's eye, etc.

Recommended to all fantasy lovers, especially my Christian friends!!

Karyssa says

So I've decided that I'm not going to review this book yet. I'm going to wait until after I reread it because... wow! But I will say, this is definitely one of my favorite fantasy series. :)

Shantelle says

Oh my ... where to even start? It brought me to tears, made my skin tingle in delight, had my mind racing, and made my heart sigh.

Resistance tells the stories of a fascinating array of characters; the most prominent being Kyrin Altair and Jace. Kyrin, along with her twin brother Kaden, train in Tarvin Hall to serve the emperor. Jace is of a feared race, an outcast to society. Both of them have this in common: they serve King Elom; which is a dangerous thing to do in the darkening days of Ilyon. Believers of Elom labor to keep their faith a secret ... but evil is at work. In the end, who will bow, and who will resist?

The setting of *Resistance* is an unusual, captivating mix of Ancient Rome-like times, fantasy concepts, and a futuristic touch —with the Christian allegory ever present. The collection of different “fantasy” races was intriguing. From the ruthless, supposedly soulless ryriks, to the regal, peace-loving talcrins, I was delighted by this creativity! Can’t wait to meet more of the races, such as the cretes and the giants (dorlanders)!

This story was deep. Deep, emotionally-stirring, thought-provoking, and hitting very close to home. I often found myself thinking, “*What would I do in that situation?*” Because I have much in common with Kyrin and Jace. A faith that has faced persecution around the world and across the centuries, for one. And it’s a faith worth fighting for! *Resistance* displayed that ... with scenes that pierced my heart. No, I will not bow down to your gods; I serve King Elom, and Him alone! Yes, it was deep. It felt real.

The love story, well ... it’s not exactly a love story ... but, I believe it will be, later on! *smiles* Anyway, the relationship was so sweet. It came about with real compassion, selflessness, and care. –Truly beautiful to watch unfold.

Oh, and did I mention that I love Kaden? Really, he’s the epitome of “big brotherly-ness”. He definitely ranks as a favorite character, along with Kyrin and Jace. But I liked all the characters —the good ones, I mean. Rayad, Trev, Endathlorsam, Liam, William, Trask, Anne ... Ah, I just want to read more of them!

Resistance was surprising, with breathtaking twists and turns. It was bittersweet and love-filled, with scenes that made me want to cry and smile all at once. It was interesting, with its amazing settings and happenings. It was heart-rending. It was beautiful. It was worth it. Definitely not your fluffy romance story —but I loved it. I absolutely can’t wait to read the next book to the ILYON CHRONICLES! And the next, and the next. I hear there is six books to the series, yay! ^_^

There was some violence, in order to enhance the story. I would caution younger children (10 and under). But otherwise, it's definitely not all gruesome and gore, just a bit of violence to make the situation more real.

All in all, a stunning story. Even after the last page, the impact remains.

I received a copy of Resistance from the author in exchange for my honest review.

Rachel'sbookishworld says

OH. MY. GOSH. If you haven't yet, go read this book right now. It was amazing! *grabs next book greedily*

Victoria Lynn says

My favorite fantasy series, hands down. Nuf said.

(that is all I am going to say for now because it has been nearly a year since I read it and I am planning on re-reading it. :)

2017 re-read

Definitely still five stars. More in depth review to come.

Katie Hanna says

WHEW.

Well . . . that was one heck of a ride and I enjoyed it muchly. I did have a few quibbles; but overall, I am Very Pleased Indeed with this story and the way it turned out, and very grateful to all the wonderful peoples who recommended it to me! (Especially one special person . . . you know who you are . . . <3)

I'm going to basically do a "what I liked/what I didn't like" style review, even though I've never tried that kind before; because I think it fits this story best. So here we go:

What I Liked:

- The characters!!! There were a ton of them, that's for sure; but they were all so vivid and well-fleshed-out, it was super easy to care about each one. Especially:
- JACE. *clutches heart* DAT BOI IS MIIINE. I don't care what anybody else says--he is Officially Mine, folks. He is a precious cinnamon roll who deserves to be protected from *all the things*. I just want to wrap him in a wool blanket and feed him hot chocolate and let him play with kittens all day long, or something. HE NEEDS SOME LOVE, OKAY???? And his PTSD was excellently written, and made me want to cry . . . which is no mean feat, because I don't cry over books. *sniffles*
- Kyrin!! I Very Much Approve of this female lead, folks :-) She's strong, and capable, and compassionate, and knows exactly who she is. And she's pretty darn handy with a bow and arrow, too *beams proudly* Fine

job, Ms. Knight. A+.

- Rayad. I really loved him as a mentor figure; he was wise, and good, but he had some prejudices of his own and didn't actually know ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING, nor did he pretend to . . . Good stuff. Very realistic.

- Trask. He makes me grin :-)

- Kaden! He was suuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuper relatable for me, actually. Rebellious? WE GOTCHA REBELLIOUS. But he was so sweet and generous, too, and brave. And humble, actually. The kind of guy who's fun to hang out with, ya know what I mean?

- The descriptions/worldbuilding. Next to the characterization, I think this was the best part of the novel, actually. It was extremely vivid, and what's even more important, extremely *clear*. It's so easy to get lost in a confusing mish-mash of details when you're trying to create a whole new world like this; but the author didn't do that! She described everything carefully and succinctly, told you what you needed to know, and then moved on. Every time she told me what something looked like/sounded like/felt like, my reaction was, "Okay . . . yes . . . I SAW that." And I'm pretty terrible at grasping sensory details in the stuff I read, I can tell you that--so the fact that I didn't really feel lost at any point in this book is quite a testament to Ms. Knight's skill as a writer.

- The allegorical aspect--especially the religious persecution. It was challenging, but in a good way. It made me think more about my own faith, and ask myself what I'd do in that situation, whether or not I'd find that courage; and that's always a worthwhile and necessary exercise.

Especially for me, at this particular moment in my life . . . So, yes. Very much appreciated. *nods*

- The plot twists. Pretty nerve-wracking, and we likes that, precious :-)

What I didn't like:

- Okay, so I'm just gonna say right now, I am EXTREMELY uncomfortable with this whole "irredeemable race/inherent evil" notion that we've got going on with the ryiks in this story. I'm not willing to accept the idea that ANY race of intelligent beings created by a wise and loving God could be either soulless or without hope of redemption. Now, I do *kind* of get the feeling that Ms. Knight is planning to disprove this concept in the remainder of the series--which would make sense, given that this is only Book 1 of what, 6 books? And Jace's character arc is only just beginning, etc., etc. HOWEVAH. There's definitely this running thread throughout "Resistance" that "Jace is only 'good' because he's half human instead of full-blooded ryik"; and that's just not okay, if that is indeed what the author is trying to tell us. On the other hand, most of that seems to be coming from Rayad; and maybe Rayad is just a slightly prejudiced old man who doesn't actually know everything. We'll see. I'm reserving judgment for the rest of the series :-)

- Even though I absolutely appreciated the strong faith shown by Kyrin and the other characters, I DID feel that the religious conflict in this story wasn't explained too well? I don't feel like I have a good grasp of WHY the worship of Elom is different from the worship of What's-His-Face and What's-Her-Face (y'know, the moon people); other than the fact that the one system has only one God and the other has several. Why, exactly, are they so unalterably opposed to each other? Why are the followers of Elom seen as so subversive and dangerous by the rest of society? Are they threatening its class structure? Gender roles? Cherished social traditions? Major modes of entertainment?

I definitely understand this is an allegory about Christianity and persecution. But here's what bothers me--

large-scale persecution doesn't happen without a reason. There always has to be a REASON why the non-believers hate the Christians; sure, it can be a stupid reason, but there has to be a reason. Otherwise, you're just kind of encouraging the notion that "everybody who doesn't believe in Jesus hates us because . . . they just DO"; and that's problematic, because it allows us an excuse for not cooperating with, and not trying to build relationships with, those who don't worship the same God we do.

Again, this may well be explained throughout the rest of the series; so I'm going to try and be patient and reserve judgment on that :-) (And I don't mean to be critical, guys. I'm just trying to explain how I felt about this book. Discussion in the comments is always welcome.)

Content? Ummmmmmmmmmmmmmmm . . . intense violence? But definitely not as intense as I'd been expecting, to be honest; and nowhere near as bad as some [real-life] stuff I've read. (Early Christian martyr testimony *cough, COUGH*) I think your average mature teen (15+) should be able to handle this just fine; although, if you're personally sensitive to violence, you MIGHT want to give it a miss. It definitely wasn't gratuitous, though, and it was all there for the sake of proving a point, not just for "oh, look how violent we can be." Ms. Knight showed a lot of restraint, I thought.

Conclusion:

This is an amazing fantasy novel with some pretty phenomenal characters and a strong message. Would absolutely recommend to a friend (just as my friends recommended it to me :-)) And I can't wait for the next book so I can SEE WHAT HAPPENS WITH MY PRECIOUS SHIP *scurries off to order it on Amazon Kindle*
