



The Fourth Sage

Stefan Bolz

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Fifteen-year-old Aries Egan lives in one of five super high rises in a nameless city. There is no government. There are no schools. People are controlled by a ruthless Corporation. Any deviation from the Moral Code, the code of living set forth by the Corporation, is punished - sometimes with prison, sometimes with torture, sometimes with death.

Aries hacks into the main frame computer, creating a loop with the camera feed to her room and so stealing one hour per night for herself. Sometimes she reads a book. That alone could send her to prison for three months. At other times, she roams the massive building via the air ducts. During one of her nightly excursions, she finds something that has the power to change her life and that of everyone around her. But in order for her to follow it, she has to become an outlaw, a criminal, an enemy of the Corporation.

As the hunt for her unravels, she flees ever deeper into the belly of her building. What awaits her there, she could not possibly have foreseen. And the fate of her people now rests on her ability to survive.

The Fourth Sage Details

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From Reader Review The Fourth Sage for online ebook

Mati says

Disclaimer: I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

The Fourth Sage is a book that takes its own twist on familiar genres. A splash of super powers, dystopia, and fantasy, I found it engaging from the start. Aries is a character who is easy to like, and her plight is unique but not unrelatable. As she struggled to maintain a sense of freedom and identity in a world focused on duty, it wasn't hard to root for her.

The plot was interesting, and I was never quite sure where it would lead. The deeper we delve into the building, the more we learn about the world and the forces driving it. The characters didn't feel too alike, which was nice, and the pacing worked pretty well. For the most part, I really enjoyed this book. There were a few points that kept *The Fourth Sage* from having a perfect score with me, however.

While the beginning really drew me in, somewhere near the end on the book I felt the story got really dialogue heavy. Rather than being carried by prose and narration, it started to feel like constant talking. I just sort of had that "budget cut" sort of sensation, where every character was pointing and describing what was happening ("Look over there, what's that!" "I hear something coming." etc.) I just didn't feel like I was experiencing as much on my own. I would look at a page and it was just line after line of conversation. I just felt like the beginning did a better job at putting me into the world and letting me feel what was going on, while those end sections relied far too much on what everyone was saying. The final confrontation picked back up, and once again I enjoyed the book, but there was certainly a lull in the middle I had to push through. I would consider that maybe a context editing problem rather than an overall problem with the story. While fixable, it does mark it down a notch, which is always a bummer for a book you really enjoy when you first pick it up.

In the end, I would read later books in this series. While it had a few areas for polishing, I still liked the story in the long run.

Will Swardstrom says

Earlier this year, I read Stefan Bolz's previous book, *The Three Feathers*. I thought it was outstanding with a unique voice in a sea of books with generic personalities and stock plots. With *The Fourth Sage*, Stefan has proved that he is not a one-trick pony and has continued his specific brand of writing to a futuristic world inhabited by Aries and her friends.

In *The Three Feathers*, Bolz really put a lot of emphasis on fate and destiny to go along with a heavy dose of supernatural and spirituality. There are recurrences of those themes here as well, but with the futuristic corporate society, the metaphysical side is tempered with the science and technology found in Aries' world. I really enjoyed reading *The Fourth Sage* and kept rooting for Aries and her friends, even as the deck was continuously stacked against them. Sacrifices are necessary for journeys like Aries' to succeed, but sacrifice doesn't always mean the same thing.

There is a positivity present in Bolz's work that you don't find in other author's books. In a post-apocalyptic, authoritarian society, you would expect to find death and depression around every turn, but for some reason, whenever Aries, her winged friend, Born of Night, or any of her numerous friends appear on the page, it is

difficult to not smile and know that somehow, someway, their destiny is to survive and even thrive. Stefan has planned more books in this series and I am very much interested in reading the future installments. Fantastic book, Stefan -- good work.

Colette Chadwick says

Hiding from the Corporate is no small feat, but Aries is a clever girl. She found a way to get a free hour every day. She explores the air ducts during that time and finds something unexpected. As Aries yearns for freedom the story explodes into this fantastic adventure of not only risk and sacrifice, but also bravery, love and friendship. With exciting twists and turns as the group finds their way from the grasp of Corporate.

It is very well written and the images the author puts forth are highly descriptive and beautiful. The mix of characters is brilliant. A book you will truly enjoy.

Leslie says

Watch out Suzanne Collins and Veronica Roth, here comes **Stefan Bolz**. This is a fantastic adventure with a young girl, Aries, who you will love like a little sister as she navigates her world. Travel with Aries into the bowels of the "Corporation" as she discovers who she is, and what she is fighting for. I highly recommend The Fourth Sage.

Ali Hammond says

I freaking loved it!!!! This has to be a movie. There was far too much detail and visual stunningness (don't know if that's a word but it is now) that just leapt off the pages. This book was a spectacular adventure and an epic love story among human beings. Not the kind of love story between 2 people, but the kind between humanity. It was beautiful Stefan, beautiful. Thank you for allowing me to read this before it was published. I feel truly honored.

Rick says

Aries rises! From page one the reader is hurtled head-long into an intense and dangerous world. Bolz makes us root for his precocious protagonist effortlessly, as we become involved in her dire mission to fight against a world she never made. Fast-paced and stylish...I highly recommend it!

Kelly says

The Fourth Sage is a filled with adventure, suspense, and self realization. The characters are believable and very real. Each possessing their own unique gifts and fighting their own personal fears and battles. Together

they embark on a journey that forces them to rely and trust each other, and most importantly, to have faith in themselves. Aries strong spirit and honest soul drew me in immediately. I thoroughly enjoyed traveling with her throughout this adventure.

Amy says

I am a very visual person and if I can't picture the world that the book is taking place in, it's tough for me to stick with it. This book had many complex settings that were depicted clearly and beautifully. It was so easy to see all of the action going on. I started rooting for the characters pretty much right from the start and even though their challenges were great, I never once questioned the believability of how they managed to survive each situation. It was very engrossing with timely themes about how much safety vs. freedom we should be living with. Believing in friendships and trusting your instincts were also major themes that are timeless. I also really liked how the more sensitive issues were written. I was able to feel for the characters and what they went through without having to read a really graphic and disturbing scene. All and all, a great, exciting book that is uplifting in the end and also deserves a place on the big screen someday!

Jenn Penn says

If you liked Divergent, you'll love The Fourth Sage. It's a unique coming of age/self realization story unlike anything you've read before. Aries is a wonderful character to get to know, love and root for throughout her struggles in a dystopian society. I can't wait to see the movie (which just must be made!) and I can't wait to read Aries and her friends' further adventures. I highly recommend this book!

Jacqueline Dooley says

I was privileged to get an early copy of the book prior to its official release date. I fell in love with Aries from the start - she's a solid, engaging heroine who is extremely compassionate. While this is clearly a dystopian science fiction book akin with novels such as Divergent and Hunger Games (in that there is a very controlling government/ruling party, advanced technology and a population of people that are oppressed), there are elements of fantasy as well as a compelling mystery that kept me turning pages long after I should've gone to bed.

What I liked best about the book was the connection that the characters had with each other which was strongly driven by Aries, the main protagonist. Aries is flawed, brave, intelligent and very real - a character you can't help but fall in love with and root for. Her connection with Born-of-Night is endearing and often harrowing and I found myself holding my breath whenever they lost contact.

This is the second book of Mr. Bolz's that I've read - the first was The Three Feathers which is referenced at the start of this book. Aries' own journey mirrors that of Joshua's (from The Three Feathers) in many ways. She's forced to make hard decisions and show true bravery, and she makes unexpected friends in the process. I love that this story is so character driven, but also that the world is very real. I'm very much looking forward to the next installment in this series.

Kate says

Pros:

It was cheap and it had good reviews. The idea behind the story intrigued me. Teenagers rebelling against a dystopian society is one of my favorite themes. But alas....

Cons:

I was extremely disappointed with the execution of the story. It had such potential, but it moved so slowly and the characters were so boringly simple that I couldn't continue reading it. I stopped about halfway through (very rare for me). The story is told in the present tense which is confusing and disorienting, and there were multiple grammatical errors that should not have made it past an editor.

A disappointment. I might try to pick it up again, since it has so many positive reviews, I feel like I must be missing something.

Heather says

Great book. Took me a little bit to get into it but before i knew it i couldn't put it down and was staying up late at night to see what happened next. I was a bit amazed at how quickly it gripped me and it was done with out my conscience thought. Was happy i won this book in a giveaway and can't wait to read the next one

Lina Gingold fd berg says

A fabulous fast paced story of Aries, that really strikes a cord at this day and age. You get sucked in from the very beginning and can't put it down, as you get to know all the characters while they are trying to save themselves and each other. Highly, highly recommend it!

Kimberly says

Once again, Stefan Bolz's unique writing style and otherworldly vision propels us into a world of brightly-lit characters and epic (although in this case sometimes bleak) panoramas.

Meet our heroine Aries, a young lady who is not quite fitting in to the dystopian world she finds herself in. She's different, a round peg being ground into the square hole The Corporation insists every member of its society fit in. Her problems, and her freedom, begin when The Corporation realizes this.

This is a timely, relevant story.; a cautionary tale but one filled with hope due to one little group of young people's sacrifice, love, friendship and growth. It is filled with characters that I cannot wait to get to know better in future installments.

One of the most endearing things about this author's works is his passion and true belief in his stories and

characters. His obvious love for them literally drips from the page; a trait sometimes missing in indie fiction.

Molly says

Wow. This book is amazing. So many characters to get to know and love. Aries is a stupendous and relatable heroine. And her companions all have these qualities to make them unique. I cannot wait to read the next books to get to know them better.

And, even aside from the wonderful characters, this plot is so fascinating. There are so many levels to it that it lends itself to more than one read. Every time you think you understand how the world works, something shifts and you realize it's all much deeper than you realized.

Another great book by Stefan Bolz that teaches us about how the world can be changed by a small group of young people who use their talents to come together for the greater good. And it's also just wildly entertaining.

Read it.
