

ELPHAME'S CHOICE by P.C. Cast
Luna Imprint (HQN)
Reviewed by :: Linda Hall

Never having read a Luna novel before, I was a little put off by the fact that the novel centers mainly on the heroine of the tale. What can I say, I enjoy being inside the mind of my hero. Add to that, that at times she seemed to really wax on about the restoration of the castle and its inhabitants.

For all that however, this book was magical. I've been a fan of P.C.'s from the beginning. Her mind is so fertile and imaginative. And this book was no exception.

Elphame is the daughter of Epona's beloved and her centaur lifemate. Touched by the goddess, Elphame bears the mark of the goddess's grace. The story begins with Elphame needing to leave the constricting home of her parents and make her own way in life. Though she bears the mark of the goddess's blessing, she's never felt any power of her own, which makes her feel awkward and unsure. She journeys, with her brother, toward the charred and gutted remains of her ancestors home, where she finds for the first time in her life, peace. Overwhelming peace and acceptance.

She'd always been revered and praised in her mother's land, but never treated as an equal. Only something to stare at and bow to. She'd never been able to make a true friend, outside of her own family, and so the changes that come over her at the acceptance of the castle and her charges works miracles on Elphame's soul. Not only that, but on this strange and rugged land the magic that had always lain dormant inside her comes into full bloom. Here, in the untamed wilds Elphame truly becomes a goddess and chieftan of her own clan.

While the reading in the middle of the book is intriguing, in my opinion, the book doesn't get explosive until the hero finally enters the picture. Lochlan, half-man half-Femorian (if you haven't read Goddess by Mistake then Femorians are demonic, mindless and human like in form, with talons for feet and wings that do very interesting things when aroused ;)) but Lochlan is no demon the way his father was. He's a half-breed, who through great pain, is able to control the demonic possession inherent in his kind.

But, it's not permanent. A prophesy has been foretold that in order for his kind to rid themselves of the evil they must do so by the blood of a goddess. Yet, this is no easy task for them. Because unlike the uncaring full-bloods, this new race of Femorian's try desperately to hang onto a veneer of civility.

The book was simply awesome, and P.C. has definitely delivered the goods once again. Nobody can do fantasy like P.C.