

Ice Massacre

Tiana Warner

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From page one, this story transports its audience into the dark waters of the Atlantic with its engaging, conflicted main characters.

Ice Massacre is an engaging fantasy novel about the human inhabitants of a small island and their ongoing battle with the merpeople who live in the arctic waters surrounding them. The story revolves around classic themes of friendship and loyalty juxtaposed against ignorance and fear, and the book is thought provoking and intelligent. The supernatural twist adds an element that makes the story fresh and thoroughly entertaining.

Each year, the people of Eriana Kwai send a ship of highly trained warriors to kill as many mermaids as they can. Most years, the ship does not return, the warriors lost to the sea demons they so desperately need to defeat. Two girls, a human named Meela and a mermaid named Lysithea, secretly befriend each other despite the blind hate that exists between their peoples. When their relationship is discovered, they are torn apart, each believing the other betrayed their friendship. As they grow up to be warriors in the never-ending battle, they learn the hate and fear of their species, but they are never quite able to forget the love they felt for each other as children. When they find each other again in the midst of battle, they must each decide what is right, what is wrong, and who they truly owe their loyalty to.

Ice Massacre is told from the first person perspective of Meela, a strong but conflicted young woman determined to do her duty and fight for her people. She is a well-developed character, and her thoughts, feelings, and actions make perfect sense in the atmosphere in which she lives, making it very easy to become fully immersed in the story.

Author Tiana Warner does a fantastic job creating a tight plot and masterfully creates a sense of atmosphere through subtle yet potent descriptions. For instance: "I'd never seen another mermaid except Lysi. Lysi was just a girl, like me—a friend, one who had a tail instead of legs. But something about this mermaid was so inhuman, like she was too perfect, each of her features exaggerated beyond real beauty. Something sinister lived beneath her porcelain flesh."

Ice Massacre is a truly exceptional book. From the very first page, the story transports its audience into the dark waters of the Atlantic and the desperate situation that the people of Eriana Kwai endure as they struggle for survival. Warner has created a story that is not nearly complete by the end of this book, and young adults who enjoy intelligent and action-packed fantasy will be left holding their breath while waiting for the next installment.

CATHERINE THURESON (August 11, 2014)

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