



Lost Kingdom

Laurel Black

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A girl looking to recover her stolen memories and magical abilities possesses a map that leads to an object that could save a boy's betrothed in Laurel Black's adventure-filled fantasy novel *Lost Kingdom*, in which two quests converge.

Raven is a prisoner working in the mines of an enemy city when Jeddak, disguised as an enemy guard, first meets her. Raven longs for a brother who only appears to her in dreams and a homeland she cannot remember. Jeddak wants to recover a magical stone to rescue his fiancée, no matter the cost.

Once Jeddak realizes that Raven holds an important lead in his search for the stone, he helps her escape. Jeddak also convinces Raven to accompany him back to his tribe's city with the possibility of restoring her magic. The trust between the two is fragile—and is both strengthened and squandered by their budding romantic tension. And though their motivations are their own, Jeddak and Raven's mission is tied to much larger forces that could impact their whole world.

The story moves at a steady pace, alternating between Raven and Jeddak's perspectives; their thoughts are distinctive and revealing. Still, they refuse to share their motivations and desires with each other. Their conversations are smooth, weaving exposition into the action of the story well. Despite ample foreshadowing, the final plot twist is shocking and uneasy—with hints that Raven and Jeddak's story is not over yet.

Following two heroes on a treacherous journey through a fantastical land, *Lost Kingdom* explores the importance of home and the meaningful relationships formed in its absence.

JULIA DILLMAN (January / February 2024)

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