

Resurrection: The Alterran Legacy Series, Vol. 3

Regina M. Joseph

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Joseph masterfully navigates the complexities of her world's political landscape with a balance between character development and dramatic action.

In *Resurrection*, the exciting next volume in the Alterran Legacy series, Regina M. Joseph explores how a colony's relationship to its home planet changes when its lifeline is severed. Stretched between two worlds, this is a battle between progress and tradition, adaptation and stagnation, and the power struggle to control the emergence of a new way of life.

After an interstellar catastrophe reduces the surface of Alterran to a barren wasteland and destroys much of its colony on Earth, including the portal between the planets, the colonists are forced to make difficult decisions that threaten centuries of tradition. A hybrid clan emerges, led by En.Lil, who realizes the old ways will lead to the colonists' demise. When the portal is later repaired and travel between the worlds renewed, the things the colonists did to survive come back to haunt them as Alterran's powerful elite questions their loyalty. The ruling En family is eager to bring the Earth colony back in line. But those who tasted freedom on Earth are no longer content with the prescribed society engineered by Supreme Leader Ama, and a power vacuum on Alterran spreads cracks in the foundation of their perfect world.

When a message from the ancient Anunnaki is discovered deep underground, Ama's son and successor, Anu, takes it as a sign that his ascension as supreme leader is blessed. Will the changes he seeks bring a new age of peace to his people, or will his departure from tradition cause his downfall?

The story is wonderfully complex and rich in both interpersonal relationships and larger political strategies. This is particularly true among Ama, Anu, and Anu's son, En.Lil, as they each try to gain power without upsetting the family dynasty. This generational tension is handled with subtlety and realism through their conflicting goals and allegiances. Seemingly every character has a plan to achieve power, which gives each action and speech a deeper dimension. This complexity, though, is also a drawback. With everyone scheming, it can be difficult to keep track of alliances, motivations, and histories. However, Joseph masterfully moves through the complexities with a solid balance between establishing scenes and dramatic action.

An emphasis on dialogue and personality creates realistic characters, but they come at the cost of rich descriptions of settings. This causes some scene changes to be confusing and sudden. It's not always immediately clear where events are taking place, particularly when the portal between Alterran and Earth reopens and characters begin moving between worlds. This would be helped by additional reminders about settings and past events from the previous books in the series. Even so, the story quickly pulls through with engaging political intrigue, dramatic betrayals, and fascinating links between Sumerian myth and interstellar civilization.

Resurrection is a beautifully crafted addition to a series that will leave readers eager for more. With her talent for balancing complex concurrent plotlines and realistic characters, it's clear that Joseph continues to be an author to

watch.

ERIC ANDERSON (June 3, 2014)

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