ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

FANTASY

Silevethiel
Andi O'Connor
Purple Sun Press
978-1-940417-00-4
Four Stars (out of Five)

The entertaining and complex world O'Connor has created is full of magic and intrigue.

Silevethiel is a fresh and creative novel full of magical lions, elvish politics, and an evil force that must be defeated, sure to appeal to readers of high fantasy.

When Princess Irewen wakes to find her father has been brutally murdered, she turns to her cousin Elthad for comfort and guidance. He advises her to flee the kingdom and go to the elves of Mistwood for protection while he tries to find her father's killer; however, when the guards attack her, Irewen realizes that Elthad has betrayed her. Stabbed in the back with an arrow and left for dead, Irewen awakens in the care of a wood elf named Laegon, the prince of his people. Laegon vows to protect and assist Irewen in her quest to protect the world from her evil cousin.

Author Andi O'Connor has created an entertaining and complex fantasy in *Silevethiel*. There is an intriguing mystery in that Irewen knows she is part elf, but she never knew her mother and knows nothing about that part of her heritage. This mystery is deepened when Laegon suspects Irewen is the girl named in a prophecy of his people, and she is destined to unite the four elvish races. The two decide that in order to defeat Elthad, she must discover her heritage. The question about her ancestry carries through the entire book and helps move the story forward. It also neatly lays the groundwork for the next book.

O'Connor provides a great deal of description of her characters and her world. Although the writing is very good, the constant description is heavy at times and slows the pace of the plot. For example, the author describes Irewen waking up to the smell of soup: "The tantalizing aromatic smell of the broth permeated the cave. Irewen's stomach growled from hunger. Her mouth watered in anticipation of the warm liquid rushing down her throat."

Additionally, the characters have strong emotional reactions that are sometimes difficult to accept. Irewen cycles through fear, helplessness, and grief to determination, pride, and even

joy very quickly—the entire book seems to span no more than a few weeks. Laegon experiences equally dramatic changes in emotion. Though he is more than two centuries old and states he has never been in love, he falls for Irewen and pledges his life to helping her almost as soon as she wakes up after being injured.

Despite these small problems, the book is very entertaining. The world O'Connor has created is full of magic and intrigue. *Silevethiel* is the first in a series, and there is clearly still a great deal of story to be told. The reader will turn the last page of the book anxious for the next installment.

Catherine Thureson