

Song of the Sending

Corinne O'Flynn

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This unique and entertaining fantasy novel becomes more engrossing with each turn of the page.

In *Song of the Sending*, an engrossing and highly entertaining novel by Corinne O'Flynn, Jim, a young man from another world, discovers that his family and friends have been keeping a secret from him. This secret and his search for answers affect not only his life, but the lives of everyone in every world.

Life in Sweetwater's Traveling Show is happy. Jim has just earned his motorcycle license, he has his beloved tiger, Bak, and he is surrounded by friends and family. When a talking falcon shows up and announces that he must return home, Jim is shocked and confused. Before he can begin searching for answers, the carnival is attacked by a group looking for him. His brother Dan sacrifices himself to give Jim the chance to run away. Jim is able to escape, but where can he go and how can he save the people he loves?

Song of the Sending is a unique and entertaining fantasy novel. Vibrant descriptions make the fantasy landscape come alive, invoking multiple senses and imparting a world that seems nearly touchable. A description of Jim's first sighting of a castle in his home world of Bellenor is evocative: "Towers stood tall and imposing, their pointed turrets like witches' hats which seemed to stretch upward as I got closer to them....The burned tower seemed wilted, like melted wax. The tang of charcoal and burnt wood clung to everything."

Though the plot is slow to build, the author creates a vivid and complex story with interesting characters and a mysterious quest. As Jim is learning about where he comes from and what lies before him, his traveling companions, Sam and Charlie, are facing their own challenges. These subplots wind beautifully through the main story, adding depth and interest.

Jim and his companions spend much of the story not knowing exactly what they are looking for or even where they are going. The plot reveals itself as Jim makes new discoveries, and this makes the tale feel fresh and exciting. With each turn of the page, the book becomes more engrossing as Jim learns about Bellenor, who he is, and what he must do.

Song of the Sending is the first book in a series called The Expatriates, and though the story comes to a satisfying conclusion, there are many questions left unanswered. As the last page is turned, anticipation for the next installment will surely run high.

CATHERINE THURESON (March 16, 2016)

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