

The Queen of Nothing (The Folk of Air #3)

Holly Black

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At the devastating end of the Wicked King, Jude is left scrambling to pick up the shambles of her story. As the exiled Queen of Faery, a title that no one else knows she wears, she struggles to adapt to her old way of life in the mortal world. Slowly working through her pain, betrayal and loss, Jude begins to accept small jobs from Fae to practice her hard-earned skills. However, one disastrous job leads her back into the world of Faery, where she realizes that her feelings for Cardan may not be completely gone.

This book was a dazzling conclusion to the trilogy and was written with the same mystical beauty that the rest of Holly Black's books contain. Masterfully written and planned, the story managed to surprise me at every turn. What I loved most about this book was the complex relationships and struggles that the characters experience as they grapple with who they were and who they want to be. The author delves into the deepest corners of every connection, skillfully revealing character growth through difficult thoughts and perceptions. The parallels between Madorc's and Jude's story is one that sent me into tears time after time. Longing to be different, but at the same time ambitious in exactly the same way draws them and pulls them apart in a dance of father-daughter dynamics.

Each character was wholly developed and individual. I enjoyed how side characters were not just there to support the main character's pathway, but to drive and direct the story forward with individual arcs of growth. One part of the story that I wish was developed more was Taryn's story and relationship with her sister. At times, her decisions felt sudden and were not explained very well. I also felt in some ways that the ending was wrapped up too neatly, as though every loose end was tied off. Even though this resolution was satisfying in some ways, I was looking for a deeper and more realistic finish to one of the most enthralling tales I've ever read. However, this book is completely worth it, and it was admirable how it managed to uphold the same value and quality as the first two books. This book would be best suited to ages 13+, as it contains some mature and explicit content, and is designed for a YA audience.

Recommended Titles:

The Iron Trial (Magisterium #1) by Holly Black and Cassandra Clare

The Blackthorn Key (The Blackthorn Key #1) by Kevin Sands

Six of Crows by Leigh Bardugo

An Ember in the Ashes by Sabaa Tahir

Spin the Dawn by Elizabeth Lim