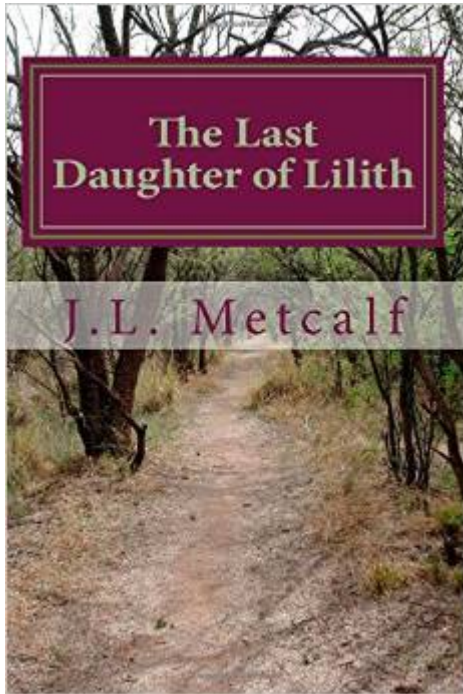


Book Review: Jessica Lee Metcalf's *The Last Daughter of Lilith*



The Last Daughter of Lilith is a true coming-of-age story. Katrina seems to be a normal kid living a normal life, but then a series of events forces her to grow up immediately and face true responsibilities. Sure, this genre of story has been told many times before and will be written many times again, but author Jessica Lee Metcalf doesn't let the story get stale, keeping things going smoothly and interesting up until the end. Featuring a lot of different elements — fantasy, human interest, coming-of-age, action — Metcalf uses her arsenal of tricks to keep me excited to read the next page.

Katrina is an average high school student who doesn't feel that she fits in, so she keeps to herself, focusing on studying and babysitting, hoping to get accepted at a college far away from her boring New England town. Her parents were freelance travel writers who spent much of their time on the road, always bringing her a snow globe from each place they went.

Growing up, Katrina noticed some strange things when she became angry. A friend disappeared after she secretly wished it so, things would catch fire and her anger would sometimes end with her parents getting mysteriously hurt. This was always covered up and downplayed, which caused her to start disassociating herself from her parents and friends. She formed a protective shell around her and stopped believing that a thing like magic could be real. Then, things got weird, causing her to grow up quickly and be a part of something she never bargained for.

Her parents had Matthias stay with her during their latest excursion. He was close to her age and the two hit it off. Though they were developing feelings for each other, Matthias seemed more of a protector than a suitor. While she was excited about these new developments with Matthias, she became worried about her parents. She barely heard from them, and when she did, they were brief before they asked to speak with Matthias.

The progression of their relationship ultimately led to a breakdown in protection, which led to the death of Katrina's parents (in addition to seeing this coming in advance, Metcalf wrote that this was the last time Katrina saw her parents alive), and her learning that she had supreme magical powers and Craig (the one who killed her parents) was after her to steal the powers that she possessed. Katrina was now protected by her new "family," which consisted of Sebastian, Alex, Magenta and Matthias. They helped her learn how to use her magical powers, all with the hope of victoriously battling Craig.

While not perfect, I enjoyed *The Last Daughter of Lilith*. Metcalf wrote a story that kept my interest, even though I associate books pertaining to magic with Harry Potter; this had me turning the page. Metcalf writes with a touching detail, leaving me with vivid mental pictures of the action. I was able to identify and sympathize with all of the characters, including the evil Craig. Protagonist Katrina is a strong-willed character, and it was a thrill reading her grow into herself. Her supporting cast was just as intriguing, and I'd love to read more about them in either the past, present or future. Metcalf could have a captivating series on her hands.