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BOOK REVIEW: Yelen and Yelena by C.M. Rosens

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Genre: Fantasy

Age: 18+

Format: ebook

Yelen & Yelena follows Yelena, a laundress and sex worker, who is driven out of her home and village by accusations of sorcery, and sets out to find the beast in a hidden castle in the woods. In the background, the land is being swallowed up by an all-consuming, deadly fungal infection known as the rot, and the people live under an oppressive class of merchants and landlords - the oligarchy.

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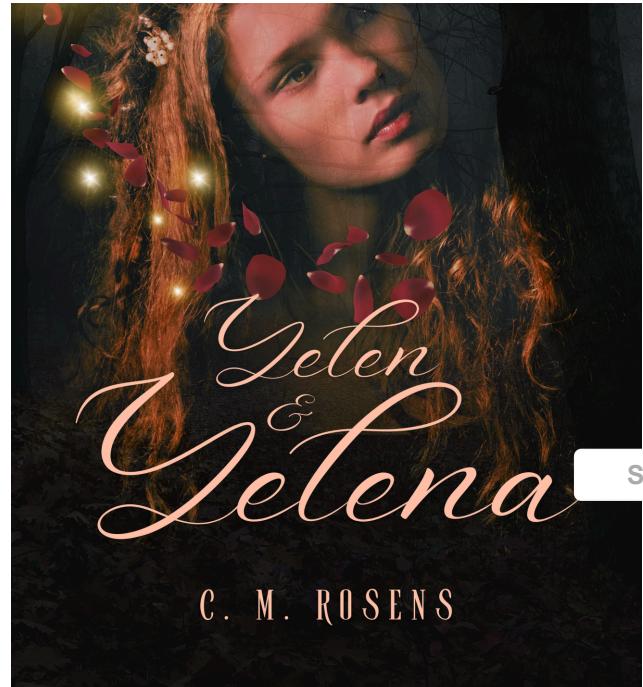


dangerous, and it is utterly unapologetic about it.

The relationship between our title characters may form the core of *Yelen & Yelena*, but sits firmly within the genre of dark fantasy, and we are treated to a wide world with a rich history. The worldbuilding is where this book truly shines.

As a rule, I try not to speculate on the writer or writing process when reviewing their work, but as it is a new release it is hard not to imagine there was an eye on current events. *Yelen & Yelena*'s world has a turbulent political history. Having undergone a revolution overthrowing the old feudal system, it is now ruled by the powerful merchant class as an oligarchy. Yes.

The rot, an unstoppable insatiable infection, is slowly eating up the countryside, encroaching on Yelena's village as the story begins.



There are also a number of religious practices and folk traditions woven into the story's tapestry, some of which are relevant to the plot, some are not. Even those that do not serve a direct purpose to the plot serve to make the world come alive and distinct in a beautiful way. For a relatively short novel, *Yelen & Yelena* contains a lot of depth.

If I were to make one criticism, it would be that the final act feels a little rushed. I would have liked to spend a bit more time with the pieces being arranged on the board, so to speak, and a bit more time on the character's relationships. This wasn't enough to ruin the experience by any means, but it would have bumped up my personal rating from four stars to five.

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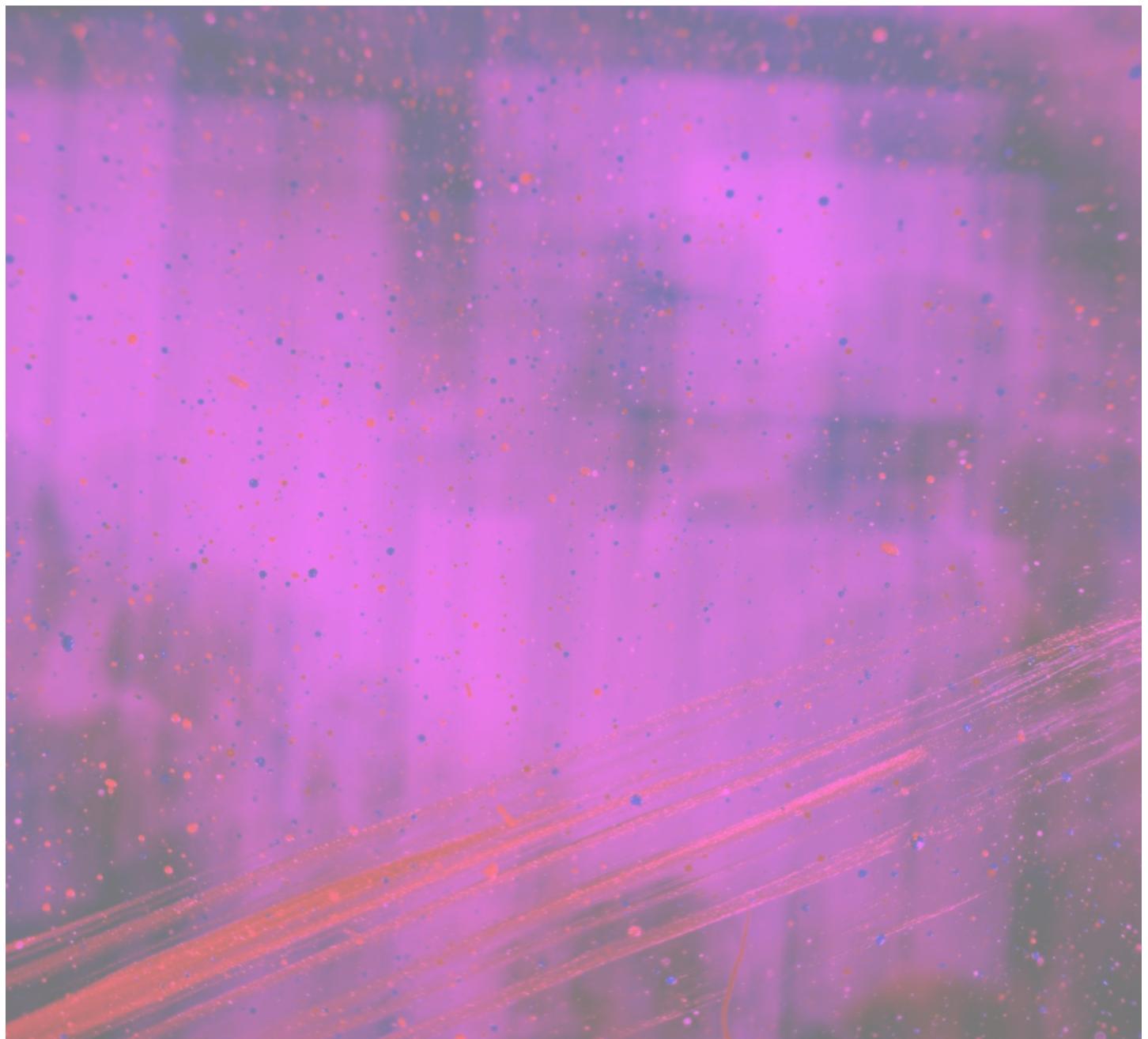
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