Matthew Jupp

Black Light is about a young orphan who soon discovers a lost sister, and a witche’s circle that must be saved, and embarks on a journey filled with magic. The book addresses universal themes such as good vs evil (the remaining witches and their children vs the grey witch/witchfinder); casting out members/discrimination (the witches who gave birth to boys); which then backfires (as the grey witch turns against the circle); and long lost sisters finding each other (Perfidy & Verity).

For me, this is an original story. I have never read anything like this. The only fantasy books I have read are Eragon, by Christopher Paolini (which is good but sooooo detailed and long winded that I have never finished it) and Thunderchild, by S.G.Miles (which was good but I wasn’t particularly inspired to read the rest of the trilogy) and both of these books are clearly aimed at boys and inspired by J.R.R. Tolkein’s Lord of the Rings and maybe C.S. Lewis’s Narnia series.

The characters in Black Light are well described; you can quite vividly picture what they look like. The dialogue is believable despite the fact that it is clearly fantasy. I think that, if it is aimed at young teenagers, they could easily relate to these characters to create a stronger picture of the story and what is going on. As a reader I didn’t have to work hard to create images of the scenes and setting in my mind because the author has done all that so well.

The pace gives you time to understand it all, to get a mental picture. There is a good building of suspense when they are in the caves, you can just tell that something bad is going to happen but you are not entirely sure what. It doesn’t zoom along so fast that you wonder what is going on, but it doesn’t drag out un-necessarily. It doesn’t plod along either, but there aren’t too many sudden twists, changes of direction or surprises to confuse you. It’s just good the way it’s done. Having said that … the ending really threw me off and I am not now sure that everyone who ‘died’ is actually dead?! I hope it is setting up for a sequel!

Based on the cover, I would probably not have picked Black Light off the shelf; I would not have been drawn to it, as this is not a genre that normally appeals to me. The book cover presents as a teenaged girl’s kind of book, not really aimed at boys. I might have had a picture of the bag of heartstones spilling out? But, I really enjoyed this book!

I would highly recommend Black Light to those who enjoy fantasy stories and I would suggest it as a good book for anyone who has never read a fantasy story before.