



2005

### Eldest

Jessica Farmer

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Paolini, Christopher. *Eldest*. Knopf, 2005. ISBN 037582670X. \$21.00. 704 pp.

Reviewer: Jessica Farmer

Reading Level: Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Adventure Stories; Fantasy Fiction;

Subject: Dragons--Juvenile fiction; Elves--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews:

The second installment in the Inheritance series continues with Eragon and Saphira as they fight with the Varden to bring down the evil Galbatorix and restore Alagaesia to its former glory. The story resumes when the Kull kill the leader of the Varden, leaving the rebel band in turmoil. Eragon must help them pick up the pieces and elect a new leader. Eragon and Saphira then venture with Arya to the forest home of the elves of Du Weldenvarden where he will complete his training as a Dragon Rider. Meanwhile, Eragon's cousin Roran faces his own adventures in Carvahall. The Ra-zac, destroying anything in their path, pursue him to get information about Eragon. Roran fights to save his village and most importantly, his fiancé. He quickly becomes the young leader of the beaten villagers as they journey through the mountains to join the Varden in the neighboring country of Surda. Eragon finishes his training with the elves and rushes to the defense of the Varden as they fight an epic battle against the mounting army of Galbatorix. The Varden are far outnumbered and Eragon as a full Rider is their only hope for success. Victory proves harder than they originally thought, however, when Eragon comes face to face with another Rider.

This exciting story is filled with action and adventure. Similar to Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, Paolini draws on the epic fantasy style, with success. The plot moves along quickly so the reader doesn't get bogged down in the fantastic elements. Eragon is maturing and growing as a character--he has believable faults and strengths. Although his formal training is complete, he still has much room to grow in the final book of the trilogy. Recommended for young adults because the battle scenes are graphic and vocabulary may be difficult for a younger audience to understand. Overall, this is a fun read even for those who aren't fantasy lovers.