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The Cerulean

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The Cerulean are an all female utopian society who have moved from planet to planet in their magical space city for millenia. They have been attached to the current planet since The Great Sadness—an ambiguous time in Cerulean history when ceruleans died and some cultural traditions were changed, such as visiting the people of the planets to which they connect via a magical tether that is both broken and established by the sacrifice of a chosen member of their society. Sera is chosen to break the tether just before her eighteenth birthday. She accepts her fate and willingly sacrifices herself to set her people and her beloved city free. But it doesn’t work. She doesn’t die and the tether isn’t severed by the magic in her blood. Instead she is captured by twins whose father is a wealthy showman with sinister intentions. While Sera searches for a way to escape and return home, her best friend, Leela, and one of Sera’s three mothers begin to discover that all is not as perfect in the Cerulean city as it may seem. The story ends as Sera makes her escape from the freak show and Leela makes a gruesome discovery hidden under the Cerulean temple.

This is a story that has mighty intentions and great potential but that falls short of expectation. Cerulean culture is all female and their world is peaceful and refined. Sera is a well rounded character worth rooting for as she accepts and prepares for her role as a human sacrifice. Leela and Sera’s birth mother remain loyal to her even after they believe that she is dead and this loyalty leads them to uncover the plot which centers around a mystery. Very little progress is made in resolving this mystery and the story ends with cliff hangers for both Sera and Leela. The differing sexual orientations between characters in this book creates the opportunity for characters to find acceptance in new cultures. The girl twin who captures Sera is lesbian, an unaccepted orientation in her culture. Sera is straight which is unacceptable to Ceruleans. The male twin is completely self absorbed and lives only to impress his evil father, but he capitulates to a good guy in an unsatisfactory way that feels false and forced. The biggest fault of the book, however, is an arduous plot with overworked subtleties that move at a slow place to no resolution. It is only a prequel to a sequel without much to help it stand alone. There is hope that the next book in the series may be more satisfying but most readers probably won’t bother.

*Contains mild violence and mild sexual content.