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Vankara (Book 1, Vankara Saga)



Synopsis

Vankara, an island nation founded by runaway mages, finds itself besieged by a series of mysterious plagues which decimate half the world's population. When the Queen of Vankara falls ill from one of the plagues, she calls upon the talents of Sarah Harker. As a shifter, Sarah is physically able to transform into another person but only if she is touching them at the moment of their death, gaining not only their physical form but also some of their memories. Queen Emma Vankar entrusts Sarah with the responsibility of protecting the people of Vankara from the ever growing greed of those in parliament and from the ambitious hands of Aleksander Chromis, dictator of the Chromis Empire and ardent suitor for the queen's hand in marriage. To help Sarah become the ruler Vankara needs, the queen enlists the help of her trusted political advisor, Gabriel, and her estranged lover, Captain John Fallon. Sarah soon finds herself at the center of a mystery when she discovers the cause of the plagues, uncovering a diabolical conspiracy to conceal the truth of their origins. Vankara takes place in a Neo-Victorian setting where zeppelins, automatons, dragons and magic exist.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I don't usually write reviews but just had to with this one. I had read the "Harvester" series, which was recommended to me, and really liked it. Found this one and thought I'd give the author another shot. I have give Ms. West a heartfelt congratulations on a novel that just sucks you in. I'd put the book away for the night or for a bit to give my eyes a break but I could never get it out of my mind for very long. The main character "Sarah" and her ability to transform into anyone who dies, if she's touching them, is an intriguing part of the story. The possibilities are endless at what she may become. Her ability to step into another person's life and seamlessly continue it is a source of amazement. You get a bit of back story at the beginning but as you read and come towards the end you have to wonder if the beginning as you learned it is really the truth or is there more we/Sarah just don't know yet. I didn't find this particular story to have a lot of action but appreciated the story that was being developed. I'm glad they didn't try to overload the plot with a lot of useless info about the other characters in Sarah's circle of trusted friends. This allowed the depth of Sarah to show as well as creating the world they live in. I really liked the steam punk setting, it's refreshing, and then to add the magic element as well makes something different. I know this may not have been helpful worn the plot, but didn't want to give too much away. Can't wait to start the second one.

I have to say this was not the type of book I was expecting from SJ West. I love all of her books and this one was no exception. I was not sure what to expect when I started reading this book, however I was quickly engrossed in the story and could not get enough of it fast enough. Reading about Sarah and Gabriel was very exciting and even more exciting and frustrating when we met Fallon. I highly recommend this book and the entire series. The story was well written and the emotions in this book were very consuming that you actually feel like you are in the story.

The beginning was pretty interesting and kept me reading. Then the middle happened and it was almost as if a different author took over. It became confusing, then predictable, and annoyingly preachy. The ending was not really an ending, and I did not care to look further into the story. The only reason why I finished the book was because I was on a flight and could waste my time.

Most of you know I read many, many shifter books, but this is a new type of shifter, someone who

shifts only as a good person who is needed in this world. These shifters have to be holding onto the dying persons hand. I'm going on for the second book, because this is not a usual story. Read and enjoy.

Haven't read a story so badly edited in a long time. Homonyms can be difficult to catch with spellchecker, so get professional help if you can't be bothered to have a friend do it. I can't say I'm up for the next book because of this, it's just too disruptive to read. Sorry.

this book series is well written with a good plot. the main character is solid and the character development is good. i will say that the third book and conclusion to the trilogy was a bit different, very short and somewhat lacking for what the first two books set up but honestly not too much of a let down. worth reading for sure. i would give this book series B-

I love this book and can't wait for the next one. I think it's awesome that you let me read along as you write, it's one of the best gifts a reader can receive from the author and I so look forward to it each month. I can't think of one book that you've written that I haven't loved. Thanks for sharing your gift with me!

Vankara turned out to be a delightful surprise! I have read all of S.J. West' books so far and had been avoiding Vankara because steam punk is not my thing...but as always S. J . West characters and situations drew me in and won me over! I loved this book from the first chapter and can't wait to continue the adventure and see what is in store for Vankara's future and all the enticing characters I met there! I highly recommend this book!

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