



The Weight of a Crown (The Azhaion Saga)

Tavish Kaeden

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THE WEIGHT OF A CROWN

Thousands dream of it; still more die for it. Yet, how many can truly bear it?

After centuries of bitter conflict the realm of Esmoria is at last united under the banner of a single king. On the surface the realm appears to be enjoying its first taste of peace, but lingering resentment and the untimely death of the new ruler threaten to return Esmoria to political chaos.

Meanwhile, in the farthest reaches of the frozen north, a dethroned monarch's plot for revenge awakens a long-forgotten evil. As darkness and treachery descend upon the realm, a young escapee from a forced labor camp, a disenfranchised soldier, and an epileptic engraver's apprentice find themselves at the heart of the troubles.

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The Weight of a Crown (The Azhaion Saga) Details

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Author : Tavish Kaeden

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From Reader Review The Weight of a Crown (The Azhaion Saga) for online ebook

Mihir says

Mini-review over at Fantasy Book Critic

The Weight Of A Crown is epic fantasy that shines a strong light on all its glorious trappings. Multi-POV structure & solid characterization, check, a complex geo-political storyline, check, various nations/lands in strife check, a magic system that's not quite explained properly, check. Tavish Kaeden's debut is something that struck a chord with me. I'm a lover of epic fantasy and this book did its best to keep me enthralled.

One thing that sort of a drawback with the title is that, because the author gives such an in-depth story, the pace of the story is something that isn't of the fast variety. So for readers looking for a short, well-paced read might not enjoy it. For those lovers of epic fantasy who want to be immersed in a world and three-dimensional characters, Tavish's debut hopefully will strike a strong chord with you as it did with me. TWOAC also gets 8/10 for its solid epic fantasy approach.

Maxine says

This is the story of several different characters who, on the surface, seem to have nothing in common - a female prisoner in a salt mine, a newly named warrior, and a young apprentice metalworker who has strange fits which threaten not only his livelihood but his life, just to name a few. But, as the book progresses, their stories begin to collide in different and unexpected ways.

I received this book through the Member giveaway on Librarything and really didn't expect too much. I am a huge fan of fantasy and, although I like just about everything I read (otherwise why read it), I don't often get excited about a new book or author, especially if it is their first book. I gotta say, this book excited me. It grabbed me from page one and held my attention right through to the last page. Mr Kaeden gives us some great characters, some pretty decent world-building, and a rollicking good story.

My one complaint though - the book ends on a cliffhanger (actually several different cliffhangers as each of the main characters are left in peril in different ways) which means I have to wait for the sequel and, damn, I hate waiting!

Bob Milne says

While it's very clearly only the first chapter of the story, in which most of our main characters never ever get the chance to meet, The Weight Of A Crown was still a very entertaining read. Tavish Kaeden has taken the novel approach of exploring a world that has already experienced its epic conflict. Esmoria is a world that should be at peace, but which is threatened as much by its sinister prince as by a defeated race, desperate to regain its lost cities/cultures.

There are four main characters here, four points of view, and four individual storylines. Jeina is a young slave, working the camp of a silver mine that has accidentally rediscovered a sinister weapon of old for their equally sinister Prince Tobin. Nicolas is a young engraver's apprentice prone to seizures, who we discover possesses a power he is too immature to wield responsibly. Xasho is a Curahshar warrior who survived a trap laid by Prince Tobin's men, driven underground (literally), where he uncovers an odd pair of enchanted short swords with uncomfortably spiked handles.

These are the kinds of characters you expect to lead a story like this, common people who discover uncommon talents and abilities. Jeina I took a while to warm up to, and Nicolas grated on my nerves a bit (I suspect he's supposed to), but Xasho I like from the start. Having said all that, Lord Commander Bokrham may just be the most interesting piece of the puzzle. Once a commoner himself, he is a former woodsman who was elevated to nobility by the previous king, and then forced into the role of Regent by Prince Tobin's disappearance. While it's natural to expect him to be a traitor, an evil mastermind, or some 'chosen' hero, he is just a man dangerously unsuited to his task. He's not an evil man, despite his temper, but one who is in so far over his head, his morals and intentions may not matter.

Like I said, this is very clearly the opening book of a longer series, so there's no resolution to what's begun, but it is a well-written first installment that lays the groundwork, establishes the characters, and makes us want to read more. I thoroughly enjoyed *The Weight Of A Crown*, and was disappointing to see it end.

Originally reviewed at [Beauty in Ruins](#)

Douglas says

I came into this book with no expectations and was surprised by how much I liked it. I thoroughly enjoyed this book. Well paced and clearly written. The prologue grabbed my attention and the book never released it. I do wish there was more of an "ending", but that doesn't detract from my overall enjoyment of the book.

Excellent story

Ari says

Finalist of #SPFBO. Read the full list of finalists here: <http://mark---lawrence.blogspot.co.uk...>

Summary: I usually try to summarise a book in one or two sentences, but that's not going to happen here, because this book is epic, and has an epic number of plot threads.

Our setting is the land of Esmoria, which was recently and briefly conquered under one king, who then got himself dead. His eldest son is missing, believed to also be dead, so the Blood Marsh throne is being held by a regent, and one of our main characters, Bokrham. Bokrham spends much of the book trying to hold the kingdom together, fend off wannabe kings, and making some dubious maneuvers of his own. In addition to the unrest in the court, the Blood Marsh throne is also threatened by rebellion by/war with the Hinnjar and the Curahshar.

Our other three main characters Jeina, a Hinnjar woman and prisoner in a silver mine, Nicolas, a epileptic engraver's apprentice, and Xasho, a Curahshar warrior, have their own problems to deal with. Jeina flees from the mine and the Hinnjar Prince Tobin (your standard, sadistic bad guy) when the discovery of psychic monsters close the mine permanently. Nicolas is rescued from his life and illness by a stranger who is part way between learned mage and street charlatan, then becomes his apprentice. Xasho, after the rest of his squad bar the captain are killed trying to retake one of their lost cities, then finds himself in possession of two magical short swords that make him a better fighter and give him visions.

The four of them remain separate for most of the book, but during the last third of the book they start to come together and connect to the larger political conflict.

Thoughts: This book was hard for me to rate, because while its generally readable and interesting, I'm not certain I'd call it a whole book. It stops with several cliffhangers, and I don't appreciate cliffhangers. This is clearly meant to be the first book in a series rather than stand on its own.

On the characters, I liked that the mains came from different backgrounds, but I felt that they could have used more opportunity to show their personalities. Often their dialogue sounded same-samey, and Jeina in particular (ie the one female main character) seemed pulled around by the plot without taking an active role.

The writing was generally good, though struggles a bit in the beginning with infodumps and a tendency to skip over and summarise what could have been interesting action in what I suspect was an attempt to cut length. Because with four main characters, it also takes a while to get moving. I also wouldn't recommend this for someone looking for a standalone.

I wouldn't call this a standout in the epic fantasy genre, but if you're looking for something with a mix of court intrigue, action, and mind controlling creatures, this might do. It's also free for a threatened limited time on google play.

Verdict:4/10

Lanko says

This is a book with an interesting premise and concept. We know from the blurb and beginning this is gonna have epic proportions.

But in the end, on it's own, it feels it's lacking something.

It doesn't help that almost everything is told, not show. Lots of descriptions that could have been replaced with dialogue, thoughts or actions, giving us much better characterization. Sometimes backstory breaks in out of nowhere.

Despite having 5 different POVs, this excess of description somehow makes the chapters a bit similar, except maybe for Xasho, more attributed to the worldbuiling of his nation.

Probably the author done this because of length.

Sometimes things get too fast, without the proper build up for emotional impact. (view spoiler)

Except for Isic, all the other 4 are merely reacting to whatever happens around them and only by the very end

two others start being more proactive.

3 of them (Jeina, Xasho and Nicolas) are very similar in being young and naive, depending on their follower/superior/tutor. Bokrham, while still only reacting, was much better because he was someone not fit to rule and was forced into the position.

Neither also show something like cynical phrases, humor, anger, hate, passion, ambition or etc. Maybe that's why I really enjoyed Jorj and Thilanea, two side characters from Nicolas and Bokrham stories, respectively.

Of the various countries in the continent of Esmoria, only the Cuhrashan are fleshed out. And it was extremely well done. However, the others have nothing in comparison. We know one is a cold, mountain land with plenty of silver. The main kingdom seems like the normal feudal monarchy. The Church doesn't seem any different as well. So the Cuhrashan setting steals the show pretty easily, in a good way. Also makes Xasho stand out from the other characters.

A lot of things also seemed way too much work of convenience than luck or the awesome coincidences in books with large casts.

(view spoiler)

About typos, there were some missing commas, specially in the beginning. Later, one character named Kayne is referred to as Layne. At least in my version, there were a lot of syllable separation at the end of the lines, which felt strange because I don't see that as often as I saw in this book.

I don't really mind any of this, not if the story keeps me engaged, but thought I would point it out for those who care.

By the final third of the book, the pace really speeds up, characters meet and have to take difficult decisions and challenge what they believe (Xasho at least). Things are gonna get epic proportions, but of course, it ends.

I think that's the "lacking something" I mentioned earlier. This volume is a build up for the larger conflict, but it lacks a sense of completion on its own.

Chapters are short and get to the point. This is good, but also sometimes feels it could use more build up for the smaller/individual stories.

The larger conflict, however, does get a proper one. After all, everything in this book is to prepare you for the cataclysm that should happen in the next book.

It's more like those details that make things sparkle a bit more to life that seem to be missing.

On a final note, the groljüm are amazing. Very different and creepy.

Hannah says

This is one of the entries for Mark Lawrence's Self-Published Fantasy Blog-Off and it seems to be scoring well. I can see why: it's finally a self-pub that doesn't make me want to gouge my eyeballs out (so long as nobody's talking). Unfortunately, there was a lot of talking. A lot of painful talking.

Still, fast-paced for 500+ ebook pages and the alternative was reading Lord Foul's Bane or grading papers, so I did get through it fairly quickly. Did not like the concept of curing epilepsy by mastering your body though.

Also, check out the difference in quality between these two covers:

vs

Literary Chanteuse says

Once I was able to establish the characters and the main story I was truly captured. I loved the world the author created here. Real and with all those elements you expect from a book of this nature. Battles, ancient myths, creatures and of course those characters you love to love and love to hate. I also loved the way the characters and their stories inevitably connected.

Mark Lawrence says

I haven't read this book (yet), but it is one of the 10 finalists in the Self-Published Fantasy Blog-Off. That's 10 out of 270+ hopefuls!

Read about the competition here

<http://mark---lawrence.blogspot.co.uk...>

See the blogger ratings and reviews of the finalists as they battle it out in the final.

<http://mark---lawrence.blogspot.co.uk...>

Milo (BOK) says

The Review Can Also Be Found Here

Epic fantasies can be tricky reads as there's usually a lot of things to get right. The world building has to be balanced with the development of plot, pace and characters, and if one isn't quite as effective as the other then everything starts to crumble. The Weight of a Crown however, is one that manages to keep the reader

entertained and hooked for the most part, largely allowing for an interesting read even if it is not without problems of its own. It follows, like many epics, the Game of Thrones approach of tackling several wide storylines with different characters, with four in particular being the ones that we share much of our point of view with throughout the book.

We meet people like Nicolas who is an apprentice to an engraver, where he discovers that he has control of a new power. Nicolas in turn is joined by a slave named Jeina, and a Curahshar soldier named Xasho, one of the few survivors following an ambush by a rival force. There's also Bokrham, the Lord Commander who has come through the ranks to become Regent following the disappearance of Prince Tobin. It can be difficult to juggle the narrative especially when for the most part their storylines are kept separate and will possibly only interlink in later books, but here it's pulled off effectively enough to give the reader a clear sense of development and progression, as well as laying plenty of groundwork for the future.

However at the same time that also presents a problem with *The Weight of a Crown*, and readers wanting an immediate resolution may be disappointed no matter how well written the book may well be, and it's certainly something that's written well. However standalone epic fantasies are a rarity in fiction nowadays so as long as you go in with that expectation in mind then the problem shouldn't be too offputting. But one thing that I did notice was the vast amount of cliffhangers featured here, not just one, so it will certainly be interesting to see how their respective differences are dealt with.

Aside from the exposition heavy scenes, that happen early on in *The Weight of a Crown* as well as the slow pace it tends to move at, Tavis Kaeden's novel is a decent read and the characters are well created with several layers of intrigue between them that keep them fresh and exciting. Time will tell whether the sequel will pay off all these loose ends however, and it's something that I probably will check out at some point. Regardless of that though it's easy to see why this was the chosen novel from Lynn's Books. There's a lot to like about it.

VERDICT: 7/10

Sarah says

<http://www.bookwormblues.net/2016/02/...>

Elizabeth says

Excellent adventure story. The story does have a lot of threads that interestingly woven into an adventure story that is worth the read. I thought it started a little slow but once you have made it into the story it is kind of hard to put down. Love the beginning and ending and really can not wait for the second installment. Was a great way to spend an afternoon in the sun.

Ian Wooldridge says

Picked this up for free from amazon and really enjoyed it. Has the potential to be a great series, looking forward to getting the next one, *The Point Of A Blade* which i'm pleased to see is already out.

Mihir says

Mini-review over at Fantasy Book Critic

The Weight Of A Crown is epic fantasy that shines a strong light on all its glorious trappings. Multi-POV structure & solid characterization, check, a complex geo-political storyline, check, various nations/lands in strife check, a magic system that's not quite explained properly, check. Tavish Kaeden's debut is something that struck a chord with me. I'm a lover of epic fantasy and this book did its best to keep me enthralled.

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Mad Giles (Giles A. Madding) says

4.75 Stars
