



The Tinker King

Tiffany Trent

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After Vespa, Syrus and Bayne defeated the Grue and restored order to their world, they thought their future was secure. Empress Olivia, committed to peace and equality for humans and Elementals alike, was a fair and just ruler. And the Creeping Waste had vanished for good, giving them hope for the first time.

But rebellion is brewing in the far-off city of Scientia, and dark Elementals are plotting war in the ruins of New London. When a wave of unimaginable terror threatens to destroy everything in its path, Vespa, Syrus and their friends are plunged into a new swamp of intrigue, deception and magic---and the cost of survival may be more than any of them are willing to pay.

The Tinker King Details

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Author : Tiffany Trent

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colleen the convivial curmudgeon says

2.5

As with all my half-stars, I debated for awhile whether to bump it up to three or down to two. Ultimately, though, my overall feeling at the end of this book was one of disappointment, so I had to go down.

I think a lot of it was just the writing. Like the first book, this one alternated between first-person and third-person chapters; however, unlike the first book, the first-person chapters in this one followed Syrus instead of Vespa - and the voice just didn't work. It was choppy and just didn't work. I don't know if it's the gender difference, or just the characters - but Trent seemed to have a better time getting into Vespa's head than Syrus's.

Of course, I still think it'd be better to just write everything third-person, since it's third-person limited and we get the same sort of insight into the characters, anyway. Honestly, though, even some of Vespa's chapters were choppy and off, and I remember myself thinking, "I don't remember the writing being so stilted last time."

Speaking of remembering - I didn't remember much of the events of the first book aside from the basics, but this does do a good job of reminding you of those details, and it works them into the story instead of giving huge info-dumps all over, so there was that, on the plus side.

Mostly, though, this book just suffers from sequel-itis. The characters were all annoying and doing that whole "not going to talk about things" thing - though at least this had a reason on Syrus's part.

The world didn't seem as interesting this time around, the introduction of Tesla as a character was interesting but never felt fully realized, and the attempt to make things bigger and badder just fizzled, as the end battle was just entirely anti-climactic. A lot of buildup about how powerful of an enemy they were facing, and it was all over in the blink of an eye, and far too easy.

After really liking the first book, despite it's having some issues, I was just pretty meh about this installment.

Here's hoping the next is better...

Jaime says

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By Tiffany Trent

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

February 11, 2014

The Tinker King is the sequel to The Unnaturalists. The novel begins during the cleanup after the destruction of the Grue. The point of view switches between Vespa and Syrus. We are reunited with Vespa, Syrus and Bayne as they take on another big bad in this second novel, each having a darker mind-set after losing innocence, gaining experience and growing a little from the first novel. Piskel and Truffler add some comic relief but not near as much as the first novel. Vespa is dealing with feeling guilty and ashamed after her spell with Lucy and Bayne and trying to seek forgiveness from Bayne. Bayne is being dark and aloof. Syrus is dealing with his feelings for Olivia and the massive loss of his people. They each are disgusted at being a society that allowed the devastation of a species to gain ease in their own lives.

There is a new element added to this novel which is the melding of science and magic, whereas before it was Science vs. Elementals (magic) and now it is blending them together to get an unknown science. We see this through magically melded automatons. This fits well into the steampunk genre, along with corsets, tinkers, metal, grease, Cthulhu-like creatures and airships. Tiffany Trent makes you feel as if you are there in the novel with the characters in the dark, dank, dripping underbelly of pollution left after the near decimation of the elemental race. Such a lovely flow of words and sentences that makes you long for more.

There undercurrent theme from the last novel takes front seat in this novel and that is the theme of removing the wasteful tendencies of the world and stop eliminating a species or ecosystem to make your life easier. Tiffany Trent shows this by the cleanup of Vespa's hometown and the characters trying to make amends for personal wrongs and trying to cleanup other people's messes to make the world a better place.

Overall, it was a lovely novel filled with a nice blend of action, suspense and romance, with beautiful world-building.

Tim Gray says

Being completely honest I bought this because it tipped me over to free delivery and it was cheaper than paying postage on the book I did want. That said, it's a decent enough steampunk style adventure, with some interesting characters and plot twists. It did get a little bogged down for me in the middle though.

David Wilson says

A nice sequel without the usual "#2" type of filler material. A good conclusion and wrap up from adventures found in #1, but you can easily tell that there will be another volume coming (hopefully soon).

This was a nice continual world development and tie-in between steampunk, fantasy, and the world today. It was an easy read and fun adventure. IMHO, it fits in with other teen-centric fantasy books. I am looking forward to seeing what happens in the forthcoming volume(s).

P.S. This is NOT a stand-alone book. Without reading the first volume, a reader will have a difficult time following the plot and character development.

Elaine Carass says

I really enjoyed this book. It started roughly a year after the first book with Vespa, Bayne and Syrus trying to

help rebuild New London without elementals been killed and used as mythagas.

With there been a long gap in this book from the first it took me a while to remember all that had happened but I was glad to get back in the story of all the characters I loved from the first book.

I did however find when the story was been told from Sryus's point of view the writing style seemed blocky, has though the author couldn't get in the head of Syrus, unlike Vespa were the writing just flowed.

The twists and turns kept the book interesting and Shadow Spiders, I liked them as a badie. I was a little disappointed in how quickly the ending seemed to be and lack of any real fight. Ximu is meant to be one of the eldest known elementals and it just felt wrong that the battle ended so quickly.

But still I enjoyed the adventure and loved getting reacquainted with the characters and can't wait for the next one

PJforaDay says

Mehhhhhh

Aelvana says

A year has passed since the destruction of the Refineries which turned Elementals into fuel for the city of New London. Some things have changed for the better, at least for the Elementals, but most of New London is finding it hard to adjust to the lack of their accustomed luxuries. Olivia is pushing hard for peace, but the Queen of the Shadowspiders is rising to claim the city for her own . . .

This improved somewhat on the first book, although not by much. Someone realized Vespa was a mess of a character in the first book, so her powers get a mysterious downgrade where they just stop working randomly to help add some tension (spoiler: I still didn't care, although it's worlds better than everyone pretty much worshipping her). And it is totally random. The only attempt the book makes to explain is as growing pains. Vespa's having troubles with Bayne, too, who--shockingly--still isn't responding to her interest in him. She thought he was over that whole forcing-him-to-marry-Lucy thing.

I still don't like Vespa, but she was a lot more tolerable now that she's no longer the center of the plot.

Syrus has grown up a lot in the past year. In the first book he sounded more like a child. Now he's definitely more of a man. Interestingly, he doesn't have any problems with being a werhound (though I wish it had played into the plot a tad more, as that was something I was hoping to see work out); he's as comfortable in hound shape as man-shape, though the whole losing-clothes bit means he tries to hold himself back most of the time. This time around, Syrus takes the first-person point of view, with the alternate chapters in third person for Vespa. I found the shift in tone a bit jarring---I would've pegged him as 13 in the previous book, and somewhere around 17-18 in this one, but only a year has passed.

I was also disappointed by the choice of villains. It felt like bringing those people in again took away from some of the fresher ideas this book went after, and although I don't mind so much what they did with the girl, I was not at all convinced by the reason why the spider was included. Sure, spare life where needed. But keep in mind that someone else sparing the spider is what led to everyone who died this time around---it's

kind of saying that Elemental life is sacred, but human life is disposable.

So all in all while this was in some ways better than the first book, in many ways it's the same. I rate this book Neutral.

See my reviews and more at <https://offtheshelfreviews.wordpress....>

Chechoui says

I really wanted to love this book. Asian male lead in a steampunk novel?! Love and love! So refreshing to have this protagonist, but unfortunately the book fell flat for me. It wasn't as engaging as book 1 and was terribly predictable. I felt like we the readers were waiting the entire time for the characters to catch on. It also felt underdeveloped at times. I loved the premise and the world created, but it just didn't do it for me. :(

Michelle says

As I said in the 1st book, I don't like the author's way of writing. The book is still interesting or I would not have read it but the little romance between the characters were frustrating. The story also lacks elaboration and I can't seem to be able to form a connection between any of the characters. So I'm reading this book not like someone who is going through the adventures with the characters but rather like reading a book with recorded facts.

Libby Ames says

I'm afraid my reaction to this book is tainted, because I was listening to Maggie Stiefvater's Scorpio Races at the same time. Stiefvater's writing is so lyrical and her description so perfect that I was more critical of this book than I otherwise might have been.

Tiffany Trent continues with interesting steampunk world building, but this second book focused on Syrus more than Vespa. I found the switching perspectives a little distracting. The chapters alternate between third person omniscient and first person from Syrus's perspective. Where The Unnaturalists included first person from Vespa's point of view, I often found myself struggling to remember whose head I was in. I think my struggle also came because Syrus didn't have as strong a voice.

The story was well-crafted and I enjoyed it, but this book was slightly disappointing after a great start to the series.

Dusty Wallace says

Update: It's not a trilogy! My bad. There is a ebook novella tie-in though.

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1...>

A trilogy's second book is often overlooked, sometimes cursed to be the disappointment in a series. Through some feat of elemental magic Tiffany Trent has managed not only to live up to the first book's standards, but improve on them in some ways.

The plotting here is swift and tight. It helps that, after reading the first book, there's not much world-building to be done. Not that world building is bad, but this is a complex land of fantasy. But *The Tinker King* doesn't focus on info-dumps and tutorials, it stays with its characters and plot.

I complained about geographical descriptions in the first book, there's no such complaint to make with *Tinker King*. The settings are wonderful and visually described. We get taken from our former home in New London by a zeppelin (not really but that's the best description I have), off to the land of Scientia and its palace of bone. It's a refreshing new land that harbors deep and ancient secrets.

In fairness, I did have a few gripes.

The story is very late to peak and it's a short climax. The hardcover is 310 pages long and the conflict only comes to a head in the last 20-30 pages. It's not a major buzz-kill though because this time the mystery and intrigue carry you along more so than action-packed battles.

I also found myself a bit confused during the ending. I'd like to elaborate but I don't want to spoil anything. I'll just say that in one moment a character is sacrificing himself to be trapped forever, and in the next paragraph he's perfectly fine. I'm not sure what transpired between those two points.

The main villain from the last book makes a surprising appearance. While his resurrection and relocation are talked about, I didn't find the explanations very convincing. That may be expanded upon in the next volume though.

There's also at least one major plot point left unresolved. That, however, is most likely on purpose. There's another book coming out in the series and I expect that point will become the major focus.

So, another great effort from Tiffany Trent. I very much look forward to continuing my journey with Vespa and Syrus and looking into Trent's other work.

Miranda says

Thanks to Edelweiss and Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers for allowing me access to this title.

I had a somewhat hard time remembering what was going on and who all the characters were, but it slowly came back to me as I read farther along. I really liked how everything all worked out and who did what. I especially liked how Olivia and Syrus changed and were able to use their abilities and heritage to save their people.

Alienor says

Disappointing. A pet peeve of mine is characters not communicating, and here we have it in spades. No one thought to ask how Olivia came into being? Couldn't Bayne explain his newfound coldness as something else than a lame plot device?

Alternating voices were confusing - also with one voice always in a present tense and the other in the narrative past.

And - inconsistencies. We care so much about Elementals but they die in spades and oops, just kind of disappear, well, my bad. That never gets resolved btw, but by all means let's pull every stop to help poor Lucy! That felt incredibly racist! We never find out what happened to the Elementals, nor the truth about Mr Waddingly - it's as if having crafted believable villains in the first book the writer was loath to let them go, but couldn't do anything with them.

And after all the build-up and quaking fear, all the villains turn out to be made of paper, easily vanquished, or even surrendering their power by themselves!

A last note on Vespa 'kinda' falling for Charles when she hated the sight of him 2 seconds earlier... No no no NO

In.con.sis.tent

Jan says

Unfortunately, it was not as compelling as the first title in the series and I found myself putting it down too many times to finish. Others might not feel the same way so don't take my review as if this were a poorly written or thought out read. I am rather jaded and it just wasn't enough to keep me intrigued.

J.A. Ironside says

3.5/4 stars. This just didn't quite do it for me like the first book. I like Syrus as a character but ultimately I preferred Vespa in first person and Syrus in third. I get why the author changed that around in this book - it was far more Syrus's journey than Vespa's but personal preference would have it the other way around.

I suppose I was looking for more of a rebuilding the world type scenario than another 'boss fight'. It is an awesome world and I'd have liked to have seen more of it. I'd have been happier with a slower paced story that detailed the struggles of living without myth and a young untried empress, white knuckling as she keeps her grip on her realm. Of course that is the problem when you go into a book with expectations.

My niggles - Vespa's power fluctuation is never really explained and is resolved almost without effort. Bayne comes round at the end without us seeing his change of heart - that can be fed in through other characters' eyes so we should have seen some of it.

I never really believed Charles and therefore his ending seemed implausible and a bit too convenient.

What the smeg did happen to all the elementals that went to Scientia? It's never explained!

The ending was a bit too easy.

I liked Syrus's story arc although it's quite sad as well. The friction between humans and unnaturals was hinted at but never really explored - I think a trick was missed there. Olivia's arc was interesting and vaguely repulsive. Not sure in the end how necessary it was - can't put my finger on why it didn't quite fit.

However overall it was a good read and I enjoyed the world as always. If there was another book I would read on.
