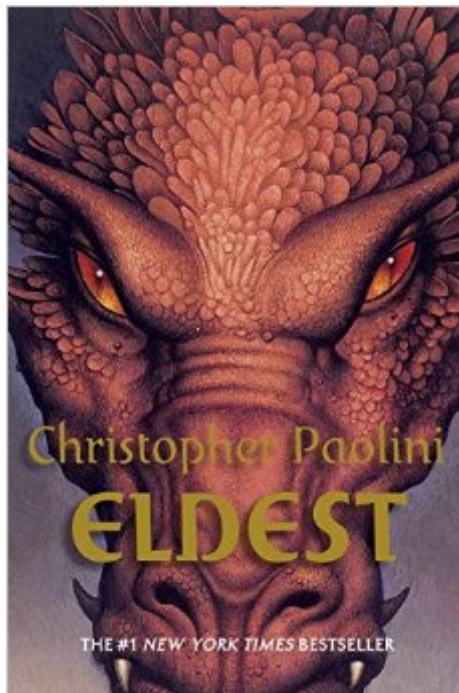


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Eldest (Inheritance Cycle, Book 2) (The Inheritance Cycle)



Synopsis

Perfect for fans of Lord of the Rings, the *New York Times* bestselling Inheritance Cycle about the dragon rider Eragon has sold over 35 million copies and is an international fantasy sensation. Darkness falls | despair abounds | evil reigns | Eragon and his dragon, Saphira, have just saved the rebel state from destruction by the mighty forces of King Galbatorix, cruel ruler of the Empire. Now Eragon must travel to Ellesmera, land of the elves, for further training in the skills of the Dragon Rider: magic and swordsmanship. Soon he is on the journey of a lifetime, his eyes open to awe-inspiring new places and people, his days filled with fresh adventure. But chaos and betrayal plague him at every turn, and nothing is what it seems. Before long, Eragon doesn't know whom he can trust. Meanwhile, his cousin Roran must fight a new battle—one that might put Eragon in even graver danger. Will the king's dark hand strangle all resistance? Eragon may not escape with even his life. . . . Praise for Eragon: "Unusual, powerful . . . fresh and fluid. An impressive start to a writing career that's sure to flourish." • "Booklist, Starred" • "Christopher Paolini make[s] literary magic with his precocious debut." • "People" • "The new" book of children's lit." • "U.S. News & World Report" • "An auspicious beginning to both career and series." • "Publishers Weekly A #1 New York Times Bestseller A #1 Publishers Weekly Bestseller A USA Today Bestseller A Wall Street Journal Bestseller A Book Sense Book of the Year A #1 Book Sense Selection" From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 970L (What's this?)

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (2,130 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #4,877 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #69 in [Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Sword & Sorcery](#) #76 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Action & Adventure > Fantasy](#) #269 in [Books > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy >](#)

Fantasy & Magic

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

I am enjoying this second novel in the series as it has a wider scope and broader plot. I think that the author is growing up with his characters and we see them having crushes, making silly mistakes and learning from them. Both Eragon and Saphira are maturing into quite complex characters. However I think that the author needs to read more widely and have a broader life experience to match the appeal of McCaffery, Tolkein and Rowling for example. I hope after the third in this series he will have a break to do these things and then come back to write some more fantasy as he obviously has a liking and a talent for it. I am looking forward to reading a lot of his books!

I'm a huge fan of SciFi/Fantasy, and while I've not even begun to read everything, it is evident that this young man has read a lot and loves it too - so many scenes remind me of stuff I've read elsewhere - even the Whirlpool comes right out of Greek mythology. Not a bad read, definitely there has been some growing up and he has a lot of potential - but until he learns to write his own stories, he will never truly be great. Anyone who has read the "greats" will recognize them in these stories, a bit here and a bit there - my daughter loves to write and does the same thing, I finally told her that if she really wanted to write well, then she had to stop mimicking her favorite stories, in fact, we boxed them all up and she isn't going to read them, then she put away her plays and stories - just recently she brought them out again and has been working on them, this time the ideas are more her own and not what she reads in other books. That's what this boy needs to do - the book reads like whenever he gets stuck, he goes to his bookshelf or a movie and watches/reads for an idea, then puts that in. I'll have to admit to skipping over pages at a time to avoid lengthy philosophy lessons and battles and long trips where basically nothing happened.

Paolini is a young man suffering from WUI. (Writing Under the Influence) He is under the influence Tolkien, Lucas and the tons of other writers he has taken plot-points and other things from. I could even say he is taking things from Poe (When Eragon wrote 'In the kingdom by the sea' in that poem, I dropped the book in shock as my mind sent an alarm of 'Annabel-Lee'). Now for those of you that say that there are no new ideas--There are none. You're right. Ideas are common and everywhere and most unoriginal. What you yourself do with those ideas in a story make the STORY

original. Paolini's story is not original. You can see from skimming the lines that there are word for word quotes from other things. Angela saying that she will spare two eyes if she can-- a direct quote from Gandalf. Murtagh revealing who he is at the end can be compared to Star Wars without that much work. If only Paolini had spent another year or two playing with the story and changing things a little, it would be a good story. But it isn't. And as for us being too harsh on him for being a young man and not an adult, he is twenty-two. He is an adult now. He is a published author in the real world and we cannot cut him slack as if he were still in school and this was a creative writing assignment that he 'tried really, really hard' on. Not to mention that Mary Shelley was nineteen when she wrote her famed novel Frankenstein and S. E. Hinton was sixteen when she published The Outsiders. Those are books that are decades old (Almost a two centuries if you look at Frankenstein) and are still being read today. And never did Shelley or Hinton use their age as a marketing tool-- both of those books were published without anything about the author on them. Teens can write. Paolini cannot.

In an interview, Paolini said that he didn't listen to his reviewers and BOY does it show. Eldest has all the flaws of Eragon (derivative plot, flat characters, predictability, etc.) as well as all the flaws anticipated for the sequel (derivative of Empire Strikes Back). I know that these criticisms are almost as cliched as Inheritance itself, but these flaws are so obvious that they bear repeating. And rather than improving, Eldest has shown ANOTHER weakness in Paolini's writing. It's the same problem I've had with The Amber Spyglass and the later Terry Goodkind books. It's so preachy, probably in an attempt to sound mature. A good, mature writer would introduce his beliefs subtly and let the story teach his philosophy. Paolini hits us over the head with his beliefs in long, blocky monologues. No subtlety at all. I bought this book because of the possibility that CP would improve. I'm ready to give up hope.

Hmm. I've already reviewed and said it was awful, but there's a point I'd like to make in this ongoing debate: "As for dialogue seeming unrealistic, of course it would be! It's a completely alternate reality from our own, stuck back into a--most likely--feudal society where people saying those sorts of things would be absolutely normal." Eragon is a farm boy. Would he really be so eloquent in two languages in...what, a year? 18 months? I think most farm boys, even then, would use swear-words and vulgar language, not flowery prose. The preaching of atheism and vegetarianism was lame too, Paolini. If you want people to follow your views, make your books a little more sensible and your characters a lot more 3-dimensional so we know you're worth following. And, before you say,

"That's just because you disagree with my views!" I am atheist and practically vegetarian.

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