

## Raybearer by Jordan Ifueko

This YA Fantasy is fast paced with a dazzling cast of characters and a fantastic world to immerse yourself in.

This book is part of a duology. Raybearer is the first book in the duology as well as Jordan Ifueko's debut novel. The second book, *Redemptor*, was released in 2021 and continues the story of Raybearer.

Tarisai was raised by her not always present mother in an isolated mansion where she didn't interact with many people aside from a rotating staff of tutors and caretakers. When her mother, known as the Lady, sends her to the capital of the Aritsar empire, Tarisai is put into a competition to become part of the Crown Prince Ekundayo's Council of II. This council rules over the empire and is bonded by the Ray, a sacred connection made out of love and companionship. The problem Tarisai faces is that her mother has sent her to be part of this game to eventually kill the Crown Prince, who's next in line to rule the empire. Will Tarisai go through with the Lady's wish? Or will she find herself doubting her mother as she builds new relationships and values?

This book is one of my absolute favorites because the world building easily inserted me into Aritsar without confusing me, and the characters, specifically Tarisai, were developed very well. The plot was engaging and the writing style contributed well to that. My favorite characters were Tarisai, Kirah, and Dayo and Jordan Ifueko's descriptions of them and their actions were amazing. I read the book twice and felt just as happy with the experience the second time as I did the first. The author perfectly builds the plot up to account for the sequel and I was left wanting the next book in the best way.

Raybearer would appeal to Young Adult readers who like fantasy with a little smattering of romance mixed in. The accessible world building made for easy understanding of the plot, so this would be good for readers not looking for the commitment of an especially high fantasy novel. In addition, people who are character focused when reading stories will not be disappointed by the main character, Tarisai and her journey.

-Serena, Age 17

