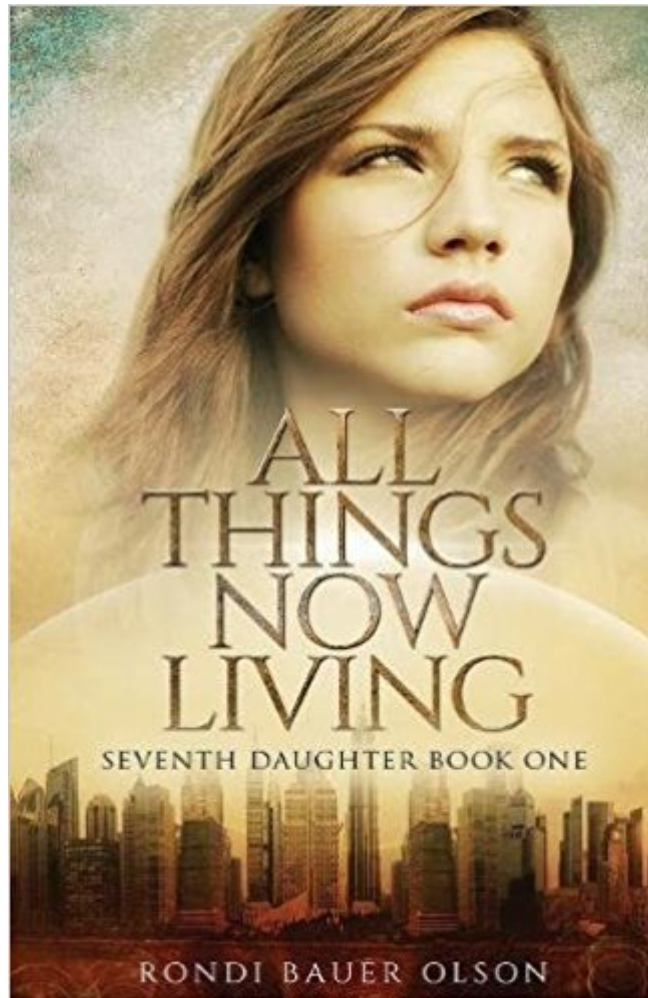




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All Things Now Living (Seventh Daughter)



Synopsis

Her whole life Amy has been taught the people of New Lithisle deserve to die, but when she falls for Daniel, she determines to save him. Sixteen years ago, the year Amy was born, a devastating pandemic wiped out most of the world's population. Now, a new disaster threatens the lives of millions, but Amy, like everyone else in her home of Old Lithisle, has accepted New Lithisle's impending doom as God's judgement. The people of New Lithisle did, after all, trade their souls for immunity to the swine flu virus by adding pig genes to their own. Then, on a scavenging trip with her father, Amy gets stuck in New Lithisle. When Amy meets Daniel, she begins to question how less-than-human and deserving of death he really is. Publisher's Note: This book is considered a Hi-Lo book - with a reading level of 3.2 - specially designed with the goal of enhancing literacy through literature that engages and drives interest.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Sixteen-year-old Amy doesn't like anything to die, she won't even eat the goats or chickens her mama has butchered every fall, but she can't let herself pity the inhabitants of New Lithisle. In a few short months the dome they built to isolate themselves from the deadly pandemic is predicted to collapse, but her whole life Amy has been taught it's God's will they die. They traded their souls for immunity to the swine flu virus, brought God's curse upon themselves by adding pig genes to their own. Then, while on a scavenging trip with her father,

Amy is accidentally trapped in New Lithisle. At first her only goal is to escape, but when she meets Daniel, a New Lithisle boy, she begins to question how less-than-human the people of New Lithisle are. Amy's feelings grow even more conflicted when she learns she didn't end up in New Lithisle by mistake. Her father is secretly a sympathizer, and was trying to prevent the coming destruction. Now time is running short and Amy has to decide if she will bring the computer program her father wrote to his contact or save herself. Installing the program could prevent the dome's collapse, but if Amy doesn't find her father's contact in time, she'll die, along with everyone else.

Rondi Bauer Olson is a reader and writer from Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Her debut novel for young adults, *ALL THINGS NOW LIVING*, was a finalist in the 2012 Genesis Contest. She and her husband, Kurt, live on a hobby farm with three of their four mostly-grown children, along with a menagerie of animals including, but not limited to, horses, cows, alpacas, goats, dogs, cats, rabbits, chickens, and parrots. Rondi also works as a registered nurse and owns a gift shop located within view of the beautiful Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore.

I picked this book to read and review because of the startling premise, and author Rondi Bauer Olson delivered as hoped. This is rich story told at a brisk pace. My interest never flagged: you'll find yourself flipping pages and staying up later than you intended to see what happens next. In a futuristic setting, a plague strikes a society (that may be future Earth). The book focuses on the conflicting survival strategies of two groups of people. The interesting thing here is that Olson imagines two very religious groups, for whom their religious principles are fundamental to the choices that form their survival strategies. This is not a conflict between believers and pragmatic skeptics; this is a war between believers whose faith in God ought to unite them. The divider is cloning. One group has retreated inside an "aegis", an electromagnetic dome in which they can cultivate an environment safe from disease, and then experiment with introducing animal genes into their bloodlines that will boost their immunity. The other group chooses the more natural route, surviving as best they can in the wild. Naturally, the outsiders view the insiders as abominations, as they take on some of the characteristics of the fish, pigs, or even rats whose genetic material they share. This may sound over the top, and you might view the outsiders, with their dehumanizing view of the insiders, as brutal fundamentalists. Olson transcends the polemics typical with fiction on religious themes, however, and manages to present both sides with sympathy and nuance. This is not hard sci-fi; creating a detailed justification for the futuristic elements is not Olson's goal. People

who can't tolerate some hand-waving should be warned. (I had no trouble with the sci-fi myself.) For me, the one disappointment was that the brisk pace was, if anything, a bit too relentless. Olson introduces some touching and even tragic elements into the story, including an intense love story between two appealing young protagonists, and sometimes I wished she had lingered over the more intense scenes, giving them the weight the reader's emotions demand. A religious sci-fi romance: I hope this book finds its audience, because it deserves to be read, and it deserves its promised sequels.

Pardon the cliché, but I must toss this out there. We are taught by those who know that we must never judge a book by its cover. Notwithstanding the warning, I think we all do. I did. When I first saw the cover of this book at a book signing I was drawn to it. And again, when I ordered it for my Kindle, I was struck by the book's impressive cover. But I soon learned that the packaging was not nearly as remarkable as what it contained. Rondi is a gifted writer. Her book is just simply fun to read. Take for example this short selection: "Beautiful, isn't it?" Gilchrist's voice is filled with pride. Only he, once the lead engineer on the project, would think so. "In a moth-to-flame kind of way," I say. "Not that I'm a bug, drawn." Gilchrist ignores me and moves to the edge of the rocks. I take his sleeve and hold him back. "I don't think this is a good idea." "Rondi. Keep this good thing going. I love it."

I found this story to be engaging right from the beginning. The characters are well developed and the plot held my interest. The character names were unusual and it took me a while to get onto them but that is only because the book is so unique. Interesting plot. I would recommend this read and think it will hold a child's attention. Am looking forward to more from this author.

An excellent story told in a unique way.

All Things Now Living by Rondi Olson is a fast paced Science Fiction romance and thriller. The story takes many twists and turns leaving the reader wondering what next!. Circumstances force the main character to put aside her prejudices and in the process she finds friendship and love. Proving that if one is willing to dig deeper and get past pre-conceived notions that they will often find redeeming qualities in others and a strength within themselves.

Captivating from the beginning, while being carried on to the end. The author does a great job of making you feel like you're in the story. A definite choice for those who love mysteries and adventures mixed in with romance.

A well-crafted, complex, and rollicking ride...Excellent story-telling!

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