



Review by: Heather
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Pros: Awesome fantasy worldbuilding; fascinating plot;
new twists; great series climax

Cons: Overused italics during dialogue

Rating: 5 out of 5



Series Note: I started reading Jean Johnson's *Sons of Destiny* series with book five, [The Cat](#). I read it without reading the first four books and enjoyed it quite a bit, with only mild confusion—the author goes to some lengths to ensure that you can start out with any book in the series. That said, it's an incredibly good and fairly complex series, and I highly recommend starting from the beginning with *The Sword*.

The eight brothers were born in four sets of non-identical twins. An old prophecy foretells the arrival of their Destined brides in order from the eldest brother's to the youngest, and now that all the other brothers have found love, Morganen can finally be united with Hope.

Hope is from another universe—the same universe as Kelly, incipient queen of Nightfall; our universe. While Kelly's been adjusting to Nightfall, Hope's been sending books and other resources through Morganen's mirrors. Hope is our world's equivalent of a Seer, and her hunches have sometimes helped the prophecy along. Morganen has impatiently awaited the day when she can come across and he can meet her in person.

Of course, nothing ever goes exactly to plan. It seems Hope has been hiding a few secrets from Kelly and the brothers of Nightfall—secrets that will shake Morganen’s faith in her.

There’s also more at stake, as usual, than love, sex, and marriage. If Nightfall is to become an independent kingdom, then Kelly must finally figure out how to invoke the Convocation of the Gods, and do so. This is no small accomplishment, and would involve heroic feats even were it not for the interference of the family’s political enemies—interference that will definitely put Hope in danger. Thankfully, the family also discovers some unexpected allies...

Jean Johnson’s *The Mage* is an exciting, fantastic climax to a wonderful series! It starts off with a bang, introducing a plot twist that I certainly didn’t see coming, and yet that had me smacking my forehead in that “of COURSE” gesture that all truly brilliant plot twists should evoke. And since it’s introduced so early into the book, even if you have anticipated it, I don’t think it’ll be in any way a letdown.

As always, the characters and relationships are gorgeous. Each couple has their own highly unique dynamic, which is one of the things that really sets Jean’s series apart from so many other romantic series. Morganen and Hope are the one couple we’ve been able to anticipate ahead of time, and that only heightens the delight of finally seeing them together. While they have some issues to work out, Jean doesn’t string us along artificially. I love Hope, with her addiction to chocolate, her sometimes-surprising attitudes, her delicious secrets, and her willingness to flat-out seduce Morganen.

The amazing world-building that went into the preceding novels finally climaxes in the promised Convocation of the Gods, and it doesn’t disappoint! A priestess of an unusual order comes to help with the Convocation for her own reasons, ones that will definitely make the Convocation anything but boring and expected. The political enemies of Nightfall have to make their final moves now. They have some nasty tricks up their sleeves, and Morganen’s going to have to use every ounce of hidden magical strength he has, not to mention some good old-fashioned trickery and smarts, to outdo them.

This book definitely has everything—love, snark, humor, danger, excitement, trickery, hope, and even sizzling hot, messy sex!