

Romance Reviews Today

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THE SWORD - Jean Johnson
Sons of Destiny - Book 1
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Fantasy Romance

Katan, Nightfall Isle, Somewhere in the USA - Present Day

Saber and Wolfer, Dominor and Evanor, Trevan and Rydan, Koranen and Morganen; four pairs of fraternal twins, eight brothers banished to Nightfall Isle because of a prophecy/curse. All of them have special abilities. When Morganen's powers come into full strength, the High Council of Mages of Katan is convinced that Saber and his brothers are the ones foretold in the Song of the Seer, a prophecy with eight verses that seem to fit the descriptions of the brothers and their abilities. To make sure that none of them will ever marry, women are NOT allowed. So why does meddling Morganen rescue a woman from Earth and bring her to the Castle?

Kelly Doyle has lost her family and is struggling to make ends meet. She is part of a group that reenacts life in Medieval times, and she sells finely made crafts at her small shop and at fairs. To make matters worse, someone has been making death threats and spreading vicious rumors that Kelly is a witch. If Morganen had not transported her from her burning home, she would have died. When Kelly arrives at Castle Nightfall bruised and burned, it is fortunate for her that Koranen, Morganen's twin, can heal burns. Saber goes berserk at seeing her and commands his brother to return her to her home. Morganen placidly informs his older sibling that he has to wait a while before she can go back. Neither Saber nor Kelly is pleased, especially after a translation spell cast on her lets them understand everything the other says.

Simple things like finding clothing and demanding that the Castle be cleaned occupy some of Kelly's time while she gets to know each brother and learns their strengths and weaknesses. I am reminded of Milly in the movie, *Seven Brides For Seven Brothers* with how Kelly makes them all do what she says needs to be done. When Kelly discovers that evil and stalkers are not confined to one Realm, she vows to help the brothers solve the mystery as to who or what is sending magical creepy-crawly and flying nasties against the brothers. Somebody wants to make sure that they are no longer a threat to Katan, and only their diligence can protect Kelly, who has no powers of her own to keep her safe, when they purge the island of all the evil magic as they have had to do before. Along the way, Saber and Kelly discover that it is more fun to make love than to constantly snipe at each other and that there is more than one way to interpret a prophecy. When uninvited

humans invade Nightfall, they must all band together to save their home.

I love SWORD. The writing is sharp and witty and the story is charming. In fantasy, Magic is real and improbable premises don't have to be plausible. However, the author makes everything perfectly believable. She has created an enchanting situation and characters that are irascible at times and loveable at others. The brothers are a cohesive family, and after a while understand they that Kelly is part of it. SWORD is a long, delightful read. This is Jean Johnson 's first book, and she is off to a flying start. She tells her story with a lively zest that transports a reader to the place of action. I can hardly wait for the next one. It is a must read.