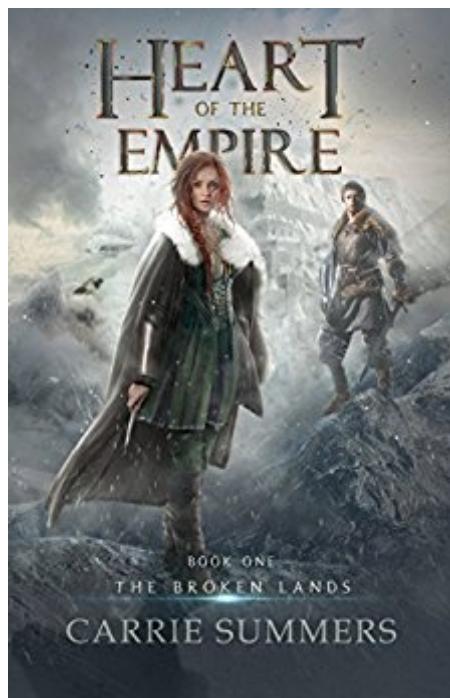


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# Heart Of The Empire (The Broken Lands Book 1)



## Synopsis

The Empire is heartless, but fate is even crueler. Tainted magic spills from a crack between worlds. Quakes rattle the Atal Empire, opening rifts that sunder towns. As the land shatters and betrayals cleave the Emperor's court, ancient power awakens in a flame-haired young woman. Savra, a miner on a remote coast, lives in innocence of her Emperor's savage rule. Only her father's disappearance--and the rumors of his rebel connections--break her illusion. But when she's suddenly torn from her home, turned pawn in the plots of madmen, a chance meeting with a young man provides the first glimpse of her tangled destiny. For nineteen years, Kostan has been groomed for one thing: ascension to the throne. One of thirteen imperial Scions, he bears a wound that won't heal until his twenty-first birthday. On that date, the shape of the Scions' scars will determine the next Atal Emperor. Savra secretly fears she carries her father's rebel blood. Kostan despises everything the Empire stands for. Neither desires a fight, but as the Empire crumbles around them, they stand on opposite sides of a war. Each can be part of the Empire's salvation, but only if they can bridge the chasm dividing them. Heart of the Empire begins the sweeping fantasy saga, The Broken Lands. Read it now, and look for the next book, Rise of the Storm, Fall 2017. Other books by Carrie Summers: Shattering of the Nocturnai series: Nightforged, Shadowbound, Duskwoven, Darkborn

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If this is a genre you like, this is a promising author. First of the books I've read, but I will read the next, tonight.

I received this book as an ARC copy directly from the author. This was in exchange for an honest review which I am giving below. I found this book utterly enjoyable. From the well written plot, to the really nicely fleshed out characters. The whole of life as the main characters have known it, has drastically changed and not in a good way. Not only is the maelstrom slowly causing land to fall into the sea, but terrible earthquakes are ravaging the land, creating deadly fissures and dropping buildings left, right and center. People are blaming it all on the Emperor, however, he's been murdered, and the scions; a group of young royals who were to have a new Emperor or Empress selected from within their number; are mostly dead too. All except two. Kostan and Vaness. Who, with the help of the dead Emperor's friend and confidant; the one man who is trying hard to keep them alive until the ascendancy is accomplished and the new Emperor chosen; are trying to stay hidden and alive. There is a lot of energy in this story... it ebbs and flows as you read it and it has a lot of tension building... not only in the instability of the world the story is set in, but in the plot itself. There is a wonderful part of the story which describes a gigantic bridge that spans over a deep ravine. It is said to have stood for a thousand years. The bridge collapses and takes an important character down with it. The description was magical. I could really see it happening and I feel as though I witnessed that moment in time in reality and not just via the story. Superb writing. As the main characters go forward into an uncertain future, trust is given, and broken by more than just the scions. A young girl with a power she cannot really control, is also hunted. Coming from a simple village, she expected to spend the rest of her days as a sluice sifter. But, at a point where all should have been mapped out for her future, things unravelled horribly and she is left fleeing for her life. Now she is afraid to trust anyone and afraid of her burgeoning powers. Who can she believe? The strange people who can talk straight into her mind and whom she barely knows? Or the one who says he is her friend but is obviously keeping things from her? Many different groups are pulling the

main characters in this then that direction. The earthquakes around the city are getting more and more violent and destructive; many are dead; more are homeless, and a great many are enraged that nothing is being done to help the poorer folks. The differentiation between the provs (poor) and the atal (well off, or downright rich) is well explored in this story. The build-up of resentment between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' as they are treated completely differently, is palpable. It makes a really rich backdrop to the main plot and gives it a satisfying glow as things build and build to an uncertain crescendo. I was genuinely gripped by this book. It is full of colour and personality and it made no bones about the shortness of life nor the fickleness of the human condition. I found that refreshing. It wasn't overly brutal in the violence nor sickeningly emotional either during more sensitive parts of the story. That was perfect and was in keeping with the plot. All things in moderation and yet nothing stinted on or forgotten. Marvelous writing! I must admit that I am very much looking forward to the next book in the series.

I received an ARC of this book and have voluntarily reviewed it. *Heart of the Empire* by Carrie Summers is the first book in the new dystopian fantasy series *The Broken Lands*. The book is written in both first person and third person (something I wish had been different, but I'll come back to that later). It is well written with incredible world building and an intricate plot. The characters are interesting and well-developed with both admirable and flawed characteristics. The plot itself is rather intricate. There is no clear answer to what the best outcome should be in the end; much like in real life. Unlike most rebellion stories this does not simply follow the rebels with the clear intent of them overthrowing their oppressors and rising up, instead we see both sides and get a glimpse into why things are the way they are in the Empire. Should things change? I think yes. But I don't think the change should come about as the Sharders want either. It's going to be a struggle for the main characters to accomplish their goals in the following books, I'm pretty sure of that at least. The world of *Heart of the Empire* is fascinating and very nearly pulled me in completely. The only thing that stopped me from becoming completely enthralled with the story is the jarring first-person back-and-forth of two main characters. I really wish the entire story had been written third-person, and I'll explain why. This is a multiple point-of-view first person story. What that means is the story is told in first-person, but from two different characters points-of view. It alternates back and forth between Savra and Kostan every other chapter, except the rare time it changes perspective completely and has a chapter written from a character other than Savra or Kostan in third-person. This first-person perspective but from two different character's point-of-view can be jarring. Personally, I find it near impossible to actually lose myself in the story when I have to keep

reminding myself who 'I' is in the story. I'm not sure why an author does this. If you want to write from multiple points-of-view why not just use third-person? First-person (to me at least) is for one point-of-view, otherwise, it can start to get annoying. Overall I really enjoyed the story and did like it more than I disliked the multi-first-person perspective. Recommended to fantasy lovers, those who appreciate well-done world building and a plot that makes you think

Carrie writes a pure adventure fantasy book. I loved the story from the very first chapter. The world the writer creates is quite fancy catching and the heroes are presented to us slowly but steadily, becoming more real and substantial as the story goes on. Kostan has been deprived of any kind of love and affection and he is so starved that he "falls" in love with any personable female he meets. Yet he matures as the story unfolds and the meeting between him and Savra shakes both of them to the core. My guess is that both have a long way to go before they can find their way out of the lies and misconceptions around them and achieve their dreams. The incorporation of nature, the earthquakes and the storms in the story make for a fascinating narrative. The secondary characters are well drawn too. Magic is everywhere and it gives the story an interesting background. The writer knows how to work with words and the story flows seamlessly. I'm looking forward to the rest of it.

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