



The Flame

Jean Johnson

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Seventh in the hot series from the national bestselling author that Jayne Anne Krentz hails as ?fabulously fresh.?

Eight brothers, born in four sets of twins, two years apart to the day?they fulfill the Curse of Eight Prophecy. Though no longer trapped in exile, their growing family faces new problems. Now that it?s his turn to look for a bride, Koranen, the seventh-born brother, cursed with a flame that courses beneath his flesh, must find a woman able to endure the literal heat of his passion. Then Danau the Aquamancer arrives, and as everyone knows, fire and water create steam.

The Flame Details

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The Window Seat says

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Of all the brothers, the seventh one, Koranen, has the biggest problem. He, literally, burns anyone he touches with passion. Needless to say, that means he has one heck of a boring social life. But he feels his time has finally come. His six older brothers are married. His younger brother already knows who his mate will be. It is now just a matter of time before his destined bride shows up in this, the seventh book of the Sons of Destiny Series, The Flame.

Koranen has assumed that it will be someone who can control water that will be his destined bride. Therefore, when he meets the icy Danau, it never occurs to him that water and ice are one and the same. Instead, he tries to romance the other three Aquamancers that have come to the island to repair and study the island's desalinator. He is just relieved he doesn't need to waste his time with such a stick in the mud as Danau.

But soon, he starts to realize that there is more beneath the surface than just ice. He starts to see a kindred soul who has had to shun physical contact as much as he has. He can't touch because he will burn; she can touch because she will freeze. Now, what would happen if they touched each other? Will it balance out?

There are problems with this book. For one, you get a WAY too brief look at a very disturbing step in Kelly's quest to become queen. Rydan would have to put all his trust in Kelly and her schemes and put his beloved wife in danger. But do we ever see anyone saying, "Wow, I feel for you. That would be hard to do." Nope. Never once. Instead, everyone acts like he is being a selfish jerk for not wanting to kill his own beloved wife. Wait, and we are supposed to believe these are romance novels? Killings of beloved wives and no sympathy or concern is romantic? Sorry, not in my book.

The other major problem is that the author never seems to be able to balance Koranen's virginity (forced by his powers) with immaturity. You can be a virgin and still be mature. I imagine that it may be hard for a romance author to keep a character's masculinity intact and make the character a virgin, but I have seen authors do it quite successfully. Two that come to mind are Gabaldon and Kurland. If you can't do it, don't try to. Unfortunately, the author tries to and the results are that Koranen comes off as a horny 16 year old rather than a mature man dealing with a legitimate concern. For me, this took a lot away from my enjoyment of the story.

Finally, the whole Kelly quest to be Queen bit is just downright annoying. I think it is almost made worse by the fact that when reading the books in order, you get a break from it in the sixth book because Rydan and Rora are rarely interacting with Kelly. But this book, she is back in full force and as obnoxious as ever as she tries to claim the right of queen to an island she has no right to. I could deal with her trying to claim her title and all that; I could even deal with the fact that she really has no right to it but is doing it anyway. What throws it over the edge is her feeling of entitlement and the belief that everyone should share it with her just because she wants to be the queen. She doesn't even want to share the throne with her husband. What is up with that? It is as though the author wants it both ways. She wants strong Alpha male heroes who are totally submissive to Queen Kelly. Sorry, one or the other, but the attempt at both ways stretches the believability to unparalleled heights. At this point, you have read the best of the books and I wouldn't blame you for throwing in the towel! :)

Sarah Mahoney says

The best book of the series, in my opinion.

Annette says

The series started out a little rough, but this installment and the last have been *much* better! I can hardly wait until April when the final brother's story is told. Given that his Destiny has been known for almost the entire series, it should wrap up all the backstories nicely.

Melissa Levine says

Okay when Kelly goes to inform Rydan and Arora the bad news relating to the Scroll, something happens. By now all the brothers and their wives know that Rydan has problems with emotions, both his own and others. Kelly expected something to happen with Rydan when she told him the bad news, hence she brought the mirror with her. In the end nothing happened to her, Rydan's lightning ended up basically firing back at him knocking him out. But when Saber and all others gather, Kelly's constantly telling Saber that he can't do anything bad to Rydan because of what happened, that he didn't mean it. I don't get that part. No I'm not a fan of Kelly whatsoever but really? Is it just me or she a b*tch? She didn't get hurt or anything so why is she making it seem like Rydan is to blame for what happened? If she was that worried then why didn't she bring Saber with her?

Another thing was when Koranen and Danau were first intimate with each other. Alone in the dark room he bends down to go between her legs only to halt because of the smell? haha I don't know about anyone else but that was gross. That little stink talk lasted a little too long for my liking too. I admit I like when real life situations take place in a book or whatever but that was a little too realistic for me. haha

Joyce says

Very little about this story that I liked. Last book of this series is next. Hope it finishes this series with a better story than this one.

Coral says

Plot: 3.5/5

Characterisation: 3.5/5

Prose: 4/5

How much I enjoyed it: 3/5

Maggie says

No doubt, I like the younger twin books better.

Gardavson says

I liked the heroine in this book, surprisingly. And of course, what's not to like about Kor. The best part, was when someone was discussing a conspiracy to kill Kelly. Oh Joy!! I was so excited I almost shouted in Panera Bread where I was reading. I was TOTALLY rooting for the bad guy on that one.

Anyway, what to say. This book followed suit in the same style as the others in the series. It's kinda getting a bit old, to be honest with you. I don't like how they are so willing to let destiny decide their brides, though this mattered more in Trevan's story since Kor had less choice in bride due to his Pyro problem. It's like, in two days, with sex but no romance, they POW fall in love. But it's not even like the soul mate kinda thing. They are just two people who've been part of a prophesy. There's no soul matching thing going on. Oh well. One more book to go, and I can't say I'll be sorry to get to the end. The characters are so likeable and well developed, but the story lines are just a bit...mediocre.

Stasha says

So now we're at 6 of 7 and unfortunately the back story was relegated to the background instead of being woven into the main story line. Can I just say the Fire and Ice was just plain trite? But that has been the hallmark. I did love the crisis of conscience faced by the government official of Katan. Now to wait until April for the final book - The library hasn't even ordered it yet.

Oh, the writing is much better than the first book in the series. Still not up to where I will be following anything else she prints. I'll admit it was the Jayne Ann Krentz quote on the cover that made me pick up the first book. Good marketing ploy. And despite my dislike of her writing style, Jean Johnson does tell a good story.

Jessica `~Blahyze~` says

Koramen suffers alone due to his ability to harness flame as a Pyromancer which he cannot control at times, he distances himself from others just as they do him. When Aquamancers come to Nightfall to help with the water issues the community faces Koramen is excited, it is prophesied that his only hope at love and at finding a bride is destined to be with an Aquamancer, water to quench his fire.;

"They're coming today they're coming today they're coming today they're coming today..."

Koramen couldn't get that refrain out of his head. From the moment he woke up, all through his morning chores, breakfast, sword practice, and even spending the rest of the morning kilning yet more of the blue faience roof tiles they were using for the new buildings in the city, he couldn't stop thinking about the fact that

the Aquamancers were due in port today”.

One of the Aquamancer women who arrive at the attempt to match make with Koranen throws herself at him, which he doesn't mind at first, but when they start crossing the line into the public domain he finds it unsettling and she does nothing to help with his fire, neither does Reuen, one of the other which just leaves two options left, Ama-ti and Danau. Because of what happened to Danau's past lover, she is hesitant to give in to the desire she feels for Koranen, but he is persistent and with Ama-ti's husband revelation, Danau is his only hope at love. I couldn't really get into this book until half way through, it just seemed to just a little too much and the ending didn't really cut it for me either. The steamy romps were well written, they are probably what made the book for me, and the characters were relatable enough. The connection between Danau and Koranen and how their abilities though they be a curse to them both, they are the very things that allow them to be together was beautiful. I can't stand Kelly the ruler, she is too harsh and just rubs me the wrong way with the way she is. Overall it wasn't a bad read and I would read it again, it was just missing the bit of magic that sucks you into a book.

Kathy says

Setting: Nightfall Isle – the 4 winged by 2 branches palace – especially Trevan's section; Harbor City – the port, the Ticklish Pig restaurant; Desalinator – the magical core, the tester pipes, the pipes that go throughout the island, etc; udrejhong (essentially a submarine); Menomon – undersea hidden city;

Characters:

Koranen – 7th brother: Pyromancer; 2 experiences with women before exiled led to burned hand marks on their breasts; he listens to what his brothers tell him about women and about sex – especially Trevon; his brothers gave him a magical illusion-woman, programed by the escort service, and can be touched, sound, and sight – but not taste or smell – so he could practice, and have some place for sexual release; but it is his turn for a bride; and Morganen, knowing the prophecy saying his brother of fire will find cooling in water, and in negotiation with the Menomons, requests 5 unmarried aquamancers to come to examine their Desalinator – both for assistance in getting it fully functional and secondly, so as to reconstruct in their city – potential destined brides for Kor – and he is very excited; though he is invested in getting to know them, not just to jump into bed with any of them;

Danau, Rank 10 Aquamancer of Menomon; 8 years celibate; she sucks heat from others, and is very icy – her tears, her sweat, her emotions result in ice; her first and only boyfriend – they progressed slowly, they tested her limits... but when actually had intercourse, his penis got frostbite – and Chana and Reuen delight in sharing this with everyone and calling her ice queen, and generally tormenting her and excluding her; Danua has instead devoted herself to the city and developing her powers;

Saber / Queen Kelly: moving forward in their plans to settle/build the island; Kelly and Amara – words like Panko game – back and forth;

Wolfer / Alys:

Dominor /Serina (pregnant) : Guardians of Koral-tai (nunnery on far side of the Eastern Ocean) and fountain on Nightfall; not seen much;

Evanor / Mariel (healer) / Mikor (her son): Mariel helping out with injuries;

Trevon / Mayor Amara: Zella enchants the royal cloak before she returns it to Amara – and when Amara puts it on, she is too nice, and the rest realize something's wrong... so Morg despells the cloak; then when Zella 'calls' her, she pretends to be spelled, so as to catch Zella – then they exile her;

Rydan / Rora : she is in hiding – the Living Fountain... and they learn to extract the fountain – required for the Conclave of gods - she must die (and then they'll bring her back to life – CPR); Rydan resisting this;

Morganen / Hope: Morganen is as much in this story as Kor – using his power to move things in for Hope, to locate the countess, to look back half a day to see who spell killed the countess, to locate and defeat a crazy mage who is out to kidnap Rora, to bringing Hope through the mirror;

Chana / Reuen / and Ama-ti: Menomon Aquamancers; flirt and blond / cousin and red&brown striped hair / an almost friend to Danau and blue hair; they are well equipped to help with the Desalinator – but they are anti Danua; Chana and Reuen destroy the velvet dress that foreseer Hope 'sees' Kor's woman would see (at Kor's suggestion, they are penalized with having to pay back x10 their world value of the dress); Kor dates each of them, but they react to his heat, so he knows they cannot be the one for him;

Zella Fin Rin: Amazai mage; she is the one that recognized Rora was a living fountain, and sent armed people to kidnap her – leading to Rora and Amara running away (landing on Nightfall); she doesn't believe that Rora is dead, and is setting spells to try and get Amara to bring the sister to her;

Yarrin Del Ya: Mornai mage; crazier mage; he is after the living fountain... and he traces a dissecting spell on the countess, and compels her... and when she doesn't bring Rora, he sends her overboard, and the sea water enacts the spell, 'cutting' her into 20 pieces (found by Morg, who is using a tracking spell to find her);

Lord Consus of Kairides: Councilor for Sea Commerce; an honest man of integrity; he accidentally uncovers a magic mirror that spies on others – and it is tuned to those making plans against Nightfall; once he figures out what is going on, he feels compelled to warn the brothers – though it is against his country's interest in seeing Nightfall fail; the Mornais are setting up a series of transport mirrors stretched across the ocean, with a plan to invade nightfall, kidnap Rora, kill Rydan (and Kelly), and transport Rora mirror by mirror back to their land – to wed their priest and take her fountain...

Memorable scenes: the gentleness of Kor – as he tries to get to know each of the women – including Danau, who keeps her distance physically and socially, due to her cold touch; and when they accidentally fall through the faux wall into the control center of the Desalinator, not only do they find the information they need to restore the Desalinator, they learn of each other's oppositeness – and Kor uses the skills he's studied and practiced with his illusion woman, to first of test their physical compatibility with kisses and touches – and then to make love to her (first orally, then penetration)... and it works... and from their pleasure in physicality with each other they continue to grow as companions... and he is willing to return to Monemon with her, and to decide together once both obligations to the Desalinator of each city is completed and they decide where to live; plus they will stay in Nightfall until the Concovation;

LWB Marissa says

“The Seventh Son shall he decree:

Burning bright and searing hot
You shall seek that which is not
Mastered by desire's name
Water shall control the Flame

Eight brothers, born in four sets of twins, two years apart to the day – they fulfill the Curse of the Eight Prophecies. Though no longer trapped in exile, their growing family faces new problems. Now that it's his turn to look for a bride, the seventh-born brother burns with curiosity and anticipation...

Koranen of Nightfall is tired of the Curse – in his case, a destructive flame that courses beneath his flesh. His brothers have wives and lovers, but all Koranen has are blistering reminders of a touch that burns... unless he can find a woman able to endure the literal heat of his passion. Then the Aquamancers arrive, at last affording Koranen the chance to find his Destined bride.

Ostracized for being too good at her job, Danau is resigned to her punishment: never knowing love. But fire and water always create steam, and things do get steamy as Danau and Koranen gradually realize they were meant for each other – even as Nightfall's future becomes flooded with more trouble than either of them could have imagined."

Of the eight brothers, Koranen undeniably is the hottest guy around on Nightfall Isle. But he did not really catch my eye until The Song where Jean Johnson described Koranen in his forge as a hot, lean, muscled guy wearing only a loin cloth. And now with The Flame his own destiny is finally known. Jean Johnson takes us back to Nightfall to follow the twins' journey to find their true love and to create an incipient kingdom.

After two very humiliating experiences in the love department Koranen decided to stay away from anything that has to do with love so he cannot hurt anyone with his burning touch. For years he watched his brothers making out and enjoying themselves but now his own time has come to experience with love. He is kind, generous, understanding and a real gentleman but also lonely and frustrated, he cannot wait to passionately practice what he has learnt in theory.

Danau also had a humiliating experience with love, only she had the misfortune that her former boyfriend broadcasted her defect to the world. Now she only focuses on her work and she has given up all hope of ever experience love again. She avoids physical contact with anyone because she does not accidentally want to frostbite anyone. Danau is very prickly and businesslike, a social outcast. She is very lonely for she does not have any friends and she hungers for what she cannot have. Love.

I have to say that I had real trouble with finishing this story, of all seven stories so far The Flame has the most characteristics of a true Fantasy story. For me it also felt different than the previous stories in this series. The first 100 pages were very fast-paced with lots of witty banter between the brothers and their destined brides, they are very well-matched. When the four aquamancers arrive it is very interesting and sometimes hilarious to follow Koranen's courting adventures in discovering who his destined bride is. But as soon as he discovers that Danau is the one the focus of the story shifts to the fixing of the desalinators (a machine that provides the isle with fresh water).

There are now 3,000 people living on the isle and they all need fresh water. The plans to create an incipient kingdom are coming along nicely with lots of practical problems of course. And so we get a lengthy description of every detail that has something to do with the desalinators or the plans for Nightfall. This is where the story slows down, all the other characters fade into the background while we watch Koranen and Danau fall in love and their attempts to fix the desalinators. The problem I had from this point on with this

story was that the romance plotline did not work for me. It was too sweet and I missed the raw passion and intensity that one would expect from two people who both had to do without love for so long. Furthermore Koranen was too much the gentleman and he gave in to Danau too many times. I did not feel the connection with them the way I did with other couples in previous parts of this series.

Another thing you would expect while reading the last but one part in this series is a serious further development in the ongoing plotline, but there really isn't any serious development going on. Yes a few pinpricks here and there regarding the attempt to resurrect the Convocation of the Gods and a murder takes place, but these mini plotlines are not deepened enough and therefore do not add anything to the story and that is annoying. The romance part is not strong enough to counterbalance the lengthy descriptions of fixing the desalinators and the lack of serious developments in the ongoing plotline.

Fortunately we can count on matchmaker Morganen to put in a frequent appearance. His interactions with Danau regarding a dress are gawky and hilarious. Kelly is also a force to be reckoned with, but especially in the second half of the book I miss the banter between the other brothers. The three other aquamancers spice up the story, they all have their own disposition. Reuen is a real bitch, Chana is a real flirt and Amati is gentle. Koranen sure has his work cut out for him in his dealings with them!

So this story was definitely not what I expected and it did not knock me off my feet. For me it lacked certain intensity and the descriptions of things were too lengthy for my taste. I did not feel the emotional connection with the characters and I missed the action between the brothers. To me it feels like this part is too isolated from the rest of the series, it was an enjoyable read but nothing more. I do hope Jean Johnson is going to end this series with a phenomenal bang; the Corvis brothers certainly deserve that!

Joe says

What could be better than two cursed people getting together. One cursed to burn any woman he touches in a romantic way and the other cursed to freeze any man she touches with passion. The two curses cancel each other and love is finally found for these two lonely people.

This is one of the best in this series.

Aurian Booklover says

This is Koranen's story, the seventh brother. Koranen is a Firemage, he literally burns. He can use his bare hands while making glass or working in his forge, and he even occasionally sleeps in it, so it can drain away some of his body heat. Before their exile, as a youth he tried to court a maiden twice, only to end up with his handprints burned into her body. And so Koranen is a virgin, unable to make love to a real woman. Until he can find that rare woman who will be Water to his Flame.

So when they find out, there is a whole city beneath the Ocean, where Aquamancers are in abundance, there is some hope for him. Especially when they want to study the workings of the famous Desalination plant on Nightfall Island, with the intention of reproducing it for their own city. Morganen has negotiated for some single marriageable female Aquamancers, so his brother can find his destined Bride amongst them.

Danau is not interested at all in the handsome Firemage, she knows she will never be able to touch a man. Her touch literally freezes a man, giving him frostburn on parts of his body he really doesn't want to be frostburned. The first two ladies that Koranen tries to date, soon find out his secret Curse, but they really dislike Danau for some obscure reason and don't tell him that she is the one for him. They just point him to the fourth of them. And as Danau keeps turning him down, Morganen needs to step in to make Koranen persevere in his pursuit of all the Aquamages.

Together Koranen and Danau find out the secrets of the Desalinator, and they will be able to repair it so it can work on full capacity once more, which is necessary as the Island's population keeps growing and growing.

But the Aquamancers came not alone to Nightfall Island. Their Council decided to get rid of all the recent shipwrecked persons they rescued, and amongst them are some bad apples. They know about Rora, and try to get to her for their own selfish reasons. A good woman gets murdered because of that. But there is also a Priestess amongst them, who will be crucial in their task to resurrect the Convention of the Gods.

Another book filled with action, magic and love. Both Koranen and Danau are lonely, they know they will not be able to make love to a real human being, because of their powers. They can't be kept under control when feeling desire or other strong feelings. So when they finally find out about the other, they know they are Destined to be together. And so happy not to be alone anymore.

Both Koranen and Danau have thrown themselves into their work, becoming the best there is in their field. And they can admire that devotion in the other. Together their powers are even stronger than alone, and I do wonder what their future will hold. Perhaps there is some more in the new series, the Guardians of Destiny.

I totally disliked Danau's cousin and friend, for the way they kept hurting Danau out of pure jealousy. They sure got what they deserved when Kelly judged them.

I just keep loving those books, and I think they will be re-read again in a few years time.

The Seventh Son shall he decree:
Burning bright and searing hot
You shall seek that which is not
Mastered by desire's name
Water shall control the Flame

9 stars.

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Full review on my blog, www.boeklogboek.blogspot.com

Julie (jjmachshev) says

What is it I like so much about Jean Johnson's 'Sons of Destiny' series? OH yeah. Well first, they're like grown up fairy tales. And second, there's no real angst. And last, but certainly not least, they're pretty darn hot! The backstory is: Eight brothers, four sets of twins, who were banished from their kingdom to an island because of a famous curse. The curse involved the brothers, each of whom has a different 'magic', finding their true loves and destroying the kingdom. So they were banished and women were forbidden from the island. The youngest, and most powerful of the mages, is the 'matchmaker' and he brought over a woman from Earth for his eldest brother which began the fulfillment of the 'curse'. Each book is about a different one of the brothers and each is a great combination of romance, fantasy, and light suspense.

Kor is 'The Flame' brother. His power is his affinity with fire. He's also the only virgin since his flame has burned the whole two women he's tried to have sex with! He's very excited when some female water mages are scheduled to come to the island as he's sure his verse in the curse means his destined mate will be an aquamancer. Water and flame.

Danau is sure she's cursed. She is valued for her water mage skills, but reviled as a woman because her power manifests itself in ice whenever she's excited. After giving her first and only lover frostbite on his 'member', no man is willing to touch her. So she has determined to make her work her life, sure she will never find a man that she won't hurt.

Another excellent story. Johnson's books are NOT erotica, but they ARE pretty hot romances. And the scenes in this book of the 'virgin' and the things he has done and is willing to do to find his true mate are both touching and hilarious. If you loved fairy tales as a child and always wanted a more adult version, you should really pick up Johnson's series. The last book of the series, "The Mage" is scheduled for release in April 2009. I can hardly wait!
