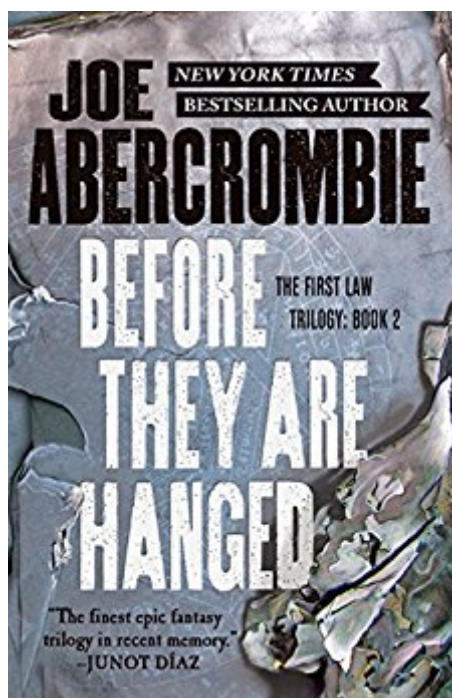


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Before They Are Hanged (The First Law)



Synopsis

The second novel in the wildly popular First Law Trilogy from New York Times bestseller Joe Abercrombie. Superior Glokta has a problem. How do you defend a city surrounded by enemies and riddled with traitors, when your allies can by no means be trusted, and your predecessor vanished without a trace? It's enough to make a torturer want to run -- if he could even walk without a stick. Northmen have spilled over the border of Angland and are spreading fire and death across the frozen country. Crown Prince Ladisla is poised to drive them back and win undying glory. There is only one problem -- he commands the worst-armed, worst-trained, worst-led army in the world. And Bayaz, the First of the Magi, is leading a party of bold adventurers on a perilous mission through the ruins of the past. The most hated woman in the South, the most feared man in the North, and the most selfish boy in the Union make a strange alliance, but a deadly one. They might even stand a chance of saving mankind from the Eaters -- if they didn't hate each other quite so much. Ancient secrets will be uncovered. Bloody battles will be won and lost. Bitter enemies will be forgiven -- but not before they are hanged. First Law TrilogyThe Blade ItselfBefore They Are HangedLast Argument of KingsFor more from Joe Abercrombie, check out:Novels in the First Law worldBest Served ColdThe HeroesRed Country

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Customer Reviews

The Blade Itself was a complete character study without a lot of plot, Before They Are Hanged has a little more plotting involved but for me it was still all about the characters. I travelled with them, I worried for them, I hoped for the best even in the midst of the worst and at the end I'm left wondering how they will ever get out of the complete mess they are all in. Glotcka-- "Strange how, with time, even the most terrible suffering of others can become . . . tedious" Glotcka has proved again what a complex character he is. Is he the misunderstood hero or is he the villain? I'm never quite sure myself. He can torture better than anyone but still it seems that he has a conscience and I love the inner dialogue he has. I look forward to his chapters because even though in so many ways he is awful he is also extremely clever and knows the true score. He might be dead as soon as the other players in the dangerous game he is playing if he can't keep on the right side of the people in power. So he plays his part of the game better than anyone else and proves that just because you are horribly crippled the mind is a dangerous thing and being smart will save your ass more than a solid sword arm. Logen and Ferro + the rest of the travelers (Bayaz, Jazel, Quai and Longfoot) I ship Logen and Ferro so hard. Both are fierce warriors with horrible pasts. Again we get to see Logen and the burden he has carried by having Ninefingers as a traveler in his head. Logen is calm, smart and collected. He hands out great advice and seems like the true leader of the pack. But when Ninefingers comes out to play no one is safe, even his allies. Ferro, I just want to hug you, but you probably slit my throat if I tried. Learning about her past made me feel so much for her character. She is a feral beast to be sure but I loved the time she and Logen spent together and how close they became. Jazel surprisingly has grown on me, all it took was a near brush with death and some real pain to make the boy grow up a bit. He might be a decent person after all and it just makes me wonder what is Bayaz grooming the boy for.-- "Easy, now, and listen to me. It hurts, yes. Seems like more than you can take, but it isn't. You think you're going to die, but you won't. Listen to me, because I've been there, and I know. Each minute. Each hour. Each day, it gets better." Bayaz is still a huge mystery to me and everyone else he is traveling with so I guess it is only fair I'm in the dark about his character as well. It seems that Quai has started to question his master a little more and the First Magi must tell stories of his past in order to convince the group that he is

prepared and will not make the same mistakes again.--

“All the great heroes of old, you know - the great kings, the great generals - they all faced adversity from time to time.

Jezal looked up. He had almost forgotten that Bayaz was there.

“Suffering is what gives a man strength, my boy, just as the steel most hammered turns out the hardest.

Wow what a journey these characters had and I will say at the end of it I was beyond surprised with how it all turned out. With all they went through to get where they were going I didn't expect the outcome and can't wait to see what the band of brothers + Ferro will do now.

The Northmen and WestThe Named men from the north have found a common ally against Bethod, but the crafty king has a lot of tricks up his sleeve and things might just get a little bloody.--

It was a bad day for men, all in all, and a good one for the ground. Always the way, after a battle. Only the ground wins.

I was so upset with West at the end of The Blade Itself but seeing him in his new position and having to deal with the Prince and a few other circumstances I really began to like him again. He has practically redeemed himself to me and I honestly felt extremely bad for him at one point. But I like West and the Named men together and it seems they have a lot to teach each other.

The Rest of the StoryThere was a lot going on in this and at the end of it and well to be honest, it seems hopeless for everyone. The deck is definitely stacked against them all and I'm not sure how they will win let alone survive the upcoming battles. There are so many players, old debts to be settled, new terrifying adversaries how many more will die???That said I still can't wait to see how everything plays out and I am crossing my fingers and hoping that at least a few of my favorite characters, if not all, will make it out alive.

Buddy Read of the next book cannot come soon enough.

Abercrombie's books are a fun read. They're fast-paced, descriptive and highly entertaining. Clearly Glokta and Nine Fingers are the best characters. Glokta's internal monologue is one of the best aspects of the books. Because they're contemporary works, it's almost impossible not to compare Abercrombie's trilogy to the Game of Thrones series. Abercrombie's writing is in many ways the opposite of George R.R Martin's. Though both have some flaws, they each have elements that more than make up for them.

Where Martin spends an exhaustive amount of time and space on backstory and history, Abercrombie is content to give those elements short shrift and focus on the action at hand and moving the plot along. Martin's dialogue can be lofty and overwrought while Abercrombie is a master of concise brevity and economy of language. If I have any criticism of these (Abercrombie's) books, it's that the history of the world created here is so sketchy and

underplayed it detracts sometimes from a very solid plot. For example, it's somewhat hard to believe virtually no one in this world has the vaguest idea of its origin when a number of the key figures in its foundation are still living. The First of the Magi is still alive, living in a library, and literally no one knows this? The House of the Maker is the center of the Union's capital yet no one, it seems, has the first clue who Kanedias was or what he did? Like I said before, if you want an exciting, entertaining adventure, this book fits the bill. It's fun, fast reading as long as you don't really think too much. If you're looking for meticulous, detailed world building like in Tolkein, Martin, or even JK Rowling, these readings may fall a little short. The fight sequences are good though and the writing is crisp and flowing. I'm looking forward to the final part of the trilogy. Definitely worth the money.

This is a damn good book. Damn good. A damn good series so far, might be that it deserves a spot in my 'favorites' shelf when it's all over. Before They Are Hanged took everything that I liked about The Blade Itself and turned it up a notch. The stakes are higher, the pages bloodier, the journeys longer, and the characters deeper. Such wonderful development in our characters in this book. Abercrombie can write, man. I can do nothing but give this book the five stars it deserves, and pick up the final piece of the trilogy.

The middle chapter of The First Law Trilogy is a fun mixture of epic journeys, brutal battles, political intrigue, and yes even sex (unfortunately). Joe Abercrombie after leading all his flawed and well written characters to Adua in The Blade Itself, he sent them all far away from the middle continent of his world. The epic journey of Bayaz, Logen, Ferro, and Jezal across the Old Empire on their way to the Edge of the World is given all the sense of an epic quest that sees all four change in their views of themselves but to the others as well. Inquisitor, now Superior, Glokta journeys to Dagoska to find out what happened to his predecessor and to defend the city from the Gurkish any way he can while looking over his shoulder for the stab in the back he always expects is coming but is continually surprised when it never happens. Up North, Logen's former crew join up with Collem West and together they attempt to fight off Bethod's invasion of Angland facing challenges none of them expected including dealing with the burden of leadership. Abercrombie surprises fantasy fans, even those use to the twist and turns of GRR Martin, by how he spins the three main story arcs in this book, especially the ending to the 'epic quest' led by Bayaz. However it's the characters that even really makes one not want to set down this book and that's why this book is so good.

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