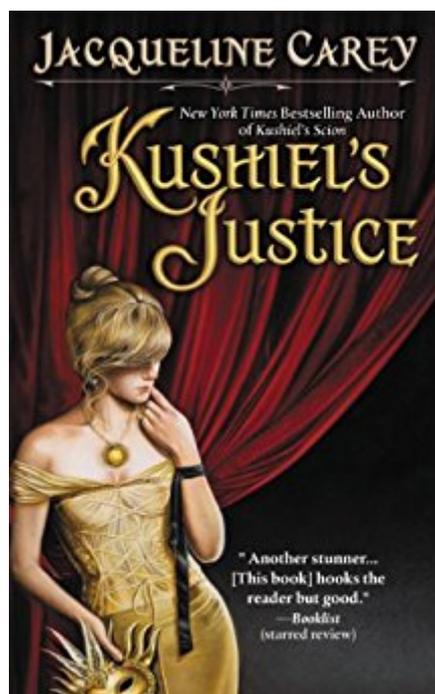


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Kushiel's Justice (Kushiel's Legacy Book 2)



Synopsis

Imriel de la Courcel's blood parents are history's most reviled traitors, while his adoptive parents, Phãdre and Joscelin, are Terre d'Ange's greatest champions. Stolen, tortured, and enslaved as a young boy, Imriel is now a Prince of the Blood, third in line for the throne in a land that revels in beauty, art, and desire. After a year abroad to study at university, Imriel returns from his adventures a little older and somewhat wiser. But perhaps not wise enough. What was once a mere spark of interest between himself and his cousin Sidonie now ignites into a white-hot blaze. But from commoner to peer, the whole realm would recoil from any alliance between Sidonie, heir to the throne, and Imriel, who bears the stigma of his mother's misdeeds and betrayals. Praying that their passion will peak and fade, Imriel and Sidonie embark on an intense, secret affair. Blessed Elua founded Terre d'Ange and bestowed one simple precept to guide his people, love as thou wilt. When duty calls, Imriel honors his role as a member of the royal family by leaving to marry a lovely, if merely sweet, Alban princess. By choosing duty over love, Imriel and Sidonie may have unwittingly trespassed against Elua's law. But when dark powers in Alba, who fear an invasion by Terre d'Ange, seek to use the lovers' passion to bind Imriel, the gods themselves take notice. Before the end, Kushiel's justice will be felt in heaven and on earth.

Book Information

File Size: 2292 KB

Print Length: 721 pages

Publisher: Grand Central Publishing (June 14, 2007)

Publication Date: June 14, 2007

Sold by: Hachette Book Group

Language: English

ASIN: B000QRIGNU

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #63,322 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #40 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Erotica > Fantasy #88 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Literature & Fiction > Erotica > Science Fiction #2118 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Epic

Customer Reviews

After the hideous disappointment of "Banewrecker", I was on pins and needles regarding Carey's return to Terre D'Ange in "Kushiel's Scion." Would the sexy, dark, original voice that had given us Phedre, Joscelin, Hyacinthe, and Melisande be replaced by the boring tediousness of the "Sundering" series? I just knew it would kill me to see that happen to these beloved characters. Furthermore, what to make of the fact that the next three books would not be narrated by that most cunning of linguists? Would Terre D'Ange without Phedre be whipped cream without the cherry? Thank Elua, all my fears were unfounded. "Scion", while taking the Kushiel's Legacy series in a new direction, is a welcome and worthy addition, and Imriel is an excellent and insightful new narrator. His voice is, naturally, different from Phedre's, but the beautiful, rich language is the same. Carey has done a great job making the transition from anguissette to prince. Imriel's story is also very different from Phedre and Joscelin's, and part of what makes this book interesting is that he recognizes it. Imri adores his foster parents, but despairs at ever living up to their example. For one thing, Phedre and Joscelin are once-in-a-generation heroes, larger than life and - in Phedre's case - chosen by Kushiel himself. Imri, while a royal Prince of the Blood, is still ordinary, and the son of Terre D'Ange's greatest traitor to boot. More than anything, he wants to be good - but first, he must decide what that means. Can he be good without ever saving the world the way Phedre did? Is it possible to be good with Kushiel's blood - and his mother's treachery - in his veins? More than anything (and unlike previous books), "Kushiel's Scion" is a coming of age story.

It's officially summer, the season of strappy sandals, sexy sundresses, barely-there bikinis, and the latest offering from Jacqueline Carey. Yes, June is no longer just about summer vacation and fruity girlie drinks on the beach - it's also the time to immerse yourself in the sweet and sexy world of the Kushiel's Legacy series. "Kushiel's Justice", of course, is the fifth and most recent in the series. It's also the second book in Imriel's subtrilogy - and, in an almost unheard-of development, in this case the middle book has actually surpassed the first. Fantasy fans know what I'm talking about - it's an unwritten rule that the second book of any trilogy is the weakest link. It even held true in Phedre's trilogy - "Kushiel's Chosen", while still fantastic, didn't quite measure up to "Dart" or "Avatar". However, "Justice" takes the bar set by "Kushiel's Scion" and blows it out of the water, if I may mix my metaphors. It is at once darker, more personal, and yes, more erotic than "Scion" - in fact, perhaps more than any other book in the series. Imriel has returned from his rebellious phase in Tiberium, a little older, a little wiser, and prepared - he thinks - to finally prove to his enemies that he is not tainted by the treason of his parents. He will marry a princess of the Cruithne and provide

Alba with a half-d'Angeline heir. It will cement Terre d'Ange's alliance with Alba and help silence the grumbling against Queen Ysandre's own half-Cruithne heirs, and thus, Imriel hopes, establish once and for all his devotion to his country. (If this paragraph has just blown your mind, it is only proof that yes, you do need to read the entire series from the beginning to understand what's going on.) But you know what they say about the best-laid plans.

Return to Terre d'Ange with Kushiel's Scion, sequel to the Kushiel's Legacy trilogy. This book follows Phedre's adopted son, Imriel, son of the treacherous Melisande and third in line for the D'Angeline throne. Carey does an excellent job of developing Imriel into a complicated, troubled young man without in any way betraying the character he was in Kushiel's Avatar: haunted but with the proverbial heart of gold. Imriel is coming of age here, and coming to terms with desires he finds hard to face. Between his molestation at the hands of the Markhagir of Drujan, his anger with Melisande, and the dominant tendencies inherent in his bloodline, Imriel finds sexuality a minefield of issues. He wants more than anything to be a good person, but fears he's fated to be something else. His quest to find maturity and inner peace will lead him to the Night Court (fans of the Night Court rejoice--we see more of it here than we have since Dart), into court intrigues, and to an Italy still clinging to the ghosts of its glorious past. Imriel finds himself surrounded by schemes, plots, and conflicted desires, and truly comes of age in this hotbed of troubles. I really love what Carey does with his character, and can't wait to see what comes next for him, as it's clear there will be further Imriel books. The one thing I didn't like at first was that the climactic battle didn't seem to have much to do with Imriel; it was more that he was in the wrong place at the wrong time. But on further thought, I realized that Phedre, too, was sucked into things she never meant to be involved with, in Dart and Chosen. I'm just so accustomed to the Phedre of Avatar, plunging herself headlong into adventure because she knows she has to--but this is a mature, 30ish Phedre.

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