

We Free the Stars

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Before you begin reading this review, I must warn you that due to the fact that the first book in this series, *We Hunt the Flame*, ended with a cliffhanger, this review may contain spoilers for the first book.

Nasir and Zafira completed their mission on the deadly island, Sharr, but now the journey that lies ahead has even more pricks and unimaginable circumstances. In this enthralling sequel to *We Hunt the Flame*, Nasir and Zafira must uncover the mysteries of their villain while their kingdom is on the cusp of takeover by the Lion of the Night. Not only that, Nasir and Zafira find themselves falling dangerously in love when they know their situation is only temporary. After fleeing Sharr and leaving Altair behind, Nasir and Zafira are in constant worry on whether they made the right decision; they need to find a way to save not only Altair, but their kingdom. They need to finish their plan: restore the hearts of the Sisters of the Old to the minarets, which should restore magic. But things aren't that easy when they return to Sultan's Keep and old friends of Altair's show up to help. They realize the sultan is not in the right mind and the people are in fear. They must form plans with unfamiliar so-called "allies" as well as battling their own personal turmoil. After bounding herself to the Jawarat, Zafira is on the edge of insanity, trying to gain knowledge from the book without losing herself to the constant whispers. Nasir on the other hand, is learning how to control the darkness that emerged within himself. With an amazing world and an intoxicating romance, this sequel will leave you begging for more.

This book was a ride through so many emotions. One moment I was giddy; then, I couldn't breathe from excitement and anticipation; and then I was suddenly crying. Basically, this was the perfect sequel to *We Hunt the Flame*. If you're a lover of happy endings, this book has one and it's so perfect that it fills me up to the brim with glee. I read this book almost a year ago, but I still remember every detail, that's how much I loved it. Literally everything about this series was so so good, the world that was inspired by ancient Arabia was described so well that it actually felt like I was there with the characters. Since the first book took place on the daunting, old island Sharr, and this book takes place in the caliphates, we were able to explore the majority of the world in the span of the two books. The plot is also very rich, there's always new theories and missions the characters must take out. Then, the characters oh my goodness, I cannot find a single character that I didn't like. Each character was so well fit for their role; the villain had the tragic backstory that every villain has, the array of side characters were equally annoying and helpful, and the main characters were real and relatable in the sense that they made big mistakes but still came out victorious like a fantasy novel protagonist does. Oh and did I mention that this book includes a third point of view? You can probably guess who, but it just added another layer of excitement and understanding to the story.

If you loved *We Hunt the Flame* and haven't immediately picked up this sequel, do it right now. The adventure, risks, and romance make for such a satisfying story. Speaking of the romance, the relationship between Nasir and Zafira blooms further in this book and since it's a multiple point

of view book, you see the longing and restraint from both characters that leaves you screaming in both joy and pain. In the first book they were mainly enemies, so love seemed like a far fetched thing to both characters, but now truths have been revealed and they're allies, maybe it won't be too much of a big deal if they truly fall in love. This book had every single romance trope that I love; like seriously, whatever this romance recipe is, I need more of it.

There were no confusions for me in this book due to the way the author beautifully explained the environment and completed most of the world building in the first book. I would recommend this book for readers ages 14 and up. There is quite a bit of violence, but nothing too gory, and the romance is suited for this age. If you know someone who loves high fantasy, romance, and ancient Arabia, this stunning series is definitely for them. It doesn't matter if you buy it or check it out from the library, just read these books!

Recommended Titles

The Wrath and the Dawn by Renée Ahdieh

An Ember in the Ashes by Sabaa Tahir

The Stardust Thief by Chelsea Abdullah