



Heart of Tartarus

Lucy Smoke

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“Lucy Smoke has brought to life a world in Heart of Tartarus the likes of which I never could have envisioned and will never forget. Strong writing, a kick-butt heroine, and a perfect sense of what makes science fiction romance rock, has turned this book into one I will never forget losing myself in.” --

Bestselling and Award Winning Author, Rebecca Royce

On Tartarus I was born...

Soaked in power and secrets—Tartarus is a city for rebels, exiles, and criminals. As a messenger, every shadow is my friend. I know all the secrets of this place. Or, at least, I thought I did. When my best friend, Kida, goes missing, I don't waste any time assuming her identity to draw her or whoever took her, out of hiding.

On Tartarus I will die...

As I search for Kida's whereabouts, Tartarus' most dangerous gang—The Tanks—are slowly rising out of the chromework, growing more and more powerful. Every instinct in my body is screaming for me to run, to save myself, but I can't—not without Kida. If I have to set the city ablaze just to get her attention, I will. And if the fire doesn't kill me, the secrets I uncover just might.

THIS COPY CONTAINS BOOK 1 AND 1.5 OF THE SKY CITIES SERIES

THIS IS A REVERSE HAREM TITLE

Heart of Tartarus Details

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Author : Lucy Smoke

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From Reader Review Heart of Tartarus for online ebook

Jennifer G says

Earth is no longer habitable. Instead, floating cities hover above it. Tartarus is a crowded, dangerous city for rebels, exiles, and criminals. Cassie is a messenger. Rescued by her best friend Kida from a juvenile center in another city, Kida has taught Cassie how to survive on the streets. Now Kida has disappeared and Cassie is using her name to try to draw her out. Instead, she finds herself kidnapped by someone else looking for Kida. When the truth is revealed Cassie is offered a position on the team to locate and rescue Kida. The weeks ahead will bring danger, heartache, and possibly a new family into Cassie's life.

Heart of Tartarus is the first book in a new dystopian RH series. This is my favorite book of Lucy Smokes to date. So much incredible world-building, so many fantastic characters, so many twists and turns. I was immediately drawn in, couldn't put it down, and still want more, more, more. Cassie is a complicated MC. Part street rat, part brilliant young lady. She's fierce, yet vulnerable; closed-off, yet loving; all survivor. I adore her. Kida is like an older, harder version of Cassie missing that unnameable quality that makes Cassie stand out as a bit more special. The guys, Thayer, Levi, Aaron, Haze, and Noaz are all part criminal, part savior, all gorgeous. I liked the complexity of Cassie's relationship with each of them and how different her relationship was with each guy. I look forward to getting to know the guys more and watching their friendships deepen.

The story is solid. The Tanks are formidable opponents yet it seems that they are small enemies compared to future threats and the ultimate upcoming doom. The action was legitimate and woven into the story to make it very exciting. The city itself is a living, breathing entity and plays its own role. I look forward to visiting the other cities to learn their impact on the story.

This book includes 1.5 as well as the first book. It's a novella that continues after the destructive ending of book 1. The aftermath is painful and this part of the story addresses that and helps to bridge over the worst of it and bring the reader to a place of new beginning. I thought this was an excellent choice by the author. I am really excited for book 2. This RH looks to become one of my favorites.

Bex (Beckie Bookworm) says

5 Stars

Review Copy

Release Date-25/6/18

This was so good: like seriously read in one sitting fab.

A new author for me and what originally drew me towards this series was the unusual premise behind the storyline.

I have read many dystopian themed books where the earth has been obliterated and society is now living in a new type of hierarchy or even taken off into space itself to a whole new planet: but an actual sky society was a whole new concept for me.

Such an ingenious imaginative idea: throw in a reverse harem type storyline and this was definitely an extremely unique approach to the whole post-apocalyptic sub-genre.

And this was such a fabulous introduction to what is looking up to be a first-class new series. And the whole reverse harem thing well it's subtle: like very, this is more about building emotions and the whole emotive relationship than any gratifying get your rocks off type thing. In fact, this is a very slow build burn and as much as I am usually about instant gratification this really does work here and I have to say this for me was the best Reverse Harem I have experienced yet. It's so ingeniously applied that it becomes so normal and acceptable here without even realising it: Like second nature. There is also so much flying under the radar here that totally stunned and intrigued me; This story was full of surprises indeed. Also, the world building here was phenomenally well done: I was really impressed with how splendidly the whole city of Tartarus and its surrounding metropolis was portrayed. The characters here were totally multi-faceted in there entirety and I really felt that I got to know each one intimately. Quite a feat when this is actually only told from Cassie's POV. I loved Cassie and also adored her boys all of them brought something unique to the equation: something that Cassie needed: I also liked how protective and warm they were emotionally towards her. I could actually see Cassie, Thayer, Levi, Aaron, Haze, and Noaz gradually morphing into a family and it was really lovely to behold especially considering the lack of caregivers in Cassie's life. So this volume contained book 1 and 1.5 it really could have been one if I'm being picky. But no matter I read them as one anyway. I am so looking forward to the next volume in this addictive new series and pleased to impart it won't be long and I'm so excited that I have got an ARC of "Shadow Of Deception"(Sky Cities #2) coming so watch this space.

I really can't recommend Heart of Tartarus (Sky Cities, #1) enough it literally blew me away with how fabulous it actually was: counting the days here until I get my mitts on the next volume. Thank You to the Author for providing me with an ARC of "Heart of Tartarus" (Sky Cities, #1) of which I have reviewed voluntary. All opinions expressed are entirely my own.

Reviewed By Beckie Bookworm
<https://www.facebook.com/beckiebookworm/>
www.beckiebookworm.com

Talltree says

has FF , not my thing

Anna says

Cass has had an extremely rough life. Now the one person who has ever been there for her has gone missing. Kida told her not to look for her but how could she not. Tartarus is a dangerous place though and Cass has to be careful. She finds herself in a world of trouble when she gets captured. That could end up being the turning point in her whole life.

So first let me say that this is my absolute FAVORITE book by Lucy. That's saying a lot b/c I love the Iris Boys. This book is so unique and captivating though. Lucy takes us to a whole new world. You would think that introducing a world as complex as this would take up too much of the story and drag it down but that is not the case. She does an amazing job of describing it so you can picture it all in your head while smoothly flowing along in the story.

Cass is just bad ass. That's all there is to it. She has her small moments of weakness and can be a little insecure but when you read about her life, you will understand why. The guys are all fantastic as well. Of course they are all going to be different and have their own strengths and weaknesses. They all have their own stories and pasts. You can't help but to love them all though.

I don't want to really tell you what happens in the book. You need to experience it as you go. I'm gonna say this though, keep an open mind. What you think may be going to happen or is hinted at in the past.....ugh so hard to explain without spoiling it. Just know that it's not all going to go how you think it will and if you are worried about something while reading the book, keep on going b/c I'm sure that like me, you will love how it all turns out in the end.

I also love that Lucy has given us 1.5 as well as just the first book. It's a shorter read and that extra bit helps to settle things down after the ending of book one. I'm not sure I could have waited patiently for more without that. Hell, I'm still not patiently waiting b/c I seriously love this book and these characters so much. Bravo to Lucy on knocking this bad boy out of the park and thank you for giving us such a refreshing read and unique new world to explore.

Kel Carpenter says

One of the best reverse harem books I've read, and I'm not even a science fiction buff. Full of action and grit, this one kept me glued to the page.

Blendy says

Ugh.

I started this book because it was tagged as Reverse Harem and at about 85% in, I was still trying to figure out why. This book has a main character and she is tasked with working with a group of guys. That does not a reverse harem make people! I *think* I see where the author is going with this and why it might later be considered RH, but as of *this* book...I wasn't buying it. First of all, the main H is in a F/F relationship with another chick, and second of all, two of the guys in her potential "harem" are in love with EACHOTHER and trying to figure that shit out. Ummmm, tell me again how this is RH?

Aside from that, I wouldn't have minded this story, except the H is soooooo damn annoying!!! I could not get past it. Seriously, I probably would have continued this series regardless of its lack of RH-ness, but I just can't deal with that H. Sorry, this is a no-go for me.

Gaby★Me Myshelf and I★ says

3.5 stars - enjoyable despite being a bit predictable for the RH genre

I was slightly unsure of this when at 1% I had (what I thought to be) a distant planet and a MC who was a *messenger*? Ring any bells? But in actuality that's where the similarities between this and "shoot the messenger" ended. It turned out to be a dystopian earth and I enjoyed it at the end.

As I said its a dystopian earth after humans have ruined the planet they have built cities on platforms in the sky to live. I found it hard to picture the world to be honest, the descriptions weren't all that clear but what I did gather is Tartarus is the city where all the criminals and addicts reside. It makes it a rough place to survive for our protagonist Cassandra. Her best-friend Kida has gone missing and in an attempt to find her she's posing as Kida and attracts the wrong attention from a band of 5 men looking for Kida.

enter the harem

The guys are a bit stereotypical of the RH genre; we have the tech guy, the care-free comedian, the big burly tattooed one who is soft inside (always my favourite), the hard-to-figure out one, and then a fighter thrown in for good measure! This set-up works for me in RH because I have a hard time remembering names and this does help give them all a little personality right from the start. (I don't even need to mention how ripped their bodies are do I? That's pretty much assumed right?)

Together they set about to find Kida and rescue her. At a few points I questioned if this was paranormal at all as some of the guys seemed to display supernatural traits but nope this was a contemporary if futuristic harem.

The other thing to point out is this is 2 books in 1 so don't freak out like I did at 76% when you're reading an epilogue! Book 1.5 is right after and goes onto 99%.

I don't really understand why Lucy Smoke did this, *why not just continue to story why break it up into 2?* There was a slight story line change between the two but nothing that couldn't have been continued in one book, not just because it actually is continued in the one book just labelled differently.

There is a bit of F/F and a potential for M/M (**bring it on**). The F/F nearly put me off but it all worked out in the end!

so all in all in didn't inspire me to

but it was good enough that I will pick up the next.

Not my favourite Lucy smoke either I think I like Iris Boys and Nerys Newblood better, but the potential M/M does give it an edge that makes me want to read on.

Camila Rodriguez says

Well then.

TBH I got this book awhile ago in my shelves, returned it after not reading it due to starting other books, then decided yesterday to give it another go.

I fucking **LOVED** it.

Lemme clarify: I loved the plot, loved the men. Still iffy on Cass.

This book wowed me at every turn. Just when I thought I had it figured out, BAM, **nothing was what I thought** but strangely enough my predictions were true. Does this make sense?

My thoughts while reading this book:

Alright I'm confused.

What started out as what I assumed would be a kick ass heroine is actually just a strange chick who has severe attachment issues to her bff/lover (can't say I DIDN'T see that coming) and basically alienates society because of said attachment.

WE SAW SO MANY SIDES OF CASS. I'm now convinced she'll be "broken Cass" in book 2.

But I found the attachment between Kida and Cass to be both beautiful and toxic, and it reminds me a lot of relationships seen in adolescence. Where teens are pining over each other as if no one else is made for them. Ya know, *young love*.

Upon meeting Kida- I was heavily disappointed. My initial thought is that she's selfish but cares for Cassie but locks her away in a tight little box away from the world. As it turned out in the remainder of the book you could tell she was... guarded? I don't want to say selfish but I don't know how to describe her. Let the lady GROW, woman. I mean damn. These poor guys have like 50,000 layers to peel back due to the damage Kida's done.

Sheesh.

The ending: I mean.... not to be harsh but this is an RH novel how else was this gonna work with Kida in the picture?? ?? that sounded terrible I know but I was wondering how the author was going to do this.

Either way **LOVED LOVED LOVED** this.
Ready for book 2.

P.s. totes ready for some Levi-Aaron action.

Jeanny says

I found the world intriguing, the story has potential, & the characters are pleasant. 3.5 stars will continue the series.

Book Addict says

Wow..I did not know what to really expect from this book but as soon as I started reading all my attention was truly captivated! This is so different and unique to all the books out at the moment written by a very

talented author!! I inhaled this book..well book and a half...and I am now fully invested in Cass and her survival. There is so much emotion in this book, heartache, uncertainty, suspense and caring that I just wanted to keep reading even st the end of the book! Cass is so many different things, at time confident, at other times very uncertain of herself, it takes a long time for her to trust and she just makes you want her to get her guys and be happy. And the guys that start to become her friends and family...serious and the leader Noaz, fun Thayer, tough and gentle Aaron, the fighter and sweetest Levi and finally the unknown and quiet Haze! What a very different and interesting bunch of guys..I cannot wait to see how their relationships develop in future books!! This book really sets the scene for what is to come, it is slow burn but you can have hope for the future of Cass and her guys. Once again Lucy Smoke writes a truly exciting and captivating story that is highly recommended!!

J says

[What is left out of the blurb is the fact that her missing best friend is also her GIRLFRIEND. Granted the girlfriend does not appear much in the book and she ends up dying in the end of the book but that does NOT make it okay.

Just because the girlfriend dies in the first book and

CoullCat says

Heart of Tartarus is a gritty science fiction reverse harem full of daring action and emotional scenes. I wasn't sure what to expect when I picked up this novel but it hooked me right from the beginning and I'm eagerly awaiting the release of book two.

Cass, or Cassandra, knows what it means to be a citizen of Tartarus, the city of exiles, criminals and gangsters, she's no stranger to living it rough and only trusts one person in the whole universe. But when that person goes missing, Cass will do anything to find her. I liked Cass. She comes across as tough and a bit rough at times but is a rather vulnerable young woman who is intelligent and determined. The fact that Smoke has managed to convey both a strongness and vulnerability in one character so well is testament to her writing skills. The budding trust and relationship between Cass and the guys builds throughout the book and feels natural.

Smoke's world building is brilliant, the words pull you right into this dystopian world of oppression and cruelty - Tartarus is not a place I'd want to visit that's for sure. Her writing flows across the pages and the characters are diverse and layered. The ending had me choking up and I'm so glad that book 1.5 of the series was included at the end of the first book for, while it was an emotional roller coaster, it made it feel like Cass was beginning to experience the sunlight again.

This is a slow burn RH with a M/M and F/F undercurrents throughout the plot. There is not necessarily any trigger warnings but it does deal with some darker subjects, it is a dystopian world ruled by men after all. And, book one doesn't necessarily give us a HEA but neither does it end on a cliffhanger. This is my second book by Smoke and I am blown away by her ability to create such strong and unique characters; I am looking forward to reading book two and seeing how the relationship between Cass and the guys develop further.

Rhiannon Chillingworth says

Probably more like 3.5, but I rounded up, as I enjoyed the dystopian world and found the characters likeable. The MC was a bit over-dramatic in places, and the men are a bit of RH cut outs, however, I liked them all.

I think there's loads of potential here and I'll definitely be picking up the next one... although it doesn't appear to be listed on Goodreads, so hopefully there will be a next one?!

Mandie (Naughty Book Snitch) says

This book was like eating the most delicious food and then discovering a bug at the bottom after you've already eaten the entire portion.

BEFORE YOU BUY THIS BOOK... THIS IS NOT A REVERSE HAREM, POLYAMORY, ROMANCE.

this is a f/f, young adult

Let me try to explain this pile of disappointment. I started off loving this book. Strong female lead, hot sexy men, lots of action and a fantastic premise. I was **TOTALLY** into it. Then at about 70% all of it started to change for me. It was like a completely different story written by a different author. This is actually a female/female, lgbt young adult story. There is absolutely no sex in this at all. Its definitely labeled incorrectly and that is annoying AF. I dont mind f/f books but I was **NOT** in the mood for that. I wanted to read a polyamorous, reverse harem book. **THIS IS NOT THAT BOOK!** Why?? Why is this labeled incorrectly!?

This book is a huge disappointment. I was all about a 4 or 5 star rating but the last 30% of this book is bullshit and changed my entire view.

How many damn nicknames does Cass have? *Troublemaker, Rocket and Firecracker?* Then there is all the different ways to say Cassandra. Oh lord... just pick one name and stick with it.

Also the last 30% is nothing but Cass grieving. Hosting her own pity party. Sure... she lost someone close to her and I know thats not easy, but the author didnt need to write about it the entire last portion of the book. Another thing that confused me was the **2 EPILOGUES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BOOK?**

I just cant with this anymore. The story started out perfect for me but ended up crashing and burning. The plot is really weak and I feel like the author gave up and couldn't figure out what direction to go in. Im really happy this is a KU book and I will not continue with this series.

buy the book... or whatever

SJ says

I was really not sure what to expect from this story when I bought it, but can I just say it was money that was very well spent indeed! I was hooked from the very beginning, Cassie is such a great character, strong and fiesty but also soft and vulnerable at times, I really connected to her from the beginning. Set in Dystopian world, the story is exciting throughout with twist and turns, Danger and sweet romance. I was intrigued excited and has a case of the feels whilst reading. With a great cast of character and an epic storyline, I am so looking forward to reading more. This is a real page turner and I highly recommend this book
