



Broken Fortress

Ginn Hale

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When John opens a letter addressed to his missing roommate, Kyle, he expects to find a house key, but instead he is swept into a strange realm of magic, mysticism, revolutionaries and assassins. Though he struggles to escape, John is drawn steadily closer to a fate he share with Kyle—to wake the destroyer god, the Rifter, and shatter a world.

Broken Fortress Details

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From Reader Review Broken Fortress for online ebook

Shelley says

“Thirty-one years! Bloody Hell!”

John Toffler has been in Basawara for thirty one years. But John Toffler is no more, he's not even Jahn he's Jath'ibaye (stupid name btw) and I don't know how or why he's called that yet. I guess he's always just been the Rifter: God Parfir personified, harbinger of cataclysmic mass destruction, destroyer of worlds, bound to the earth, rivers, oceans and sky, immortal and forever bound by blood and bone to his Kahlil – his protector. Never has that fact been more prevalent than in *Broken Fortress*.

Jahn/ Jath'ibaye has grown into a man of immense God like stature with a profound presence – Ginn Hale descriptions of him raises the hair on my skin. His strength and aura bleeds through the pages with his Godly presence and yet he still proves to be capable of so much more, his humanity, remorse and dedication to replenish and heal the lands makes him truly exceptional – I am in awe of him! And like a mother hen I feel so proud of him. How ridiculous is that?!

And then we have our beloved Kahlil, the Kahlil of old who's suffered loneliness, loss and torture in training with the Payshmura. Finally Kahlil is reunited with Jath'ibaye; so many years have passed and finally they are where fate dictates. Together - side by side - friends - lovers and defenders. Thank you Parfir!

“I followed you across the worlds, twice. I am bound to you. I have known since I was a boy that I would be with you. So there's no point in denying me. Oh how I love you Kahlil ... sigh.

Without the strength of his Kahlil, Jath'ibaye has suffered and endured years of grief and remorse, but now he's back and my heart is overflowing with happiness right now. Together they are indestructible ... right?

“...and in the hour of darkness, the Kahlil shall return, and in his wake, divine wrath shall fall upon our enemy and he will be no more...”

Right!

The armies of the South are converging on Vundomu and the Hungry Bones are approaching from the desolate North. Yes, I said hungry bones! It's crazy – I can't explain, but they are evil blood and soul sucking bones thirsty for, well...blood and souls. I think. {Frowny face}

It would appear that Fikiri has become an evil SOB and still has designs on gaining entry to Nayeshi (Earth) and he'll stop at nothing to get there, including killing innocent children!

There are more revelations about how the Gates were originally destroyed and there is an influx more characters, namely the members who make up Jath'ibaye council. I love Ji, her wise nature and calm countenance is a soothing welcome. There is still 27 missing years of Jath'ibaye life to account for and all of what happened to the Payshmura. I know Jahn must have been pissed to destroy it all but I don't know why. And I NEED to know

The focus of this book (for me) is the relationship between Kahlil and Jath'ibaye and the converging forces. Kahlil is struggling with mixed memories and insecure about not being the man Jahn fell in love with.

. “I may carry his memories, but I didn't live his life. I didn't make the choices he did.”

So now we wait, wait for Kahlil to prove his own sense of worth, even if it is only to himself. And we wait for the hungry bones and the gaun'im to make their move.

PS: My favourite quotes...

“Your flesh is my earth. Your blood is my river. Your breath is my sky. Your body is my world.” – Kahlil to Jath'ibaye. {and I swoon}

“Kahlil slipped his hand beneath the blankets. His fingers brushed over the ridges of Jath'ibaye's ribs. He felt the rise and fall of Jath'ibaye's breath and the smooth hardness of his abdomen. The muscles curved down into a deep cleft. Kahlil followed it to Jath'ibaye's belly button. His fingertip slid around the small circular indentation.

"Belly button," Kahlil whispered the Nayeshi words. It sounded so absurd, almost childishly cute. A belly button had to be the absolute antithesis of the world-crushing Rifter.

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

I think I'm in the minority with this one. It was very military planning-ish, which is not my style. It's the first time since I've started this series that I haven't been glued to my kindle.

Vivian says

“Tell me you won't forget me,” Kahlil whispered.

Absolutely satisfying installment even if one is left in a state of anticipation, again. Like that deep breath before a surge, waiting in a false quiescence for the engagement.

I'm not talking about the characters or the plot points specifically because it would spoil, but more of the past is uncovered, new dangers rise, and while there seem to be alliances in place, in truth it looks more like a battle royale about to unfold.

I've picked a pair of quotes that resonated most strongly with me, and what I like most about them is how diametrically opposed they are. That constant state of struggle epitomizes humanity for me, life.

“To cling to what is lost, no matter how real it once seemed or once was, will lead only to madness.”

Em says

This installment is told purely from Kahlil's perspective as he struggles to accept Ravishan's identity as his own. Kahlil's and Jath'ibaye's relationship is deepening and there are some really touching moments. Moving straight on to Enemies & Shadows.

Just one thing - Please let Bill return at some stage!

Martin says

This story is outstanding!

It's drifting a bit into deep strategy game territory what with the opposing armies gathering against each other - instead of focusing on John and Kyle's relationship, but that's alright, as the story has become an epic high fantasy dream journey with a time travel bonus on top.

I can hardly wait to find out how this will resolve.
Until then.. bring on those hungry bones!

5 stars for the fanclub of Kyle'insira!

Laura says

Spoilers Ahead

"Everything you dream of could have been real once."

I feel mind-fucked! But in a lovely, tender, heartfelt way. Broken Fortress is my favorite book in The Rifter journey so far. A story alive with emotion and battles of the heart, time, space, and identity. My head and heart lived and loved every new layer and piece of this tale. A tale that pulled tears, sighs, smiles, and questions out of me at every twist and turn.

How far would I go? What would I sacrifice? Who and what would I destroy for the one I love?

What these two have been through and sacrificed for each other simultaneously breaks and sets my heart all a' flutter. Pieces of each other—actions and decisions--that make them who they are shattered and changed. I truly cannot begin to explain how alive and intertwined Kyle and Jath'ibaye feel to me. Linked in their hearts and lives, but also in mine.

When you look back on your life, do you recognize yourself? I look back on parts of my life now and can no longer identify with who that person was—the decisions I made in my life. *shakes my head* I can't see myself in my own history sometimes. Did I really do that? Say that? So when Kahlil spoke of his past as not his—not his to claim. Not worthy of his past. It broke my heart. Hit me pretty damn hard actually. The pieces

that make us whole can also shatter and change over time—change us over time. It will never cease to amaze me what actions, words, and moments leave a mark on us and alter our lives so completely. The way Kahlil and Jath'ibaye alter and touch each other's lives absolutely charmed, stunned, and dazzled me!

Romance, longing, suspense, humor, and danger! In other words, everything. Haha....This tale has it all. From the adorable whispered words---“belly button” to the creepy shivers of the “hungry bones”! I loved it all! These words and characters have carved a permanent spot in my heart. One I will not forget. Ginn Hale can mind fuck me any time she wants! The way she flirts and plays with time and history will leave you begging for more.

The suspense, battles, and sacrifices are all coming to a head! It's killing me! I just want to tell them to hold on to each other. Don't let go!

Favorite Line:

(view spoiler)

Katerina says

A warning: **This contains spoilers**. And is therefore only something for people who already know the story. At least to this part No 6. Or for people who are as curious as I am! But you really should have already read a few parts of this series, otherwise it spoils the fun. Honest!

And is quite philosophical. Broken Fortress is probably the **best part** in this series - so far.

This is more for me (haha). To understand what actually happened here. Because it's quite confusing. Really.

There is the rifter. A deity. Very powerful and capable of shaping or destroying the world.

A true secret weapon when he is released. So much power needs to be controlled. Preferably by the church or priesthood quite generally. To keep the rifter in check there is the Kahlil. He is a priest and has special abilities but he is mortal.

The world building consists of the world we know (here and now) and a parallel world (like Medieval Marrakech, I imagine it so). Both worlds are connected by the Great Gate. And to go through the gate, you need a key.

The rifter is a man of flesh and blood in our world. The Kahlil has the duty to watch over him. To protect him, or if required, to kill him. In our world, the rifter is John, the Khalil's name is Kyle.

The original story is now as follows: Ravishan (or Kyle or the Kahlil - this is all the same) is trained to be the Kahlil and then sent from the parallel world Basawar into our world to protect the rifter (or John or Jahn or much later Jath'ibaye). He lives in our world for a long time. From John's childhood to adulthood. The last months as John's sub-tenant.

Then it was decided to kill the rifter. Because some oracle predicts that he will destroy the world or something like this.

A key was sent to Kyle. This key, however, fell into John's hands. And that changes everything. EVERYTHING.

John and two of his friends find by chance a gate in the mountains (it's a strange stone formation. John's friends were in the mountains and thought that was weird. Because John is familiar with geology, they show him these yellow stones.) And there John uses the key to get to Basawar. Of course he has no idea what he is doing and where he lands with his friends. And, of course, the whole history changes in this moment.

He meets Ravishan / Kyle in Basawar. A younger variant of him. Ravishan is a teenager, while John is an adult man. And he experiences and supports his career as a Kahlil. Of course, he understands what happened. But Ravishan is his only possibility and hope to return to our world, since he has lost the key.

The events take their course. And terrible things happen.

At the end of this altered history one of the friends is dead, the other now pregnant and accused of witchcraft, the rifter unleashed and Ravishan dies.

"I died, didn't I?" Kahlil asked at last. "I mean Ravishan—he died."

"There is no difference between you and Ushiri Ravishan. You are one and the same. But yes, you died when Rathal'pesha fell."

He'd had dreams of this death. The fire and confusion of battle, and then agony. Jath'ibaye had been there—holding him and shaking with desperation. Kahlil felt cold and sick.

"You died," Ji said gently. "But now he's brought you back. And he needs you more than you can know—"

Ravishan had died. Kahlil was still here, the vestigial remnant of a history that never existed.

John lives after that further in Basawar and tries to cure the damage of the rifter's destruction.

He had turned away from his initiation as Kahlil to save the man he loved.

But he was not Ravishan. They might have been one at some point in the past, but they were no longer one

and the same.

He wasn't Ravishan—he never would be—but there was still something he could offer. Even if he'd never become more than a lurking assassin, that was still what Jath'ibaye needed if he wanted to be free of Fikiri.

"Kyle!" It was Jath'ibaye, searching for him. But not really for him. For Ravishan.

A dim memory flickered to life in Kahlil, a scene from his other life. Jath'ibaye had found him like this before, but that time he had been high in the cliffs above Rathal'pesha.

That time Jahn had wrapped his arms around Ravishan and promised to be his lover. This time he kept his

distance.

“You shouldn’t be here,” Jath’ibaye said.

“I wanted to see where I—where Ravishan died,” Kahlil said.

Jath’ibaye mattered to him enough to make him nervous, to make him feel like a nineteen-year-old idiot hanging back in the shadows of Candle Alley.

And now it comes, dear friends.

Back to top.

Kyle comes home unsuspecting. He finds the letter addressed to him. Not the key though. And he suspects what happened.

He's trying to get to Basawar. Without key, but with his blood. And he also manages it. Same place. Wrong time. Thirty years later. And also badly injured ...

His memories are completely confused.

“To cling to what is lost, no matter how real it once seemed or once was, will lead only to madness.”

“I can’t be Ushiri Ravishan’in’Rathal’peshā any more than you can be John Matthew Toffler from Arlington, Washington.”

And he tries to make his way. He remembers that his job is to protect the rifter ...

And only to remember for us. This is romance! Ravishan and John have loved each other!

And now ... thirty years later (don't worry, the guys are as fresh and as beautiful as ever - by the time jump and by the fact that the rifter doesn't grow older in this parallel world) ... do something about it ...

Standing together like this, bickering without any real anger, it was easy to forget that they were not lovers. It was even harder to remember that they never had been. He knew the heat of John’s naked skin against his own body. He knew the feel of his lips and the taste of his sweat.

“There’s room on the bed,” Jath’ibaye said. “You can stay.”

“Things are already so complicated...” Kahlil said. “I should go back to my own room.” But he didn’t move.

“Stay,” Jath’ibaye said. His eyes were almost closed, his hands curled up close to his chest. He seemed disarmingly young, vulnerable, and human. He looked the way Kahlil remembered John looking years ago.

“It doesn’t have to be anything you don’t want. Just lie beside me, so that I can know you’re safe.”

“I’m the one who’s supposed to keep you safe,” Kahlil told him.

“All right,” Jath’ibaye agreed easily. “Stay and keep me safe. But just stay with me.”

Absolutely great.

I can not stress enough how great Ginn Hale can write. So much attention to detail.

This series will always be one of my favorite series. For ever.

Absolutely recommended and one of the best reading experiences you can make.

Mare SLiTsReaD Reviews says

Ohh those tangled webs some weave.

This series just keeps getting better and better. I have butterflies! I can't wait for some people to die die die

Mare~Slitsread

Alisa says

4.5 stars

“Your flesh is my earth. Your blood is my river. Your breath is my sky. Your body is my world.”

This was my favorite book so far. Parts are heartbreakingly sad and others are heartbreakingly beautiful. I love these two together.

I have a really bad feeling about the next book but onward I go.

Dreamer says

Okay, so John (Jath'ibaye) & Kyle (Khalil) are back together again in the future. Turns out that John was sent back into the past through the gateway, while Kyle was zapped forward to the future. Kyle had weird confused memories because Ravishan was killed 30 years back at the same time as he (Kyle) was babysitting John back on Earth. Get it.. me neither??? It's a most excellent series anyway..

"You are carrying two lives. One belongs to this history and another does not. You may not want to know the life you lived here. You may not want to be the man you were, but let me tell you that there is danger in not knowing. There are mistakes you could avoid if you would just allow yourself to know."

Susan says

BEST BOOK OF THE SERIES ...(until the next one, I'm sure...)

I rarely highlight in books. I'm just too lazy.

I pretty much highlight 2/3 of this book! There are so many NUGGETS of brilliance! Life lessons. Plot explanations. Romantic swoony stuff. I DEVoured THIS BOOK and then felt like savoring it! If I didn't have 4 more books in the series to read, I would've reread this one immediately!

Book 6 is when you start to really see the impact that the time jumps have had on the future and the past. And it's MIND BLOWING.

GINN HALE...WHY YOU SO AWESOME, YO?!

I can't stop...even though I'm SO ANXIOUS about what lies ahead!!!!

Optimist ?King's Wench? & MANTIES Champion says

THISCLOSE to my face springing a leak. THISCLOSE!

I fear my chances of getting out of this deal leakage free are dwindling though.

p.s. Jury came back on Fikiri. It wasn't a favorable ruling, I'm sad to say.

p.p.s. Really liking Hirran.

p.p.p.s. (is that even a thing?) How the hell did I get sucked into this vacuum? I believe the makes the 3rd Ginn Hale vacuum I've succumbed to this year. THIS YEAR!

I know, I know. ?

Karen says

So many things fell into place for me with this book. So as a natural result of that I did enjoy this installment more than previous books. I'm still not totally clear on all the details but I'm feeling like I have a solid grasp on some of the important ones that were confusing me and as a result things that are happening are now making more sense and I'm on to book #7 Enemies and Shadows because things are really starting to happen and I'm feeling totally invested in finding out how this story ends.

Sofia says

Cannot rate while the story is still in progress - this was one of the easiest parts for me to read though - will rate when I finish the whole lot.

On to Enemies & Shadows
BR with Irina

Alexis Hall says

After the violence of the last book, the ... something-like-peace-ness of this book basically broke me and I cried all the way through it.

I have no more useful commentary to make.
