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The blade itself spoiler free review

I finished reading The Blade Itself last night. The novel had a lot of hype and acclaim, and so I was expecting great things from it. Fortunately, I was not mislead, and I closed the book with a profound sense of excitement and curiosity.The Blade Itself is the first book of The First Law trilogy. Written by UK author Joe Abercrombie, the book is a realistic, brutal and bloody look at the fantastic. The book starts with Logen Ninesingers fleeing from a group of Flatheads, and I was hooked from the get-go. Logen gets separated from his travelling group and each assumes the other died. He continues on his own. The next character introduced is Inquisitor Sand dan Glokta, a crippled torturer with a dark past. The torture scenes from this book are bloody, but deeply enjoyable. Glokta is charged with getting to the bottom of a conspiracy by any means he sees fit. Enter Bayaz, the First of the Magi. He's a name everyone in the Union knows, but he's a legend, not a real person. Or is he? Finally, Jezal dan Luthar is a Captain in the army, born of high and noble blood, and training for the annual Contest, dreaming of glory and honor. There are more characters in the novel, making fun and entertaining chapters to read and reflect on. Dogman. Ferro. West. Too many to write on, but they all have a roll to play in the plot. By the end of the novel it almost feels like this book is just an introduction or prologue to what is to come.Abercrombie hints at magic, but nothing too deep. He writes of the First Law and the Second Law. He talks about the Shanka and the Eaters, never fully describing them, which is unsettling and immensely entertaining.The writing style reminds me of George R. R. Martin's A Song of Ice and Fire series. The use of profanity and vulgar words are frequent, but not over-the-top and do not detract from the story. Keeping the "magic" as a mystery is also like GRRM.My favorite character is probably Glokta, but I'm equally intrigued by Logen. I can't wait to see where this story is going, especially for these two. Hopefully I'll get my copy of Before They Are Hanged soon. Overall, The Blade Itself is another reminder why the fantasy genre does not have to be boring and cliché. People like Joe Abercrombie, Pat Rothfuss, and Brandon Sanderson are breaking boundaries and re-defining the field. I can recommend this book easily to you, but be warned, it's brutal and will hook you in, kind of like the way a torturer's blade may pull your intestines out and have you screaming for more. Edit Comments Share Gollancz (UK) & Pyr (USA) Next Before They Are Hanged " The blade itself incites to deeds of violence " –Homer in The Odyssey The Blade Itself is the first novel in The First Law Trilogy and was Joe Abercrombie's first novel. It was first published in May 2006 by Gollancz in the UK, with an American edition following from Pyr Books. Publisher's Synopsis[edit | edit source] Logen Ninesingers, infamous barbarian, has finally run out of luck. Caught in one feud too many, he's on the verge of becoming a dead barbarian – leaving nothing behind him but bad songs, dead friends, and a lot of happy enemies. Nobleman Captain Jezal dan Luthar, dashing officer, and paragon of selfishness, has nothing more dangerous in mind than fleeing his friends at cards and dreaming of glory in the fencing circle. But war is brewing, and on the battlefields of the frozen North they fight by altogether bloodier rules. Inquisitor Glokta, cripple turned torturer, would like nothing better than to see Jezal come home in a box. But then Glokta hates everyone: cutting treason out of the Union one confession at a time leaves little room for friendship. His latest trail of corpses may lead him right to the rotten heart of government, if he can stay alive long enough to follow it. Enter the wizard, Bayaz. A bald old man with a terrible temper and a pathetic assistant, he could be the First of the Magi, he could be a spectacular fraud, but whatever he is, he's about to make the lives of Logen, Jezal, and Glokta a whole lot more difficult. Murderous conspiracies rise to the surface, old scores are ready to be settled, and the line between hero and villain is sharp enough to draw blood. Characters[edit | edit source] Plot Summary[edit | edit source] The action, for the most part, takes place in The Union, in the year 575 after its founding. It is a stagnating but powerful empire beset on all sides, by barbarians from The North led by ruthless King Bethod, and the might of the vast Gurkish Empire to the south ruled by an equally ruthless Emperor and religious leader Khalul. The story followed the interweaving stories of six characters. First, Logen Ninesingers, a legendary Northman warrior, is alone and purposeless having been exiled from The North. He finds direction in the devious Magus Bayaz who he joins on his journey to Adua and then the Edge of the World. Meanwhile, the Dogman and the rest of Logan's former crew realise that The North is about to be overrun by Shanka, a hostile humanoid orc-like race. In Adua, Inquisitor Sand dan Glokta, a former war hero but now a deformed crippled torturer, is tasked by the Arch Lector to bring down the corrupt Guild of Mercers; although he eventually succeeds, the real culprit may have been the mysterious bank Valint & Balk. Meanwhile, Captain Jezal dan Luthar, a self-obsessed young noble, is determined to win the national duelling Contest, despite the distraction of the sister of his friend Major Collem West. Finally in Gurkhum, Ferro Maljinn, a bitter former slave, is being hunted by soldiers and Eaters, but finds a saviour in the Magus Yulwei who convinces Ferro to journey with him to Adua where they will meet Bayaz and Logen. Logen and Bayaz arrive in Adua so that the Magus can reclaim his place on the Closed Council. Glokta is tasked with preventing this and proving he is a fraud. At the Contest, Glokta's scepticism is shaken when he sees Bayaz seemingly helping Jezal to win the competition through his High Art. Finally, at Jezal's victory dinner, Glokta and the Arch Lector challenge Bayaz to prove his identity by opening the ever-closed House of the Maker. Bayaz does just that, taking Logen and Glokta into the bizarre creepy tower, and bringing out a strange black box. War has finally broken out between The Union and The North, and Major West and Captain Luthar prepare to leave for the war. However, before he can leave Jezal is co-opted in joining Bayaz' journey. Bayaz' party has also been joined by the Navigator Longfoot and Ferro. As they prepare to leave, the Inquisition attempt to arrest Ferro, but Logen and Bayaz saves her; the former by turning into his alter-ego The Bloody-Nine, and the latter by turning a Practical to pink mist. Meanwhile in the North, the Dogman and the crew try to warn Bethod about the Shanka, but the King of the North proves unsympathetic. They determine to oppose Bethod in any way possible, even if it means allying themselves with the Union. Finally, Glokta is given a new role, the Superior of Dagoska, a city preparing for yet another war, this time with the Gurkish. Chapter Summaries[edit | edit source] Quotes[edit | edit source] "Blood gets you nothing but more blood. It follows me now, always, like my shadow, and like my shadow I can never be free of it. I should never be free of it. I've earned it. I've deserved it. I've sought it out. Such is my punishment" Logen to Quai "Every man has his excuses, and the more vile the man becomes, the more touching the story has to be" Glokta's thoughts on Severard "But that was civilisation, so far as Logen could tell. People with nothing better to do, dreaming up ways to make easy things difficult" Logen's thoughts on Adua "History is littered with dead good men" Bayaz to Logen "It's hard to stay calm when you're terrified, helpless, alone, at the mercy of men with no mercy at all" Glokta's thoughts on torture "Something dug into the Bloody-Nine's back, but there was no pain. It was a sign. A message in a secret tongue, that only he could understand. It told him where the next dead man was standing" The Bloody-Nine finds his next victim ""Kill me?" The Bloody-Nine laughed louder than ever. 'I do the killing, fool!'" The Bloody-Nine explains some harsh truths "Fear is a good friend to the hunted, it's kept me alive this long. The dead are fearless, and I don't care to join them" Logen to Bayaz "It was a fact, he was only now beginning to realise, that the conversation of the drunk is only interesting to the drunk. A few glasses on wine can be the difference between finding a man a hilarious companion or an insufferable moron" Jezal ponders the mysteries of the drunk Trivia[edit | edit source] The title references the quote by Homer in The Odyssey: "The blade itself incites to deeds of violence". The quote comes towards the end of the epic poem. In the ten years that it has taken Odysseus to return from Troy, a rowdy mob of suitors have overrun his palace seeking to marry his wife Penelope. Odysseus returns disguised as a beggar. An archery contest is organised to decide who will marry Penelope. Odysseus wins the contest and then kills every last suitor. Community content is available under CC-BY-SA unless otherwise noted.

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