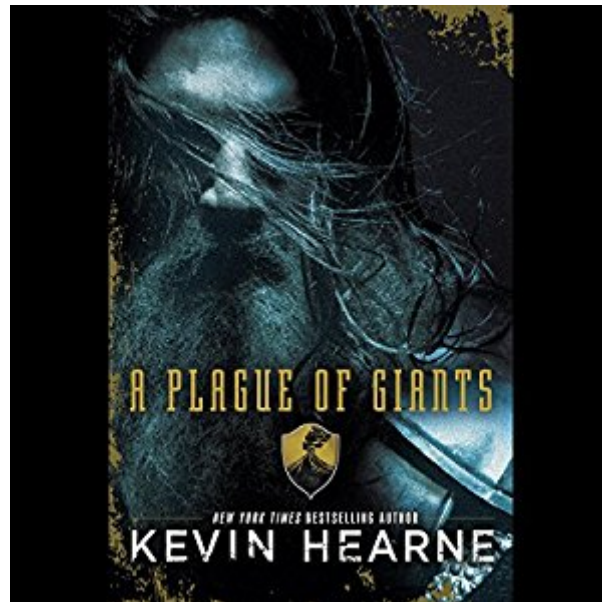




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A Plague Of Giants



Synopsis

From the author of *The Iron Druid Chronicles*, a thrilling novel that kicks off a fantasy series with an entirely new mythology - complete with shape-shifting bards, fire-wielding giants, and children who can speak to astonishing beasts. Mother and warrior Tallynd is a soldier who has already survived her toughest battle: losing her husband. But now she finds herself on the front lines of an invasion of giants, intent on wiping out the entire kingdom, including Tallynd's two sons - all that she has left. The stakes have never been higher. If Tallynd fails, her boys may never become men. Scholar and spy Dervan is a historian who longs for a simple, quiet life. But he's drawn into intrigue when he's hired to record the tales of a mysterious bard who may be a spy or even an assassin for a rival kingdom. As the bard shares his fantastical stories, Dervan makes a shocking discovery: He may have a connection to the tales, one that will bring his own secrets to light. Rebel and hero Abhi's family has always been hunters, but Abhi wants to choose a different life for himself. Embarking on a journey of self-discovery, Abhi soon learns that his destiny is far greater than he imagined: a powerful new magic thrust upon him may hold the key to defeating the giants once and for all - if it doesn't destroy him first. Set in a magical world of terror and wonder, this audiobook is a deeply felt epic of courage and war, in which the fates of these characters intertwine - and where ordinary people become heroes, and their lives become legend.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

First off, this is different from Kevin Hearne's other novels. This one does not have a mention of Atticus in it. Second, this is long. My proof copy has over 600 pages, and it is part of a series. (Only

the second novel is named yet.) Third, the voice is a little different. While in other novels Hearne has different speakers for different chapters, this time he has a bard tell the story—albeit a bard who takes on the look and sound of different speakers. I can't tell you much else about this book without giving away parts of it: The bard does a great job. . However, the bottom line is: This is a really good book. I enjoyed it and, if you like Hearne or fantasy stories, you will enjoy this, too.

Having never read anything by this author, though Iron Druid was recommended to me, I started out fresh to his style. And really liked it! This book is fantastically complex without the dryness of high fantasy authors (sorry husband, Tolkien's not for me). This book begins with a character list, which may prove useful for some people, but it does give you advance notice that there are many characters, and I suppose only 2 main ones. There's the Bard, telling the tale of all these lives weaving together, and the scholar, writing it all down. The chapters are 1 day in the life of these two men. I really loved this set up—my favourite thing in books is to read a million different perspectives and watch them all tie together. I adore the complexity of it, and the skill to pull it off. But I know a lot of people find this confusing, so keep that in mind. The plot itself is fantastic (I'll try for spoiler free here). There's a few different invasions of giants, in different areas of the land, and the nations are stuck dealing with that. Each nation has its own 'magical blessing', if you will, and the blessed (and un-blessed in some cases) use these powers to fight the invaders. You get a perspective of all these types throughout the different characters. This book also really showcases the horrors and senselessness of war—so if you're easily grossed out, tread carefully. I also found it interesting that this book is so low-key diverse. There's no political statement thrown in your face, no preaching; there is just a statement of fact. There are people of different color and sexuality, and different cultures react to these facts differently. To me, the weakest area in this book was the detached writing style and language. The writing was a little inconsistent to the overall feel at times; there were instances where I'd be incredibly devastated over a character's death, simply because of how it was written. Other times a death seemed so nonchalant—again because of how it was written. This disconnect doesn't serve a purpose, so I assume it wasn't meant to be there. The language also suffers from some inconsistencies. Sometimes it's very modern, and other times it's along the lines of typical fantasy speak. In one part of a sentence, a character will use a contraction, then in the next part not use one at all. It's these little things that break the suspension of disbelief for me. Overall though, I thoroughly enjoyed this book, as the plot and characters make up for those inconsistencies for me. Unfortunately, I received an ARC, so it'll be awhile before I get my hands on *Blight Of Blackwings*.

I liked this book enough to give it a four star rating, but not enough to continue on with the series when the second book is released. One of the problems I have had with the Iron Druid series was that there were so many different points of view in each novel that it was sometimes hard to keep track of where I was supposed to be and with whom. This first book in the Seven Kennings series has that same issue in spades. There is Dervan the narrator who interacts with the bard and holds the story together. Then there is the bard, Fintan, who tells the story of the war which has just been waged to the survivors gathered in one city and uses a creative invention by the author which allows him to take on the physical appearance of the person who's story is being related. Each day Fintan and Dervan gather in the town square and the bard sings before he assumes the physical manifestation of the person telling their portion of the story. Some days there are more seemings (where the bard takes on the appearance of another) than others, but the action has always already taken place. There are nine more characters who have their part of the story told. Each chapter is divided into days, there are 19 days in all, and within each day there is a label with the character's name in it to tell you who is speaking. With a little over 600 pages in the book and with so many stories being told, you can bet I got my characters mixed up at times. The world Hearne has developed here is complicated. There are many different nations and each has its own speech, religion, and main source of earning a livelihood. Within each nation there are people who have a 'kenning', a gift which sets them apart from others; they must specifically seek this kenning and few are chosen. Those who don't survive the attempt die. There are five kennings already known and the sixth kenning is discovered in this first book. The remaining books in the series will be the search for the seventh kenning. It is very obvious that Kevin Hearne has been in the process of planning and writing this saga for a long time because he has developed so many differences in the appearance of the people and almost all the plants and animals are new inventions. My main qualm with the story is that it is so large with so many circumstances and battles and discoveries and the author had to continue throughout the book to grow the abilities of each kenning and even added a character toward the end of the novel. I gave this book four stars because I found it interesting. Notice I say that it was just *interesting* for me. I don't have any desire to know what the seventh kenning is. Because of the makeup of what cost a kenning can have for a person when they utilize it to its maximum potential some favorite characters were lost along the way. The next book following will be called A Blight of Blackwings and the descriptions of those birds in this book was enough to turn me off that book right there. However, I'm sure new characters are waiting in the wings to join this story and the search for the Seven-Year Ship and the seventh kenning will go on.

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