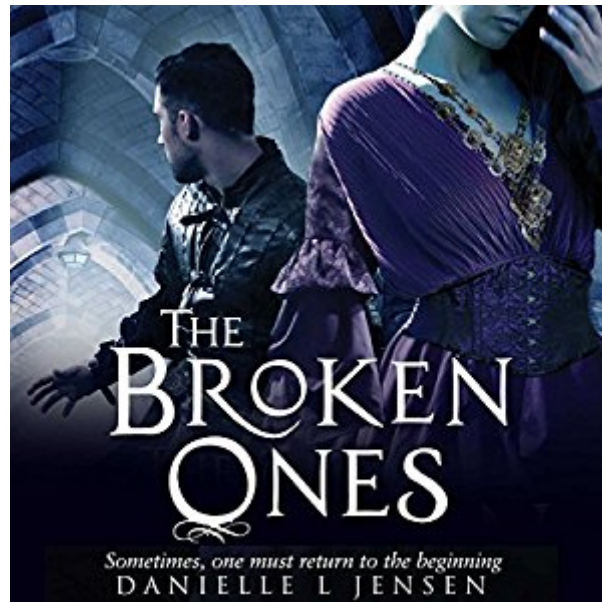


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# The Broken Ones



## Synopsis

Prequel to the USA Today best-selling and Goodreads Choice finalist *Stolen Songbird*. Below Forsaken Mountain, a plot is being hatched to overthrow the tyrant king of Trollus, and Marc is the right-hand man of its leader. His involvement is information more than one troll would kill to possess, which is why he must keep it a secret from everyone, even the girl he loves. After accidentally ruining her sister's chance to become queen, PÃfÂ©nÃfÂ©lope is given one last opportunity by her father, the Duke d'AngoulÃfÂ©me, to make herself useful: she must find proof that the boy she's in love with is conspiring against the crown. If she fails, her life will be forfeit. Marc and PÃfÂ©nÃfÂ©lope must navigate the complex politics of Trollus, where powers on all sides are intent on using them as pawns, forcing them to risk everything for a chance at a life together. Except being together may turn out to be the greatest risk of all.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Wow. I am utterly speechless at how much I loved this book. First things first, I recommend reading the Malediction series in this order: 1. *Stolen Songbird* 2. *Hidden Huntress* 3. *The Broken Ones* 4. *Warrior Witch*

This book takes place before the events of *Stolen Songbird*, which is one of my favorite books of all time, and it sets the perfect back-story for the characters in the Malediction Trilogy.... for those of us that finished this trilogy within three days, like me, it answered all my questions and fulfilled all my secret disappointments when I was left in the dark about the "Trollus of before." I wanted Marc's story to be told so bad, his character was never fleshed out well enough for me, I wanted to know why he was the way he was, why he had the feelings he did, and this also

sets a beautiful prelude to a younger Tristan, my one and only book boyfriend. This book drew me in from the first page, I fell in love with Penelope, who was only a name to me before, and though it's been a year since I read *Warrior Witch*, the feelings I had for this world all came rushing back in the blink of an eye; my hatred for the King of Trollus and Penelope's awful father, my love for Tristan, Marc, Anais, the twins, and their cause, and my newfound admiration for Penelope, who was denied the most simple of life's wants and desires through no fault of her own. Read this book. Read this series. Danielle L Jensen will make you feel, she will memorize you, she will make you angry, and sad, and joyous, she will make you feel for her Broken Ones.

First things first: Even though this is a sequel in terms of chronology, *The Broken Ones* definitely requires previous knowledge of the series and the world. It can be read either between the second or the third book or after you've read the entire series, but it's definitely recommended to read at least some of the original *Malediction* trilogy first, both because it's very good and because this book truly is a companion to the series, and it really only works when you already know the world and the characters. There's still an intriguing story with a lot of twists and turns even if you hadn't read the series before, but it will feel as though much information about the characters and the world building is lacking if you tried to read just this book as a standalone and can feel very confusing when actions or reactions aren't explained. It makes complete sense when you've already spent time in this world, but doesn't always work otherwise. If you have read the series, however, you're in for a treat. You also know "roughly" the story and how it ends, which does not hinder the need of additional tissue boxes one bit. Beyond the joy in returning to the beautifully crafted and magical world of Trollus, the book does exactly what was meant to do and gives us an opportunity to really understand one of the beloved main characters from the original series so much better. The first thing I did after I finished reading was going back and rereading the original series, because understanding the history of this character gave its part an extra depth. Even though the book is called *The Broken Ones*, in many ways the main and supporting characters that we already know from the trilogy are less broken here. They are younger, they are less experienced and much more naive, and even though I already know what their future holds and who they become later, it was easy to put that aside and go back in time with them and experience the events that shaped them to be the characters we met in *Stolen Songbird*. Much like the trilogy, this book is also driven by endless intrigues, mind games, manipulations and conspiracies, and even though by this point in time we really should know better than the younger versions of our protagonists who are yet to learn some hard truths "and as I

mentioned, we even know how it all ends - we still manage to be surprised. As in the trilogy, the book alternates between two points of view, and this is perhaps its main flaw. While both characters are equally important to the story here and the alternating chapters allow us to learn information we wouldn't have otherwise, one of those characters doesn't actively participate in the trilogy, even if mentioned, so in comparison to the other main character and all the supporting characters it is a lot less developed, despite an obvious effort to provide as much history and backstory as possible, and it feels a little imbalanced. Having said that, I'd happily read a version of the trilogy told by the other protagonist of this book. I tried to decide between 4 and 5 stars - I loved the book, but it's not without its flaws. The love part of the equation won at the end, but if you're ones for accuracy, the actual score is actually 4.5 stars.

I knew what I was getting in this book, it's a prequel, so we know how this was going to wrap up and still I went into it with open arms. Do not read this if you haven't read the original trilogy! Also if you have read the originals right away maybe give yourself some time to grieve before diving into this cause it will break you all over again. Marc and Penelope were all I dreamed they would be, and their love was so perfect, this catalyst for pushing the change that Marc was certain might never come despite their best efforts. It changes the core group, drives them to do things they never would have before. It's tragic and heartbreaking but so so beautiful. You miss nothing of the main story by skipping this book but it's so needed for the world, and I'm so grateful we got this peek into Trollis before the main trilogy colored out view of their world.

Marc and Penelope's story is deep, touching, and heartbreaking. Even though the end is known from the beginning, it's hard not to yearn for a happily ever after ending for these two amazing characters. Jensen weaves a tragic love story that hits the heart, filled with the usual twists, turns, and schemes. I'm so glad the world of Trollus was expanded on along with new characters to love and old characters to hate even more.

I absolutely fell in love with the original trilogy and couldn't wait to get my hands on the prequel. I am not disappointed. This gave the reader another glimpse into the world of the trolls and what came to pass before the beloved trilogy and the epic story that followed. The pages are filled with love and a glimpse behind the mask of Marc. If you loved the trilogy you will not be disappointed by this!

This prequel happily shines where most fail. The back story was rich, and managed to stay entirely

true to characters at both the beginning and end of the original trilogy, with little, to no, contradictions. It Answered questions I didn't know I had and most importantly, gave me more time with a character I loved and showed me why I always instinctively knew I loved him all along.

I have been shouting my love for these books from the rooftops for the past six months since reading the first book. This prequel novel was absolutely perfect and a great example of how prequel SHOULD be done. Cannot wait for more from Jensen!

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