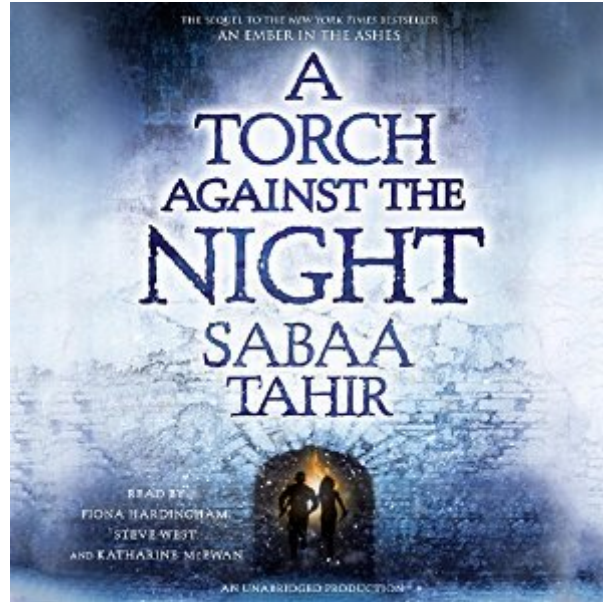


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# A Torch Against The Night: An Ember In The Ashes, Book 2



## Synopsis

Elias and Laia are running for their lives. Following the events of the Fourth Trial, an army led by Masks hunts the two fugitives as they escape the city of Serra and journey across the vast lands of the Martial Empire. Laia is determined to break into Kauf - the empire's most secure and dangerous prison - and save her brother, whose knowledge of Serric steel is the key to the Scholars' future. And Elias is determined to stay by Laia's side, even if it means giving up his own chance at freedom. But Elias and Laia will have to fight every step of the way if they're going to outsmart their enemies: the bloodthirsty Emperor Marcus; the merciless Commandant; the sadistic Warden of Kauf; and, most heartbreaking of all, Helene - Elias' former friend and the empire's newest Blood Shrike. Helene's mission is horrifying, unwanted, and clear: find the traitor Elias Veturius and the Scholar slave who helped him escape, and kill them both.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 15 hours and 9 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Listening Library

Audible.com Release Date: August 30, 2016

Language: English

ASIN: B01FWLOATS

Best Sellers Rank: #18 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy #22 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Children's Books > Fiction #24 in Books > Teens > Romance > Fantasy

## Customer Reviews

I want to preface this by saying while I enjoyed the first book in this series, I wasn't in love. And I must be the only person in the world that had such a strong dislike for Helene. But things have changed. While reading *A Torch Against the Night*, from page 1 I was grabbed into the story. I just could not put it down. Not only that, my feelings about my most hated character changed somewhat. Go Sabaa for making me truly love pretty much everything about this book! We start off pretty much moments after the end of *An Ember in the Ashes*, with Laia and Elias running for their lives. Of course, nothing goes right while they flee, and things just begin to look grimmer and grimmer. Laia ends up doing even more than we could have expected to get her and Elias to safety. I mean, she's

with a Mask, right? You'd think he'd be the one to do everything, because Mask. But she truly shines. We learn some interesting little background things about everyone, and some really cool new characters are introduced. I can't wait to ship them! There are twists and surprises around every turn. Okay, was I actually surprised? No. I had weirdly guessed half the twists in this book before they happened. But trust me, I am not sure how I guessed so many of them. And even when the things I was expecting to happen did in fact happen, I was raging and whatnot about how crazy that twist was. Because while I may have had that theory, I didn't really expect it to go in that direction. Or at least I'd hoped it didn't for the characters' sakes. It's a rare book that gets you screaming and jumping for joy and hoping for more. I, for one, cannot wait for the next book.

Reasons to read this book

- 1) Because ships!
- 2) Magic!
- 3) You liked the first book and were curious about the second
- 4) I need to say it again. Ships!
- 5) Death lore
- 6) Betrayals and unexpected twists!

Reasons not to read this book

- 1) You didn't like the first book
- 2) That whole love square really got your goat and you don't think you could go through another book with everyone so confused

Overall

While I liked the first book, I truly loved this one. And I am so anxious now for the next book. Even if you were on the fence about the first one, I would suggest continuing on with the series.

Note: I received this book in exchange for an honest review.

A Torch Against the Night is a book filled with non-stop action and it captivated me from the very first page. An Ember in the Ashes was originally intended to be a standalone book, however as readers we can't tell that by reading this book. Tahir drops us right where we left off from book one, Laia and Elias are on the run from the Empire. Helene is now Blood Shrike to Marcus, he who is now Emperor.

One major thing that Tahir did in this book was to build on her characters. Laia was never a favorite of mine, however she continuously stepped up to the plate and did just as much heroics as Elias did. She is no damsel in distress. The empire hunts them both. At the helm of that hunt is none other than Elias' mother the Commandant. She's ruthless, cunning, and most certainly has an ulterior motive. Elias and her cross blades, and he comes away a little worse for wear. I won't say too much, but their fight was a huge turning point for Elias' storyline.

Elias begins to traverse between the living and the death and this opens up a huge paranormal theme-like plot. It becomes the major focus of Elias' chapters and I found them deeply intriguing. Elias takes off his "mask" and you see a tender side to him that we haven't quite seen before.

While Elias fights for his life, Laia is there almost every step of the way, and even when she isn't, she's fighting her hardest to return back to Elias. Their goal is to break out Laia's brother who knows the secrets of Serric Steel, which could ultimately cripple the Empire's power. During their journey, they not only meet the

Commandant, but they also cross paths with Helene. Helene was hands down my favorite character and storyline in this book. Her internal struggle of being loyal to the Empire while also wanting to be loyal to Elias was so intense to read about. She's cunning, strong, and I loved the power struggle she had against the Commandant. We found out she's in fact what the book title is referencing, "A Torch Against the Night". Towards the end of the book, we see that she's the only one who can truly protect the Empire from what's to come. War is coming on all sides, and she may be the only one who can honestly save them all. There were plenty of "OMG" moments, one in particular towards the end. I was not expecting it, and that shows you how talented Sabaa Tahir really is. A Torch Against the Night is gritty, emotional, full of in-your-face violence, and doesn't apologize for its dark seducing themes. It encompasses a cast full of characters who all move with a purpose, and each of them will fight tooth and nail to see that purpose come to fruition. This was a stellar sequel, and I look forward to see how this series will end with the next book. Happy Reading!

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