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# The Iron Trial (Book One Of Magisterium) (Magisterium Series 1)



## Synopsis

From NEW YORK TIMES bestselling authors Holly Black and Cassandra Clare comes a riveting new series that defies what you think you know about the world of magic. Most kids would do anything to pass the Iron Trial. Not Callum Hunt. He wants to fail. All his life, Call has been warned by his father to stay away from magic. If he succeeds at the Iron Trial and is admitted into the Magisterium, he is sure it can only mean bad things for him. So he tries his best to do his worst - and fails at failing. Now the Magisterium awaits him. It's a place that's both sensational and sinister, with dark ties to his past and a twisty path to his future. The Iron Trial is just the beginning, for the biggest test is still to come . . . From the remarkable imaginations of bestselling authors Holly Black and Cassandra Clare comes a heart-stopping, mind-blowing, pulse-pounding plunge into the magical unknown.

## Book Information

File Size: 21306 KB

Print Length: 309 pages

Publisher: Scholastic Press (September 9, 2014)

Publication Date: September 9, 2014

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00I5T2KJ2

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #2,840 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #12 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Children's eBooks > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Friendship #20 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Children's eBooks > Action & Adventure > Fantasy & Magic #31 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Children's eBooks > Science Fiction, Fantasy & Scary Stories > Fantasy & Magic

## Customer Reviews

I got an eGalley of this book to review from NetGalley. This is the first book in the five book Magisterium series. The second book will be titled The Copper Gauntlet and is scheduled to release

some time in 2015. I actually liked this book quite a bit, it is an action packed middle grade fantasy full of wonderful magic. It does however have many many parallels to the Harry Potter series. Callum has always known his parents were mages. Callum's dad however, hates and fears magic and is desperate to have Callum not be involved with any magic what-so-ever. When Callum hits twelve he is required to be tested for his magic ability and see if he is ready to enter the Magisterium. Callum and his dad hatch a scheme to ensure that Callum will fail all the magical testing and be free of the magical world forever. However despite his best efforts, Callum ends up admitted to the Magisterium and learning magic. He also finds out that learning magic is a lot more interesting and not nearly as deadly as his dad would have him believe. I actually liked this book a lot. I loved the elemental magic and enjoyed the characters. I love the little elemental lizards and the Chaos ridden dog that Callum and his friends befriend. There is a lot in this book about being different and making friends. There are also a lot of fantastical scenes and creatures throughout which I absolutely loved. The way these scenes and creatures are described is wonderful and the scenes are easy to picture and really come alive. Callum is terrified of magic and originally a bit of an outcast. However, he is forced to work with two other students that are training with him and eventually they all end up working as a team.

The Iron Trial is the start to a five part series that centers on twelve year old, social outcast Callum Hunt. Growing up Call is constantly told by his father the dangers of magic, and how it was responsible for his mother's death. Thus, embedding in Call's head that he must never use magic. The Magisterium is a school for magic where the students learn how to control the different types of elemental magic. When the time comes for Call to be tested to enter the Magisterium, he is determined to fail all the tests, so that he never has to deal with magic. However, he fails miserably at failing, and winds up being accepted as an apprentice. As Call is suddenly thrust into the world of magic he will make friends, foes, and face many challenges along the way. I did not really have high expectations for this book at first, but as the story progressed I found myself completely engrossed. The writing style flowed smoothly and kept my attention. There were also some major plot twists that had my jaw dropping and my mind blown. I also thought that the characters were so likable. Callum's sarcastic comments had me smiling throughout the book, and the side characters had some interesting personalities as well. A lot of people have been comparing this to Harry Potter. I would have to disagree for the most part. The magic system is completely different, the plot line is completely different, and the characters are completely different! The things that reminded me of Harry Potter were that it was about a magic school and the character Tamara. Tamara reminded me

of Hermione at first, but as I read on I realized that they were quite different from each other.

This was one of the many ARCs I picked up while I was at BEA this summer. I was extremely excited to snag *The Iron Trial* as I'm a fan of both Holly Black and Cassandra Clare. I couldn't wait to see what the result of their two creative minds coming together would look like.

**What I Liked** The characters are very well developed. You get a good feel for all of them – including a good number of the more minor characters. The amount of time crafting and building up the backstory of the main characters was great in the sense that going forward in the series you really know where they're coming from. The main character, Callum, was particularly fun to learn about since he actually doesn't know much about himself or the world he's fallen into due to his father keeping him in the dark. As details of the magic world is revealed to Callum, the reader gets the chance to react as respond as he does.

**The magic system.** Anything that has to deal with the elements is a win for me. The mantra, of sorts, is, "Fire wants to burn. Water wants to flow. Air wants to rise. Earth wants to bind. Chaos wants to devour." I really liked this as it gives power to the elements that the mages are ultimately manipulating.

**The twists.** While I predicted some of them, I can honestly say I was surprised by a few near the end. I'm very interested in seeing how it turns out. The way some things are revealed left me questioning the motives of certain characters, or why they never acted on things when they most definitely should have.

**What I Didn't Like** The pacing. This is definitely what I call a "set up" novel. The world is defined and the characters get a lot of backstory. While I loved learning about the characters, I really wish there had been more action.

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