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# First Year (The Black Mage Book 1)



## Synopsis

Magic. Romance. Rivals. Perfect for fans of Throne of Glass, Falling Kingdoms, and Tamora Pierce. Before the age of seventeen, the young men and women of Jerar are given a choice --pursue a trade or enroll in a trial year in one of the realm's three war schools to study as a soldier, knight, or mage...For fifteen-year-old Ryiah, the choice has always been easy. Become a mage and train in Combat, the most prestigious faction of magic. Yet when she arrives, Ry finds herself competing against friend and foe for one of the exalted apprenticeships. Everyone is rooting for her to fail--first and foremost among them is Prince Darren, the school prodigy who has done nothing but make life miserable since she arrived. Will Ry survive, or will her dream go down in flames? \*\*\* The first book in The Black Mage series by USA Today bestselling author Rachel E. Carter. \*\*\*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I suppose I'm not the target market for the book. I was fooled by the summary and the reviews. I'll try and explain why I didn't like it and why you might or might not like it. The first thing to understand is that this book is focused on romance first, interpersonal drama second, and action a distant third.

The second thing to understand is that the romance is almost a parody of YA female-targeted romance. You have the guy with gemstone colored eyes that change color with his moods. You have the girl who's a scrappy tomboy that isn't confident in her looks. The guy is a complete unrelenting bastard but he occasionally shows off a softer side... only when he's alone with the girl. Also, the guy is super-talented with magic. Also, he's a prince. Although we open with an action scene the action stuff is then firmly pushed to the back burner. This is really exemplified by the end of year test. We have 22 young combat mages competing for five spots. The first part of the competition is a series of one on one duels. A tournament designed to identify the best fighter? Nope, just one fight each. The second part of the competition is an oral examination grilling the candidates on combat scenarios. This happens off screen. To repeat for emphasis: the author yada-yadas her way through half of the test that is at the center of the climax of the book. If you're looking for a straightforward romance with a sprinkling of magic stuff in the background, this is for you. If you wanted to cheer for an underdog protagonist as she kicks ass and takes names after learning magic, not so much.

Ok so I bought and read these books (1-3) in November of 2015 so I was excited to see a book 4 and a prequel but when I went to click on the link to the series, it claimed I had none of the books. I looked closer and these books claim a published date of 2017 and make no mention of having been released earlier. I also noticed a slight title change (old books were *The Black Mage: First Year*, *The Black Mage: Apprentice*, and *The Black Mage: Candidate*). Those books are no longer in the system. So just beware if you think these seem familiar it may be because they are. I guess they got republished and the old ones taken down but this is kind of foul play since it could sucker you into buying books you have already purchased before. I really loved these books and am super excited though to have a prequel and a book 4. I'm just not happy about the republishing sleight of hand.

Rachel Carter writes a terrific blend of fantasy, action and romance with this one. Ryiah and her twin Alex aim to join the academy for three branches of magic-wielding youth: Restoration, Alchemy and Combat. While Alex hopes to heal soldiers with his powers, his sister aims for the most challenging faction-Combat. But she is untrained, her magic only newly discovered and her physical strength and skills with weapons of war are pitiful next to the higher born and much more talented in her class. With her new friend Ella helping her, Ryiah must dig deep in order to earn one of only 15 apprenticeship spots for the next year at The Academy. Making things even more complicated is the love-hate relationship developing between Ryiah and second in line to the crown Darren and the

growing animosity aimed at her by Priscilla, the prince's apparent love interest. Caine's characters are well-developed and balance each other nicely. The plot moves at a fast pace with plenty of spell casting and sword fighting. The romantic storylines in this book, however, may make this more a choice for the females in the 12 and up age bracket. Parents and librarians will be pleased to note that there is no profanity or sexual innuendo in this first book in the series.

OMG! I didn't know what to expect going into this book. I try not to read some of the same kind of genres one after the other in case I get too biased and at first I thought I might have made a mistake starting this one right away. I WAS WRONG! I loved this book so much!! absolutely love the characters... well...I can't stand stupid Priscilla.. she can suck it! But Ryiah, her brother Alex, her new friend Ella and even old grumpy Darren. I love some of the secondary characters as well. Ryiah goes into the academy with her brother Alex in training for combat mages. She's a little worried because she doesn't really do so well with magic. I mean she only got it to work on the way there by an unfortunate turn of events! Anyhoo... they not only have classes in magic, they have to learn combat and do studies. It seemed like a tough arse boot-camp for mages to me. And I am so proud of Ryiah, she works so very hard to get as far as she does! There is a test at the end of that years training to see who the 15 mage apprentices are going to be. They have to do some major fighting against one another. Annnnnndddddd..... there is a surprise 16th mage added to the group by the black mage himself and what he says goes! I look forward to reading more on this continuing adventure. Did I mention that I loved it!!MY

REVIEWS:[www.melissa413readsalot.blogspot.com](http://www.melissa413readsalot.blogspot.com)<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/1196465136>

Wow! I have forever been a fan of Tamora Pierce and this book is quite on par with my love of Tamora's writing. It has everything I'm looking for in a book, such as suspense, intrigue, girl power, intelligence, twists and turns, some romance, and a lot more. I highly recommend this book. I'm just starting on book 2 and I am finding myself anticipating breaks at work just to get a few moments to read more!

Loved the book...and the whole series. They are very different and kind of dark but in a good way.[https://www..com/dp/B01MSA1LNA/ref=cm\\_cr\\_ryp\\_prd\\_ttl\\_sol\\_3](https://www..com/dp/B01MSA1LNA/ref=cm_cr_ryp_prd_ttl_sol_3)

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