



Ghosts and Ashes

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This is a rollicking adventure that blends elements from westerns, sci-fi, YA, and romance into a cohesive page-flipping thrill ride.

Ghosts & Ashes pits a burgeoning technopath against a powerful military, a despotic villain, and a dynamic romance in a LGBT-positive YA sci-fi adventure that unveils troubling ramifications for the future of the series.

Three months after the events of *The Star Host* finds Ren a captive under the watchful eye of the Phoenix Corps. Unfortunately, the star within him begins flaring up and endangering the crew. His only hope is returning planetside after months aboard ship. Meanwhile, his relationship with the intrepid Asher is put to the test. Ren struggles to control his power, remain connected to his new family, and discover the fate of his biological family back on Erden. Shocking revelations come to light about the Phoenix Corps, the Star Hosts, and Ren's family.

The second book in the Broken Moon series builds upon the first nicely. The extent and variety of the Star Hosts' abilities are expanded upon and hint at deeper conflict beautifully. Ren's technopathic abilities allow him to seamlessly interact with any technology, while other Star Hosts can see the future, enter dreams, and more. Equally exciting is the world building. From the feudal-like Erden to the postapocalyptic Crei, each new planet is vibrant and diverse.

Characterization shines, especially in the unique relationship between Ren and Asher. Their romance formed under fire comes under constant abuse. Least of all is the strain of Ren's power and Asher's duty to the Phoenix Corps. Asher must balance his service with his love for Ren, as his love functions as an anchor that stabilizes and strengthens Ren's control over the star within.

Despite a dearth of backstory, the plot moves at a steady clip with even pacing. Whenever the plot shifts from the action sci-fi aspects, it picks up romance and adventure elements wonderfully.

Ghosts & Ashes continues the adventures of the star host, Ren, as he comes to grips with his power and searches for his place in the cosmos. This is a rollicking adventure that blends elements from westerns, sci-fi, YA, and romance into a cohesive page-flipping thrill ride.

JOHN M. MURRAY (LGBTQ+ 2017)

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