



Murder of Crows

Anne Bishop

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Return to New York Times best-selling author Anne Bishop's world of the Others - where supernatural entities and humans struggle to co-exist, and one woman has begun to change all the rules....

After winning the trust of the terra indigene residing in the Lakeside Courtyard, Meg Corbyn has had trouble figuring out what it means to live among them. As a human, Meg should be barely tolerated prey, but her abilities as a cassandra sangue make her something more.

The appearance of two addictive drugs has sparked violence between the humans and the Others, resulting in the murder of both species in nearby cities. So when Meg has a dream about blood and black feathers in the snow, Simon Wolfgard - Lakeside's shape-shifting leader - wonders if their blood prophet dreamed of a past attack or a future threat.

As the urge to speak prophecies strikes Meg more frequently, trouble finds its way inside the Courtyard. Now, the Others and the handful of humans residing there must work together to stop the man bent on reclaiming their blood prophet - and stop the danger that threatens to destroy them all.

Murder of Crows Details

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From Reader Review Murder of Crows for online ebook

Erin ? *Proud Book Hoarder* says

“He just hoped Meg leading the way didn’t mean all the blood prophets would do strange things to their hair.”

While I didn't like this one quite as much as the first, it was an excellent follow-up that kept me glued.

The world-building is fascinating and complex - I love Meg and the different creatures in Lakeside and how they interact with each other. It's dark and violent and gritty, but even the humorous parts (and there are several!) work well. The crows especially get a bigger part in the story, and I love that little group. Bad, bad humans must ruin everything as always *sigh*. The Controller plays a larger role and we get to connect with another blood prophet in a cool sub-plot and angle.

It's funny but most of the actual story doesn't start skyrocketing in pace until the end, but it still lured me in since I like the charm of the town and characters so much. There's still a little too much shifting for POVs - I like the cops but don't need to be in their heads quite this much - but I still stayed focused on Meg and her bizarre prophecies, the struggle of the other blood prophets that need rescuing, what's happening with the poor crows, Simon getting more attached to Meg, and the townfolk being the fun but vicious monsters they are.

I do find the way The Others are portrayed as so superior and almost holier-than-thou grating sometimes, even if humans are destructive, but I can't settle with ease on the destroy all humans and take their lands with as much enthusiasm as some of the series readers.

Oh, but this book has cookies - lots and lots of cookies!!

Maria V. Snyder says

Book number 2 in a series. I really enjoyed the first one and I liked this one as well. I really don't know what it is about these books that appeals to me. There are lots of POV characters and I would have liked to see more of the Human's First and Last movement - more from their POV to get a better sense of the danger. Plus it's odd to be rooting against humans - except for the human pack :) I don't mind the bad ones getting their comeuppance, but there are a number of innocents that are hurt - but that is what war does so it's certainly accurate.

Anne says

For those of you who didn't like the slow pace of the first book?

Welp, you're gonna want to give this series a pass, because this one is more of the same.

Me? For some reason, I really loved it...

And all the complaints about how the last book had too many details of Meg & Co. just sort of doing silly nothingness, like brushing their teeth? Yep. Same sort of day to day minutiae included in this one.

So.

Either you're interested in the characters and world, or you're not.

I don't blame anyone who isn't into this, because the *vast* majority of the time, I'm annoyed when I have to read about bullshit details that don't really do anything for the story.

But I simply cannot get enough of these guys!

What can I say?

Ok, so with a title like **Murder of Crows**, can you guess what happens in the story?!

Yep.

Plus, other stuff that Meg and her new friends have to figure out.

Drug are bad, M'Kay?

Everything just kind of inches along, and by the end, everyone knows a bit more than they did when the story started.

Again, I have no idea why I like this series so much!

Good stuff. If you liked the first book, you'll probably like this one.

Wendy Darling says

4.5 stars The best sequels expand the world you know and make you fall even deeper in love with the characters. *Murder of Crows* does all that and more in a story that's just as interesting as its predecessor.

Review posted on the blog: <http://www.themidnightgarden.net/2014...>

If you enjoy urban fantasies, whether YA or adult, you should be reading this outstanding series!

Bradley says

So. Tainted Meat. Got it. It's a novel about making hamburger, right?

Okay, so I liked this novel a lot more than the first because it actually felt like an editor got a chance to flip some red at it. There was more mainline story and less of the mild and rather boring "getting to know you in such a mundane way" build. Of course, there was plenty of sitting around and watching movies and hoping that the doggie would get to lick her fingers, and while that has a fairly charming place to sit in a story, somewhere, I don't believe it really needed to be in THIS one. Repeatedly. At least I can be thankful that there was less mail sorting and more drama, even if it was bird watching. Bird watching? Oh, sorry, I meant

crow.

sigh Believe me, I *want* to like this urban fantasy, but despite the fact that I *know* that the story really and truly has some actionable moments like raiding a compound or diving into a murder mystery or even just trying to find jobs for fresh meat that dared to be un-racist, well somehow we got a novel that managed to make all of even THAT boring. Action was muted and distant in favour of being in unsatisfied out-season heat, sappy friend-first-too-shy-to-try messages on phones, and endless pages and pages devoted to dog biscuits.

Is this charming? Are you not entertained?

I'm sorry, if I'm going to be diving into the close, close intricacies of a daily life, I want to at least get something like the Stephen King treatment, filled with frightful intimacy, warts and delusions and all, taking me on a path of deep character development for 4/5ths of a book to set me up for a huge metaphysical explosion. That would have been fine. I wouldn't have minded the mundane so much in that case. But no. We get all the cutting and some drug overdoses that were conveniently glossed over and made ordinary and acceptable and shall I say it? Yeah. Boring.

The bones of the story was fine. It suffered from being muffled and blanketed in mild cuteness and removed conflict. There were way too few moments of blind terror. The teakettle and broom was fine. The exploding trash can was fine. But where was the frantic and ever-present danger?

In exposition. Expect cities to be wiped out. Oh yeah, and do you remember when....? GAAAaaaaahhhh.... I wanted immediacy! I didn't want to have to pinch myself awake every 10 minutes in sheer daylight.

Fortunately, I did somewhat enjoy the care put into the worldbuilding, but because that was the only really interesting thing going on besides the Elementals, I kept asking myself really unfortunate questions. Like if the Others are a whole society of magical Native Americans in fact and feel, only with the entire upper-hand when dealing with the peeps from across the sea, and they treated and traded with the fresh meat for hundreds of years to make the alternate near-identical world we have in our reality, then why, in all the names that are holy, are we ignoring all the things that actually happened in real history that made the technological revolution not only viable but a necessity? From the gin mill to trains to the damn necessity of mining... if the Others had control over all the resources, then where was the pressure to build the trains in the first place? Let alone the advancements or the dreams required to build aircraft, cell phones, or movies? If normal humans were so smart, why didn't they take a page from the Romans and just find a way to control all sources of water and let everyone else believe they controlled what they controlled? Elementals could always ruin that control, but after they saw how everyone else relied on it, they'd hesitate out of fear of hurting their own kind, too.

I could go on and on and on, because I like discussions of power and societal pressures and history, but these world-holes are annoying, especially since the main tale relies so heavily on it to keep an illusory conflict going for us, the readers. If one domino is missing, the rest seems to all fall apart. Of course, this isn't the main focus of either novel, so I'm forced, reluctantly, to give it a pass. And then I return back to my first concern. Writing with Immediacy.

Where was the ongoing tension and conflict keeping the reader's interest alive. It was just too mild, and it didn't need to be. The story was there to be coaxed into high flame. Instead, it was banked low and kept behind a big finely-meshed grate so all we could do was get hints of some far-away lick of fire. The concern with the crows kept some of it going, but then the rains came and all interest in helping those idiots petered

out. I got the impression that once they gave up their vigil and blew themselves to smithereens, the rest of the Others just threw their hands up and said, "Yeah, well, they got what they deserved. Let's hide that hand for a while and see what the other hand is doing... oh, look! Shiny conflict over there! Let's go rescue us some prophets."

Hmmmm. No, I'm not giving this a higher rating, even though it was superior to the prior novel. I'm also not going to drop a star, either, although I'm annoyed enough to want to. It's still a competent novel. I just wanted a damn lot more out of it.

Simona Bartolotta says

Quickest buddy read in the world with my adventure buddy Nina (seriously, people, less than a day. That's how fabulous we are). Now be good and go read her review, go.

"Do any of them realize that Simon Wolfgard is falling in love with Meg Corbyn?"

Who the heck cares about *any of them*? The only ones who must realize that **soon** are Meg and Simon. And if they don't realize it, don't come blame it on me if Simon is kidnapped by a mysterious criminal who's his - almost- namesake and who may or may not have the intention of marrying him.

If someone asks you, you don't know who I'm talking about.

"Steven Ferryman was there, of course. He might know things Meg wanted to learn, but *he* would never be as thorough about cleaning the salt and butter off her fingers after movie night."

Do I even have to start raving about the cuteness of this man? He's so **cuddly** and **overprotective** and **generally gorgeous** that he sings his own praises. I don't care if it's still February, I just elected him my biggest fictional crush of the year (and for sure one of my whole life). And in *Murder of Crows* there are so many Simon/Meg moments, I thought I was in heaven. Me happy.

But the book is not called *Simon Wolfgard: between fur and sex-appeal*, so I think the moment has come to talk about what the book actually is about.

- The first book in the series, *Written in Red*, is a book I utterly adored. It pains me to say that *Murder of Crows*, yes, lives up to the expectations, but not fully. While *Written in Red* is a masterpiece of balance, its sequel is far less uniform: for one thing, it presents a significant **lack of action**, to the point that if you asked me to sum up the main and most relevant events that takes place I could meet your request just by telling you what happens in the last fifty or so pages. Pages that are undoubtedly really intense, but...

- ...but that, at the same time, feel a bit **anticlimactic**. Moreover, in this **conclusion** Meg and the other protagonists don't properly have an active role, meaning that they're not directly involved in that little action there is, and this may be disappointing, but (this is the review of buts) to me it wasn't that much.

- The **lack of action** the whole book experiences (differently from the deflated conclusion) **didn't bother me one bit**. I've always been more interested in the characters, in their personal development and their interactions, so that the plot is something in regard of which I am more willingly to forgive or turn a blind eye. And the **characters** here are just so **well-written** and **peculiar** as they were in book one, so I had a great time even when all they did was talk and discuss with each other or watch movies or play tug or cook

spaghetti-
Ahem.

• **Meg**'s character is great. She sometimes reminds me of Snow White with her innocent, sweet vibes, but you know deep down there's a lot more to her. I didn't think I could enjoy a female character who jumps on a table screaming at the top of her lungs because of a mouse, but I do. I so much do.

• **I missed Sam.** He was one of the characters I loved the most in book one and here he has no more than two or three scenes, and I really felt his absence.

So summing up, what I want from the next book is 1) a kiss (and I already know I'm bound to die in grief in my own personal vale of tears) 2) more Sam (I'm not much hopeful about this one either). But figures if I don't want to read it right now all the same.

Faye, la Patata says

First of all, before I begin my review, let me just thank all the gods and higher deities out there for the fact that I am still alive to see this day. I've waited all year for this book to come out, and while it was a long one that pushed my endurance to the limits, I waited with much eagerness and patience, and I was rewarded accordingly with one hell of a sequel.

M-may I get some tissues, please?

Now that that's over with...

OH HELL TO THE YEEEEEEEEEEEEEEES!!!!

It's no secret that I hold *Written in Red* close to my heart. I was introduced to the series when I saw Wendy Darling's review. Convinced that I was in for a ride, I got myself the book not too long after, but what I didn't expect was for me to love - no, ADORE - it so much. If you know me, I'm not usually into Paranormal or Urban Fantasy. I mean I read books from these genres, but I pick very selectively and only if the premise is interesting enough to reel me away from my post-apocalyptic and fantasy reads. *Written in Red* did and blew my socks out of the water and held me in its grasp and I didn't even care. **It's that kind of book you'd do anything for. Let me kiss your toes, do your dishes, or wash your dirty laundry. Just please give me my *The Others* fix.**

As for *Murder of Crows*? It was everything I wanted and more and it only intensified my adoration of the series and the characters I've grown to love. In this installment, the problem that started in Jerzy, the one where humans and Others alike were slaughtered, continues to escalate and has spread to other regions. Crows are being drugged and viciously killed here and there, protests against The Others continue endlessly, and tension between the two parties keeps on rising. Meg is still being hunted, and the Controller sent another one on her way... and things are about to get reaaaally ugly.

Here are the things I loved about this book:

Relationship Dynamics Between the Characters

This is effortlessly the best part of *Murder of Crows* and the series as a whole. **I love the relationships between the characters. Even** though there are so many of them in this book - Wolves, Crows, Hawks, Coyotes, Vampires, Elementals, Bears, Ponies, Harvesters and many others, all of them dangerous and a force to reckon with - they still felt very personal, like they're my close friends or something. **Usually when there are so many of them, you start only connecting and feeling for a few, especially those with more exposure, but in this particular book, even though certain characters had lesser moments their presences could still be largely felt.** I think what makes them stand out so much is how they treat and interact with each other.

Example, **the dynamics between Meg and the Others...** Because of her kindness and her innocent naivety, she softened the hearts of many of the creatures the rest of her brethren deemed highly dangerous. Not many of them received such gentle treatment from the other side of the coin, so it confused them and they eventually accepted her as their own. **It was fun seeing them learn from each other and protect one another in their own ways.** Another is between the Others and the policemen (Monty, Burke, Debany, Kowalski, Lorenzo etc.). Aside from Meg, Simon and his friends didn't have any reason to trust other humans, **but because they police has shown how willing they were to ease the tension and keep the peace, we see the walls that were erected so tightly for centuries slowly crumbling down, to the point that Simon et al would sometimes show their vulnerability without hesitation.** Knowing well how these two parties have been at each other's throats since the start of time, this was absolutely fascinating to read, and I'm thirsty for more because I want to see how the development between the two will continue to grow.

PLUS, SIMON AND MEG. Even though romance is hardly the central point of this book (which works well because it's the "we are all family" vibe that is), the continuous development of these two made me giggle like a schoolgirl. I just love how Simon remains to be confused of his feelings for Meg. He knows they're pretty much different - he a Wolf, she a Human/Blood Prophet - but he can't help the human feelings he keeps on getting whenever something concerns her. He placed boundaries ("she's a friend") and yet he himself can't find the courage to follow through them. I found all of this extremely adorable and endearing! **If you loved their dynamic in the first book, expect to love it even more in this installment.**

"The Terra Indigene shift without thinking about it," Merri Lee said. "At least that's the impression I've had - shifting from one form to the other is no more significant to them than us changing from work clothes to casual, comfy clothes. So maybe it didn't even register with Simon that he had shifted except that he felt cold. You did say he's been sleeping with you since you got home from the hospital."

"Yes, but as a wolf-shaped Wolf," Meg said. "A furry Wolf is warm and cuddly. A people-shaped Wolf is... a man."

Awesomeness Personified

I know it's pretty shallow, but it was kind of thanks to Twilight and the PNR books that followed its footsteps that I became wary of the genre. **I hated how it romanticized these creatures that were meant to be dangerous and to be feared, so I was extremely happy when I found out *Written in Red* went back to the roots and made the very same paranormal creatures be what they were supposed to be - feral, brutal, merciless, and have moral compasses of their own that are beyond human comprehension.**

It was therefore really refreshing to finally see a vampire being feared and being able to kill in a bloody fashion (pun intended); of wolves howling battlecries and ripping your stomach open with one swipe of its paw; of elementals and its disaster-named ponies (Whirlpool, Cyclone, Thunder, Fog etc) wrecking havoc and destroying everything in sight... we've seen a bit of their power in the first book, but you see them once more here and you'll be surprised how brutal they can really get if they really put their minds to it. Even though the chaos were far and few between, you can really feel the insanity of their strengths and capabilities as well as the stupidity of the humans who dared go against them.

Tension. Tension Everywhere.

This book is filled with a lot of tension, especially between the humans and the Others. As we all know, the continent of Thaisia has always been the property of Namid's creatures, and they've only "rented" it to people in exchange for goods and services. However, as the human population grew, so did their want to expand and get more resources, which is kinda hard to do considering they're only borrowing (at a price) in the first place. But since it has possibly been milleniums since their ancestors made their treaty, they've forgotten this pact and unrest blossomed resulting to an animosity between the two that would sometimes erupt in violence.

To be honest, I kind of loved the uneasiness in the air. I hated the unfairness being given by the humans to the Others in the Courtyard, such as refusing to deliver goods to them and saying they're out of stock whenever a paranormal creature would want to buy human merchandises. Because of this, I couldn't help siding with the Others in their plight. Every time I'd see a human overstepping his boundaries, I'd mentally make a snide comment saying, "Dude, are you forgetting your lives are pretty much borrowed right now? You're on their turf, you dimwit! They can turn you inside out before you can even blink!" **And every time they're reminded of their place, I can't help but punch the air in victory.** Yes, humans, I'm sorry but I'm kinda going to have to side with them. You were being douchebags.

Overall...

ABSOLUTELY LOVE, LOVE, LOVE ! This was an exciting second book and my only complaint was that I wish it were longer (448 pages *only*?! This needs another 1000!!). It's kind of a big number to think about it, but frack, man, I was flying through the pages and the next thing I knew I was at the end already. That's a sign of a great book right there, folks - when you can't be bothered to be distracted because you're that engrossed. I loved everything about this book and I am eager to read more. The world-building is awesome, the characters are adorable, the dynamics are refreshing... is there anything else you could possibly ask for?

Actually, there is.

WHEN IS THE NEXT BOOK COMING OUT?!?!?

Shelby *trains flying monkeys* says

Murder of Crows picks up right after Written in Red ends.

The drugs "Go Over Wolf" and "feel good" are being distributed again. This time the targets are the Croward.

Don't mess with my Crows! They can't help if they can't resist the shiny!

Once things start taking a bad turn between the humans and "the Others" Simon and his crew finally figure out what the drugs are being manufactured from.

These books do move slowly..there is a whole lot of buildup to the action sequences, but there is so many different characters that I realized the story wouldn't make as much sense if Bishop didn't do it this way.

Don't be thinking that just because it has a crap load of characters that it gets confusing. It doesn't. It makes you so attached to these characters that you see them as real.

I did want more of my favorite character Tess: Can she please have a book all to her own? She wasn't in this one as much and I'm disappointed.

One thing that amazes me about these books is that the romance still isn't sizzling. I LOVE that. It's slowly building but that makes it believable. I wish all the rest of these authors would take note on this. Meg is slowly coming into her own and she is a human that might just get involved with a hottie wolf. So you can't just jump into that stuff. You might get bit.

Nanche says

reread:

03.10.2015-03.12.2015

Julie says

Posted at Yummy Men & Kick Ass Chicks

OMGTHISBOOKWASSOGOOD!!!!

Before I even tell you why, go to the store (or a bookstore website) and pre-order this book. Murder of Crows by Anne Bishop. NOW. I'll be here when you get back. If you have not read the first book, Written in Red, buy that one NOW then pre-order this second one. I will wait while you do that. Go. *hums Jeopardy anthem*

Okay. Let's get to it then.

Anne Bishop is primarily known for her straight up fantasy. Fantasy writers, in order to be successful, need to be able to build a world that is just as captivating as their characters and their stories. Anne definitely accomplishes that in her The Others series. It's based on how the Europeans came to North America and captured the Native's land. But what if the Natives were shifters of the most terrifying sort and didn't

relinquish their lands and resources so easily? What if they controlled everything we needed to make what we need to survive? Some pretty interesting questions come up while you are reading these books. Many times I thank goodness that our reality isn't the one in these stories. That is the impact this world has on its readers.

The stories are also quite gripping. In Written in Red, we meet Meg and all of the scary and intriguing members of the Courtyard, a place where Others (paranormal creatures) live and handle trades with humans. Meg is a blood prophet, which means she can see the future when she cuts herself. You just have to ask her a question before she does so and you'll get an answer. A cryptic and weird answer but an answer none the less. We watched as the Others took Meg under their wing and started seeing her as one of their own.

In Murder of Crows, humans are starting to get gutsier, or stupider -however you decide to look at it, and are starting to attack Others. Why anyone would want to purposely incite a war with creatures that see you only as meat is beyond me. Others are vicious. They are animals. Animals who know they are the top of the food chain. There are also Elementals mixed in there. I love these characters. They control the wind, air, fog...name it. If it's natural, weather related and outside, there is an Elemental that controls it. And don't tick them off because they are unapologetic in their attacks. You get to see their sheer power in this book and it will for sure make you shudder. You also have sub-plots of how the 'human pack' is forming in the Courtyard, the Controller wants Meg back and someone is making drugs that can turn humans and Others alike into either blubbery balls of goo who don't care what is happening to them or angry rage-filled beings. All of these make up the story in Murder of Crows and all of these plotlines will keep you interested while keeping you guessing until the very last moment.

There is one more little side story line of sorts in this book and it's one we romance/chemistry lovers are excited about and that is Simon and Meg. I know, there isn't really a 'Simon and Meg' but we 'love-junkies' are hoping there will be someday. And we are also hoping that it won't cause too much trouble for them because they deserve happiness and each other.

Simon is one of the most feared Other. He is a wolf shifter and leader of this particular Courtyard and in the first book, it was very easy to see how people tended to pee themselves at the mere sight of him. He's vicious and unrepentant. He is wolf, animal, and he has no desire to be anything else. We watch him transform a wee bit by being around Meg in the first book and his transformation continues a bit in this latest book. I love watching his growth. Anne writes it perfectly. He is nowhere near 'human' but there are moments here and there, endearing scenes with Meg, where you almost swear there is a little bit of 'man' in him. I love watching his struggles to understand human women, and Meg in particular. She has been locked up in an institution before her escape in book one so she is also just learning about herself. Watching the two of them trying to figure things out together really warms the heart.

We meet a new sort of human/Other in this book. Intuits are humans who have a 'feeling' when something is going to go wrong. Very interesting people and I like how Anne added them to her world. We also have Monty and the human police force. They play a very important role in this book. I liked how Anne managed to even add character growth to these side characters. There are many characters in this book and some of them seem to come out of nowhere then drop off for a while only to come back in later chapters bringing with them a pivotal line or scene that just brings everything together. Anne weaves such an intricate story it really is impossible to put the book down once you start it.

Meg has many opportunities to prophet in this book, and thank goodness she does as she manages to thwart many nasty things. Watching Meg and her friends trying to decipher and read a prophet was so interesting. This is just another example of how Anne writes her world with incredible detail.

The side characters, as I mentioned, are abundant but each memorable. Vlad, Henry, Sam...I can go on and on, but I won't. I'm sure you all don't want to read a 72 page review ;)

One BIG revelation occurs in this book: we finally learn what Tess is! All I'm going to say is *shudder*

Overall, I absolutely adored Murder of Crows. It is, in my opinion, a near perfect urban fantasy read. It is the perfect mix of endearing moments that make you smile and giggle and moments that scare the poop out of you on a psychological level. It has some of the best written characters I have ever found in Urban Fantasy and storylines that suck you in so completely you try to convince your bladder that no, it does not have to pee right at that moment. The pace is perfect and Anne's voice is stunning.

It's simply brilliant.

5plus stars

Niki Hawkes - The Obsessive Bookseller says

DNF at 65%. With all the same issues I had with the first book returning with force. I wanted to like it soooo much, and even picked up this second book (despite by better judgement) because I love the concept behind the series. Most of my problems were with execution, although this second book brought forth a whole host of new problems with inconsistent character construction. I just don't have the patience to force myself through it at this point.

Wanderlust says

oh, my lord, it's..

★?????★ says

2.5 Stars

I absolutely loved, *loved, loved* the first book. Which is why Murder of Crows disappointed me so much more than it should have.

There are two main aspects that in my opinion 'ruined' the story: Meg's character and the plot. If you will, let me tell you what I thought. If you loved this book, like all my friends did, then just ignore what I have to say. (:

I actually don't have a lot of expectations about a sequel. The only thing I really ask for is good character development; this, however, I feel is vital.

I allow a book series, its characters and plots a lot of flaws in the beginning of the story. The protagonist(s), e.g. our hero or heroine, can be cruel, or naïve, or weak, or spoiled, or broken, or have almost any other character trait that normally shines a negative light on him or her. Why? Because flaws make fictional characters real. Because I want to see the characters grow into something else. Because I want their story to be given weight and meaning.

Sadly, the only character development to speak of in this book surrounds the supporting characters.

Meg is probably the character that is most subjectable to change and development.

When we met her, she was this broken thing of a being, that - understandably - had trouble handling the simplest tasks of daily life. Because of the cruel actions she had to endure in all her life, she was as helpless and naïve a girl as you can come by. And because of what she is, a blood prophet, she was seen as one the purest creatures that exist.

Despite Meg being the main character of this series, could she never be seen as a heroine, as someone that impacts the direction of a story through her own will, as someone that leaves their mark on the world. She was the personification of a Mary Sue character.

Which is why, I really needed Meg to grow beyond her limitations. I wanted her to battle her past demons, to fight to live without having to bleed, to grow a consciousness of the world around her, to form opinions by herself, to learn to not be dependent, to not want to please everyone, to just say fuck you world because she can. To become someone I want to follow on her journey.

None of that happened. Meg remains the same girl we met in book one. Not only is she helpless and doesn't do anything about it, but also does everyone still fall over themselves to serve and protect her. This worked for me in Written in Red, because I could understand and imagine how hard this new life must be for her. I could reason for why she managed to enchant the terra indigene. However, this merely annoyed and frustrated me in Murder of Crows.

What makes matters even worse is that she is beyond passive in this book. I loved to read about the daily routines in book one, because it was just as new for the readers as it was for Meg. But now, that merely is boring to read about. Furthermore, I must wonder whether this actually matches Meg's character. Yes, she was helpless and naïve, but she also survived and escaped her cruel upbringing. Does this not mean she has fight in her? Does this not mean she wants to discover what the world holds for her? Does this not mean she wants to be the only one making the choices over her life? I wonder how the author can reason keeping her character within the boundaries of the courtyard, from keeping her from participating in the world?!

The plot of Murder of Crows surrounds the whole slowly escalating conflict between the terra indigene and homo sapiens. The whole concept simplifies to two sides of an unopened war. The humans blame the Others for suppressing them, which leads to individual aggressive actions against the latter, and the Others blame the humans for not upholding their bargain, and destroy whole civilizations to counter.

While I at first liked the premise of this, and getting to know more about the world building, it soon became clear that what Ms. Bishop had in mind just doesn't work as she intends it to.

Good and evil are often merely two sides of a coin. A take of perspective. A learned, conditioned opinion. Can the humans fault the Others for treating them as they treat their livestock? Can the Others fault their intelligent meat for acting after their instincts; to break the chains of suppression and fight for the chance to live?

Pretty fast it becomes very clear what opinion the author tries to enforce upon the reader, which isn't only too *black-and-white* to be true but also seems extremely short sighted.

The Others are betrayed as honorable creatures; sure, they see humans as walking, talking meat, but apparently the terra indigene let the humans live their lives as long as they impose no threat. But once you take a closer look at the world, once you start evaluating everyone's actions, you will actually see, that this

isn't quite true. In our world, on Earth, we have learned through wars and civilization that suppression, slavery and physical punishments achieve a lot, but don't lead to obedience and submission. At least not on the long run.

The Others either don't know this - despite them considering themselves as the superior species - or don't care about it. They act by punishing all human kind for the bad actions of a few. At the same time, humans acting good - like our lovely inspector Monty! - are merely rewarded by the Others promising to withhold further slaughter for a short time. I am not trying to defend the horrible actions some of these humans take, but every action has a reaction. And this whole scenario is nothing but a huge vicious circle. There is no right or wrong, no good or evil. There are merely sides. The Others. And the humans.

Personally, I think Ms. Bishop is heading into a dangerous direction with the whole conflict. For several reasons I feel she should have just stuck with what we knew about the world, and left this impending war untouched.

For one, if she wants to resolve the situation - for the good of one or both species, this takes a lot of time and effort. This can't just be resolved on-the-fly in one or two books. This takes some real commitment.

Furthermore the whole terra indigene vs humans left Meg completely unfazed. Apparently. Not once did she have an opinion about terra indigene slaughtering whole cities. Hey, I am again not saying the Others aren't in their 'right' but I am saying that as a human you must have some kind of feelings about this. Again, circling back to Meg's passiveness. Unreal.

There is a lot left to say, but quite frankly, this book disappointed me so much, that I had to force myself to finish it - and even then it took days. So a few more things in short.

Pros:

- Monty. Loved him. He's the only one that feels real.
- Simon had his moments. Made me giggle a few times, and his inner dialog made me nod along. However, I feel like he's becoming too human. I preferred him in book 1.

Cons:

- Sam is nonexistent. Why?
- I miss hearing more from Tessa.
- The romance doesn't interest me so much anymore. I felt addicted to it in book one, but I lost that feeling in this book.
- Most terra indigene that we got to know in book one seem to be very different characters. Why are they all going soft all of a sudden? Also, whenever Meg's name is mentioned, everyone falls over their own feet to rush to her. Annoying; don't they have any lives themselves?
- Nothing actually happens. Sure, there's a plot, and we read from the 'bad guys's POV, but there's no real curve to the story. No climax. No OMGWTFJUSTHAPPENED moments. Nothing that will emotionally touch you.

I will be continuing to read this series, but it no longer has me waiting excitedly for the day the next book is released. To all of you who have yet to read this book/series, I hope you fare better with it than I did. (:

Pre-read updates:

EDIT3:

AND SO IT BEGINS.

EDIT2:

OMG! Am I hallucinating??!!

It freaking has a cover! #fangirldance IT HAS A COVER GUYS! And an awesome one at that.

It fits so incredibly well to book one :o Well chosen Mrs. Bishop.

Now, where are we on that earlier release.....? Say - tomorrow? ;)

EDIT:

It's one of those days, you know? One of those days where I'm looking for my next reading candy but nothing seems to be good enough. EXCEPT, ofc, a freaking book that hasn't been released yet.

HELP! Can we have an excerpt or something. PLEASE! I'm starving here.

I SO WANTNEEDCRAVE this book!

NOW!

Pretty please?

The recreation of shifters, vampires, elementals, prophets - hell, supernatural beings in general was soooooo refreshing! I am addicted!

Plus I cannot wait to see how Meg and Simon's story is going to continue! *girly scream*

Jilly says

Let me start by mentioning that if you're a bronny, this book is totally for you. There are colorful ponies in this book that can affect the weather and kill everyone. Think "My Little Pony" on steroids.

Okay, so I loved this book as much as the first one. Meg is settling in to life with the Others. She has been accepted by all of the different creatures in the Courtyard, and they love and protect her. They also still find her very amusing because she is "human-ing" around them and they really don't get humans at all.

When a group of Others from a different area came to have a meeting with Simon and the other leaders, they were considering killing all of the blood prophets to stop the availability of the drugs that are made from their blood. They considered blood prophets a terrifying weapon, and had heard that they were called, "Namid's terrible creation." Simon was worried about Meg's safety, until he took some of the leaders to meet Meg and found her on a table screaming because a wolf pup had brought her a mouse as a gift and was chasing her around with it.

"Simon?" Charlie finally said. "It was just a mouse."

"I know," he replied.

"A small mouse."

He sighed. "I know."

"So," Alan said after a long pause. "That's Namid's terrible creation?"

"Yeah, that's Meg."

Suddenly, blood prophets weren't so terrifying. ;)

But, the fact that they were being used to manufacture a drug that could hurt the Others was a problem, so the Others decide to try and figure out where Meg was being held so that they can deal with the situation.

There is a lot of action in this book, but the best part, to me, is the interaction between the humans and Others. These books do such a great job of making me care about all of the different people/creatures. There are alternating POV's, and yet I love them all. I don't feel like I want to hurry back to the other person's story, like I do in a lot of other books like this.

I really can't recommend this series enough!

(although I do need to warn that there are some pretty violent and disturbing things happening to the girls that are being held. It might not be a good idea for someone under 16 to read.)

Courtney says

I wish I wouldn't have read the first book, Written in Red, the day after it came out because now I have to wait a year for Murder of Crows :(

Jennifer Kyle says

4.5 STARS

Review to follow though I'm jumping into the next book so ...

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

This is just a mini review =)

I didn't love this one as much as the first one but I still loved it.

The world that Anne Bishop created is awesome! I love all of the creatures that live together and rule so many things in the world.

Meg is back to seeing prophecies, uh, through the way she does. There is someone poisoning the crows and of course this doesn't sit well with the Others so they are going to start taking things away from the humans.

We get to find out more from one of the other cassandra sange like Meg. She is one that is still kept as a prisoner for her prophecies. A good thing did come out of that though.

There is some weirdo out there cutting up people and vampires so that's a load of fun. Not!

I wonder what Anne Bishop has in store for us in the other books. Btw, I wish Meg and Simon would just get it on before they drive me crazy!!

? Jaela ? Killer ? QUEEN says

The Sanguinati referred to females like Meg as sweet blood because, even when they were adults, these women retained the sweetness of a child's heart.

Another 5 star rating. I can't put these books down for any reason. Eating and sleeping has become secondary.

But who cares? **Less sleep----> more reading!**

These books are so goood, exactly what I expected for a dark UF to be, it has all the elements to rock this genre.

A lot happens. There are new characters introduced, old characters development, Meg helping and other things that I don't want to spoil. In the meantime, I would like some cassandra sanguine euphoria.....And Simon to be there, of course. ><

Sanaa says

[5 Stars] This was even better than the first one! I didn't even think that was possible, but it's definitely the case here! I honestly just think that this series has one of the most fascinating worlds. It is so uniquely woven, and I love how genuine the characters are. When I say genuine I mean that the characters are not ashamed to be who they are whether that is something a bit on the darker side or something more innocent. Everyone's character makes such perfect sense, and I love how the different groups of people interact with each other. The resulting conversations are so intriguing. Pretty much what I'm trying to say is that I love this series and need the next book immediately.

Robin (Bridge Four) says

What a great second book in the series. I did like the first book just a smidge more but it was only by a little.

A few things that I continue to like about the series are that the Humans are not the big cheese Alpha dogs of the story. There might be some that forget that, forget that the creatures known as the Others really control it all but they get some pretty big reminders of that in this book. The other thing I like is the Others aren't shifters. They don't think like humans and they do not understand most of our ways. That becomes more and more clear as we spend a little more time with them. There will be misunderstandings like when Simon was a wolf before he and Meg fell asleep but looked like a man later.

"Weeeelllll. When my mom takes a nap, our cat curls up with her, and my dad doesn't care.

But I don't think he'd like it if the cat suddenly turned into a man."

"Why?" Simon demanded. "The cat would just be a cat in a different form."

Heather made a funny sound and didn't answer.

Monty quietly cleared his throat before he said, "A form that would be able to have sex with a human female."

"I didn't want sex!" Simon shouted. "I just wanted my share of the covers."

I do enjoy the slow burn, semi confusing relationship that is building between Simon and Meg. It looks like it will take awhile for it to manifest in any big way but there is enough that I'm totally enjoying the romance that could build.

In this book we learn how both the Gone over Wolf and Feel Good drugs are made. Man this series really makes me hate the humans and the horrible things they can do. There is an introduction of a few new characters from other Courtyards and the Intuits a human culture that lives alongside the Others in their own community. We also get a better look into the Controller and the place that Meg escaped from.

It is always fun to see how new Others see Meg especially when they are scared of what she is only to see the woman in Liaison's office.

"Simon?" Charlie finally said. "It was just a mouse."

"I know," he replied.

"A small mouse." He sighed.

"I know."

"So," Alan said after a long pause. "That's Namid's terrible creation?"

"Yeah. That's Meg."

There is also the very real difference between humans and the others. Something as simple as a fairytale takes on very different meanings depending on which side of the story you are on. Take Little Red Riding Hood for instance

"Officer Kowalski is in HGR, talking with Alan Wolfgard," Tess said. "They were discussing a

story about a girl who gets swallowed by a wolf and then rescued by a hunter. Apparently, whether you see it as a story of love and courage overcoming danger or a horror story about devious humans depends on whether or not you have fur.”

The story line was well plotted and I possibly wanted a little more carnage at the end but I did enjoy the resolution to this story arc quite a bit.

My favorite things in this series so far

♥?- Simon and Meg and their super adorable yet awkward courtship that they don't even realize they are doing.

“You want to get a look at Meg?”

“Yes, I'd like to meet her. But more than that, I'd like her to get a look at me.”

He thought about that too—and decided tearing out Steve's throat was an honest response but not an appropriate one. And since he had enough to think about, he wasn't going to ponder why that was his response.

? - Tess's hair. I'm a little jealous that my hair doesn't change color and curl with my moods.

✿ - The elementals and their Grumpy Ponies. That is an unusual aspect to this world that I haven't really seen in anything else.

◎- Simon learning how to deal with Meg's human pack. Sometimes they don't seem to understand that He is the Alpha.

♥ - The different kinds of Others and how each retains a little part of the animal aspect no matter the form. Remember they are not human.
