



The Raven

Sylvain Reynard

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From the New York Times bestselling author of the Gabriel series comes a dark, sensual tale of romance in a city shrouded in mystery . . .

Raven Wood spends her days at Florence's Uffizi gallery restoring Renaissance art. But an innocent walk home after an evening with friends changes her life forever. When she intervenes in the senseless beating of a homeless man, his attackers turn on her, dragging her into an alley. Raven is only semiconscious when their assault is interrupted by a cacophony of growls followed by her attackers' screams. Mercifully, she blacks out, but not before catching a glimpse of a shadowy figure who whispers to her . . .

Cassita vulneratus.

When Raven awakes, she is inexplicably changed. Upon returning to the Uffizi, no one recognizes her. More disturbingly, she discovers that she's been absent an entire week. With no recollection of her disappearance, Raven learns that her absence coincides with one of the largest robberies in Uffizi history--the theft of a set of priceless Botticelli illustrations. When the police identify her as their prime suspect, Raven is desperate to clear her name. She seeks out one of Florence's wealthiest and most elusive men in an attempt to uncover the truth. Their encounter leads Raven to a dark underworld whose inhabitants kill to keep their secrets . . .

The Raven Details

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From Reader Review The Raven for online ebook

Jennifer says

The Raven is the first installment in Sylvain Reynard's The Florentine series. It is marketed as a paranormal romance, and it is, but it is also full of art, mystery, Italian culture, history...all with a gothic undertone that melds everything together beautifully. As the story progressed, the focus became more centered on the romance which disappointed me just a bit as I was really enjoying how the other elements were proportioned, but the vampire/human dynamic was not your typical paranormal romance. It was complex and written with a sophistication that I appreciated (or maybe that was the audiobook's delicious accent). Overall, a great start to an intriguing new series for me. I'll definitely be continuing!

My favorite quote:

"No one deserves mercy. Not deserving it is what makes it mercy."

Note: In my opinion, The Florentine series stands on its own for new readers and will feel like a companion series of sorts for fans of Mr. Reynard's Gabriel's Inferno trilogy, as it features cameos and references to those characters. However, when I read The Raven, I had only read the first installment in Gabriel's Inferno and I never felt confused or out of the loop. Below, I included a list of both series for any interested readers. Enjoy!

The Florentine Series:

#0.5-The Prince (2015)

#1-The Raven (2015)

#2-The Shadow (2016)

#3-The Roman (2016)

Gabriel's Inferno Trilogy:

#1-Gabriel's Inferno (2011)

#2-Gabriel's Rapture (2012)

#3-Gabriel's Redemption (2013)

Amy (Foxy) says

WHAT DOES THE FOX SAY?!"

Mr. FøxReynard (Reynard is fox in French) is taking us to Florence, Italy. We are going to see the dark side of the city with a paranormal touch.

**Patty Belongs To Kellan~Jesse~Lautner~Miller~Jack~Racer~Rafe~Liam~Prince
Nicholas~Hayes~Simon~Gianluca & Archer says**

*****4.5 STARS*****

"For a long time, I thought love was not for me. Men who noticed me were few and far between. Almost all of them just became friends with me. You changed my mind. You changed my world. I started believing that maybe someone could love me and I could love him in return. I felt hope, William. You gave me that."

WOW! Where do I begin??! I mean I have to say that I don't know why I am surprised that I absolutely ended up loving this book! Maybe it's because I was really not feeling the novella. I found it a little boring and it didn't paint a favorable picture of the Prince aka William York. He was far from lovable in *THE PRINCE* and so I thought I wouldn't end up loving him in **The Raven**. I was completely **WRONG!!!** I do believe it had to do with the fact that he meets the woman who is able to warm his cold heart after having been so devoid of human emotions for centuries.

To give a little backstory here, the Prince is a vampire, and he is the ruler of the vampire colony that resides in Florence, Italy. He is also a huge art collector and has many paintings by Michelangelo and Botticelli. Here's where we get some of the boring aspects of the story but it's also necessary in order to bring Raven into his world and as an added bonus, Gabriel and Julia Emerson!! Gabriel and Julia have loaned their Dante & Beatrice illustrations to the Uffizi Museum. The Prince is furious and plots to kill Gabriel because those illustrations were his property but were stolen many years ago. William spies on the Emersons and catches them during some very passionate moments. He finds himself envying the love that Gabriel and Julia have. But, he also is determined to take back what belongs to him and succeeds. This triggers an investigation by the Florence police department and FBI. Raven Wood is an American woman who happens to work at the Uffizi as an art restorer. She disappears the week the illustrations were stolen, and when she returns, she has no recollection of where she has been. She also has gone under a major physical transformation that she has no reasonable explanation for.

Raven badly injured her right leg when she was a young girl. She has a terrible limp, and needs a cane to help her walk. She is also a woman with curves and has never been considered attractive. One night after attending a party at a friend's house, she decides to walk home and witnesses a homeless man being brutally beaten. She tries to come to his aide but little does she know that the attackers are not ordinary men. They are feral vampires who don't follow any code and are ruthless. Raven gets herself into a very dangerous situation and lucky for her William happened to be in the area and comes to her rescue. He is able to take out the whole crew of feral vampires because he is basically one of the oldest living vampires in Florence and in their world, the older you are, the more powerful and strong you become. He nurses her back to health by using the blood from a couple of really old vampires that he had stored and gave her a blood transfusion. A week later she wakes up in her apartment, and miraculously her leg is perfectly normal, she's lost a considerable amount of weight, and even looks beautiful. Unfortunately she will come to learn that all these side effects are temporary.

Raven's new appearance freaks out all of her coworkers and friends but that's the least of her worries. Now she is being investigated in the case of the missing Botticelli illustrations. She hears Gabriel Emerson mention the name William York as a possible suspect and tries to do her own detective work which ends up landing her in serious danger once again. Luckily, William has been keeping close tabs on her and is able to rescue her for the second time. He asks her to leave Florence but of course she ends up staying and quickly things start to heat up between the two.

I was completely swept away by the romance between William and Raven. One thing Sylvain Reynard is a master at, is writing of romantic love. The fact that William was enamored with Raven just for being beautiful on the inside, made me love him so much more. Every time Raven would put herself down, he was quick to point out all the beautiful things about her. I found his struggle to deal with his feelings for Raven to be very endearing, especially when I learned of the tragedy from his past. There's quite a bit of action and intrigue thrown in as well. The steam factor is definitely intense as vampires have an insatiable appetite for sex! You'll need a few cold showers after reading this one!

I highly recommend this one to any of you who loved the **Gabriel's Inferno** series. This story does not disappoint!!

K says

UPDATE as of 1/7/14: My next novel is the first in a new series, and it will be entitled The Raven. With this novel, I'm asking you to pack your bags and travel with me to the city of Florence. The Gabriel Series showed you the city during the day. This time, I'll show you Florence's underworld, which is ruled by creatures of the night ...

Here's the formal announcement:

From the New York Times bestselling author of the Gabriel Series comes a dark, sensual tale of romance in a city shrouded in mystery...

Raven Wood spends her days at Florence's Uffizi Gallery restoring fine works of Renaissance art. But an innocent walk home after an evening with friends changes her life forever. When she intervenes in the senseless beating of a homeless man, his attackers turn on her, dragging her into an alley. Raven is only semi-conscious when their assault is interrupted by a cacophony of growls followed by her attacker's screams. Mercifully, she blacks out, but not before catching a glimpse of a shadowy figure

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UPDATE As of 12/03/13: The first chapter of The Raven has been released, here it is! So freaking excited ♥

A lone figure stood high atop Brunelleschi's dome, under the shade of the gold globe and cross. His black clothing faded into the darkness, making him invisible to the people below. From his vantage point, they looked like ants. And ants they were to him, an irritating if necessary presence in his city. The city of Florence had been his for almost seven hundred years. When he was in residence, he spent every sunset in the same place, surveying his kingdom with Lucifer-like pride. These were the works of his hands, the fruits of his labor, and he wielded his power without mercy. His considerable strength was magnified by his intellect and his patience. Decades and centuries passed before his eyes, yet he remained constant. Time was a luxury he owned in abundance and so he was never hasty in his pursuit of revenge. A hundred years had come and gone since he'd been robbed of one of his most prized possessions. He'd waited for them to resurface and they had. On this night, he'd restored the illustrations to his personal collection, the sophisticated security of the Uffizi Gallery causing him only the most trifling of inconveniences. So it was that he stood in triumph against the clouded dark sky, like a Medici prince, looking out over Florence. The night air was warm as he contemplated the fate of those responsible for the exhibit of his stolen illustrations. He hadn't quite decided whether to kill the men, or merely torture them. He had time and time enough to make his plans and so he stood, enjoying his success, as a warm, persistent rain began to fall. The ants below scattered, scurrying for shelter. Soon the streets were empty of human beings. He clutched the case more closely under his arm, realizing that his illustrations were in need of a dry space. In the blink of an eye, he traveled down the side of the dome to a lower half dome, before running across the square and clambering up the side of an adjacent building. Soon he was on the roof of the Arciconfraternita della Misericordia. There was a time when he would have served the Arciconfraternita, joining in their mission of mercy, rather than running over it without a thought. But he hadn't exercised the gift of mercy since 1274. In his new form, the concept of mercy never entered his consciousness. He flew through the rain at great speed, heading toward the Ponte Vecchio, when the smell of blood filled his nostrils. There was more than one source, (or vintage as he called it), but the scent that attracted his attention was young and unaccountably sweet. It resurrected in him memories long forgotten. Instantly, he changed direction and increased his speed, moving toward the Ponte Santa Trinita. His black form was a blur against the night sky as he leapt from rooftop to rooftop. Other monsters moved in the darkness, from all parts of the city, racing toward the place where her innocent blood cried out from the ground. As he ran, the question uppermost in his mind was: Who would reach her first?

READ THE UPDATE BY SYLVAIN REYNARD REGARDING HIS NEW PNR, *THE RAVEN*!!

Dear Everyone,

Back in September, I wrote a post in which I mentioned my next novel. I'm pleased to be able to give you more information now.

My next novel is the first in a new series, and it will be entitled *The Raven*. With this novel, I'm asking you to pack your bags and travel with me to the city of Florence. The Gabriel Series showed you the city during the day. This time, I'll show you Florence's underworld, which is ruled by creatures of the night ...

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As I mentioned in my September post, readers of *Gabriel's Redemption* will be able to read an excerpt from *The Raven* at the end of both the paperback and e-book editions.

But what I didn't mention was that one of the characters of *The Raven* appears in *Gabriel's Redemption*. Can you identify him or her? I welcome your guesses in the comments below and on social media.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that there's a connection between The Gabriel Series and my new series – a connection that is more than simply me, or the city of Florence, or the Uffizi Gallery. If you've read the cover copy above carefully, probably you're beginning to guess the answer. But I'll be explicit and state that we won't be saying goodbye to the Professor and Julianne at the end of *Gabriel's Redemption*. Look for them to have cameo appearances in *The Raven* as well ...

While I don't have a release date for *The Raven* yet, I hope to have one soon. This novel marks my transition from a contemporary love story to a paranormal one. I hope you'll join me on this journey and that if you have friends and family who enjoy paranormal novels, you'll help me share the news

with them.

As we approach the December 3rd release date of Gabriel's Redemption in North America, my American publisher has listed a giveaway of the novel on Goodreads. US entrants can enter the contest [here](#).

And if you'd like to read a new excerpt from Gabriel's Redemption and enter another contest, you can do so [here](#) at Romance Times.

Finally, I want to wish everyone who is celebrating Thanksgiving this week a very happy holiday. I have much to be thankful for and in particular, I'm thankful for you, my readers.

All the best and thank you for your continued support,

SR

www.sylvainreynard.com

then..

I've been reading Gabriel's Redemption and I think I have a very accurate guess on who the mystery person is that will be in the The Raven. I'm assuming it's the blonde haired grey eyed stranger at the museum showing. Then later on after meeting him, Julia looks at a painting of Mercury and said that his features looked familiar. Either the painting was based after him or Mercury the God is coming into play! Any guesses? Leave me a comment and we can discuss!

Ramona says

Paranormal love is my new "IT" genre and I am certain that Sylvain Reynard is one of the best writers for this type of books. I loved the Gabriel Series and wanted to read as many books that I could from him, in order to explore his style more.

There isn't much to say about this book except that it's BRILLIANT. You have everything that you need between its 2 covers: love, action, passion, thrill, angst and sadness. A lot right? But all this elements are so well combined that you won't let this book out of your hands so easily. I won't say much about the plot, because I want to reader to know as little as possible from the book, but I will talk about the 2 main characters.

Raven is one of the most fearless and strongest heroines I've ever meet, and believe me, I'm picky at this. The thing that I admire the most is her pure heart, the way she loves unconditionally and in the same times without restraints. She is smart, brave and although not perfect in body, in my opinion she is perfect in character and heart.

Meeting Will was an opportunity for her to discover herself and make some changes in her life. Will is smart, strong and has like an aura surrounding him that completely mesmerizes you. They fell in love in such a powerful way, managing to heal each other and to bind so perfectly. He gives her confidence and she changes him completely, making him a better person.

The connection between them was amazing for me, the way they completed and accepted each other being very heartwarming. What I love about Reynard is that his characters are so genuine, so anchored in real life, with flaws and qualities.

The book was also action packed and the writer is sooo good at describing and narrating the events that you feel like watching a movie, not reading a book.

All the details are so well presented, you can see how documented the writer is and feel the passion he puts in this book.

Just read it, feel it and tell me that I'm not right. Book hangover guaranteed:)

4 stars to this book and to one of my favorite writers.

For more reviews please check <https://readwithloveblog.wordpress.com>

D.G. says

"The Raven" is DNF #100!!! Woohoo!!

Oh wait...should I really be celebrating that I've spent hours of my time reading sucky books? Being as I'm a glass-half-full kind of gal (at least some of the time), I'm focusing on the positive.

Anyhow, **The Raven** starts as follows: young lady leaves a party at 1am to walk home even though she has deformed foot, whereupon she encounters 3 hooligans beating on a homeless man. Instead of going back to the party or calling the cops, she decides to confront said hooligans who proceed to beat the shit out her. She's saved from being raped/certain death by the vampire hero who kills the bad guys and whisks her away. When next she wakes...she's changed!

Her foot is not deformed, she's not nearsighted anymore and she's not fat! Oh lordy! She now looks like Vivien Leigh! From plain, chunky and disabled to movie star bombshell in 3 days!

She doesn't remember what happened and instead of trying to figure it out - I would go to the doctor to see if I was kidnapped by aliens/I'm hallucinating/whatever - she runs to work. You know, because she can. *rolls eyes*

This was just too much for me. This woman clearly doesn't have the sense God gave a mosquito - and how is it that vampire blood (or whatever he gave her) is now a weight loss formula? I hate books where heroines lose weight by miracle. And let's not even talk about the hero.

Dee Montoya says

FIVE STARS*****

(ARC provided by Publisher via Netgalley)

The Raven was a gorgeous story about a girl who looked weak on the outside, but possessed tremendous strength on the inside, and her prince. The man who through darkness brought her the freedom she always wanted.

Raven is used to being invisible. When she was young she had an accident that left her with a disability. She is comfortable behind her baggy clothes and her cane. She finds beauty inside the paintings she restores at the museum where she works, in Florence Italy.

Raven has a big heart and is always helping and defending the less fortunate. Helping a homeless man, one night she will find big trouble. Luckily for her the Prince of darkness will come to her rescue.

William York is the prince of Florence and all the vampires. He's an old vampire and thus very powerful. He's confused as to why he felt compelled to save the life of the woman with the bright green eyes, but he's feeling even more troubled, because he can't stop thinking about her.

William and Raven's paths will inevitably cross again and both will be helpless to the feelings growing between them.

William wants to take Raven to bed, but she needs more convincing than an earth shattering kiss. Ever since Raven met William, her life hardly makes any sense. Even the history behind the paintings she has been studying for years, have a different meaning now. It's hard for Raven to accept the attention and protection William offers, because ever since her father died, she's been left to fend for herself. She carries dark secrets of her own, that only contribute to her skepticism when it comes to giving into the strong feelings she's been having for William.

William is a dark and cold vampire who's lived the same way for centuries. He always thought he was incapable of feeling mercy or love, little did he know that the wounded girl with a sassy mouth would come and change everything ...

Reading this book was a magnificent experience. It was like every word in this story was dipped in the most luxurious chocolate. I devoured every chapter with ravenous desire. The beauty and depth of the characters utterly consumed me. I simply couldn't have enough. I loved the paced in which the story developed and the romance was something I'll never forget. William's words to Raven were so rich and beautiful, that he made it impossible not to fall in love with him.

Those who are fans of professor Gabriel Emerson, will get a nice treat as he and his lovely family make an appearance in this book.

This author is very talented when it comes to writing about love and now he takes us on a riveting journey to the dark underworld of Florence, Italy. Vampire and human relationships will become blurry and the rules may have to be re-written...

Beautifully written novel.

My *The Raven* music playlist:

*Sound Of Your Heart by Shawn Hook

*Things by Maggie Lindeman

*The Moon Song by Karen O

*Wild Horses (Acoustic version) by The Rolling Stones

Sylvain Reynard says

Author.

Lucia says

Vampire novels always bring this special kind of excitement with them. Because even though there are general rules about vampires (drinking blood and supernatural abilities), every author brings something new in his/her portrayal of these paranormal creatures. And I was very excited to discover Sylvain Reynard's unique take at vampires. Will he present sparkling vampires (Twilight), traditional ones who cannot enter house until they are invited (Sookie Stackhouse) or complex troubled and family oriented ones (All Souls Trilogy)? I am not going to spoil this for you but I have to say that result was very satisfying.

It's not a secret that I'm huge fan of Sylvain Reynard's writing based on my love for his Gabriel's Inferno series. His writing style is distinctive, flawless and lyrical. And it was all proved once again in this novel.

"No one deserves mercy. Not deserving it is what makes it mercy."

Even within paranormal genre, Sylvain Reynard pursues profound topics and offers his readers plenty of things to think about. This is exactly what distinguishes Sylvain Reynard's novels from other novels and what makes him one of my favorite authors.

However, I didn't end up being connected to and touched by these characters as I hoped I would. Author didn't provide enough information about nature of main protagonists so some actions and decisions made by the Prince and Raven seemed to be out of their character and disrupted the flow of the story. Overall, characters development felt somehow unnatural and never properly explained. Worst of all, second part of the book focused heavily on romance and I just found it weak and unsatisfactory. It lacked chemistry and the kind of intensity that would make me cheer for the couple.

But all my issues aside, I liked mysterious and supernatural aspects of this book. It was enjoyable read and I definitely plan on reading the sequel.

WARNING: The Raven contains HUGE spoilers from Gabriel's Inferno series. So if you haven't read this series yet and plan to do so in the future, I would suggest staying away from The Florentine series for now.

ARC provided by publisher as an exchange for honest review

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Wendy's Thoughts says

4 Finding Your Match, No Matter Where it Leads Stars * * * *

Few years ago my terrific friend Shurn and I embarked on a reading binge...and one of the series we read together was the **Gabriel Series**. She had read the first two, loved them and was excitedly awaiting the much anticipated third book. She was thrilled to find out I had not read any of them yet and proceeded to schedule a buddy read like no other I had had.

If any of you know Shurn, then you know how incredibly bright, sarcastic and fun she is...and reading the Reynard books with her were some of the best times I ever had reading. We were on our cells texting constantly and she named me the "Naughty Nancy Drew" because I kept figuring things out way ahead of schedule and she would have to bite her tongue and say wait and see. Needless to say, we had a blast.

This is my history with Reynard. During my reading of the third Gabriel book, I sensed his desire to finish up this series and move on...and it was in the third book he planted a seed and groomed his readers to be interested subconsciously with a mysterious character, William York.

It is with this William York, Reynard was able to bring many of his loyal fans to his new desire, Paranormal Genre. Here in this series we are taken on a journey of discovery by our heroine but also on a path for William York as well.

I am not your usual reader of this sort. I bring no Twilight or True Blood reading experience to the table. (did watch True Blood for the first few seasons though) So I had no real expectations of "how it should go or read".

What I did know was the way Reynard takes writing to another level...this author incorporates history, Mythology, masterpieces of the art and literature world fusing them all together, making the reading an

exploration of more than its end goal of HEA. It can be an awakening of dormant interests stimulating the reader to go forward and look into the subjects referenced later...cause a full growth of knowledge. It happened to me with the past series and once again with this installment of the new one.

It is at its base a very simple story in many ways. A woman sees another person being hurt; she cannot idly let it continue and does everything possible to stop it with no thought of her own safety. The thugs turn on her and she is about to be their new target. Another far away but with the ability to see what is happening, decides against everything he believes in and has done in the past, rescues the woman destroying the thugs. It should be no surprise, these two somehow start a relationship of sorts and in the end after many conflicts and secrets revealed end up loving each other for who they are.

Sounds pretty simple, right....

Well, here is the real deal... this has the Prince of Florence, William York...a Vampire of the Ages be the rescuer and the damsel in distress is Raven Wood, a woman who has reinvented herself and finally found happiness in Florence. She is not the cliché of "Stunning with a body Victoria's Secret" would want to walk the runway. She is a woman who experienced an accident causing her leg to twist outward and the need of a cane to walk. She is normal in body and covers herself with clothing that masks any figure at all. She has come to terms with who she is and how she looks to others. She has an understanding that all of us have what would be called "disabilities"... just some are more easily seen by others...

Hers is only on the outside, for this Raven is strong in her core of convictions. She sees clearly what her life looks like; although in the past she had a couple of "liaisons"...neither were what she knows of true love...she has set aside the idea, for she will not take pity or any other of those feeling directed to her.

This Raven is accomplished in Art Restoration. She studied and came to Florence with the hope of working on pieces which the world should see clearly. She is now working at the Uffizi Gallery. There she removes the veil of time covered on these works, bring out the true glory of what was seen all those generations ago...the sight of what the artist saw while creating. It is a long process; minute movement and detailed work so as not to harm the paint under the layers of varnish. It is something to treasure and the hours are some of the most beloved by Raven.

For she is of the understanding true beauty should be shared, not hidden away and it is this determination to make it so which plays heavily in this tale.

William Wood is unique on to himself. He carries the burden of being "changed" hundreds of years ago and with this increased strength comes certain abilities he keeps secret from all who know him. His existence, his power has followed the sands of time and he has been the Prince of Florence ruling with a tight hold. There have been times of revolt... others have tried to overtake him... but he has fought them back and won.... but he is ever vigilant and does not leave himself open to the possibility of betrayal. This irks many of his kind... and a beginning of internal threat is brewing.

These two meet under the dire circumstances I described earlier. She acting as she has a history of doing; being the protector of the underdog, the one to run and look to save, protect and fight off whatever cruelty she sees happening to others with no thought to herself or her safety.

A rare individual... one the Prince has not experienced for hundreds of years...one that brings to mind a time when he could have acted differently, could have stopped harm to another and he was not able to... these are the reasons for him to save a human, this human from her fate....and even in the underworld...every action

has a reaction changing the course of fates.

This book is layered as I said with amazing references to classic art, literature and all of the places in Florence. The detail and feeling of current times with the traditions of ancient through William was felt all the way through. Reynard likes to infuse his writings with sly humor and his use of Raven's quotes for the GodFather are only a sample of it.

The relationship between Raven and William takes some leap of faith, as he is firmly planted in his ideals and she has her mind set on what she thinks is right and just. She is written to be strong, capable as she is and comfortable with her own skin and primarily she is. Yet there were times, I felt she was not acting as if a real person would...acting as if the changes and situations involving her were too much to ignore or chock up to whatever. It could be a reader's view rather than the one experiencing it which made me feel this way.

These two grow through knowing each other...just like any other couple..but with the add complexity of their circumstances. The romance was there, however, the coupling had more of artistry than a raw feel. They wanted each other, but it was the emotional longing which felt more powerful.

There was also a political/human under-story... using the case of these beings beings tormented and hunted while all they wanted was to be able to live on their own.

I thoroughly enjoyed the ride and will be front and center asking for The Shadow when it comes out next year...Reynard has made a case for the readers to remain loyal through the end.

~~~~~ **Before Reading** ~~~~~

*You know when NetGalley teases you with,*

*"Click here and maybe your wish will come true" for certain books?*

*Well, I clicked for The Raven by Sylvain Reynard and La de Da, it seems I won the lottery for it.*

*Now, the book has been out and Reynard readers have loved it...and with the upcoming sequel The Shadow releasing in Feb 2016...it makes sense to have this promoted to prime everyone for the next part.*

*Since my chances of going to Florence, Italy in Real Life does not seem to be on my agenda at this time...I am going to take up the offer from Reynard...and go there through this author's exploits.*

*Wish me luck... I promise to stay out of Dark Alleys....*

*A gifted copy was provided by The Berkley Publishing Group via NetGalley for an honest review.*

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☆ Bianca ☆ BJ's Book Blog ☆ says

The Prince and The Raven connect our beloved Gabriel Series to Sylvain's brand new paranormal Florentine Series.

The Prince is a Vampire. An about 800 year old Vampire who rules the city of Florence.  
(Every Italian city is ruled by a Prince - and then there's an Italian King too...but we will learn about all that and more in The Prince & The Raven)

How are the non-paranormal Professor Emerson and his wife connected to the Vampire Prince, you ask?  
Remember Gabriel's beloved Botticelli illustrations? He gave them to the Uffizi museum for a showing. But the Prince... he wants them. Because they have been stolen from him over a hundred years ago.  
And he hates Gabriel for possessing them. Enough to want to kill him.  
But fortunately for the Emersons, the Prince is disturbed in this goal by a group of enemy Vampires who are trying to kill him.

All that ^^^ happened in THE PRINCE.

Now, it's two years later and The Prince is done with his little war with the Venetians, and now all is back to how it's supposed to be. And now that the Emersons are back in town, he finally has the opportunity to kill them - for owning his beloved illustrations.  
But, again, something, or rather someone, comes between him and the Emersons.

### **Raven Wood.**

A nice, chubby, not very pretty girl, with a bad leg - who works in the Uffizi, restoring art.  
One night she comes upon a homeless man being attacked by a bunch of drunken idiots. And because she interferes, the bad guys' attention is on her now. Seconds before they can rape and possibly kill her, she is miraculously rescued by a dark stranger, but that's all she knows, until she wakes up 10 days later ready to go to work.  
Only she thinks it's the next morning. And the worst - or best thing about it all...  
Her bad leg is not bad anymore. She's not chubby anymore - she's pretty.  
She has no idea what could've happened - she doesn't believe in the supernatural, she's a scientist. But because she's late for work, she hurries to the museum without giving her new looks another thought, only to find the museum surrounded by police. Because the precious Botticelli Illustrations have been stolen - 10 days ago - the night she disappeared.  
Now she's suspect number 1.  
Because the police can't prove anything, they let her go.  
But she can't give up. She needs to clear her name. She needs to find out what happened to those amazing illustrations, and she needs to understand why she's changed so drastically in only 10 days. Was she somehow drugged? And who is this mysterious William York who she's hearing talk about in connection with the Illustrations???

Then there's also Professor Emerson, who is trying everything to find out who stole his illustrations.  
And of course The Prince. He still wants to kill the Professor, and he feels that he might've made a mistake in rescuing Raven. She might smell like the sweetest nectar on the planet, and he might even start to feel a tiny bit of his lost humanity again - but lots and lots of problems will come up for him and her, now that he's in her life.

"I'm no one special."

"That's where you're wrong."

Plus one of his 'friends' and council-members; Aoibhe [A-vah] - she wants him. She wants to be his partner, so that, once he's dead, she can take over the city. Because he will die one day - his kind can only live for so long... and he's verrrrry old already.

**What will happen to The Prince & Raven?**

**What happened to Raven when she was young?**

**Will she be able to light the Prince's long-dead heart on fire?**

**What will happen to Gabriel & Julianne?**

**Will everybody die at the end? o.O**

**Or will there be a horrible Cliffhanger?**

**I'm not telling you that of course ?**

*I don't want to spoil too much ?*

*well, there's not really a Cliffhanger - well maybe there kinda is...but not a really bad one ?*

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Great new series!!!

First I have to say that I'm not really a fan of supernatural books. But since I love Sylvain's Gabriel series and Gabriel has a little part in here too, I really wanted to read this.

And I really enjoyed it. It was even better than I expected, after reading the introduction novella.

It's not like all those vampire books or tv-shows you always see. We don't have guys running around with blood dripping all over their faces, no bloody fights all the time. It's a real classy story. It's about love, and pain and loss and the past and the future. About Art and the city of Florence. There's suspense and intrigue and mystery and romance. And it's so wonderfully written by Sylvain - he has this amazing writing-style that's just so different from other books ?

Even though the Prince is a bit of a bad guy (mostly because he wants to kill our beloved Gabriel ?) we still really like him. We want him to get a happy ever after - preferably with Raven.

There were some moments where we feel really sad for him - for whatever he went through in his past - back when he was still a human. The dreams and hopes he had ....

There was a time when he would have done anything to have a wife and a child. That possibility had been stolen from him.



And Raven, she's a really great person too. Terribly nice to just everybody - even strangers on the street. She's been through bad things too in her younger years.... we slowly find out more about her as the story goes along.

The Prince & Raven would be so perfect for each other - they both love art more than anything. And they're horribly attracted to each other - but there are so much problems standing between them. The least of all is him being a non-human ? But we wish and hope that they will fight their way through everything and have a chance at a happy life together.... Even though they both say that love is not something they ever wanted or thought they could have - they do want it. Just like everybody else, they don't want to spend the rest of their lives alone.

what he craved most, however, was a lively mind and a noble soul. Someone with whom he could talk about art and beauty.

... the way Sylvain writes and explains everything, and the beautiful background of Florence and all that beautiful Art ... The Raven was such an amazingly beautiful story. Suspensy, sexy, romantic, frustrating, dangerous and dark.

I just loved it. I couldn't put it down.

Now I can't wait for the next book in the series!!!!!! I need to know what will happen to William & Raven next - and of course we want to see the Emersons again ?

***If you loved THE GABRIEL SERIES and EVEN if you're not a HUGE fan of vampYres - you need to read the FIRST BOOK IN THE Florentine Series - IT'S AMAZING!!!! ?***

I can totally see this series as a TV show - set in this beautiful city, with sexy Professors & Vampires -  
#BringItOnKevinWilliamson

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**Karen says**

**5 STARS**

“I didn't know what darkness was until I lost you.”

I was a huge fan of the Gabriel's Inferno series. Yes, a Professor Emerson groupie. So I don't know why I didn't dive right into this when it was released back in February. Something about the description just held me back. Well, I'm here to say, I've finally taken the plunge and my only regret is that I have to wait for the next book in the series to be released. Here is the plot review.

Raven Wood spends her days at Florence's Uffizi Gallery restoring fine works of Renaissance art. But an innocent walk home after an evening with friends changes her life forever. When she intervenes in the senseless beating of a homeless man, his attackers turn on her, dragging her into an alley. Raven is only semi-conscious when their assault is interrupted by a cacophony of growls followed by her attacker's screams. Mercifully, she blacks out, but not before catching a glimpse of a shadowy figure who whispers to her...

*Cassita vulneratus.*

When Raven awakes, she is inexplicably changed. She returns to the Uffizi, but no one recognizes her and more disturbingly, she discovers that she's been absent an entire week. With no recollection of the events leading up to her disappearance, Raven also learns that her absence coincides with one of the largest robberies in Uffizi history – the theft of a set of priceless Botticelli illustrations. When the baffled police force identifies her as its prime suspect, Raven is desperate to clear her name. She seeks out one of Florence's wealthiest and elusive men in an attempt to uncover the truth about her disappearance. Their encounter leads Raven to a dark underworld whose inhabitants kill to keep their secrets...

I don't know how I missed it, but I was completely caught off guard by the whole premise of this series. I guess that's what happens when you go in blind, without reading any reviews or book summaries. And I'm glad I didn't, because I might have put it off longer.

I knew it was connected to the Gabriel's Inferno series, so I definitely was not expecting the supernatural theme. But I have to say, I was sucked in right from the beginning, and completely entranced.

”No one deserves mercy. Not deserving it is what makes it mercy.”

The writing was impeccable as usual with Reynard’s books. The setting...Florence Italy. A beautiful romantic city. Birthplace of the Renaissance. A mythical playground of art and passion. A perfect setting for our Prince to rule.

“I am about to bring you into the underworld, Persephone. Can you be brave?”

There was also an interesting moral twist woven into the storyline. A definition of *beauty*, as it defines the soul. Which leads me to my only complaint. Raven is disabled from a childhood accident, and when she’s offered an opportunity to cure her ailment, she declines... why? Who wouldn’t take that offer? There was NO reason not to. Well, who knows, maybe that will change in book 2. I would have been all over that shit... like right away. Dumb girl.

Otherwise I liked her character. She is an innocent. A protector of the weak. She appears to be one herself, but is finding out that she is stronger than she thinks.

“Noah released the raven and the raven returned. If I were able to hope, I’d hope you would return to me.”

William York is definitely the elusive underworld character that you would never mind stalking you. No mind that he’s a (view spoiler) I say bring it on Billy!

“You are my greatest virtue and my deepest vice.”

I always love the art history that Reynard throws into his stories. Botticelli being the focus here.

"Raven." His voice was hoarse. "If I were capable of loving anyone, it would be you."

Overall, I was captivated. Loved the book. Can't wait for the next installment in the series.

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### Ellen ♦ Book Bellas ♦ says

A lush, sensual, erotic and suspenseful story that is at once poignant and dangerous. Another must-read from SR and easily one of my top reads of 2015!!

To say that I was ecstatic to read this book is an understatement.

The Raven has everything I love about Sylvain Reynard's writing and more. Lyrical, erotic, sensual and mysterious, The Raven begins another addictive series with the introduction of Raven and the Prince. This book is a must-read!!

Professor Emerson and his wife do appear here, but Raven and the Prince are themselves insanely fascinating. Even if you are not a huge fan of paranormal stories, this book is a must read for the thrilling story and lush, intensely sexual scenes. We are introduced to the Prince, leader of the City of Florence, who is at once cold and calculating but beautiful in his own right. He cannot stay away from Raven and feels compelled to help her again and again. He sees in her virtue and goodness, and she awakens long-dormant feelings that he never believed he could have, even at his own peril.

**"I'm afraid that trouble is not what you do. Trouble is what you are."**

Raven is an unlikely heroine and I fell in love with her! She is damaged goods, inside and out, and her painful history is hinted at and then ultimately explained. She is an extremely sympathetic character and I cannot wait to read more about her in the next book. The Prince, too, is surprised at his attraction to her; might she lead him to redemption and true love?

**"In many ways, we are the most perfect match. We see each other as we are, but neither of us views the other as broken."**

I am not articulate enough to adequately describe the virtues of this book! Part art history lesson, part paranormal romance, part erotica, it is a must read for all fans of Gabriel's Inferno - and even for those readers new to the series. This book can be read as a standalone but is best understood after having read the GI series. The Raven is engrossing, suspenseful, sexy and yes, humorous. Do not miss this book! And while it has a fabulous conclusion, there is much, much more to come for these characters and I cannot wait for more!!

Favorite quote:

**"You are my greatest virtue and my deepest vice."**

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## **Nina Bocci says**

Things I know:

1. I'm lucky because I beta read this.
2. I liked this BETTER than GI/GR/GRed and I have mad love for those books.
3. You'll fall in love / lust with the male lead. Dare I say, he's possibly hotter than Gabriel. POSSIBLY
4. The way the two series are linked is so genius that I hate SR a little bit for being so smart and awesome for thinking it up.
5. Raven is KICK ASS.
6. I honestly can't wait for you guys to read this so I have someone to talk about it with.
7. February isn't that far away. ;)
8. You should totally pre-order it.

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## **Nancy's Romance Reads says**

### **5+ POWERFUL & FASCINATING STARS!**

This book was INCREDIBLE!! So incredible that it blew me away like I never thought possible. That's because this is a paranormal romance and I don't usually read in this genre so for me to love this book so much, it felt like I'd been enlightened by a totally new kind of romance-world. A world that in this book is beautifully detailed and filled with symbolism, strength, darkness, seduction, but ultimately filled with bravery and *hope*. I just loved every second of this *powerful and fascinating* romance and how it took me places and made me *feel* the story so strongly.

*“Cassita vulneratus. Now the wounded lark had been healed and he was the vulnerable one.”*

This book is set in the city of Florence, Italy, a beautiful city that is well known for its remarkable structures and rich art history which are all so well illustrated in the story. So much so that from the moment I started reading I felt immediately transported there and I was able to admire up-close both the city's lights and dangerous *darkness*. The darkness comes from an underworld that lives secretly in the city, a world of supernatural beings (vampires) that feed from humans to survive and from which their ruler is called the Prince. I first met this enigmatic character in the prequel of this novel (named after him) and I got totally obsessed with him. His strength, his ruthlessness, his ruling power, and all the mystery behind his story really left me fascinated. Now having read *The Raven* and learned about his true story, it makes me love his character so much more because now I can confirm what I felt all along since I read *The Prince*, that the hero of this story and the vampire ruler of Florence indeed has a *heart*.

***“A bird in a cage is never as beautiful as a bird that is free, Cassita. You’ve been wounded enough. I won’t add to your wounds.”***

This story starts with an attack that crosses the paths of Raven Wood and the Prince changing their lives forever. For Raven, the aftermath of that incident brings her into a dark, frightening, and very dangerous world she never thought existed. It is that world and her connection to the Prince that continues to put her in a great deal of danger but just like the first time, the Prince decides to protect her despite all the threats that may come to him for doing so. Why do it then? Well, there's something about Raven he can't stay away from, something pure and beautiful that starts to awake feelings in him he had long forgotten and that's how their risky yet captivating romance begins. . .

***“My good deed will be exposed, along with my weakness.”***

***“What weakness?” Raven whispered, unable to look away.***

***“You.”***

I LOVED the Prince in this book. His character would not stop fascinating me more and more as I kept reading. Perhaps it was because he's supposed to be bad, evil, the complete anti-hero and at times he was exactly that, but deep inside there was so much more to him than just a ruthless vampire. He's powerful, cultivated, intelligent, handsome, and still preserves some level of benevolence in him. Moreover, he carries painful secrets that only start to surface when Raven's kind heart magically touches his forcing him to then figure out if what he feels for her is simply desire or something more that may be worth risking everything.

***“What do you hope for?”***

***He frowned. “That I wouldn’t be condemned to an eternity of empty darkness.”***

***Raven cringed at his words. “Is that what you have?”***

***“Not exactly.” His expression grew guarded. “Somehow the darkness recedes when you’re near.”***

As strong as the hero of this story is, as *strong* is the amazing heroine as well. Yes, Raven was indeed remarkable, she not only changes the Prince's life by bringing hope into this world but it is the way she does it with her bravery and good-hearted personality that makes her character so compelling to me. I just loved her with the Prince, aside from the seduction dance they had going, she was always sweet, curious, vulnerable, and even stubborn with him that it was clear she was going to challenge him in every way when it came to feelings. Additionally, she is one of the most selfless characters I've read about and for that she was more than perfect for the Prince.

***“She’d entered his life like a Trojan horse and brought mercy with her. ”***

This book for sure is one of my favorites now for its incredible plot but also for the beautiful and unique way

the story is told. Sylvain Reynard's writing is just so elegant, smart, poetic, and lyrical that with every book I read by him I'm always amazed by how deeply he draws me into the story. Actually, I'm even more amazed by his writing now because one: it made me decide to read this romance from this genre I wasn't familiar with, and two: it was successful at making me fall in love with this paranormal story just as much (or even more than) as my other favorite contemporary romances. So for that and so much more *The Raven* is an absolute MUST-READ from me and I cannot wait for the sequel which I can already feel is going to be just as amazing as this one. ♥

*He pressed his lips to hers. "You've ensnared me, Cassita," he whispered. "I've never been less eager to escape."*

If you enjoy paranormal romances I totally encourage you to give this story a try, it's so well written. Or if you're new to this genre like me, I'd say go for it. I loved this story so much that I think many contemporary romance readers will be able to enjoy it too. Also, I mentioned before this novel has a prequel but you don't really have to read it to understand the story in *The Raven*. *The Prince* is just a nice introduction to our hero and his world so I'd say is totally optional but really worth considering. Furthermore, if you're new to this author I cannot recommend enough his contemporary romance series the Gabriel's Inferno, that story is also too incredible to be missed. ;)

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**Happy reading! ;)**

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