



By a Thread

Jennifer Estep

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When killing people is your job, there's no such thing as a vacation.

Then again, how often does an assassin live long enough to enjoy her retirement? In this line of work, you either get lucky or you get dead. And since I destroyed my nemesis Mab Monroe a few weeks ago, all of Ashland's lowlifes are gunning to make a name for themselves by taking out the lethal Spider--me, Gin Blanco. So I'm leaving behind my beloved barbecue joint and heading south with my baby sister, Bria, to cool my heels in a swanky beach town. Call it a weekend of fun in the sun. But when a powerful vampire with deadly elemental magic threatens an old friend of Bria's, it looks like I'll have to dig my silverstone knives out of my suitcase after all. Complicating matters further is the reappearance of Detective Donovan Caine, my old lover. But Donovan is the least of my problems. Because this time, the danger is hot on my trail, and not even my elemental Ice and Stone magic may be enough to save me from getting buried in the sand--permanently.

By a Thread Details

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From Reader Review By a Thread for online ebook

Maja (The Nocturnal Library) says

Fans of the series won't be disappointed at all.

Now that Mab Monroe is finally gone and Gin's identity has become common knowledge, every aspiring criminal out there is trying to make a name for himself by killing the (in)famous Spider. Sophia Devereaux is busier than ever, what with cooking for all the people who come to the Pork Pit to stare at Gin *and* getting rid of the bodies Gin leaves behind in their back alley. So when Finn suggests a vacation for the four of them (Gin, Owen, Bria and himself), Gin jumps at the chance to leave town, hoping things would blow over by the time she gets back. She's also excited about spending some time with her newly found baby sister, but Gin is well aware that things rarely work out the way she wants them to. Thinking that she'll really be able to enjoy an uninterrupted vacation would be downright naïve, and let's face it, Spider may be many things, but naïve she's not. Fortunately, she never goes anywhere without her five Silverstone knives – the ones Owen made especially for her. She'll need them to fight a foe even worse than Mab Monroe. It's a shame that she can't use her knives to resolve emotional issues as well, especially when her former lover, the much despised Donovan Caine, comes back into the picture.

The beginning of *By a Thread* was a little hard for me. I was disappointed in Gin, especially when it came to her attitude towards her baby sister. She carried all this guilt and allowed Bria to make her feel not good enough, making the same mistakes she'd made with Donovan Caine. I'm not used to Gin feeling so helpless and inadequate and when she kept beating herself up over things she had no way to control, it was infuriating and really hard to read. I'm glad to say that there was a reason for this and that it became apparent in the second half of the book.

I know this is a strange thing for me to say, but I'm normally not a big fan of fight scenes. There is just something messy about them that doesn't appeal to me at all. Fortunately, the ones written by Estep are among the rare exceptions. She writes these scenes with such clarity, describing just one thing at a time, thus allowing me to picture them vividly in my head, and yet somehow making them rich, eventful and extremely interesting.

To me, Mab Monroe was never especially scary, and I'm glad to be rid of her. Her actions never once sent chills down my spine and I was never truly worried about Gin when she was fighting her or the ones Mab sent after her. But the vampire who feeds on elementals to absorb their powers was a very convincing villain. I knew, of course, that Gin will make it out eventually, but I was unsure of how damaged she'll be. Major points to Ms. Estep for that.

Old fans, I promise you won't be disappointed. And those of you who haven't even started the series, try the first book. Jennifer Estep maintains the same level of quality throughout the series. If the first one works for you (as it did for me) the rest surely will, too.

A copy of this book was kindly provided by the author for review purposes.

For this review and more, please visit [The Nocturnal Library](#)

Denisa says

3.5 I liked it, just not as much as the last one...

Ok, maybe it's not the best idea to read books in a series one after the other. You get too used to the characters and you don't see them as special as they actually are (and I know Gin is, I love her and it's rare that I like a female character as much as I like her).

Still, well... the others were a bit more interesting.

If you liked the previous books though, read it! It's definitely worth it!

Naomi 🐨 says

This was terrific :-) One of my favourite series ❤?

Jo says

08/06/2016 Buddy read with my bloodthirsty friends over at BB&B because we love our weekly Wednesday BRs. Let the fun never end!

Gin is so tired of fighting all the lowlifes in Ashland, who has decided to makes a name for themselves by taking out the famous Spider who killed Mab Monroe. So when Finn convinces her she needs a vacation, she agrees.

Together with Bria her baby sister, they decided on a little holiday at a very nice beach town, where Bria's best friend owns a restaurant. But Gin can never escape trouble, and when Bria's friend is threatened by the powerful vampire Randall Dekes, she once again offers to come to the rescue. Because let's face it, taking out the bad guys is what Gin does best.

But Gin might have underestimated how very powerful Dekes is, and this time she will have to depend on all her assassin skills to defeat the enemy.

POSSIBLE SPOILERS AHEAD

I was a little wary about this book because Spider's Revenge was so fantastic I just couldn't see how the author could top that. BUT once again Jennifer Estep surprised me. I really enjoyed this book. The action was not as riveting as the previous book, which was expected, however in this book we had a lot of Bria and Gin moments, which has been a long time coming.

I have liked Gin's little sister so far in this series, however there were many moments where I wanted to slap her. In a way she viewed Gin the same way as the jerk Detective Donovan Cain. They see themselves as superior to Gin, thinking her evil because she is an assassin and them pure as snow because they try to uphold the law. In this instalment Bria was forced to see herself through the way Donovan treats Gin. Yes

you heard right, Asshole Caine made an appearance again. And although I never wanted to see this jerk again, I was VERY happy with how things turned out in this book. Gin got some closure and by the end she started to stand up for herself against those who judge her, Donovan got a much needed punch, and what a beautiful moment that was :-D. And Bria got her eyes opened.

I must say the villain in this book was very evil, and it was very interesting to learn more about how vampires become more powerful when they drink elementals blood. And it was a lot of fun to see Gin fighting without her powers. She is definitely not a kickass assassin just because of her elemental powers :-D

“You’re mine,” Owen said in a fierce whisper, the heat in his eyes as bright as the scorching sun. “Not his. Mine. Only mine. Always mine.”

I also loved the sweet moments between Owen and Gin. He’s such an understanding guy, and I just love him.

This was a much needed and great addition to a very kickass series that I’ve come to love.

Cheryl La Pa says

Loving this series!

Gin decides to get away from it all and have a few days away with Bria, Owen and Finn. Sounds romantic and relaxing but it turns out to be anything but the idyllic holiday that Gin so desperately wanted. But it does give Bria and Gin an opportunity to work through their issues, and Gin finally gets to sort out her feelings for Donovan, the ex who broke her heart.

I laughed at Finn's witty remarks and Owen's pointed comments, and loved Gin's kick ass attitude. Another great instalment in the series and can't wait to jump into the next one.

XX Sarah XX (former Nefarious Breeder of Murderous Crustaceans) says

Actual rating: 3.5 going on 4

And with this instalment this series is finally back on track! I almost gave up on Elemental Assassin because of the constant recaps and repetitions (it felt like reading the same chapter over and over again) but held on tight because I love Gin's character. I'm so glad I did! Things had gotten a little better with Spider's Revenge and Mab's demise so I was curious to find out what would happen now that the original story arc was over and done with.

By a Thread was highly entertaining, mainly because of the change of setting, different plotline and interesting character development. There is still a lot of action going on (it's a bit more gory too, which is something I have been waiting for since book 1!) but this instalment focuses more on emotions and character growth. With Mab gone the dynamics have changed and the relationships between the various characters are shifting and evolving. Gin has to adapt to this new world without Mab, with her real identity out in the open,

which makes for some interesting developments.

The way Bria treats Gin in this instalment is really heartbreaking. I understand that they didn't have the same up bringing and that they are on opposite sides of the track but still, why be such a bitch to her sister who has been saving her ass over and over again. Channelling your inner Donovan Caine much Bria? All that self-righteousness is making me sick. Anyway, it seems that things start looking up a bit at the end of the book so I guess we'll just have to wait and see what happens with Bria.

And now for the fun part: Donovan Caine finally getting what he'd been deserving since he walked out on Gin. Eat your heart out you conceited, smug ass! Oh I just **love** the conversation he has with Gin at Cassie's place and the way she sets the record straight with him. (view spoiler) And having Owen playing Mr Macho Man everytime Caine was around really was priceless. Fun fun fun!

By a Thread is probably my favourite instalment in the series so far. Gin has come a long way and the influence of her new-found friends and family (and of Owen of course) is changing the way she sees the world. She's still as ruthless a killer as she used to be but she definitely is softening up and allowing herself to have more feelings towards others. As much as I love her character, I still think its potential is not used to its full extent. She could be another Kate Daniels or Elise Kavanagh but in reality I don't find that she is as ruthless and cold-blooded as Estep would have us think. Okay, she cuts throats and everything but it always feels to me like something is missing. Something that would turn her into a real badass. Oh well, I still like her character a lot, if only because she is a knife-handling assassin.

One last minor quibble about this book: can we FINALLY drop the "little white pills" thing already?! WE KNOW Gin takes them. WE KNOW she always wants to use condoms for extra protection. WE GET IT. ENOUGH! Thank you.

Off to read Widow's Web.

Sharon ☺ is an emotional book junkie ☺ says

After the events regarding Mab in *Spider's Revenge*, Gin is now having to deal with other lowlifes on a daily basis and it's taking its toll. Finn tells her she needs to go on vacation and thinking it might be a good way to spend some quality time with Bria, they head off to Bria's hometown.

~*~*~*~*~*

Okay...I finally get the whole Donovan debacle. Not that I was wanting Gin to get back together with him especially after getting to know Owen but I'm not sure if I was expecting this! I really do love all the emotional drama but I think this was more like a train wreck. It was sooo hard to read about but I do love the way Gin handled things and Thank God Owen was sooo amazing...even when he got jealous!

I was really happy with the way this story drew me in. I'm not sure why I was hesitant considering I really enjoyed the last book. Maybe I felt since things had tied up so nicely, we wouldn't get any of that fantastic tension and drama. Well, I'm glad it didn't pan out that way.

Randall Dekes as a villain was marvelous...cunning, conniving and totally evil. Yikes...he makes the hairs on

my arms stick up! Reading about him being Mr. Suave, Mr. Rich and Mr. Man-Who-Has-Everything did not prepare me for what a psycho he is...that is, until we read about some of his collections. Still, I was not prepared for what he did in the library. I had figured out how he got his powers but I couldn't figure out how Gin could get away.

Speaking of Gin, while I don't think she deserved what happened, she definitely needed to be knocked on her butt a bit. She was not listening to Fletcher, much less her own self and things got out of hand. I also think what happened help turn things around with Bria. Even though Bria saw that Gin was willing to help out, I don't think she understood to what lengths.

I love all the gang together...they've just come together so well but I'm nervous especially because I've heard some things. I'm just trying to put that out of my mind and enjoy their moments.

I did get a little teary eyed when Bria and Gin were talking before they left to go back to Ashland but it was sooo good. About time!!

I do love seeing the growth in Gin...she's becoming more open to letting her feelings out and cracking that hard shell she worked so hard to build up. The good thing is that she's figuring out she can have it both ways.

~*~~*~~*~~*~

Overall...another great addition to the series. I promise to be more open minded to what other bad guys will show up and to where things will go with all the characters....*I promise!!*

Favorite quotes:

- ♥ "I love you too much for that, Gin. I do now, and I always will."
 - ♥ "You're mine," Owen said in a fierce whisper, the heat in his eyes as bright as the scorching sun. "Not his. *Mine*. Only mine. Always mine."
 - ♥ "Wow," I whispered when we were through. "I'll have to make you jealous more often."
 - ♦ "Never trust a vampire who collects dolls."
 - ♥ "You're my sister first, and that's all that matters to me."
-

Terri ♥ (aka Mrs. Christian Grey) says

Quick review

Cover: Love it.

Rating NC-17 for the sexiness of it all.

Thumbs Up 5 shiny stars

Overall: Fantastic read!

Characters: Awesome!

Plot: Love the surprise and the twist in the story.

Page Turner: Yes

Series Cont.? Yes, absolutely.

Recommend Yes

Book Boyfriend: Owen

SUMMARY (50 word or less)

Fantastic read and a total home run. Estep brought us back to all the reasons why we love this series. We get one heck of a surprise earlier on in the story and from there Gin finds herself in trouble we haven't yet seen. Looking forward to the next installment.

Check out my full review and pic of my book boyfriend at my blog link below.

<http://mybookboyfriend.blogspot.com/2...>

AUDIO REVIEW

Lauren Fortgang does a wonderful job with this series as usual. I don't think I could ever listen to anyone else do Gin. She has that character nailed. Lauren doesn't have a wide array of voices she uses in the series, however I never get confused as to who is speaking. Again, Lauren is as fantastic as the writing for this series. Love it.

Katyana says

Well. This one was honestly disappointing to me. I'll admit that the ending was good, and did a lot to salvage the book, but I was pretty irritated for the first 200 pages.

The biggest flaw in this book is Bria.

I know that she was never thrilled with Gin being an assassin, but she did make her peace with it. So in this book, when Bria suddenly morphed into a female Donovan Caine, I was pretty shocked. I thought it was needless drama in the Gin/Bria relationship, and was way out of character for her. It made her seem like an idiot. The fact is, with their history, there is plenty of other drama that is in-character and way more interesting that the author could have tapped in this book. The two of them just becoming friends, now that the Mab situation is over, would have been fun to explore.

And there was a shitty additional side-effect to the Bria-as-moral-police development: it made me disbelieve her relationship with Finn. Which is too bad, because I thought their relationship developed beautifully over the last few books. But it occurred to me, during one of Bria's bitchy, self-righteous, condescending rants: how can she be in love with Finn? If Gin is the very devil herself, doesn't Finn at least qualify as a demon? So then either she's a hypocrite on top of being a judgmental asshole (as in, it is okay when Finn does it, but not when Gin does), or she has no consistency and is now a flat, 2-dimensional character (which I frankly think is the case).

Look, I get what Estep was trying to do. She was trying to set Bria and Donovan up for this parallel relationship. It was a re-tread, as far as I am concerned. Bria HAD this concern, and got over it when she

showed up at Gin and Owen's Christmas party a few books back. She chose to get over her black-and-white view of the world. The events of the series since then should only have reinforced Bria's view of the world in shades of gray. There is just no reason at all for her to revert to her old self, and then twist into an even more extreme version. It was forced by the author to play against Donovan Caine, and it felt forced. It was a bad call.

And speaking of, if I never saw Donovan Caine again in this series, I would have been MORE than fine with that. Him popping up again was nauseating, to say the least. Him popping up with Bria's best friend/shoulda-been sister-who-is-just-like-an-angelic-version-of-Gin-so-of-course-Donovan-loves-her ... again, **way** too contrived. This whole book felt horribly, horribly contrived.

Really disappointing. I hope this doesn't define the new, post-Mab direction for what *was* one of the best UF series currently running.

Suzanne says

I hate Donovan Caine so much, that having him in this book brought it down a star for me. Gin and her sister and friends go on a "vacation". The fights (especially at the last) were great, and Gin got some closure with a couple of issues, but wow Donovan.....I hope he never reappears.

Wanda says

******2017 Summer Lovin' Reading List******

Can it be? Can Ms. Estep have written an installment of the Elemental Assassin series without repeating herself ad nauseam? It would seem that she can or that an editor finally stepped into the breach. I have raised my star rating by a whole star in appreciation!

I met Ms. Estep at a literary conference this summer and I like her. But I think I know what's going on with all the repetition in her books—she writes at a frantic pace! I think that repeating things filled out those pages in a satisfying way (and there is a belief out there that readers are distractable and need these frequent reminders to keep us on track). Plus, I think repetition is one of her methods of dealing with the world. She was on several panel discussions that I attended, and she said virtually identical things on each and every one of them. She had interesting things to say when someone could get her stirred up a bit, but she didn't allow that to happen very often. Very self-contained, she had obviously scripted some responses and wasn't easily shaken from her script.

This was a satisfying offering in the Gin Blanco saga, as Gin realizes that getting rid of Mab Monroe didn't solve all of her problems. In fact, she has been outed as The Spider and now has to deal with a lot of gossip and regular murder attempts. But Gin can't catch a break even when she goes on vacation—there's an evil vampire making a friend's life difficult and despite how tough Gin thinks she is, she always stands up for the underdog. The villain is a good one (i.e. evil & powerful). Wouldn't you know that Donovan Caine shows his nose again in this book—Gin gets some satisfying closure and Owen gets to strut a bit. I appreciate Gin's circle of friends and comrades—she's no longer the cold loner.

I had thought to quit reading the series after this book, but I may have to amend that plan. This book was such an improvement that I think I will forge onward and see if this non-repetitive thing continues!

Steven says

That's right. She's better off without you. Buh-bye.

Callie deserves better too though.

Maria Dimitrova says

Another awesome buddy read with the bloodthirsty folks at BB&B.

I love Wednesdays! They're not only the middle of the week and mean that I just have to hang on just a bit more before I can indulge in shameless time-wasting during the weekend but also are the day we start our weekly UF buddy reads with the wonderful crew of people that over the last few months have become my friends. So yeah you can say I'm always looking forward to Wednesday. The fact that we're currently reading about one of the most badass heroines in UF is an added bonus :D

WARRNING! Untagged spoilers! Because I can't really talk about my thoughts and emotions without explaining what elicited them in the first place. So if you haven't read the book stop now. If you like spoilers like I do go ahead. It's not that bad but I can't really go and tag every second sentence.

The Big Bad Mab Monroe is finally dead! Hooray! But that has left Gin feeling a bit adrift. And also exposed since pretty much everyone that matters or doesn't know that she's the Spider. So people are flocking at the Pork Pit to gawk at her or try to kill her. And she's grown bone wary. That's a dangerous situation for an assassin, especially one who has a painted target on her forehead. So the wonderful and mischievous Finnegan Lane comes up with the idea of a vacation! Get away from Ashland and all the blood and violence. The merry band is off to explore new territories. Or rather just one - Blue Marsh, Bria's hometown.

Those who haven't read *Thead of Death*, the short story that shows us Mab's funeral, might be surprised by the coldness that seeps from Bria at the beginning of this book. But there's a rift between the sisters now and Gin being unable to deal with emotions or at least verbalising them is at a loss at what to do to fix the damage Mab's torture inflicted on her bond with her sister. Because Bria blames her for what happened. In her head it's all Gin's fault: she didn't save her fast enough, she didn't kill Mab earlier, she was the Spider and because of that Mab wanted to kill her. I can get that torture messes up a person's head but it's not only that. Now that there's no more danger to herself Bria can't come to terms with her sister being an assassin and not giving a damn. So basically Bria is acting like a self-righteous bitch. Does that remind you of someone? Yep, I was strongly reminded of another self-righteous cop under the name of Donovan Caine. Talking about setting the mood because the bastard shows up later. And guess what? He's still a prick.

Gin being Gin can't really go on a normal vacation. So just a few hours after arriving in Blue Marsh she's swinging a chair in a bar fight. Well restaurant fight but it sounds awful. The restaurant is the property of

Callie - Bria's best friend. At first things didn't go well between Gin and Callie. Gin was jealous and as a result acted like a bitch. And I can't really blame her because when you're hurt by someone you love you want to lash out at someone. Doesn't really matter who. But when a couple of thugs come to harass Callie, Gin can't just stand by and let it happen. Especially after they make the mistake of threatening Bria.

Personally I would have been tempted to let them deal after the way Bria treated Gin but apparently Gin is a better person than me. Though in all honesty I wouldn't have been at the scene because I would have blown up in Bria's face and walked off long before that moment. Because lets face it Bria has no one to blame but herself. She could have never went to Ashland, she could have not antagonised Mab herself and all other little things that led to Mab torturing her. And even not going back to Ashland wouldn't have saved her had Mab found out that she's alive since the crazy elemental though that Bria's the one destined to kill her. But she making Gin pay again and again. I was really disappointed. I was hoping that things will be better now that Gin proved that she'd do anything for Bria.

This tension between the two Snow sisters is what triggered the dream sequence featured in this book. It was a particularly strong one because for a change it had nothing to do with Mab and the night Gin's family was murdered. It was one of Fletcher's many lessons. One that Gin had to relearn again. That she's strong in her own right, with or without people backing her up. And that fear kills. Both those lessons played a role later on and help Gin survive yet another impossible situation. But it was the first that resonated most with me. People will hurt you. But you can and have to move on.

Back to the bar fight and its consequences. After disposing of the two goons Gin offered her help to Callie and that's when mister impeccable, the very definition of a saint Detective Donovan Caine walks in. He happens to be Callie's fiance. Poor woman. I really feel bad for her. And as the book progressed I felt even worse because Donovan proved that he is a major a**hole. Needless to say he treated Gin like trash. Later when Callie was in the hands of the bad guys and would have certainly died if Gin hadn't interfered that jerk still had the gall to spew all that nonsense about how bad Gin is for doing what is necessary. I loved how Owen put him in his place EVERY SINGLE TIME he opened his mouth! Oh yes, Owen showed up :) Much to my relief and glee. Sorry I'm not a grown-up enough not to enjoy Donovan's suffering over the fact that Gin has moved on! I relished every single scene of those two together. Owen hanging Donovan's a** to him on a silver plate every damn time and spoiling for a good fight flat out did it for me. Owen getting possessive? I had to go and change my panties :p

This book showed the difference between a functional, healthy relationship and a lust-driven fuck. And I'm so glad that Gin had the good sense to work about keeping what she has with Owen. There was a bit of a false start at the beginning when she didn't tell Owen that Donovan is there but after that Gin was open about everything that had transpired between her and the good detective. The final showdown between the two of them was PRICELESS! Finally all that needed to be said was laid bare and Gin got to (view spoiler) This was the time that Donovan reached a new low. Dude your fiancee, you know the one that was KIDNAPPED while you were lured away like the bloody idiot you are, is less than a hundred feet from you and you (view spoiler) How fucked up is that? And don't let me start on how you found the one woman in the world that's basically Gin without the whole assassinating people to propose to. That's creepy. And pathetic.

The bad guy of this novel is a vampire. He's the Mab Monroe of Blue Marsh. And he actually made Mab look nice and good. Because he was a f*cking psycho. I won't go into details about what made him an extremely dangerous opponent. Instead I'm going to bitch about the way Gin approached this particular assignment. Someone was being really full of herself lately. "I'm the big bad SPider. I killed Mab Monroe. Fear my name! Because I can kill you with ease!" Usually the latest part is true. But as Gin is fond of thinking TIME AND AGAIN *Arrogance will get you every time*. And it almost got her. Gin thought that she's the biggest fish out there and ignored everything Fletcher taught her. And even when her own instincts

started screaming at her that something was terribly wrong she still didn't stop to think. It could have easily cost her her life or something even worse - being kept as a pet right alongside Bria. So Gin's arrogance easily could have condemned both sisters. And knowing Finn, Owen, Sophia and Jo-Jo they would have come swinging in an attempt to rescue them and ended up dead. The one thing I admired about Gin from the start was her reluctance to rely on her magic. And now she had started doing precisely that. It didn't end well and I think Gin learned another lesson or rather relearned another lesson.

And somehow among all the action Bria had an epiphany. She finally understood Gin and how much she's willing to sacrifice for her baby sister. Hearing Bria defend Gin's actions and methods to Donovan was one of the finest things in this book. Having that little heart-to-heart at the end of the book makes me optimistic about the relationship between those two. I'm glad that Gin finally manned up about her feelings and told both Bria and Donovan all that she had hidden away and concealed before. It was time and the only way to start healing.

This book was mostly focused on character growth and the evolution of relationships. But not at the price of action. So I'm happy with it. I was worried at the end of *Spider's Revenge* that with Mab gone things will be less interesting. I'm glad that I was wrong :D

Anna (Bobs Her Hair) says

Lots of good stuff...tension between Bria and Gin, a vacation spot with a bigger badder fish than Mab Monroe, the reappearance of Gin's ex-boyfriend Donovan Caine, and Gin's oh-so-sexy-best-boyfriend-in-the-world Owen, fight scenes, bloodshed, spilled guts, and good food...What's not to like?

*****edited to add full review*****

The Story

After defeating Mab Monroe, the fire elemental responsible to the murder of her mother and big sister, Gin Bianco wants life to return to normal but rumors of her being the deadly assassin named "the Spider" has brought out small-time hoods wanting to kill her. It doesn't help that Gin's relationship with her little sister and police detective Bria Coolidge remains tense.

Finn suggests Gin and her baby sis take a vacation so the sisters drive to Blue Marsh, which is the town where Bria grew up. Their bonding does not go as planned. A vampire elemental is harassing Bria's best friend Callie to sell her restaurant, and Gin has to do what she does best...killing. To add the cherry on top Detective Donovan Caine, Gin's ex-lover, lives in Blue Marsh. To state the situation is complicated is an understatement.

My Thoughts

Throughout the series, we've seen the devastation Mab's murder of Gin's family had on her life. Fortunately, Gin had Fletcher Lane and his son Finn take her in when Fletcher found her at age thirteen scrounging for food. They were her unconventional and substitute family. As the Spider she survived her duel with Mab, killing the fire elemental, and avenging her family she should be living in peace. It's not that easy.

Bria's relationship with Gin is tentative at best, and in this novel little sis is downright insensitive and witchy. She indirectly and almost spitefully wounds Gin with her actions and words. For the first time, I disliked Bria. The positive result is we see Gin at her most vulnerable. We see her longing for the sister she

was once close to, react to the pain of rejection, experience feelings of inadequacy, and see Gin's jealousy for Callie.

The focus of this book is mending broken bonds and healing old wounds. Donovan Caine's strong presence in the book is cathartic. For those readers that are worried about him being a threat to Gin and Owen Grayson's relationship – be at ease. There are some lingering feelings in Gin but she is steadfast in her love for Owen. When Owen arrives at Blue Marsh and sees Donovan he handles the situation with grace and maturity. What happens next between Gin and Owen at the beach is sigh-worthy.

The vampire elemental villain, Randall Dekes, successfully affirms that there are still people in need of the Spider's *pro bono* work. The Elemental Assassin series has life remaining to justify a continuation of books. Overall, I loved the bloody fight scenes, the way Gin kills without the need to talk, Owen's super-sexy-smart-mature loving, Finn's comic relief, and I love how Gin is a badass assassin.

Nit Pick

I don't understand how Bria could be a hypocrite. She struggles to accept Gin's alter-ego but has no issues with her lover Finn, who is Gin's sidekick. He gathers intel for the Spider, participates in the killing, and runs some shady deals in his own business ventures. It doesn't make sense. Am I the only one who noticed this?

Plus, I know where Gin keeps her five silverstone knives. I know what Owen's face looks like. Maybe Gin can trace her finger down his crooked nose and run her tongue along the scar under Owen's chin. Anyway, that is what I would do in her position. Just sayin'.

Memorable Fight Scene

Gin takes on some giants

The giant didn't even get a chance to untangle himself from the tree before I palmed another knife and started in on him. He was half turned toward me, so I couldn't slam my blades into his heart and put him down immediately the way I wanted to, but I cut up the right side of his thick, muscular chest like I was butterflying a slab of meat. The giant screamed and staggered back, but I kept right on going with him, opening his stomach from one side to the other, blood and intestines spilling across the white marble floor. The giant screamed again, his feet going out from under him, and slumped to the floor. I drove my knife into his throat, cutting off his hoarse cries of pain, before yanking it back out. He toppled over and joined the valet on the floor, both of them dead.

Trent stared at me, his eyes flicking around the room as if he was considering whether he wanted to fight or run. He should have run.

...and she never says a word before or during the fight. Cool!

Michelle, the Bookshelf Stalker Queen of the Undead says

Ok, I really gave this another try. I even made it to 70% but I am absolutely bored with it. I no longer find Gin a likable character. The only characters that I truly like are Owen, Finn, and Sophia.

update....

I decided to give the book another chance. Too many people have messaged me regarding how much better this book is than the previous one. So im trusting all of them!

My old ranting below

~~I'm giving up on this series. There was so much I liked so much about this series but I can't do it anymore. To prove my point, fellow readers...take the following test, I bet you can pass with FLYING colors since it is repeated over and over again in all the books.~~

~~Finn is Gin's _____ brother?~~

~~What type of coffee is Finn's favorite?~~

~~How many knives does Gin normally carry and where are they located on her body?~~

~~Come on, admit it, you knew the answers automatically didn't you? This is why I'm stopping. I literally cringe when I see the repetition and that is when I know I no longer want to read this book nor continue with the series.~~

Choko says

***** 3.60 *****

A buddy read with my UF assassins at BB&B

This is the 6th book in the Elemental Assassin Series and we see Gin, an ice and stone elemental, trying to figure out her life after finally getting rid of the evil bitch who had destroyed her family and kept trying to make her and her loved ones lives miserable and shot!!!! You would think that everything would be peaches and cream from here on out, but things are never so simple for Gin and her gang...

It could have been a pleasant, if a tad boring life, tending bar and cooking in the Pork Pit, trying to be friendly with clients and loosing herself in the everyday grind... But once the big bad of the town was gone, a vacuum exists in the underworld leadership and various assassins, bad guys and lowly thugs have decided that to make a name for themselves, best and fastest way to do so is to kill the notorious Spider!!!

After teaching some of those bolder scum a permanent lesson, Gin is tired of killing, tired of always having to watch her back, tired of having a target painted on her face.... On top of all that, Bria and Gin's relationship has hit a rough patch and Gin feels she is growing even further apart instead of closer together... So, the always full of whimsical ideas Fin decides that the best medicine for the situation is a VACATION!!! I am also always for vacations, but there is always the possibility that things could go wrong, and since luck seems to have a grudge against Gin, this is exactly what happens...

Bria introduces all to her best friend growing up, and apart from the jealousy she provokes in Gin for her closeness with her sister, she comes with couple of other complications - Donovan Cain, her ex, and a sadistic Vampire real estate mogul, threatening to kill all in the way of a casino development... So, as much as Gin wants a real vacation, with being lazy on the beach, waves, and no murderous villains around, she finds herself on the wrong side of pair of fangs...

There were a lot of really good things in this book and most of them included Donovan being reminded of how wonderful Gin is and what a dick he had been with her... I actually felt sorry for his fiance, since I think she deserves better than him!!!

The other really good part - the vicious, gruesome, wonderfully satisfying, completely deserved way she dealt with the Vamp and later dealt with her feelings and had a closure with her looser ex, as well as the wonderful way Her current boyfriend was patient, caring, loving and solid for and with her!!!

The things I felt the author was a bit lazy with, thus my rating, were just irksome! The whole attack at the hotel, getting rid of the bodies, the cleaning of the room, this whole episode was sloppy and ridiculous... Not only was it unbelievable in an already made -up Fantasy world, but it felt like the author didn't even try.... I understand and appreciate that this volume was more focused on relationships and character development, which I love, but you can not totally overlook the plot and just fake it with several chapters... Which actually surprised me, since the actual writing has definitely improved since the beginning of the series... Hopefully, since now we love the characters, the author finds a way to deliver complete stories in beautiful packages for the characters we are fully behind now:-)

Overall, I am thoroughly enjoying the series and am planning on reading every last one of the books in it!!! Yes, there are some repetitions, yes there is some predictability, and yes, this series is not perfect. But it is still highly entertaining and fun, so I will recommend it as a light UF to all fans of the genre!!!

I wish all of you Happy Reading and may every book you read lift your spirit!!!

Robin (Bridge Four) says

3.75 Somebody got feelings all over my assassin story Stars.....

Some of this book was awesome. The Bad Guy is fantastic, I think he was worse than even Mab and the tension built around this part of the story was so fantastic. I wasn't sure how Gin was going to win against what seemed like insurmountable odds. Owen and the ever growing relationship between him and Gin is great as well. I enjoyed their time together on page and didn't mind at all the Owen went a little alpha male in this book. These were the parts of the story I really lived for and carried it for me.

Some of this book was frustrating. There is Gin acting like a jealous lover over her sister's lifelong friendship with someone else. There is also the comeback of a character I didn't care if I even saw again and all the emotional angst that went with that. The problem with this was (view spoiler)

Still this holds pretty close to the last book for entertainment value. Gin still isn't my favorite Heroine in UF I'm liking her a little more all the time.

Note: There is a ton of repetition in this series. I would say that at least 15% probably closer to 20% of the book I eyeskinned through because it was just recaps and repetition.

Katie Michaels says

I have to admit, I was worried. When Jennifer Estep wrapped up the Mab Monroe storyline in the last book, it felt like it could be the end of the Elemental Assassin series. Then I heard two words that made me shudder: road trip. Few authors can take their main character out of the familiar environment and make the story work. But let me tell you right now, not only did Jennifer Estep make it work, she's given us the very best installment in the series to date.

After Mab's death, Gin thought her life would get easier. But thanks to Jonah MacAllister, Gin's identity is no longer a secret. And every day, a new thug is showing up at the Pork Pit to challenge her. So Finn convinces her to take a vacation. Gin jumps in the car with Bria, back to her sister's home town, hoping to leave the violence behind. She also hopes she can bridge the growing gap between her and her sister.

I must say, Bria really ticked me off here. She is so judgmental of Gin; she blames her for things that are not her fault; she basically acts like Gin is beneath her. Very reminiscent of Donovan Caine in the earlier books. --And speaking of Donovan-- He is suddenly back in the picture as Gin finds herself in the middle of a conflict involving one of Bria's old friends. The woman is getting pressure from a vampire crime boss to sell her restaurant and Gin can't help but to try and help the woman who was like a sister to Bria for years. The woman who also happens to be involved with Donovan... who is still a complete toad.

This book is fast paced and full of action. But what makes it so good is that it's also full of emotional turmoil in Gin's life. She has to learn hard lessons about the limits of her power. She must decide how much crap she is willing to take from her sister. And she needs to figure out where her heart lies. Is Owen the only man for her? Can she let go of her old feelings for Donovan? Do I ever stop wanting to punch him in the 'nads?

The absence of Mab and the change of venue gives the series an infusion of new life. It feels fresh without trying to reinvent the core of the series. It brings back all my favorite characters (and even some better left to rot beneath a bridge.) It is unpredictable. And it managed to make me worried, angry, sad, hot, happy, and triumphant, all in equal measure. I couldn't have been more satisfied and I wouldn't change a thing about how it all played out. I can wait to find out what's next for my favorite assassin. 5 stars.

**ARC Provided by author for review*

DaJa says

Und wieder ein neues Band über meine Lieblings-Profi-Killerin.

Trotz Mabs Tod kommt Gin nicht zur Ruhe. Immer wieder tauchen Gestalten bei ihr auf um die berüchtigte Killerin zu töten. Gin hat wirklich Urlaub verdient um sich von den ständigen Kämpfen zu erhöhlen. Doch selbst in der alten Heimat Ihrer Schwester kommt sie nicht zu ruhe. Gin trifft auf einen alten Bekannten und hat damit sehr zu kämpfen.

Mir gefällt einfach, dass sie nicht das Superweib ist, dass alle Bösen mit einem Handfeger wegweht, sie ist

manschmal echt auf der Grenze zum tod und muss verdammt viel leiden, aber irgendwie zieht sie sich immer wieder aus den bösesten Situationen raus, nicht zuletzt mit der Hilfe ihrer Freunde/Familie. Jeden einzelnen davon habe ich auch lieben gelernt und finde sie auf ihre eigene Art und Weise wundervoll.

Ich freue mich schon auf den nächsten Elemental Assassin Band :)

Bisher hat mich Jennifer Estep mit keinem Band dieser Reihe enttäuscht und ich bin sehr froh, dass mich auch das neueste Abenteuer von Gin Blanco wieder begeistern konnte! Die Wiederholungen haben mich ja schon immer gestört, aber irgendwie fand ich es hier nicht so prägend, oder vielleicht habe ich einfach darüber hinweggelesen ;)

Shauna says

I had to really push myself to finish this one.

Okay, yes, the re-hashing that had you skimming through sizable portions of previous books in the series *has* been greatly reduced but perversely, it's absence just let me focus in on what has really been my main problem with this series. Gin. That's right, the woman herself. What attracted me to the series in the first place was the whole bad-ass female assassin deal. What I got was a guilt-ridden doormat.

First book, I was happy to heap the large part of the blame onto the unprincipled, holier-than-thou disgrace that is Donovan Caine (view spoiler) The books that followed, it was irritating but I thought hey, the love of a good- and extremely understanding- man could only help her get her groove back, right? I mean, there must have been a groove at some point?

'The Spider' doesn't actually just let everyone (view spoiler) walk all over/ forever look down on/ blame her for *everything*, does she? She does? I see.

No. I'm sorry, I find that somewhat contrived.

Oh, and I call **hypocrite** on half the bastards that Gin just grins and bears it from (view spoiler) Which makes it ten times as galling.

You deserve better Gin. I know it. You *should* know it. You should make sure *they* know it.

I really liked this series to start off with, but it's time I call it quits. I won't be reading the next one.
