



# Box Office Poison

*Phillipa Bornikova*

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## **Box Office Poison** Phillipa Bornikova

What happens when exquisitely beautiful elves start getting all the roles in Hollywood? Human actors sue, that's what. In a desperate attempt to keep the squabbling inside the Screen Actors Guild from going public, the president of SAG forces the two sides into arbitration.

Enter Linnet Ellery, a human lawyer working for a vampire law firm, to serve as arbitrator. Linnet discovers that there are sinister forces at work in Tinsel Town determined to shatter the fragile peace between elves, vampires, werewolves, and humans. Someone has been coercing famous elven actors into committing sudden and terrible acts of violence against humans in a series of tragedies that could turn the tide of public opinion against all the supernatural Powers.

During the course of her investigations Linnet realizes that a puzzling secret surrounds her, and that a strange power has been affecting the very course of her life. . . .

## **Box Office Poison Details**

Date : Published August 6th 2013 by Tor Books

ISBN : 9780765326836

Author : Phillipa Bornikova

Format : Hardcover 320 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Urban Fantasy, Paranormal, Vampires, Mystery, Supernatural

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# From Reader Review Box Office Poison for online ebook

## Karen says

This book was frivolously fun, and the legal aspect of it was close enough to accurate to not annoy me. Well, mostly close enough. But there are aspects of Linnet that did annoy me. The writing, however, was pretty good.

Actual rating: 3.5 stars, but I round up.

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## Becky says

This second book in Phillipa Bornikova's urban fantasy/legal thriller series brings Linnet Ellery to Hollywood!

Since coming out to humans, vampires, werewolves, and the Alfar have become part of every facet of the human world. The Alfar, with their insanely good looks and their incredibly slow aging, are particularly popular in the film industry. Some would argue, though, that the Alfar are no more talented than their human counterparts but that they have an unfair advantage in that they can glamour themselves into the job.

Unfortunately, rumblings along those lines are creating a bad scene in the industry and the Screen Actors Guild. Human actor and heartthrob Jeffery Montolbano has called for arbitration between all the interested parties in hopes they can come to some agreement before things get too out of control. Ishmael, McGillary, and Gold are assigned case and although they do have a local office, firm partner David Sullivan and Linnet are sent out from New York to handle it instead - their overall distance from Hollywood and the industry means no party should have an unfair advantage in the case. But when they arrive, Linnet notices an odd trend beginning with the Alfar. The added wrinkle of a group calling themselves Humans First leads Linnet to wonder if there's something more going on under the glitz and glamor of Hollywood than a dispute between actors.

This series is seriously fun! I adored THIS CASE IS GONNA KILL ME and couldn't wait to get back to Linnet and this world with BOX OFFICE POISON. I was immediately impressed that Bornikova took the characters out of New York and to Cali for this second installment. It shows she's made a real effort to keep things fresh and new in the series even at this early stage.

We do also get to know more about Fey - the world the Alfar inhabit. I won't go into any detail there thanks to possible spoilers (read book one!) but this was something I was definitely looking forward to in this book.

Readers unfamiliar with the series can - if they really want to - start with this second book. It's a completely different case and there's enough of the backstory on the world and Linnet that you're not necessarily missing anything from THIS CASE IS GONNA KILL ME that would hinder the enjoyment of BOX OFFICE POISON. There are, however, enough details about the happenings of the first book to make for pretty big spoilers should you start with this second and then work your way back to the first. Since the first is sooooo darn good and out in paperback, I'd suggest springing for them both :)

(Bornikova, if you didn't know, is actually a pseudonym used by Melinda Snodgrass.)

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## Joanna says

This was a quick, fun read. It was good to get a little deeper into the world of the vampires and fae but the case still kept more of a caper quality than a supernatural one. I love the comedy and the action scenes were actually pretty exciting.

Notes on 2018 reread- I am pleased that book 3 is coming out this month, and decided to reread 1 and 2 since it had been quite a long time since I read them. I'm glad I did!

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## Carol. says

Fast and frivolous.

Good parts:

1. Fast
2. Frivolous
3. Linnet, the heroine, does not miraculously develop kung fu skills
4. She does use amazing legal skills
4. Former female adversary now a bestie
5. Lots of detail on Hollywood movie sets
6. Kick-ass horse
7. Decent writing, with details that make it feel real

Bad parts:

1. Numerous men she meets are convinced she is 'cute' and want to date her
2. Former love interest treats her in a cold and heartless way, clearly under a spell but causing Linnet self-doubt
3. Leading male in this book obviously has a crush on Linnet, of which she is completely unaware
4. Which means future love triangle
5. Former female adversary now a bestie
6. Lots of detail on a Hollywood with imaginary movie stars
7. Moralizing about how we all need to treat beings as individuals, and not just react against a particular race/species
8. End-of-book scene where important identity questions are promised to be answered "when you are back at home in New York."

Personal peeves:

1. Being an over-twenty-year-old lawyer at a prestigious firm, living on her own, and living away from her dad since she was eight but still calling her him 'Daddy' when he visits
2. Repetitive dialogue about counting calories/being forced to eat salad/drink plain coffee and then eating french fries, binging on sushi and eating steak-n-crab at dinner. "I grabbed a cup of coffee, and took a blue M&M, and wandered back toward the set." Seriously. A M&M? Who does that? I *hate* heroines in UF with food issues. Harry Dresden doesn't have food issues. Felix Castor doesn't have food issues. Cal Leandros thinks the less healthy, the better (he's the Dean of the brotherly duo). Neither does any other male detective.

So why must the females? I don't mind if it's about *healthy*, but it always seems to be about weight. Females and female writers--let's stop hating ourselves, hey?

Okay, now that I parse it out, it's not that great. Still, Bornikova is a decent writer whose talent is wasted on a storyline that barely reaches above the low bar of standard UF (young single woman working to establish her identity and relationships in the new order). Notable for some nice touches of humor.

Two and a half stars. Yes. It rated above Cold Days. So sue me.

Cross posted at <http://clsiewert.wordpress.com/2013/0...>

With links!

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## **Karl Schaeffer says**

Linnet gets into more trouble, this time on the left Coast. Vampires, werewolves and elves... oh my! An easy, pleasurable read. Not great literature, but if you only read great literature, you must lead a boring life. an interesting paranormal universe. There are no women vampires or werewolves. Need some paranormal title IX here. The slow motion LA freeway chase in the beginning of the story was a bit too OJ. One bone to pick: Remember Jack Ryan, Tom Clancy's hero? he starts off as a lowly CIA analyst and in a few books ends up as Prexy of the USofA. Where did he go from there. He hit the literary glass ceiling for plot development. Linnet's shenanigans at the Oscars seems like a pretty big leap for our heroine. Hopefully our author doesn't run out of outrageously enjoyable plot lines. And Phillipa Bornikova, I get a chuckle out of your pen name.

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## **Amy says**

I picked this book up because I wanted to see where the author took the series. She took it to a fun place, somewhat frustrating, though, because that place is clearly in a series, with "answers" forthcoming, but not contained in the pages of this volume.

However the main character is still interesting. Her strengths are not in her brawn, but in her brain, though she seems to have developed some teflonicity that I fear will end up being magical or supernatural in origin. Her fighting skills are more in her ability to use that brain as a new, but promising to be kick-arse lawyer. Her passion outside of work is riding and dressage, which adds interest for me. Her relationships with her co-workers are evolving -- no black or white here as former arch-enemy is now a best friend. Still sorting out the supernaturals in this series: not your Sookie Stackhouse vamps, faries, and werewolves. (I can't believe I even wrote that in a review.)

But in the end, the burning question in my mind is, "what television series did Phillipa Bornikova work on?"

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## **Shelley says**

\*Genre\* Urban Fantasy

\*Rating\* 3.0

**\*My Thoughts\***

Box Office Poison is the second installment in the Linnet Ellery series. Having just recently finished reading "This Case Is Gonna Kill Me," I was happy to see that my local library also had the sequel. 27-year old Linnet Ellery is a recent top of her class graduate of Yale Law school. She was fostered by a vampire patronage for 10 years, before being given an opportunity of a lifetime to become a lawyer with the prestigious white fang Law Firm in NYC.

**\*Full Review Posted @ Gizmos Reviews\***

<http://gizmosreviews.blogspot.com/201...>

Published August 6th 2013 by Tor Books

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## **Zev says**

Somehow I thought this would be a legal thriller set in an urban fantasy world. I kept reading until the end, looking for that element.

It is one of my least favorite things to do write the following sentence, considering I spent the better part of a decade writing fanfiction: this reads like a bad fanfiction, complete with a Mary Sue, stupid romantic subplot jammed into the final paragraph of the first fifty pages, enormous paragraphs of Mary Sue's inner monologue, and barely any plot advertised. The legal thriller part was so incredibly bland, at first I didn't realize I was reading it.

The book opens up with Linnet, our Mary Sue, whining that she was coerced into taking a case at the last minute and her life is so haaard and she's furious that she's flying coach, pro hac vice. I'm a paralegal. I've worked for attorneys who fly coach, on short notice, and on cases pro hac vice, all the time. As in, five times a month. You are no hotshot attorney, madam. Your behavior throughout the book indicates you're maybe two years out of law school (apologies to better lawyers!) and you are a thirteen-year-old in a woman's body. The plot doesn't show up until nearly a hundred pages into the book, and it's a workplace shooting out of nowhere. Mary Sue that Linnet is, she -heroically- jumps to save the paramedic and only has some blood splattered. She utterly forgets what a hospital is, and marches into her office shortly afterward. A long paragraph is dedicated to someone rushing out to get her a new, expensive blouse since we can't have a Mary Sue not be the prettiest woman in the room.

She seems to have an odd fascination on pointing out how pretty women of color are when they're around her for five seconds. It comes off as trying too hard. Serious societal issues are addressed here with the Sledgehammer of Symbolism (credit to Mervin of Das Sporking for the term), and clumsily at that. Lots of long-winded paragraphs.

Entire pages are dedicated to her love of horses and I don't care. I suppose this was meant to provide characterization. She lovingly describes each item of clothing she ever wears in three sentences or more per item. The more expensive, the more it's described. She whines about her refusal to eat rich food and screeches about calories. Some of us can't afford food. Stuff yourself.

The book ended with no real resolution. I could practically hear the author shout, "I'm tired of the story! Here are more paragraphs to pretend the ending! I am done!" All I could do was shake my head a bit.

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## **Dr susan says**

I do not need to read Box Office Poison twice to give it 5 stars. The sequel to This Case is Gonna Kill Me was everything an urban fantasy should be. Bornikova's world is believable, edgy and all her own. 'Parlan and the Alfar' are engaging and an enjoyable addition to the cast. Linnet's brushes with death continue, and her escapes are even more inventive. Even Linnet is realizing that she is 'different', and is using that difference, as opposed to some heroines that spend four or five books in denial land. Linnet's world appears to have more mysteries than anyone expected; so more questions arise, but no answers are revealed. I read that book 3 has been delayed, but a novella is going to be available. I hope the delay is not too long, but I will wait no matter how long (I will whine a lot, but I will wait).

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## **Alisi ? wants to read too many books ? says**

I did this to myself. I have no one to blame but myself. In my defense, I really wanted to see if a comet would hit someone.

Instead, I come away feeling dirty about this vaguely racist book.

I have no idea how this girl dresses herself in the morning. Like, I truly don't. But you know what? I'm sure there will be someone who'll praise this girl for her ability to dress herself.

She's an idiot. She's an idiot and yet almost everyone tells her how unique and smart she is. I'm AMAZED! Let me give you an example of her wit:

She tells David (while in California) that she thinks for every group of people there are good people and bad people and it's not okay to lump everyone up together.

And instead of David telling her 'you've just figured this out? I got this lesson in the first grade' he looks into her eyes and says 'you are such a unique human!'

Her big, awesome, and (apparently) uber smart idea to solve all problems in this book? To take the actors. These people know the elves mojo can't be transferred onto tape and so people are saying they're terrible actors, right? That's the whole focus of the book, yet no one! NO ONE in this book has the forethought to think "hm, I'm casting this elf in a movie... on a tape... Why don't I tape him and see how that works out?"

This is the quality she brings to her world.

But the very worst part was the racist overtones. Much of this book acts like a dig to affirmative action. Most of her character have long discussions about how it should be talent as the determinate and not the gov'n in the job market.

She totally ignored the fact that the reason WHY affirmative action is in place is because employers don't want talent. They'll pass up talent and it's still going on in today's world.

Take my sister (technically my half sister) who is half black. She got good grades in school. Went into the military, served overseas in some kind of intelligence thing, and was released with honors.

She sends out her resumes and gets called in for an interview of a evening manager position. It's all fine and dandy on the phone but the moment she walks in? He pauses and says "did I say the job was for a manager position? I meant a bag boy."

Seriously. Military intelligence school. Awesome job recommends. And employers think she shouldn't do anything above a bag boy position.

Don't spoon me any of this 'affirmative action' is soooooo unfair. That attitude is a first world, upper class white peoples VP. It's not reality.

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### **xdroot says**

Another fun read. But I did find the author's dragging out of Linnet's luck somewhat tedious. And David's behavior. But then, I guess, that sets up book #3- Hounds, Fey, and finally, Spooks.

And can the author please stop having Linnet think she's not attractive. It's a trite contrivance. For a character who's supposed to be smart, the modesty plays false. And with almost all the male characters complimenting her looks, it just comes across as dumb. Please move on.

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### **Darcy says**

I am glad that this one lived up to how much I liked the first book. I like Linnet, love the way that her mind works. She managed to take a seemingly mundane case and blow things apart within their world for both humans and the Powers alike. At times it didn't seem like the steps Linnet took made sense or that the help was much help. I did like how Linnet learned new things about the Álfar.

The people that ended up helping Linnet were fun, a motley crew that I hope we see in future books. I am intrigued by a few things, David's changing thoughts, and what is going on with the horse and it's owner. I have a feeling that the later will change things.

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### **Cecelia says**

One of my roommates is currently obsessed with the show Suits. As a result, I have recently watched an episode (or two!) featuring ruthless lawyers, unbelievable shenanigans, and really, really well-dressed members of the firm and their clients. It may have been this peek into the Hollywood version of law that prompted me to pick up Phillipa Bornikova's Box Office Poison, a fantasy that feels very real, and features not only werewolves, vampires and elves (Álfar), but also a resourceful and indomitable human lawyer, Linnet Ellery.

In this second installment in Linnet's adventures in law as a human dealing with Powers, Linnet has traded snowy New York for sunny L.A. She's being called upon to serve as one of the arbitrators between human actors and their Álfar counterparts after a suspiciously high number of roles go to elves over humans. The already-tense situation is complicated by the fact that elven actors are committing horrible crimes against



their human counterparts. Linnet, acting as one-part impartial observer and one-part private investigator, is about to find out just how hot (in a dangerous sort of way) California can get.

In the interest of full disclosure, I'll say that I didn't read the first in this series, *This Case Is Gonna Kill Me*. Obviously I would have had a much better understanding of the circles of power and Linnet's back story if I had picked up the previous entry. That said, the writing is straight-forward even as the mystery sets characters from with varying motivations and different backgrounds into play. Linnet herself is a reliable narrator with a sort of blunt charm and a side helping of sass. She's also dealing with a world that is inherently unfair to women and downright dangerous for humans, so her self-possession is admirable.

Plot-wise, *Box Office Poison* is at times legalese-heavy, and that's not something I'm in the habit of reading. Action scenes break up some of the slow-moving political wrangling, as does Linnet's interest in horses. Still, the pacing is a bit uneven, although there are moments of humor (some prompted by awkward interactions) between Linnet and her immediate superior, David (a vampire), and the Hollywood-style banter kept the book from tedium. Linnet's talent for being in the wrong place at the wrong time, and escaping with her life, are sure to be the subject of ongoing interest in future books.

In all, *Box Office Poison* was a mixed bag for me – it had some fun/funny moments and featured a strong, lawyer-turned-PI heroine transplanted into a sunny new environment, but the pacing suffered a bit from an excess of procedure, and in the end the reader is left with more questions than answers (although that could have been my own fault for not reading book one first!).

Recommended for: those who enjoy law, mystery and urban fantasy, fans of Wen Spencer's *Tinker* and Jennifer Estep's *Elemental Assassin* series, and readers who fancy a smart, unflappable heroine who has the wits to survive a complex, supernatural situation.

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## **k reads says**

That was fun.

A cross between a legal thriller and chick-lit with the addition of vampires and elves, it was an enjoyable way to spend some time.

I am leery of books that involve the entertainment industry but this one did not annoy the fuck out of me. (Which probably has to do with the fact that the author has experience with Hollywood and so managed to avoid the cliched pitfalls so many books seem to fall in to.)

And as someone who has over-indulged in the UF genre and is feeling a bit burnt out, it was nice to read a book that brought something different to the table. (I like my ass-kickin, loner gals but they can get a bit repetitive.)

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## **Kristen says**

GENRE: Urban Fantasy

THEME: Elves, Vampires, and Law

RECEIVED: Publisher

BLOG: <http://seeingnight.blogspot.com/>

## REVIEW:

This is the second installment to the Linnet Ellery series and for me it was just as good as the first. Bornikova created a heroine with spunk; smarts and determination when it comes to getting answers no matter what dangers lurk around each corner. With the first book focused more on the law firm, I liked that this one had the glamour and humor of Hollywood mixed in with the law business.

Box Office Poison follows Linnet Ellery a human lawyer working for a vampire law firm. She and her boss David are sent to Hollywood to help serve as arbitrators between the human actors and the elves for the Screen Actors Guild, without the feud going public. But nothing about Hollywood is boring or easy and Linnet soon finds herself in a whole lot of danger when Elves start acting out violently and something way bigger is happening besides actors having a turf war.

Linnet seems to always be at the wrong place at the wrong time, but she gets the job done and fights for the truth. I enjoyed her character a bit more in this book because she held her own, she went looking for answers of why the Elves were acting out and if human were behind the ordeal. But with Linnet nothing comes easy, she opens up a lot of secrets, discovers hidden agendas, gets more knowledge of the Alfar (Elves) world and tries to find some way to help her friend and lover John.

What I love most about Box Office Poison was the interactions between Linnet and her boss David. David being a vampire and one who is use to New York and humans who are more comfortable with his kind, isn't a fan of the Hollywood life. He and Linnet actually have a lot of humorous moments, awkward conversations and always seem to help each other out in sticky situations. They are definitely a good team and I'd love to see them work on another case together.

Overall I really liked the plot, digging deep into Hollywood and having the humans being angry of Elves getting acting jobs over them because of their beauty was hilarious. Linnet also digs deeper into finding a way to free her friend John, who was forced by the Alfar Queen (his mother) to stay in her world. We get a small glimpse of him, but it was actually disappointing to not get much resolved in his storyline. I'm hoping that in the next book we find out what's been happening on his end.

In the end I enjoyed the humor, Hollywood banter, secrets of the Alfar world and Linnet being her normal super sleuth lawyer self. Bornikova's writing is strong with not only the memorable characters she created, but also her details and facts in the law that kept me hooked. There were a lot of great characters introduced that I hope we come back to in future books as well, even Linnets kick butt horse Vento gets involved in the case! I can't wait to see what Linnet gets in the middle of next.

## RECOMMENDATION:

This is an adult with a bit of violence and supernatural goodness. Fans of Chloe Neill's Chicagoland Vampire series and Jennifer Estep's Elemental Assassin series will enjoy Phillipa Bornikova's Box Office Poison.

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## Kristin (MyBookishWays Reviews) says

You may also read my review here: <http://www.mybookishways.com/2013/08/...>

The Alfar (elves...gorgeous, gorgeous elves) are getting all the good parts in movies and television, and the

humans aren't happy. That's where Linnet Ellery and her vampire boss, David, comes in. They've been asked to arbitrate a dispute between SAG and the Alfar after the humans sue for damages. It becomes increasingly clear that the Alfar are using their otherworldly powers to get parts, because frankly, their acting talents aren't anything to write home about. A dispute that seems rather silly on the surface actually has some pretty interesting and timely implications, and for Linnet, it's a chance to prove that she can hold her own. It also gives her a chance to enjoy the balmy LA weather and get close to some powerful Alfar in order to find out how she might help her friend and lover, John, who took imprisonment in Fey by his mother in exchange for saving Linnet's life. When big name Alfar actors and actresses start going off the deep end and committing shocking acts of violence, Linnet is determined to get to the bottom of things, but at what cost?

I'll put it out there right now...I love this series. I loved the first book, *THIS CASE IS GONNA KILL ME*, and *BOX OFFICE POISON* was a one day read for me. Linnet is a great narrator and while she's smart and very savvy, she still makes mistakes, sometimes big ones. She holds her own in a firm filled with very alpha male vamps (in this world, they don't make female vamps), and in the absence of John (aside from a brief scene), there's some rather interesting tension between Linnet and her very proper, and old fashioned, vamp boss David, who she works closely with during the arbitration. Phillipa Bornikova (a pseudonym for a veteran author), has created a unique urban fantasy world with a heavy, and fascinating, dose of legal drama, and unique is something that's becoming harder and harder to find in the crowded UF genre. There's something delightfully quirky about Linnet and her world and it makes for some very fun reading. Don't be fooled, though, there's some pretty biting, and timely, social commentary to be had here, which raises this series up a notch or two above the rest. Do keep a lookout for an eye popping scene set at The Oscars, too! This is an intelligent fantasy series, and Linnet is a heroine worth rooting for. Her friends aren't too shabby either. Not to be missed!

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### **Elizabeth says**

*Box Office Poison* is a new addition to the urban fantasy genre by Phillipa Bornikova. I love urban fantasy and always enjoy a new take on the genre. Unfortunately, this particular take was flat, emotionless and ultimately dull.

The main character of the novel and presumably the series is Linnet Ellery, a young corporate lawyer in a vampire-run law firm who was raised by vampires. In *Box Office Poison*, Linnet must discover why the Alfar (elves) are getting more movie roles than humans, and why they keep committing horrific murders that they cannot remember afterward. This first novel in the series also sets up several larger storylines, including one about Linnet's elven lover who is trapped in Fey and another about who - or what - she is.

I realize that urban fantasy is a pretty formulaic genre. But like most genres, successful urban fantasy transcends the formula. Unfortunately, Bornikova does not quite manage to do that. Linnet feels disconnected and emotionless, leaving the reader feeling the same way. I ultimately did not care what happened to her, and that marks a failure for me.

*Box Office Poison* is an interesting take on the urban fantasy genre. Unfortunately, it felt formulaic and emotionless. Skip it and try something better.

Read this review and more at [The Library Lass Book Talk Blog](#).

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### **Jeffrey says**

Phillipa Bornikova burst onto the urban fantasy stage with the original well written and intriguing urban fantasy legal thriller *This Case is Gonna Kill Me*. A fusion of the traditional legal thriller, but set in the urban fantasy supernatural landscape. with vampire, werewolves and elves, Bornikova's first novel was a real page turner and set the bar very high for similar novels.

*Box Office Poison*, Bornikova's followup in this Linnet Ellery series, is a good legal mystery about a series of odd murders. Ellery is in Los Angeles to help her vampire boss arbitrate a dispute between human actors and elves. It seems the human actors are missing out at castings. Could the elves be using some form of magic to influence the outcome of the casting calls? One of the leading actors of the time and the president of the Screen Actors Guild has brought an action.

Meanwhile, in a O.J. Simpson like turn of events, a famous elf actor has been arrested after a long road chase for killing his wife.

While at the set of a movie, Ellery witnesses another elf actress open fire with an assortment of weapons.

Ellery thinks there is something strange about the two elf murder incidents and investigates. It is a fast paced investigation with a lot of action. However, the actual villain was pretty obvious early on to this reader.

Moreover, Bornikova keeps dropping hints in the text about some supernatural power that Ellery has, but leaves that issue in a cliff hanger. Its clear that something is helping Ellery out.

I am not a big fan of the unresolved hinting of some "power".

Its a good book, but it loses something in comparison to the first novel.

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## Charles says

### First Reads Review - *Box Office Poison* by Phillipa Bornikova

There is a first book in this series that I did not read, but I normally figure that shouldn't matter too much when starting a series like this, and I was pleasantly confirmed in that opinion here. Without reading the first book I still felt like I got a good feel for the characters and the situation, and enjoyed myself with this somewhat quirky urban fantasy legal suspense book. It is a strange amalgam of genres, but I think it works, not spending too much time to dwell on the various aspects of world it presents but rather showing by moving through it and witnessing how things work. It is a good strategy for showing something as complex as the world in these books without having to pause and explain everything.

The characters worked I think, with Linnet being fun and rounded, definitely not weak but still feminine in many ways. Backed by her vampire boss and a number of other human and non-human allies, she navigates the world of LA with a bit of naivety and style. It was an interesting read, because the book does succeed at all the things it seems to set out to do. It has legal drama with the question of the actor's guild and the lawsuit, which makes sense because she's a lawyer. There's also magic and murder flying about, which takes

care of the urban fantasy angle. There isn't too much of a romance beat but there is some as she struggles with the fact her beau is trapped in the Alvar realm.

The book does even manage to raise some interesting points about how people should or can use their natural advantages. Everything is there, and works, though I will admit that I found certain parts of it a bit predictable, especially the bit reveal towards the end. It's not that the author does the story poorly, but rather that she tips her hand regarding the surprises a bit too early. The moments when she lays the groundwork for those twists seemed a little obvious at times, the clues a little too easy to follow. While it's reasonable that she could connect the dots, it didn't seem to take a great deal of detective skills.

Still, the book does work and the groundwork all pays off in a bit climax with lots of fighting and violence. Unfortunately what is missing from this book is sex, which I get the feeling from what is said was in the first one. And I feel a bit let down. Not that I wanted Linnet to just hook up with someone, but in these sorts of stories I do kind of want some sex to be happening. It didn't necessarily have to be Linnet who had it. It could have been something she saw, but I wanted more. The writing is certainly sensual enough at times, but I wanted more. More! I just think it was a missed opportunity.

By the end, though, I found myself nodding along and enjoying myself, and I am a bit looking forward to tracking down the rest of the series. The writing is solid, the pacing excellent, and the characters interesting. The premise of a world partly run by elves, vampires, and werewolves might not be the most original thing in the world, but the way in which they do things is unique and interesting enough to get past any other reservations. I liked it, and so while I might have given it three and a half stars if possible, I'll go up to four stars out of five.

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### **Terri Lytle says**

This book was weirdly good! I wasn't expecting much, but was pleasantly surprised! I really hope there's more installments in the series, otherwise I'll be waiting like I am for so many others...haha!

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