



The Nine

C.M. Stunich , Tate James

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Tricky, like a fox.

As a kitsune--a fox shifter--I have to be to survive.

Sometimes it seems like the whole world wants me dead.

Ironic, considering that's my job--to kill people.

Thea Hunt, professional assassin at your service.

But that's not my only vice.

I'm also attracted to the darkest denizens of the supernatural world, the men I should run from instead of fall for. Men like Mikhail, the leader of the assassins guild, Barrett, the local alpha wolf, and Nix, the skinwalking coyote that's likely to bring the entire shifter community to their knees. And then there are my exes--Riot and Fin.

Somebody's killing off old gods, stripping shifters of their ability to change. And a trapped shifter doesn't last long without losing their mind. Nix knows; Mikhail wants me to kill him; Barrett wants me dead. Oh, and Riot and Fin are determined to make my life a living hell.

As the youngest kitsune to ever get nine tails, I should be able to trick my way out of this one, right? Right?!

THE NINE is the first book in the FOXFIRE BURNING series. It is a full-length reverse harem urban fantasy/paranormal romance with a spunky kitsune (fox shifter) main character and her six love interests: a vampire, a werewolf, a coyote shifter, and a few mysteries. This book includes cursing, violence, steamy scenes, and a whole lot of magic.

The Nine Details

Date : Published April 18th 2018 by Sarian Royal

ISBN :

Author : C.M. Stunich , Tate James

Format : Kindle Edition 364 pages

Genre : Polyamorous, Reverse Harem, Fantasy, Paranormal, Vampires, Urban Fantasy, Magic

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From Reader Review The Nine for online ebook

lauren says

Is it possible to loath a book 5 pages in? Well I guess stranger things have happened. She's a assassin who couldn't get away from some killer wolfs? Then alpha of these wolf's is threatening her and has his fingers on her neck and it's hot? Then when she gets to her ppl so they can bind her tail, who seem not to like her, we learn the guy escorting her is her poor mate who doesn't want the binding to happen because he's waited 8 years and he's tired of waiting obviously. So he ask that he can break the future mate thing with her so he may get another, and when they ask if if that's ok, she gets tongue tied because obviously she's selfish and pathetic. Yup I was done with just a few pages. I seen this book and didn't bother seeing who the author was, which was a definitely a stupid move on my part knowing damn well I can't stomach c.m stunich books.

Teigan says

God, I always end up hating harem books afterwards but guilty pleasures are guilty pleasures. ˋ_?(?)_ˊ

And plus, that cover looks freaking awesome.

C.J. says

This was a good story with plenty of interesting characters to sink your teeth into. Not sure how much I liked all of them but I definitely want to find out what happens next.

Isabella - Madly in Love with Books says

Lordy, what. A. Mess. I should know by now that Stunich characters are just so shitty, I can't even ... but I love Kitsunes and wanted to give this a try. Bad decision. Really, really bad decision.

Runningrabbit says

KU

This was a truly enjoyable reverse harem novel that was a bit different. There are a few paranormal shifter novels based around kitsune rather than the more traditional books and this one is well done including some of the original history of the kitsune background. The 'nine' actually is a direct reference linked to the number of tails a kitsune may have at any given time and the resulting powers that the incumbent gains, and this a great theme resounding throughout the novel.

And of course the lovers come into play. Par for the course is tall dark and handsome; tall, dark and broody;

tall, dark and psycho; sexy, beautiful and caring; and challenging, sexy and beautiful. So, you're just going to have to read and see.

I recommend this to lovers of lovers, and reverse harem reads.

Searcy says

Well, umm, okay then...

This book was most definitely a one star rating and was classifying itself as the most frustrating and annoying and awful thing I had read in I don't know how long.

Every single character was annoying as hell. Either they were stupid, sullen, passive, selfish, whiny, and clueless...or they were over-the-top abusive domineering asshats without a shred of personality to redeem them. All cardboard cutout stereotypes and DROVE. ME. CRAZY.

There was no story or plot to speak of, just a main character, Thea, who reactively drifted from one thing to another, with the only thought in her head how hot someone's washboard abs, crazy twisted smile, sexy curves, or wish to kill her was. Oh, and plenty of thoughts about how "muscles down below clenched in anticipation". Over. And. Over. And. Over. *groan*

And the cursing! God. Every fifth word. Written so crudely even I was occasionally offended (and that takes a damn lot).

Not to mention Thea constantly using her narrative voice to *tell* us how she was drawn to some asshat who wanted to kill her (many times)...instead of fuggin' showing us! There was no need to beat us over the head like we were stupid. We probably could have managed to get there on our own with just a little demonstration. Hell, the actions already SAID all that....I didn't need the MC telling me that ad nauseum too.

But I hate quitting on a book, and I have enjoyed other things by both authors, so I persevered.

And now I almost wish I hadn't. Because the story finally came to life and actually hooked me about 80% into the book. A few of the characters started developing just a bit of depth and the MC finally dialed things back just a smidge so she wasn't constantly screaming at me, dialed up to an 11.

Edit: the best damn character in this book is Ziff, the fennec fox pet of Thea's who is completely and utterly adorable. And how sad is it that that is the truth of this book?

Fin and Riot gained more balance - but I am worried that both are far too submissive/passive/clingy, and sorry, homie don't play dat.(view spoiler)

Bennett - well, he pretty much remains a psychotic asshat, and I can't understand any of his actions. I mean, I can guess what the authors are intending here, but they are messing it up by going so over the top if that is their goal.

Revel - I actually like her character a ton. Just not that it is focused at the MC. (view spoiler)

Nix - yeah, he is also a psychotic asshat, not to mention creepy as all get out. The whole skinwalker thing is just... *shudder* And (view spoiler)

Mik - I'm not usually big on the vampires (or the fae), but I think Mik has the most potential in this book. He is, like every other domineering alpha male in this book, also an asshat. But you can tell early on that there is more going on there and he is very protective of the MC. So...maybe.

And Chris is the most ridiculously over-the-top cliché of a fairy faerie drag queen BFF that I can't even enjoy it. Dial it back already! Not to mention calling him "Fae-Bitch". REALLY!?

Regardless of how much I hated 80% of the book, the concept behind the story is kinda cool. I like the idea of the world, and where this could go. And it ends on the most irritating goddamn cliffhanger JUST as the story was picking up. So I gave it another 2 stars for the potential that had hooked me despite my best efforts.

Then I took one back because

THE. GODDAMN. CLIFFHANGER. JUST. AS. IT. GOT. GOOD!

**grumbling and cursing under my breath at the authors for potentially ruining a really good story with self-indulgent writing and crudity* It seriously reads like an inside running joke between C.M. Stunich and Tate James.*

And yeah, it is seriously just strange to categorize a book as BOTH slow burn and explicit. But that seems to be what we have here. There is continual, graphic, and crude sexual thought, innuendo, and even sex. Yet the build for this reverse harem looks like it is going to be slow. Well, at least before it really cements or is acknowledged in any way. Because hell, it's not really *slow* if Thea is already bound to three characters and in love with two more, and attracted to a sixth (woman), is it?

God, this is just such a friggin' mixed up mess of a book. So maybe I will scratch the slow burn idea.

I dunno. I sure as hell can't recommend this one. And I am not sure I want to inflict waiting on the sequel in utter frustration on anyone else. But, unfortunately, I will be waiting to see where this goes.

Heading off to slit my own wrists now...

UPDATE PROGRESS NOTES:

87.0% *"I hate comments like this...when authors use narrative to say something that happens in the future. It interrupts the flow with something the character couldn't possibly know. A cheesy way to create "tension". Cheating."*

81.0% "

"Thea," Bennett growled. Literally growled. "Someone hit you." He was all up in my grill now, with his fingers gripping my chin and inspecting the split in my lip. "That's my job." He hissed this last part so quietly, I was positive only I heard, and fuck if I didn't get a shiver of arousal from it.

Seriously!? That is so not right. In. Any. Fucking. Way."

68.0% "See? This is kinda what I mean. She is the most passive, irresponsible, idiotic "assassin" I have ever

met. Way the hell more bumbling and inept than competent and kickass."

67.0% "Yeah, that wasn't fucking abrupt or anything. LMAO. She's met this woman, what, twice? This is the third time. And because of some kiss that has her questioning 30 years of sexuality, she lets her move in and decides she'll do "anything...anything" to save her? ROFLMAO Okay...suuuurre."

67.0% "Is there some reason she hasn't warned Chris (who she knows is addicted to dust) that the stuff is contaminated? And that sex can be too? *sigh* Did I mention this chick is a moron? Actually, she is coming to remind me of the chick from Hijinks...just passively moving from one thing to another, making stupid "snarky" comments (that are mostly composed of curses) and ogling everything that walks."

61.0% "You know what is so goddamn frustrating about this book? It has the seeds of a pretty great story. Just written all wrong. And that always drives me nuts."

59.0% "Oh, what fresh hell is this?

Bennett is the worst of the lot of them. And that's saying something."

57.0% "

...if I hadn't had ovaries of fucking steel, I'd have died that day.

What the actual fuck? That has to be the stupidest line I've ever read."

54.0% "

I hate this guy, I thought as I glanced over at him. But why the hell am I turned on by him? Much as I wanted to deny that fact, my nipples were hard, heat was flooding between my thighs ... ugh.

Wow. *groan* No. Just...fucking no."

43.0%

"Fuck me, I had a lot of issues to sort out, didn't I?"

No fucking shit."

42.0% "OMFG...this is becoming a tragi-comedy of errors. Is Thea so stupid she can't recognize Revel is hitting on her and could care less about Fin? Stupid, moronic, idiotic, rage-filled, clueless MC...."

37.0% "OMFG...never read a character that couldn't stop thinking about sex for two seconds and had illicit thoughts about every fuggin' character in the book - including the women! What the hell is this doing in an RH?"

37.0% "ARGH! Are they fucking INTENTIONALLY being stupidly crude?"

37.0% "That pretty much sounded like the stupid-as-fuck "I'm a barista not a _____" line that repeated ad nauseum in the Hijinks series."

35.0% "Okay...I gotta know...

She was dressed in hooker heels (and an outfit that has been removed), but she also had hair teased all to hell and a drag-queen's worth of makeup on, complete with fake eyelashes when she passed out. When she woke she had only her panties and the heels, then was given a shirt to wear to the office. WITH THE FAKE LASHES AND ALL THE MAKEUP ON OVERNIGHT STILL???"
(view spoiler)

34.0% "The ONLY scene so far in this damn book that was remotely enjoyable. (and it was kinda funny)"

26.0% "*groan* Not only is she a whiny mess...but she is stupid as hell! 1) She knows skinwalkers are super rare, 2) she knows that it is a skinwalker connected to all the shifter deaths through something odd causing them to be unable to shift, 3) she meets a damn skinwalker in a bar who says he does "experimental research"...and she can't connect the goddamn dots? Because, what, her ovaries are controlling her brain?"

24.0% "OMFG...Thea is the most sullen, cantankerous, whiny, bitchy, IRRITATING main character I have ever read. Ever."

16.0% "Fucking hate this MC. Does she even know how to have a normal conversation? With anyone?"

11.0% "I am seriously hating every character in this book. They are all assholes and over-the-top stereotypes. And all the "getting hot down below" from life-or-death situations and death threats from assholes...ugh"

7.0% "I just realized part of what is bugging me so far. Everything is dialed up to 11. The MC has no voice other than cursing and shouting. Therefore, there is no ebb and flow, no rhythm to the story. It's completely monotone. Loud monotone. Like static."

6.0% "The excessive cursing is way over the top...and is a stupid way to try to show a character is snarky or sassy. It's just annoying."

3.0% "Already, the six million italicized emphasis words are bugging me. One every once in a while, fine. More than 3 per page? Nope!"

Phire says

Contrary to what this author might want you to think, drugs are bad for you. That's why they are called drugs. And there resides the reason as to why the MC of this book is braindead and only says and does stupid things.

The MC is not only stupid, she's also a total cunt. I really can't remember hating a character so much, she's a childish egotistical asshole. What should have come across as badass just came across as "wow, what a bitch, hope someone kills her". I feel like all characters should get in a polyamorous relationship and leave her stupid ass, since she clearly doesn't deserve any of them.

I have made this comment before about CM Stunich's books, but again I was flabbergasted by the amount of times the MC cursed. So unnecessary, badassery is not measured by the amount of times you can utter fuck in 60 seconds, by the way. The secret to being a badass is being low profile and not speaking until you absolutely have to. And then, you can say fuck.

Obviously I would know, since I'm a badass myself.

Tiblu says

O , F No!!!!!!

Ok, tell me how the hades you have the h Thea questioning her own sexuality when a woman kisses her and she seems to like it (end of 11 and questioning in 12) and wanna call this a RH?

I thought the fact that Thea seemed to a selfish themed hard A was gonna be my problem,coz Thea is a hot mess and for me not a likable one....

Her and her life and her choices and her mind are soo disorganized and all over the place,I can't see her as a successful anything much less an assassin,thou maybe she'd be a good barista ,you know from "Hijinks harem" BS!

It's ok if I'm brain dead, coz I'm only a barista nonsense...

Geez you'd think I'd learned my lesson lesson with that load of nonsense , seriously that book is pure drivelt, but this in a way way just as big a mess....

Honestly I got to chapter 12 and still didn't know what the F was going on...

Thea starts out in trouble cutting through wolf pack land to get to her earth or skulk to get her 9th tail,bound,telling us and herself she knows what's she doing is stupid and as the trained and supposedly Bad A assassin she is barely escapes there and back,it was very unimpressive and should have told me all I needed to know ... lord I should have let it....

She's denied a needed tail binding (which btw much like the world building (which there isn't any) isn't explained at all ,just that it's needed for her to have magic) because of her messed relationship w/her ex Fin, ex mate ? I thought mates were supposed to be for life ? What ever Fin and her other bisexual love Riot ar3 tired of being ignored for 8 years and in their own Whitney passive aggressive way want her back...

Ok, one why any of them want didn't make a lick of sense,it was just unsexy childish whining and snapping , because she didn't want to deal,(she had her besties drag show to get to) Really? That's more important than losing your magic and your job,life etc.. and bi sexual harem isn't a RH....

NO,no it's not... that's about like a gay ménage adding a woman and calling it an RH,true but awful story ...

They are t yours really if they were together before you came along and without every chance they get...

Any way it just goes down from there Thea just seems to stumble from one awkward encounter to the next whether it's her running from her ex's basically like a child with her fingers stuck in her her ears going lalalala not wanting have even a slightly adult conversation (though I don't believe for a second she's 30, she's too clueless and immature for that) ,to a clumsy pick up of the skin walker she's supposed to kill, making out with him in the alley, only to be interrupted by her boss who can't seem to let himself,d have her,even though he doesn't seem to want anyone else to either ...

Her boss then who fights the skin walker but not trying hurt him,instinct tell me in a book like this by C.M. The walker will turn out to be an ex love of the Vamp.....

Sighs,sooo NOT AN RH! Any way , this was just a big hot mess, lots of sexual tension , but a story much like the h and her potential bed partners didn't know where the heck it wanted to go....

The reviewer who was kind enough to give this two stars said this was like a shorter version of Anita Blake after she went off the rails,never read Anita but from what my research on different wiki's on the series tells

me , I agree...

Ps. My research is why I didn't read it and grateful I couldn't get past the 1st book...

Want a lil dark in your RH but want something good ?

Try the godhunter series by Amy Sumida, just read book 23 and I love it...

This this makes me wonder why Tate James name is on this, her books by herself are great,with C.M. never

...

Marguerite (Lady RH) ❀ says

UPDATE 18/01/2018:

April 18th.

So close but so far away~

:cries:

~~~~~

When you think *2018* should automatically mean *january 1st 2018* and you feel betrayed because it's already the 13th - or 2023 in bookworm calendar...

*mine, mine, mine*

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## Spax says

I wanted to like this. It headed in a nice direction but overall sank like Titanic.

As I mentioned in my update, I picked this one up because of Mikhail, Bennett, Nix, Riot, and Fin. That's what I expected, that's what I paid for. So when I'm halfway through and there's suddenly girl on girl action... if I wanted that, I would've picked up a book with a description that hinted towards girl on girl. This came out of nowhere and it's not what I was looking for. Others will surely love it but for me it was a huge deal breaker.

The fact that Thea is Japanese (yay diversity!) brings in some interesting cultural aspects but considering her western name and the fact that she acts wholly American brings me to the conclusion that although Japanese, she was born and raised in the US. Thea acts like the stereotypical foul-mouthed loud and obnoxious American but for a fresher change she also feels as cunning as she is described to be. Sadly I also feel there were a lot of missed opportunities in not making Thea act a little bit more Japanese. All the cussing felt excessive and, I can't say if it's an American thing or a PNR/YA thing but just because you don't like someone it doesn't mean you have to be rude to them. Shocking, right?

Lastly, Thea is an assassin. We, as readers, are told this is an important job to her. However, I wouldn't say we were given any insight to her job life. What made her want to be an assassin, how she met and came to work for Mikhail, how her missions work, how long it takes to prepare, what kind of targets she kills, how she is psychologically affected by her work, what kind of moral/ethical battles she has to fight... we're told nothing other than the occasional "my job as an assassin required me to be smarter than that" or "hotheaded

assassins didn't generellay stay alive long" which, quite frankly, is quite tragic.

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## Gaby★Me Myshelf and I★ says

This is a train

↓

This is a wreck

↓

And this is a Trainwreck

↓

*Edit; for those haters out there I would like to point out that I'm a Stunich&James fan and have read all their work co-written or otherwise, but I refuse to give this higher than it deserves just because I like the other stuff. Also if you want a full and comprehensive list of why this is a train-wreck please check out Searcy's review (I've wasted enough time on this)*

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## Marley says

### One big clusterf\*\*\*

I read it because it was recommended so much in an RH group. I really don't know if I even enjoyed this book or not tbh. The characters were disappointments. The plot line had/ has potential. It was good when there was one but it didn't even get started before the book ended.

I felt like I was watching a teenage soap opera. There was no real explanation for her attraction to these guys & gals. I guess they must have been super hot but I wasn't feeling it.

Thea was a very crappy assassin! So much so I forgot she was one- now that's embarrassing. Thea usually forgot about her main objective (rabid shifters) in place of her hormones. That's cool at times but not constantly. The main plot took a backseat and became the side plot. Her main plot became how wet her panties always were and how she needed counseling.

How her panties survive from just a word out of their mouths we'll never know but that's all she talked about. I'd honestly rather have two chapters of a cringeworthy sex scene than have to read about it on ever page.

\*Fin was a pussy!

\*Riot literally turned into a pussy- wasn't bad in the first introduction. I liked him in the beginning.

\*Bennett was a psychopath- & I love psychopaths in my books- that sucked at being a psychopath. I guess he was suppose to be the love/ hate but just came off as an idiot douchebag. He pretty much sounds like a woman beater.

\*Revel Is probably the only one I really did like.

\*Nix was weird and creepy. I thought for sure he was gonna skin her and make himself a new fur coat. Now that might have been more interesting. It honestly felt like that would be apart of the plot but they decided to make him one of her harem.

\*Mik for me was ok one minute gone the next. The scenes with him are hit and miss.

The best and only good part was at the end. It's the only reason I'll chance reading the next book.

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## **Gwen says**

It was an absolute agony waiting for this book it felt like it would never arrive and then it did: HOOOORAH !!!

So was it worth the wait?.....

And the answer.....

I think so!!!.... am I happy with just so many romantic interests? .. not really.... will I read the next book? ....Well someone has too, so I am more than willing to take one for the team ..Damn I'm good. But let's be serious..

The Good side:

Loved Thea Hunt a women/foxy lady with attitude, in fact all the female characters were fun (even if possible Lady action is not my thing).

Loved the action, world building and the HEAT Level. I am also interested to see where things go with Nix, is he good or bad?? and who wouldn't love Bennet he is a real badass! And of course a RH that is better than some of the drivel out there, what's not to love!

The Bad: Who on earth is on the cover??, a really busy storyline, that with so many characters, could really become complicated in the future. I didn't like Finn, even though you can't have smooth sailing all the time, but he is a real whinger.

So overall, not perfect but a fun read that you expect from CM Stunich and I can't wait for the next.

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## **Jennifer G says**

Thea Hunt, professional assassin, youngest kitsune in history to get nine white tails, is a total badass. She's also in a rough spot. She needs her ninth tail bound by the elders but her ex, Fin has put in his rights as her destined mate. The council has bound her magic until she returns to him or finds him a new mate. She needs to do this immediately or her next job as an assassin may be her last. She still loves her ex (exes, Fin and Riot, actually) but she can't live the life the kitsune expect of her. She feels trapped and won't have her life dictated to her. She loves her freedom, power, money, and while she loves her exes, she also has an

undeniable attraction and unbreakable ties to several others. She's also promised to help work on a cure for a deadly disease attacking the shifter world. A new drug has taken the shifters ability to shift away leaving them on a path to madness. She really needs her magic for the coming fight. But Thea is not one to back down; she will do whatever it takes to protect her own.

Nine Tails is a paranormal romance/urban fantasy collaboration between CM Stunich and Tate James, two of the most talented writers in the RH genre. This book is creative, highly original, and enthralling. It's very well-written. I am not sure how I feel about it. It's entertaining, capturing your attention from the first page. As an RH, I am conflicted. It hurt me to read at times. I personally like the harem to pretty much worship the lead female. That is not the case in this book. Most of the men either seem to want Thea dead (some by their own hands) or grudgingly want her body. Fin, her destined kitsune mate, and their partner Riot, a jaguar shifter truly love her but she left them. It's unclear what happened; if they smothered her or if she wasn't willing to commit but either way she walked away from the loves of her life. Mikhail, a vampire, the leader of the assassins guild, her boss has more than an employer's interest in her but he's maintained that she is only an employee or a food source for years. Barrett, the local alpha wolf is crazy and torn between wanting to kill her or have sex with her. Nix, the skinwalking coyote, is an enigma. He may want her, he may just need her. All three of these men have bound Thea to them in an inescapable manner yet are cruel and unfeeling except when desiring her. And we can't forget about Revel, the sexy kitsune. I'm not entirely sure what her role is; lover, friend, tool of the goddess. I'm not a fan of a mixed harem. I don't mind F/F at all but it doesn't fit into my idea of the perfect harem. However, since this harem is so dysfunctional, maybe I should just embrace her. Really, I want for the men to all admit how special Thea is and start treating her with respect. She deserves better from Mik, Barrett, and Nix. I want her to fix the mess she created with Fin and Rio, I want her magic restored, I want her to deal with some of her a\*\*hole attraction issues. Then I want her and the guys to fix the shifter world! I want alot!! Thea's choices in friends are much easier to understand than the men she wants; Chris (fabulous), Bex (fierce), Shelbi (sweet), and her adorable familiar, little Ziff. I want one! I loved all of the time spent with these characters. It added a realistic feel to her life. She wasn't all about the men. She has her job, her friends, her trouble with the council and her magic. And she has her men/woman.

I seriously cannot wait for more. Thea has my attention. I want to see her with her full magic. She's fierce on her own but with her magic, she will be a goddess in her own right. I also want natural order restored so that I get to enjoy her with Fin and Riot. PLEASE! This is one of those rare unicorn books that I can't figure out what comes next. That is deliciously delightful!!

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## **Jennifer says**

I really truly wanted to like this one..... it was just ... no.

For me there's just a lot of problems with this one. I just don't like any of the characters first off? like none are likeable or have me drawn to them. they are all really annoying and I really don't get this like ears and tail thing showing but while they are human?...felt weird. And like their ancients have 100's of tails and she just got her 9th. And like there's no chemistry, I don't feel it or see the point. I didn't get the assassin side of things she didn't seem that bad ass and uhg. It also just felt all over the place I dnf around 75% I just couldn't find it in myself to continue.

World building was confusing along the lines of the tails and ears and stuff was this in the 'real world' or like idk. and then like it just kept dragging on. And the fact that this didn't feel reverse harem at all? like she had

multiple lovers but like no harem?? she just slept with whoever she wanted or had some sort of feelings for people, maybe this changes further on or in later books but I just felt no draw to any of them.

I really hate slagging on a book, specially knowing how much work goes into one and the fact I was really excited about this one. But this one was just definitely not for me. I always think if a book sounds interesting to you to give it a chance because something that one person doesn't like, another can love. But ya I can't personally recommend it, take from this what you will and make up your own mind.

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