



# Wrong Side of Hell

*Sonya Bateman*

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**Wrong Side of Hell** Sonya Bateman

*"The dead never bothered me. That honor was reserved for the living."*

Hauling dead people around Manhattan is all in a day's work for body mover Gideon Black. He lives in his van, talks to corpses, and occasionally helps the police solve murders. His life may not be normal, but it's simple enough.

Until the corpses start talking back.

When Gideon accidentally rescues a werewolf in Central Park, he's drawn into the secret world of the Others. Fae, were-shifters, dark magic users and more, all playing a deadly cat-and-mouse game with Milus Dei, a massive and powerful cult dedicated to hunting down and eradicating them all.

Then a dead man speaks to him, saying that Milus Dei wants him more than any Other. They'll stop at nothing to capture him and control the abilities he never knew he had.

He is the DeathSpeaker. He is the key. And he's not as human as he thought...

Life was a whole lot easier when the dead stayed dead.

## Wrong Side of Hell Details

Date : Published January 23rd 2016 by Sonya Bateman

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Author : Sonya Bateman

Format : Kindle Edition 288 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Urban Fantasy, Paranormal, Fairies, Fae, Fiction

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# From Reader Review Wrong Side of Hell for online ebook

## Ami says

Few years ago, I read Sonya Bateman's "Gavyn Donatti" urban fantasy series (Master of None and Master and Apprentice) and I really enjoyed it. So I was bummed when I discovered that the series didn't continue -- probably the publisher decided that it wasn't selling enough? Then I found out that she released a NEW one (totally by coincidence! I saw the cover at Lou Harper's Gallery) and I was so excited! It wasn't a continuation to Donatti, but I didn't care. It is a NEW book (and hopefully new series) !!

Well, I enjoyed this one too!!! The beginning had a tortured Fae, saving his haffling baby brother then the story starts 26 years later with Gideon Black, whose job is transporting corpses to the city morgue. Only this time, with a corpse that seems to be mangled by a big animal, well, the corpse TALKS to Gideon!!

Apparently, it is a start of a 'new life' for Gideon when he finally finds out about supernatural beings as well as his own heritage. Of course, what's an urban fantasy series without some life-threatening actions to our heroes, right? Because Gideon must also stand up and fight against Milus Dei, an ancient cult dedicated to hunt down and destroy non-human beings.

It was a fast-paced read, and I LOVE the characters introduced here. I loved Gideon, I liked that he embraces his power and heritage quite well, and when push comes to shove he doesn't hesitate. The villain is not a big mystery here, it's the adventure and finding a new-set of family for Gideon that just warmed me over.

So yep, I loved it!!

The book mentioned a title for second book already, so I hope, with this being self-published and everything, that it will have better 'life' than the Donatti series.

Yay for new urban fantasy to follow!

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## Lianne Pheno says

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

Un premier tome vraiment très sympathique et une lecture très fun. J'ai été agréablement surprise parce que tenter de l'urban fantasy en auto édition est toujours un pari risqué et ici il est en grande partie gagné.

Gideon Black travaille comme ambulancier indépendant à Manhattan. Son métier plus spécifiquement est de transporter les cadavres d'un lieu à un autre, principalement d'une scène de crime ou de mort au locaux du médecin légiste ou d'une maison de retraite à une entreprise funéraire. Métier solitaire si il en est il a pris l'habitude de discuter avec les corps qu'il transporte histoire de faire semblant d'avoir des relations humaines de temps en temps. Jusqu'au jour ou un corps lui répond...

Mais Gideon n'a pas le temps de se poser trop de questions car une série de meurtres atroces ont eu lieu dans

Central Parc, comme si les victimes, qui ont toutes le même tatouage bizarre, avaient été tuées par des animaux. Et voilà qu'un jour en revenant du boulot il sauve la vie d'un loup garou pourchassé par une personne avec le même tatouage !

Décidément le monde n'est plus ce qu'il était et Gideon commence à découvrir qu'il est peut être bien plus impliqué qu'il aurait pu l'imaginer car il se retrouve poursuivi à son tour sans trop comprendre pourquoi ...

Dit comme ça on pourrait s'imaginer que c'est un peu fouillis avec tout ces éléments différents rassemblés en une seule intrigue, mais en fait non pas vraiment, tout semble logique dans le livre, c'est juste moi qui ai du mal à faire un résumé de cette histoire qui donne envie de lire sans trop en dévoiler histoire de garder un peu de suspense.

En urban fantasy, finalement le plus important dans un premier tome de série est d'abord d'avoir un personnage principal intéressant et qui nous convienne, qu'on a envie de suivre dans de nombreuses aventures. Et ici ça a totalement été le cas. Dès le tout début j'ai apprécié Gideon, j'ai eu de l'empathie pour son histoire. En gros il m'a vraiment bien plu.

C'est un personnage qui est à la fois fragile et combatif. On est loin du guerrier mais pourtant il n'hésite pas à aller de l'avant et à se jeter au devant du danger si il le faut, notamment pour sauver des gens. Il cache aussi de grosses blessures qui sont très loin d'être refermée même si il a tout quitté pour s'éloigner de leur source. En gros il est loin d'être le mec parfait, mais il est très sympathique.

Je pense que ce que j'ai particulièrement apprécié dans cette intrigue a été le rythme de ce roman. On n'a vraiment pas le temps de s'ennuyer car il se passe toujours quelque chose d'intéressant et on est vraiment pris dans cette histoire alors que les scènes s'enchainent. L'auteur arrive à caser une intrigue relativement complexe dans peu de pages, du coup tout va vite.

Le style est relativement simple mais vu qu'il correspond bien avec le personnage principal finalement ça se tiens. On n'a pas besoin de plus pour aller avec le reste du livre.

Parmi les points qui au contraire pourrait être améliorés je pense qu'il y avait certains passages qui aurait pu être bien plus fort émotionnellement si ils avaient été présentés différemment. Et la on avait des fois l'impression qu'on passait dessus trop rapidement, sans avoir le temps de s'y faire avant d'avancer, ce qui était un peu dommage. En plus ça donne des fois un sentiment de facilité car on n'a pas le temps de appesantir trop sur des événements qui auraient mérité réflexion.

Je pense qu'en fait ce qui manquait à ce livre pour en faire un très bon début d'urban fantasy est un éditeur professionnel derrière pour réarranger certains passages et approfondir un peu le texte (en lui rajoutant 50 pages par exemple). Mais même sans on sent tout le potentiel de cette histoire pour le futur de la série, et c'est déjà vraiment pas mal. Au final j'ai trouvé l'ensemble assez impressionnant pour un auto-édité, il ne manquait pas grand chose pour passer au niveau au dessus.

16/20

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## Shari Kay says

3.5 ★

I enjoyed it. It had some shaky plotting going on, but the author's voice is very easy to read, the premise is interesting and Gideon is a likable character.

So Gideon lives on his own, mostly out of his van to avoid detection from his whacko family. His makeshift home doubles as his way to earn a living. He's the guy that gets a dead body from point A to point B. I mean, somebody's has to do it. Right? Anyhow, he also gets these *feelings* when he touches them; kinda their last thoughts. If it's a murder case that his friend, Abe, happens to be working on, he'll tell him about that 'hunch'. But, Abe's latest case sends Gideon's life into a tailspin.

Next thing you know, Gideon is hanging out with werewolves, bogey*persons*, a golem, what I thought were vampires...but maybe not...and the Fae. These *Others* are being targeted by a sick cult of hunters that want to exterminate anyone nonhuman, but are happy to torture them first.

Issue #1: We are told there are thousands(10 of thousands even) of men and women who belong to this cult. Policemen, doctors, businessmen, politicians....etc. The author is trying to tell me *that many* people would be okay with the level of OTT torture/evilness they are visiting on these Others? That many? I don't believe it. These guys are sick personified. They will also kill collateral damage without a thought. If she had just told me they hunted them and killed them on sight because they feared them and thought of them as the enemy...okay. I can understand that. If you'd told me a few were captured for information and only a core group were sickos and like to torture them...again...I'd buy in. But this level of knowledge and depravity...nope.

So turns out, Gideon is part Fae and what legend calls, the Deathspeaker. The cult wants him, he's the key to eradicating the Others' entire species. Now Gideon is on the run and when his new werewolf friend (and possible future love interest?) gets recaptured, he vows to save her.

Issue #2: No one is fighting back? Say, what? These hunters have been capturing and torturing your kind for centuries and you aren't doing anything about it? You just accept it all? They outnumber you...so there's no point? We tried once in the past and failed, so why try again? I can't wrap my head around that. Until Gideon comes around, all they did was whine and hide out.

Issue #3: eh. Not really an issue, more of an observation. Gideon 'catches on' to his magic fairly quickly. There is a lot of luck going on in every encounter with the baddies, and Gideon should totally be dead by now.(kind of like Rambo) Coincidences pile up to make things *work*. And there is a budding love triangle between brothers.(Issue #4?)

But, whatever. It was action packed, I rooted for Gideon the entire book and I enjoyed the ride. I'll be picking up the next one.

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## **Brock Deskins says**

I don't give many 5 star reviews, and I was a little hesitant doing so with this one, but I decided to round up because it's a well-written, thoroughly enjoyable book from beginning to end. The narrative and dialogue are well-written without a wasted, superfluous word. This is not a roller coaster story with its slow up and crazy, exciting downs. It's more like a rocket car the blasts off and pushes you back in your seat for the entire ride. Editing is very good. I caught a missing opening quotation mark near the end of the book, and that's the only oops I recall seeing. Was it perfect? Of course not. Haven't met the book that is. I felt a slight decline near the end. The enemy is described as this huge, powerful paramilitary force bent on eradicating all non humans. This made the ending a little implausible as it was wrapped up neatly and with relative ease. The bad guys have this big noise machine (I assume it blasts a combination of gangsta rap and jazz) that's

supposed to turn non human brains into mush, but they don't bother to use it until the hero is nearby and able to shut it off before it makes his kind extinct. It's also only briefly mentioned and isn't really part of the story until the end. A bit of a plot hole.

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## **Koeur says**

<https://koeur.wordpress.com/2016/08/2...>

Publisher: Sonya Bateman

Publishing Date: January 2016

ISBN: 9781523672127

Genre: Fantasy

Rating: 2.9/5

Publishers Description: Hauling dead people around Manhattan is all in a day's work for body mover Gideon Black. He lives in his van, talks to corpses, and occasionally helps the police solve murders. His life may not be normal, but it's simple enough.

Review: Boy, am I late to the party on this one. Scads of reviews out there already, that are mostly glowing. I think each reviewer nuzzled up to the authors butt in order to get some brown time. "Was that necessary?". Yeah, maybe.....well whenever every reviewer spans the critical chasm without discernment (jumps on band wagon) I am immediately suspect. So I sorted the reviews and found that there were 16 chicken shits that ranked it as a two, but not a one written review. What we can generally learn from reviews prior to reading the novel is a sense of what will either interest us or repel. Say, if I am perusing a Scifi novel and find that there is a gushy love tribangle (yes, triBangle) between humans with no alien element, then meh. Add in that if it is forbidden that a Fookyarnian female in the throes of Markya avail herself of the nearest male in order to relieve her tentacled naughty bits without the Rangled Foo, then I am all in.

So where does that leave us with Wrong Side of Hell? Viscerally, I liked it. Technically it was ok. Believability ....pushing it. Character development, average in its entirety. Storyline pretty good. So lets shjtpick this fooker like a real critic so every writer out there can hate me even more as I trample upon their identities.

Gideon was a well developed character, and as you move with him through the story line, the self-discovery is a tangible thing where you can almost at times be the character. Gideon more than makes up for the lack of development of the supporting cast that seemed like they were assigned roles in a play. "You, yeah the tall skinny kid. You're gonna play the bogey man...why? Cause you're skinny and scary looking. No need to try out for anything else.". Initially the story line was great and moved at a good pace. Then at about 2/3 of the way through, the story line begins to become compressed and a bit rushed. Gideon's self discovery goes from a well paced and driven novel to a random assortment of events tied to a rushed ending. A substantial portion of Gideon's story is based on his adoptive family torturing him his entire life. This Hillbilly poacher-hunter clan regularly hunts Gideon and shoots him with real bullets for sport. They burn him and generally behave badly in his direction. For the moment forget the ludicrous idea that he has been getting shot since he

was a little child. Wouldn't Gideon be fucked up as an adult as the result of this mistreatment? Like, serial killer type fucked up? But what we find is a rather glib and deeply caring person that will risk his life for others he doesn't know. Gideon now lives in a van mostly to avoid being found by the Hillbilly clan. Really? How are the Hillbilly's going to find him let alone do anything to him, and why would they care since they wanted to drown him as an infant?

This was a solid three stars. It had upsides and downsides, mainly with story line compression and character development. As an independently published author this is amazing work and really needs a major publisher in order to take advantage of a professional editor. Or maybe she just needs an honest professional assessment of the novel entire. This work was an easy 4 stars with a cohesive story line.

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### **MsMiz (Tina) says**

I liked this UF version of paranormals and trying to live among humans. I really look forward to reading the in the series.

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### **Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says**

Kindle freebie 5/3/16!

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### **Xing says**

I really wanted to like this.

My first problem with the book was Gideon. Gideon was an alright fellow, but he exhibited too much of this Chosen One mentality where the stereotype seemed to define him more than anything else. He has this great power, but no explanation for why. He also has a tragic past being hunted by a crazy family, but doesn't exhibit any kind of mental trauma. Sure, he tells us it sucked, but this is a clear example of "telling, not showing" that left me feeling very detached from him as a character. The supporting cast of characters also fell nicely in specific molds that didn't really catch my attention.

The plot was also very straight forward, very clearly defined good and bad. It was almost comical. Even the violence felt like watching a B movie.

Overall, Wrong Side of Hell just wasn't for me. I think the idea of speaking to the dead was interesting, but it wasn't executed very well in my opinion.

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### **Meigan says**

Review to come.

## **chucklethescot says**

I had previously read the author's djinn books so I was interested in seeing what she was going to do with the Fae as they are not my favourite magical creature. I was not disappointed!

The book starts with a prologue, featuring a Fae who is trying to find his dead father's human lover before she falls victim to their enemies but he finds her dead. He is able to save her child, his half brother and vows to put him with a human family to keep him safe from the hunters. Intriguing start, and the reader knows that this will form the basis of our MC's back story, even though he doesn't know it yet. I like prologues that set up a story rather than give spoilers so this was fine.

Gideon is nicknamed the Corpse Whisperer by cop Abe Strauss as he is the one who removes bodies from crime scenes and takes them to the mortuary, and can also learn about the crime by touching the body. This time, he realises that the second shredded body in the city was killed by a female and both bodies had the same tattoo. When Abe starts to dig, he is taken off the case. Gideon however, ends up in it up to his neck when he noses about the park and sees a female werewolf being hunted and is almost killed by the man trying to shoot her. When Sadie wolfs out and kills the hunter, his dead body tells Gideon that they are Milus Dei, supernatural hunters and they want Gideon, the Deathspeaker. The plot thickens. Gideon realises that being able to compel dead bodies to answer his questions could be something these hunters would kill to get hold of but he has no idea what to do about it. Sadie decides that they need to get her Fae friend Taeral to help.

I very much liked the characters in this book. Gideon is down on his luck and somewhat anti-social (which I can relate to!), living in his van and quietly getting on with his job. He likes the fact that the dead don't bother him and the only one who knows that he can coax information from the dead is his only friend Abe. Abe is the honest cop who is willing to open his eyes to the supernatural, all be it reluctantly and is happy to get help from Gideon on these strange cases. I would like to see a bit more of his character in later books in the series. Sadie is tough and capable, which I always like in an urban fantasy female MC. I was also very pleased to see that Taeral was a Fae I could actually like. Usually the Fae are cold characters with few redeeming qualities but Taeral is a good character who forms a relationship with his friends.

The bad guys are as bad as you would want. Milus Dei are hunters who kidnap supernaturals to make use of their power. They have sought the Deathspeaker for a long time but have never been able to find him because Gideon was living safe amongst humans. Sadie was able to kill a few of those hunting her but there were too many to evade for long. the Chief of police Foley ensures that Abe is taken off the case when he links the so called wolf attacks to a female killer, so Abe knows to warn Gideon to stay away from Foley who seems anxious to find him.

I liked the way magic was used in the book. Sadie used purchased magic to be able to turn into her wolf whenever she needs to, which has helped to keep her alive so far. Gideon's power comes from compelling the dead to answer his questions but with it being a new skill, he finds that each use takes it toll on him. It was also fun to go into the magical world where Taeral lives, seeing all the people who live there and see a totally different side to the world. We meet some really interesting characters here who choose to ally against the Milus Dei when their home is invaded and their people are taken.



This was a very promising start to a new urban fantasy series and I have snapped up the other books published so far. I liked the characters and the way they interacted with each other as a dysfunctional team, and I loved the introduction of the zany sidekicks which added a bit of humour. There was plenty of action in evading the enemy and then plotting to break into their stronghold on a rescue mission. There really was a lot to enjoy about this book. The writing was good, pulling you into the story without the need to be over-descriptive but still drawing you into the world we are visiting. It was an excellent urban fantasy read and I very much look forward to reading more in the series when time allows!

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### **Susan Angela Wallace says**

Wrong side of he'll by Sonya Batsman.

The dead never bothered me. That honor was reserved for the living."

Hauling dead people around Manhattan is all in a day's work for body mover Gideon Black. He lives in his van, talks to corpses, and occasionally helps the police solve murders. His life may not be normal, but it's simple enough.

Until the corpses start talking back.

When Gideon accidentally rescues a werewolf in Central Park, he's drawn into the secret world of the Others. Fae, were-shifters, dark magic users and more, all playing a deadly cat-and-mouse game with Milus Dei, a massive and powerful cult dedicated to hunting down and eradicating them all.

Then a dead man speaks to him, saying that Milus Dei wants him more than any Other. They'll stop at nothing to capture him and control the abilities he never knew he had.

He is the DeathSpeaker. He is the key. And he's not as human as he thought...

Life was a whole lot easier when the dead stayed dead.

Omg. This was an absolutely fantastic read with brilliant characters. I just couldn't put it down. It had action from the first page right the way through to the last page. Absolutely brilliant. Loved the characters apart from the baddies. Foley was the worst of them. Am looking forward to next book. 5\*. Highly recommended.

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### **Fangs for the Fantasy says**

Gideon, transporter of corpses across New York City, does not lead a conventional life and he certainly hasn't has a conventional upbringing

But even he wasn't prepared for the corpses to talk back, a werewolf stalking central park and finding a whole world of Fae, magic and more

And a team of hunters dedicated to wiping them all out – and ready to use him to do it.

This book has a lot of wonderful elements I always love.

We have a very wide world of various supernatural creatures – with lots of hints of complex cultures and histories and different interactions which is definitely something I look for. There's also a lack of info dumping (though that may be due to other issues later)

I really love how the werewolves are linked to moonlight which is a really original touch which I always appreciate. And bogeypeople? I love the bogeypeople. That's a scary addition to the supernatural menagerie of this world. It's fun, it's broad and it has vast potential.

I also like the twist of the bad guys, the fear of the power they have not from just money and resources – but their knowledge of the supernatural. Normal humans who are determined to figure out every last weakness of the supernatural are considered utterly, unassailably powerful which is definitely different from what I've read before

The pacing of this book barely pauses for a second. The action starts very early, there's very little delay or even introduction before we race into the story. We have lots of action, lots of information and this huge wonderful broad world to absorb as soon as possible. It's a book that quickly drags you in then has you sprinting none stop all to the end.

We do have a little bit of a Chosen One scenario – because there really is no real explanation for why Gideon has the world changing super woo-woo. To say nothing to the pretty terrible magical-world-building of having Gideon master impossible-for-him-faerie powers with the power of imagination. I generally like Gideon a lot, I like his attitude, his humour, his resilience, his determination and the fact he's been outspoken without being ridiculously foolish and annoying with it. But super powers just 'cos is never something that I'm a fan of.

I do think this book was perhaps a little rushed in many way which, in turn, made some elements of it far too hurried.

For example, we get insights into Gideon's past which was sad and tragic. Of course it was sad and tragic. Isn't it ALWAYS sad and tragic? But rather than just abusive parents he actually has brothers who hunted and shot him for fun.

Shot him. With a gun. A real gun. Not an air rifle. A gun. Isn't that just... a bit too quick and extreme? And why is he afraid of having an actual address to hide from, what, 3 poor hunters who kill animals? What, they have access to FBI databases or something? They're going to hunt you down and shoot you with rifles in New York City?

Or his relationship with Taeral which goes from "cursed human begone" to "brother mine we are united and loyal forever"

Or there's Gideon's reaction to the supernatural which is like 2 seconds of blinking (and a really nice shocked reaction to actual werewolves existing) to kind of taking it all in stride

Or there's the way he gets really really really used to actually killing people.

Read More

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## **Ln Winchester says**

### **Excellent story, and I rarely say that.**

I also rarely give five stars. I'm so pleased I found this author and the DeathSpeaker Codex. I'm an avid reader and authors like Patricia Briggs, Seanon McGuire and Kim Harrison, among others, have set the bar pretty high for urban fantasy. I've read more than my share of UF/PR books that failed to hit the mark, sometimes painfully so.

I'm pleased to say The DeathSpeaker book 1 had everything I like and nothing I didn't like. Budding romance that does NOT take over the plot or stop the action. A hero who isn't a badass, who muddles along and gets hurt, but keeps trying to do the right thing. Secondary characters who are fully realized, not just props. World building that is believable and intriguing.

Yes, I would recommend. Yes, I'm going after book 2 now.

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## **Naiya says**

The book starts strong. Our tough-as-nails hero is Gideon Black. He moves bodies for the city, lives off the grid, and moonlights as a kind of unofficial consultant for his detective friend. Gideon's weird, but it's a human kind of weird. Until he tries to investigate a series of gruesome murders and comes face-to-face with a werewolf. Until he starts hearing dead people and is attacked by a secret cult of monster hunters.

Gideon's sleuthing and the murder mystery was wonderfully interspaced with hints about his brutal past and tantalizing details about why exactly he chooses to live in his van and how he became so mafia-tough. Then add in a murder attempt, a cute girl with a secret, a vicious secret society, theft, torture, family revelations, a ton of magic, and, suddenly, poor Gideon is in way over his head.

The book is written in the spirit of Kevin Hearne's Iron Druid Chronicles with a nod and a tip of the hat to Jim Butcher's Harry Dresden series. We get murder and mayhem, all sorts of magical beasts, a bunch of evil scientists in lab coats, corrupt officials, and a fairy dimension.

Except, except, except.

The story gives everything up so easily. I spent most of it knowing a lot more than the characters. There was no moral ambiguity about the evil guys. Gideon's reluctant, inhuman allies were occasionally scary, but even the most homicidal actions were immediately explained or brushed aside so everyone could be bffs again as they took on the baddies. And anytime Gideon was in trouble, the nasty plot points were quickly resolved through coincidence, convenience, or Gideon's special powers. The issues facing Gideon were hard, but overcoming them didn't *feel* difficult, storywise.

Overall, a mixed bag. Large cast of characters, interesting setup and backstory, and novel that, all in all, falls neatly into its genre.

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## **Devann says**

This was an okay read and I enjoyed it well enough, but I read a lot of urban fantasy and overall it was just incredibly standard. Like I could probably look through my TBR and find 50 books that are almost exactly like this with only minor plot / characterization changes. And when you have an incredibly formulaic urban-fantasy-chosen-one-with-traumatic-family-past-must-save-the-world plotline you really have to wow me with the characters. Unfortunately while all the characters were likable enough, they were still basically the same archetypes you are going to find in a hundred series like this so I didn't end up actually connecting with any of them. If you don't read a lot of urban fantasy then I think this could be a very enjoyable series, but I needed a little bit more out of it if I was going to be convinced to continue and unfortunately I didn't get it. Still, it was a pretty fun and quick read so that's why I gave it 3 stars instead of 2.

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