



Guardian

Carole Cummings

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As he pursues a man who is not what he seems, Constable Dallin Brayden learns the lines between enemy and ally, truth and deception, and conscience and obedience are not only blurred, but malleable.

Constable Dallin Brayden knows who he is, what he's about, and he doesn't believe in Fate. "Wilfred Calder" has no idea who he is or what he's about, and he's been running from Fate for as long as he can remember. When Wil flees after witnessing a murder, it's Dallin's job to pursue him. Along the way, he's pulled into a maelstrom of ancient myth, fanatical religion, and the delicate politics of a shaky truce between two perpetually warring countries—all of which rests on the slender shoulders of the man he knows is not Wilfred Calder.

Even Dallin's success proves a hollow victory. Wil is vengeful, rebellious, and lethal, and his tale of magic and betrayal rocks the carefully constructed foundations of Dallin's world. Suspicious and only half believing, Dallin must question not only his own integrity and his half-forgotten past, but the morality and motives of everyone around him—including those who hold his own country's fate in their hands.

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Guardian Details

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From Reader Review Guardian for online ebook

Cole Riann says

The Mother created the Aisling to Dream the threads of man and the Father created the Guardian to guard against his power. Or did he? How much influence do those around us, as well as those who govern over us have to shape and mold our beliefs? And when we're cultivated to their ideal, how does that war against our own sense of self and reason? These are the questions posed in this novel about warring political factions, the two people they are warring over, and the beliefs that they hold so sacred they are no longer belief but fact. On a closer level, this is a novel about what happens to the psyche of a man who has been chained to his fate. Conversely, it is also about the healing powers of love, trust, and a deep sense of self.

The major focus of this story is the world building, and it grows very organically. There is no info-dump. In fact, I believe that the opposite is true here. We are forced to put the pieces of this story together ourselves — forced to keep up with the story, as what one believes to be a fairy tale and another considers fact merge together with a cold war (that is fast becoming a real one) and a spark of what will soon become a revolution. We aren't even sure of who our two characters are until two-thirds of the story has passed. This was done very well and it added a whole new ingredient to the dialogue between Wil and Dallin, which was the best part of the story. Because we don't know exactly who our main characters really are (and both of them don't know everything about who they are either), their dialogue becomes the most important clue to the reader. It shows us who they are at their core before we are told what their roles are, what others have ordained for them. By the time we figure out what those roles are, we already know what kind of people they both are, what they want and need, what they will do for freedom and what they will sacrifice, and just how steely their strength is to survive...

For the full review, visit [Reviews by Jessewave](#).

Mandapanda says

Wonderful first volume in a new fantasy series. This is the story of Wil Calder, a secretive and gifted young man who is on the run from his captors and Brayden, an honorable officer with the Putnam Constabulary. When Wil is questioned as part of an investigation, magic is suspected and Brayden as the chief investigator is called to question him. Wil escapes and Brayden sets off to capture him, not knowing that his world will be turned upside down as conspiracies are revealed and everything he knows about himself and Wil is proved to be wrong.

I was immediately drawn in to the plight of both the lead characters. The gradual reveal of who Wil really is, is captivating and complex. There are no big info dumps. Instead the reader only learns the truth as our two MC's do which is very addictive. Once you start this book you can't put it down. I loved the world of Gods and Deities, fanatical religious groups and warring countries the author has created. Even though the story takes place over just a few days, it has that *epic* feel that I love in a fantasy novel. It's also a very fast-paced story. Our MC's are fleeing from terrible danger and I really had that feeling that they needed to *Hurry Up* at several points. Very edge-of-the-seat drama.

It's great that all three volumes are scheduled for release within one year. The second is already out and the final volume is due for release in December. Highly recommended for fantasy fans. For romance fans, there's

no romance in the first volume but you won't miss it because it's so full of action. Be patient because I've read the second volume already and they definitely...!

Em says

I just knew that Carole Cummings would not disappoint me after falling in love with her Wolf's Own series (my favourite ever series). This is epic fantasy at its best, the world building is fascinating and the writing flows beautifully.

It's one of those books that you really need to take your time mulling over and absorb everything you're being told and almost try to work out what's going on yourself. The relationship between the main characters Wil and Dallin builds up slowly, nothing is rushed and I'm looking forward to starting Dream. I would definitely recommend.

Jenn says

"You fight shackles like a wild animal, but you accept a cage like you belong in one."

Ok, seriously, my love is like **whoa** for this book! I want to sleep with this at night. I want other writers to read this book and take notes.

In this book the fantasy, world-building, and the characterizations come first. The author takes the time AND the care to make sure each of these has multiple, detailed layers that unfold for the reader in the best way possible. For someone concerned about the complexity of the world-building...don't. There is no info dump. The reader slowly discovers parts of this world and mystery so that the action, tension, and your love for these characters increases with each page. This book has heart down to its corners.

I fell in love with Wil and Dallin, and they don't even really have a romance in this book. However, I fell in love with *them*. So many detailed moments that breathed life into them, and you felt all of their emotions naturally. The argument over the apples, footprints, and horses might be the cutest thing ever.

I have so many questions about the mystery of the Aisling, and it's been awhile where I've had this kind of excitement over a "world." Even without the m/m romance, I would still read this book and the series. If this isn't normally your genre, give it a shot anyways. Your mind will rock!

Teal says

Since this isn't a stand-alone novel, it feels a bit arbitrary to give it a rating. But I'm going to go with 3.5 stars for now, rounded up, because it feels like a solid set-up for the rest of the trilogy.

The world-building is fine, but what really shines here is the characters. Brayden in particular kept surprising me -- apparently I had some fantasy-character stereotypes in my head that I expected him to fall in line with,

but he just kept refusing to conform to them.

I wouldn't normally have picked this up -- I'm tired of epic fantasy -- but it was only 99 cents. I'm glad I did, and I'm looking forward to the rest of the story.

Kaje Harper says

This book grabbed my attention and held it from the opening page. It's not a romance...yet. It is an intriguing fantasy about two men who are caught up in magical and political violence and intrigue, and are finding that neither they nor the world around them are what they had previously believed. Both men are enormously sympathetic and complex characters, and their interactions have a fascination somewhere between a love story and a train wreck. This book is in my top favorites of the year. Might be right at the top if it were a self-contained story. But be warned, this book is in no way complete in and of itself. At the end, the adventure is just beginning for these men together. I went right out and bought Book 2, and I'm relieved that Book 3 is not too far down the road. If you hate cliffhangers, wait to read this until the third comes out. But then, if you enjoy fantasy, run don't walk to your book vendor and give this a try.

Nina says

I'm astonished.

I don't even know what to say.

Okay, so this is fantasy, and it doesn't even have any romance yet! And I LOVED it!

The characters - so realistic, both of them, and incredibly lovable.

The writing - mind-boggling; basically, CC manages to express an exact, precise emotion in a range of a hundred different ones with three words put together in such a seemingly careless way that I can't figure out how she does it.

The mythology/religion - not very developed yet, but definitely intriguing. A Mother *and* Father on approximately the same plan of importance? Sign me up.

The baddies - honestly, they scare me.

Just read it. Even if you have doubts (like I did), or you don't really get along with fantasy (like I do), or you're thirsty for romance (...yep, that's right), just go read it.

Paul says

YES a rant for all text-to-speech readers, how on earth do you get away with having all the page #No and footer of book read out **MID SENTENCE** Excerpt to make my point: **QUOTE** He kept his voice flat, but he couldn't keep his jaw from *Aisling Book One:Guardian* -5 tightening. He'd thought this was finished. . . . and have no way to turn it off for**339 fucking pages**.

This is a great book but. . .

NOT TEXT-TO-SPEECH FRIENDLY AT ALL AND THE AUDIOBOOK'S PRODUCTION QUALITY WAS SO BAD I RETURNED IT, THE NARRATION WAS FINE BUT IT SOUNDED

LIKE THEY WERE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE GRAND CANYON

MLE says

Exceptionally well done fantasy. The world is interesting, complex, and well built. Must read the rest of the series now. It's nice to see if there is going to be any romance it's going to be very slow moving these characters are in no position for any of that right now.

Lauraadriana says

Epic...big and vast and with characters that grew through the book, a world that took root and flourished with every page, with every chapter everything was better.

There is so much in this book that I have trouble even trying to pin down the elements that made me love it. I can say this, the writing was solid, the dialogue fantastic, the world building fascinating, and the themes broached were done carefully and so very intelligently...Wil and Dallin the main characters are complex and interesting. They are at a crossroads and their fates are intertwined. Wil is a man looking to fulfill his fate and he's been walking alone bearing that heavy weight...Wil reminded me so much of Odysseus making that long lonely journey with that heavy burden just on him, along the way finding cruelty, kindness and finally someone to walk along with...

I feel like I need to read the next one to fully be able to put down what I feel about this book...but I will say this, this is an excellent story, written finely.

This is my first book by Carole Cummings...but certainly no the last

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

FREE today at Torquere Press!! 12/21/14

<http://www.torquerebooks.com/index.ph...>

Sheziss says

I can't find the appeal of this book. It's boring, heavy going and there is no plot! Only Wil the whole time "poor guy but he has pride, poor guy but he takes a bath, poor guy but he has apples...". I didn't pay this book to read Wil's dear diary!

I don't understand why this is m/m, or romance, or fantasy, or a novel... Seriously, what genre is this book? None I recognize, I'm afraid.

Everyone loved it! Is it really the same book?

So, no, thanks, Carole Cummings...

Edina Rose says

Wilfred Calder is Trouble; or maybe he is just In Trouble; or both. That's yet to decide.

He has been in captivity most of his life, secretly used and abused for his powers. Now he is on the run, has been for three years already, when he is "involved" in a murder, but it's not clear if he is just a witness or if he has a part in it.

The lawman in charge of getting the truth out of him is Constable Dallin Brayden, a mountain of a man with ten years experience and an uncanny ability to read a man's heart. Dallin is also a rational man who doesn't believe much in magic. Too bad, because magic is Wil's middle name.

While chasing after elusive Wil, Dallin will experience things and discover facts that will make him rethink everything he held for true, starting with his true self.

From the dank underground cell of a constabulary station to the wildness of the country meet the legendary Aisling, the unsuspecting Guardian, The fanatical Bethren, The greedy Guild and so many more fantastic characters.

From the first page to the last you are going to be captivated by this universe, this book will OWN you. The author's style is very pleasant; it's like eating a tiramisu with the littlest spoon.

This book is NOT a MM romance. I've learned from reviews that in the next book romance blooms between Wil and Dallin. I would love that very much!

♥Laddie♥ (Lee Lee) says

Hands Down, No Contest: The Best M/M Book I Have Read Thus Far

When Carole Cummings wrote this book she got everything right. Everything.

The world building in *Aisling* is complex, well thought out, fresh, multi-layered and brilliant. When the book starts there is no info-dump, so as you read, all of the intricacies of the world Carole Cummings created are slowly revealed. The reader has to pay close attention. The fact that I had to piece things together as I read kept me fully engaged. Magic, religion, shamans, tension between countries, murder and so much more.

The plot is revealed just as slowly and carefully as the ins and outs of the world in which the story is set. At no point was this book predictable. Every scene revealed a million new things that had me rethinking where the book was going to take me and I was thrilled with each revelation. There was no aspect of the story that was pointless. Every action and event was important. There were no dropped plot threads and no holes that I could see. Flawless.

Another thing that amazed me was the author's skills when it comes characterization. To say that these character's are complex and well-rounded is an understatement. Wil and Dallin are characters that I would read twenty books about. The secondary characters were vivid and even they did not seem two-dimensional.

Carole Cumming's writing style was what pulled this whole book together. She makes gorgeous word choices and those words flow beautifully. She all but paints a picture of the character's surroundings while conveying their emotions and thoughts skillfully. Her writing is pristine.

This book is, as I stated in the review heading, the best M/M book I have read to date. There are books I love and that I re-read a million times but this book is in a class all by itself. Completely untouchable. This is a book that everyone should pick up and read as soon as they can. I recommend.

Christina says

An excellent read set in a fascinating world where characterization is the focal point. Two men were brought together by fate in a world of magic, murder, politics, and religion. With each chapter, the world slowly unfolds while the characters become more and more complex. The author gives us one puzzle-piece at a time and I was constantly wondering where the next one would fit. I loved how this kept me on my toes.

Wil and Dallin totally captivated me. Wil is a tormented soul who just wants to stop being afraid. He's on the run and carrying a heavy burden full of rage and agony. At times, he exhibits almost child-like qualities but he has strength and pride. I just adore him! Then there's Dallin, who's honorable, strong, and methodical. For him, everything has to be rational and logical. They come together in this world where they both have to learn to trust and where they begin to question their beliefs and their fate.

The author did a wonderful job describing the world. It was vivid and alive. The only issue I had was that some parts of the book moved too slow for my liking.

This was my first book by Ms. Cummings but it will not be my last.
