



Court

Cat Patrick

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For more than 400 years, a secret monarchy has survived and thrived within the borders of the US, hiding in plain sight as the state known as Wyoming. But when the king is shot and his seventeen-year-old son, Haakon McHale, is told he will take the throne, becoming the eleventh ruler of the Kingdom of Eurus, the community that's survived for centuries is pushed to the limit. Told through four perspectives, Court transplants us to a world that looks like ours, but isn't. Gwendolyn Rose, daughter of the Duke of Coal, is grudgingly betrothed to Haakon -- and just wants a way out. Alexander Oxendine, son of the Duke of Wind and Haakon's lifelong best friend, already grapples with external struggles when he's assigned to guard Haakon after the king dies. And commoner Mary Doyle finds whispers in the woods that may solve -- or destroy -- everything, depending on your bloodline.

Money. Love. Power. Community. What's your motivation?

Court Details

Date : Published October 23rd 2014

ISBN :

Author : Cat Patrick

Format : Kindle Edition 277 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Contemporary

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From Reader Review Court for online ebook

Katie Scarlett says

I love all of Cat Patrick's books. I think they're genius and so different. Part of why it's taken me so long to read this book is I wanted to make sure I was in the right mindset and that I would give it the attention it deserves. Another reason is maybe I was hoping she'd release another book by the time I read it.

This whole book is centered around the idea that Wyoming is actually the Kingdom of Eurus pretending to be a state. (Which sounds crazy but it makes you wonder, it could be.) And it is so cool blending the modern with the traditional.

When Prince Haakon's father dies, he is to become king at 17. To make him seem more mature the council wants him to get married to Gwen. Only Gwen likes to spend her time sneaking across the border to help her roller derby team score points (this part was a bit confusing because i thought she was playing ice hockey at first. If you know derby terms you know right away when they talk of jams and whatnot. I knew nothing but that there was an ice rink and skates. They eventually mentioned derby and I figured it out). In addition to Haakon and Gwen, the book also centers on Alexander, who is Haakon's best friend, and Mary, who is a commoner. This review doesn't begin to cover the complexities of this world and the relationships between everyone in it.

There is one thing. Why does Haakon share a name with his father and grandfather if his father was the second son? Why would you name your second son after yourself? Unless Haakon's father took the name after his brother died??? or when he became king??

Anyway, the book ended in a way that seemed open to a sequel, which would be amazing because my brain does not want to leave this world.

Moon Love says

My head is still spinning. This book...WOW. My emotions are all over the place. I'm stunned by the events that took place in this book and how I reacted to it. I'm beyond impressed with the concept of having a kingdom hidden in plain sight, and I HAVE to know when the sequel will be out. I'm almost kicking myself for reading this book so close to it's publication day. HOW WILL I BEAR THE WAIT FOR THE SEQUEL? The only thing worse than waiting would be finding out there is no sequel. That would be devastating!

I'm going to try to put words together and form coherent thoughts so I can share what this book has done to me. I think now would be the perfect time to start using gifs, because in all honesty, besides tell you this book is amazeballs, there isn't much that's going to make sense. You HAVE to read this book. I think the biggest testimonial is that I rarely read fantasy or dystopian novels. Rarely. So rare, I can think of only one fantasy and one dystopian title off the top my sleep deprived head, for a grand total of two books.

Cat Patrick certainly has a knack for writing amazing characters. The story is told from four points of view and it was astonishing to see how tied together they all were. I was surprised by how my thoughts on characters changed as I continued to read. There were characters I initially liked that I almost despised by the end of the book, and others whom I wasn't so sure about, but whom I loved by the time I turned the last page.

I read this book without stopping once. I just couldn't put it down.

I'm beginning to wonder how it is I'm only discovering Cat Patrick now; she's written five books including this one. However I'm so glad I have. It's opened my eyes to a whole genre of books I've been missing out on and to say I'm ready for the sequel is an understatement. I'm so ready to have my mind messed with again!

Stephanie Cowart says

It took me a little bit to get into this book because the world building was a little slow. But the premise was really unique so I was intrigued. The characters grew on me and I got really invested in the story. However the ending was abrupt and unsatisfying but I am hoping that is because a sequel is in the works!

Paula M. of Her Book Thoughts! says

Hey people! I interviewed Cat Patrick on my Blog and you can also read an excerpt from this book! Check it out [HERE](#)

Pamela says

There is definitely a market for *Court*. I don't think I am that market. Intellectually, I understand where Cat Patrick was going with this, but it just didn't work for me.

The basic premise is that there is a secret government operating within the borders of the United States--namely, in the state of Wyoming. I suppose if I wanted to hide a government, I would have gone to North Dakota (no offense, North Dakotans)--Wyoming has Yellowstone, the Grand Tetons, etc. ANYWAY. This secret government--Eurus-- was established by some dudes who didn't want to hang with the Founding Fathers, so they somehow made trails all the way out to Wyoming where they could live with the "Native people." Joseph Dyer didn't like that his daughters couldn't go to university in Puritan New England (what century, exactly, was he from?) and his buddy, John Seymour, didn't like that his "Native woman" wife was being attacked by their neighbors. "Dyer, Seymour, and several other men and their families snuck away. After a long and dangerous journey, together they created their version of paradise: a kingdom that blended the best of England with Native cultures. Dyer was thought of as the Father of the Realm, and Seymour's Native wife, who ensured their survival through tribal relations, the Mother."

Okay. That was my first stomp-on-the-brakes-screeeech moment. Once again, Native Americans are reduced to magical helpers and not treated as sovereign nations of their own (which they are). No reason is given, but the reader assumes that the people with whom the European men intermarry simply assimilate into the government created by their husbands, which is, again, ridiculously ... I am actually at a loss for words here. If there is a word that means skeevy+offensive+unbelievable+irrational all in one, it fits in that ellipsis. I assume that the whole Native-wife-keeps-them-alive concept comes from the story of Sacagawea, but, I'm not fully buying this either.

Now, this presents problem number two: genetics. Unless these "several" people had fabulous DNA, it's unlikely that they could generate descendants who didn't have serious birth defects. I suppose you could argue that the men all married people of the nations of that area, but I doubt that you'd get enough genetic variety. Plus, the narrative makes a distinction between those who favor "the Father" in looks (i.e. Western European) and "the Mother" (American Indian of unknown tribe/nation). Evidently, after 300 years, there is still distinguishable phenotypic variation. Wow. *Note* I am not a geneticist, but I *did* make Punnett squares in high school human biology *and* I know it's a pretty bad idea to marry your cousin.

Anyway, even if you skip all that, things start to get pretty familiar. The heir to the throne suddenly becomes King even though he's a horrid little twit who enjoys getting drunk at any and every opportunity. He's basically this guy:

Note the Second I've neither read nor watched *Game of Thrones* but everyone at work is obsessed and I think I've absorbed some of the culture via osmosis.

WAIT A MINUTE. When, in the course of writing a book review, it becomes blindingly obvious that much more was borrowed than previously thought, a lady lowers her opinion of the book even further.

Back to that in a moment.

This heir, Haakon (unfortunate name, that), is formally betrothed to Gwendolyn Rose. There are five main families in the kingdom, and each one controls a different aspect of the nation's functions. The Roses are the PR people, centered in Jackson Hole, which naturally prompts the question: Harrison Ford, Eureka or not? Gwendolyn leads a double life. Let us all collectively gasp!

In fact, she is so subversive that she sneaks out into the Real United States to a bar in like Idaho or something and plays zombie roller hockey or ... something. Because there's obviously a huge market for that in Idaho, with lots of lithe young ladies willing to check each other with sticks. At the bar/hockey rink, she sees a swoon-tastic feller with whom she falls in insta-love and for whom she ponders leaving her life in Eurus. I really wish she would have.

Instead, as she sneaks back in after her night of brawling-lite, ~~Jeffrey~~ Haakon comes to Gwen's rooms and announces that the Council (there is always a Council to muck up people's lives) has declared they must marry by Christmas for his Kingship to be legitimized in the eyes of the people. Never mind that his dad was king and he, being the only child, is the obvious heir. Obvious succession rules are obvious.

Cut to yet another character named Mary, who is not a member of Court but instead skips school to ride her horse across the Wyoming plains, which, to be perfectly honest, sounds awesome. Mary is also the victim of either a genetic freak accident or an author's overenthusiasm for words that do not mean what she thinks they mean. Mary has "black-streaked titian hair." Titian hair is so named for the color of golden red so often seen on the women portrayed in paintings by Titian.

Titian's Flora. I tried to pick one with less boobage than most.

I have never heard of someone's hair being naturally streaked with black if it is a light red. There's no indication that Mary colors it, either. Plus, red hair is a recessive gene, and with generations of presumed intermarriage and blending with the unnamed "Native people" of the area, it's rather unlikely that she would have red hair. Much less black-streaked red hair.

Mary's big deal is that she is Totally Not In Love with her best friend, which means, "Yes, I am totally in love with my best friend."

I couldn't deal with this any more, so I skipped to the end to find out that many things happened with supposed deviousness. To bring back my revelation that I talked about earlier, the major plot twist regarding Haakon is pretty much the same one as in *Game of Thrones*. If you can Google, you can figure it out. Not really a spoiler.

And that really irritates me. You can't just take someone else's story, clean it up a bit, toss in some roller-derby-style "edginess," and pop it into the state of Wyoming. Sorry, Eurus, which is mostly in Wyoming.

Going back to my opening sentence (you really learn so much about your actual feelings regarding a book as you review it), I would still agree that there is a market for *Court*. It probably consists of three subgroups: 1) fans of the author, 2) people who can't get enough *Game of Thrones* and therefore read anything remotely like it, and 3) people who don't like the explicitness of *GoT* and would like some roller derby hockey with that, thanks very much.

I received an ARC of this title from Netgalley.

Christy Wilson says

Holy moly. My mind is blown. Will post full review after I take some time to recoup and formulate my thoughts on this WONDERFUL read.

I have to say, right off the bat, that YA novels are not usually my thing. They have to be of very high caliber for me to enjoy them and give them a good rating. Think Harry Potter. Think Hunger Games. Think Hush Hush.

Court is of very high caliber.

In a nutshell: Wyoming is not Wyoming as we, the rest of the United States (referred to as "the Democracy" in the book) perceive it to be. Wyoming is a kingdom. There is a king. There is a queen. There are class systems. If one wishes to leave the kingdom and enter the Democracy, you must pay a tax in order to do so; and only the most wealthy of families can do this. Five families are considered to be in "control" of the kingdom, each of which powers something that is necessary. Coal. Oil. Natural Gas. Wind. Tourism.

When the king is killed, his 17 year old son Haakon is told that he must become the king, and that he must marry 17 year old Gwen. However, each of them have been living what they think are secret lives and want something different for themselves. The powers that be have their own plans, and manipulate these teenagers, including friends, in order to get what they want.

First, this book is very well written. You immediately feel badly for Haakon. He's 17. He wants to be a teenager and is not ready to be king. You feel badly for Gwen, who yearns for freedom outside of Wyoming. Not only are these two characters fascinating, you have assorted supporting characters that you grow to like immensely, some that you grow to hate. Some of them make you want to reach through your Kindle and shake the snot out of them because they are just mean and evil.

I was drawn into this book and simply could not put it down. It is so unique, so entertaining...it is simply unlike anything I have read in years. And that is a compliment. I was brought to tears more than once.

If you are a reading fan and enjoy a good story, you **MUST** read this book. It doesn't matter if you think you are more of a fan of mystery, more of a fan of romances, more of a paranormal fan. This book is simply a must read, pure and simple, for those who want to be entertained and taken somewhere outside of the norm. The year has been a wonderful year for me in book reading; each time I read a book and think I have found the best book of the year...I read yet another story such as Court and feel I have yet again found the best book of the year.

My hope is that we get a follow up to this story. It ends in a way that a reader can be satisfied with; you still have questions but maybe, you aren't meant to get the answers. Here is hoping that Cat Patrick continues and feels we are worthy.

5 out of 5 stars. I wish I could give it 10.

Adriana says

Okay, this book seriously needs to get more recognition. Why haven't more people read this, I don't know. But they better because I want a sequel and fast.

Court centers around the idea that Wyoming is actually a secret kingdom in the U.S. and it has been one for hundreds of years. It even has its own king. Now how cool is that? This was such an original setting and concept. It all starts with Prince Haakon, who does not want to be king and then bang! his father gets shot right in front of him which means he'll be king in two months time. Before that can happen though he'll be married off to Gwendolyn at the age of seventeen.

Source

There are four POV's in this story and it works really well. Haakon, the soon to be king; Gwendolyn or Gwen, the soon to be married off queen; Alexander, the prince's best friend; and Mary, an ordinary citizen of Eurus. Their choices will impact the whole kingdom which has secrets of its own. New information about the kingdom and its people will arise and depending on how our four main characters receive it'll change the course of the kingdom and all the lives it's supposed to protect.

Haakon just does not want to become king especially since the change his father went through when he became king. His father turned into a harsh and distant person -perpetually disappointed in him. He is more of a rich kid who doesn't want any responsibility, but it's thrust upon him anyway and he must figure out what to do with it. Gwendolyn (Gwen) is actually pretty rebellious. She doesn't want to be queen or married off so young to someone she doesn't even know. She's determined to find her way out of it. Alexander is

holding on to a secret of his own while also trying to keep his best friend out of trouble. Mary is an ordinary girl with great strength of character. She wears her heart on her sleeve even if her best and only friend Roarke doesn't notice her. All these characters stories come together to make one page turning read.

Source

From beginning to end, Court had me enamored. And towards the end things get **real**. I could never have believed the dramatic change in the storyline if I hadn't read it myself. This is my second Cat Patrick book and I'm continually impressed by her writing and imagination. This underappreciated book needs more attention because it has everything to make you keep reading and wanting more.

Rachmi says

ARC was provided by the author/publisher via NetGalley in exchange for honest review.

3.5 stars

When the publisher invited me to read and review this book via NetGalley I was beyond excited, as this is my first invitation on NetGalley and I knew that Cat Patrick has already have 4 books that look interesting but somehow I never read them. And reading its blurb picked my interest. So yeah, I can't not to accept it.

I think this book has an awesome idea for its story, a story about a hidden country. A country, called Realm, that is disguised as a state in the US. Along the way it was quite hard for me stomach all of the things that make Realm runs. Many questions wandered in my head, the how, what and why demanded answer from the characters, which to be honest at first I was kinda doubt they will provide me the reasonable answers. And the most important question is could Realm even truly exist when there is no one knows about them? The answer is it can be and the characters give me make sense description to answer my doubt and my questions. So then I began to understand and quite believe of what the author told me through her story. And what I love most of it is the story isn't as simple as I thought before. There are so much going on and more complex than the blurb says. And I really liked it.

The story its self is told from third person POV from 4 perspectives; Haakon, the prince; his bestfriend, Alexander; his fiancée, Gwendolyn; and a commoner, Mary. Some of their POV are more interesting than the others. The problem is when I was so glue with one POV I have to wait for a couple chapters to go back to it since the next chapter is told from other perspective. And sometimes it isn't as interesting as the previous one. So here I read one chapter about the king's dead and then the next chapter is about a mundane thing like riding a horse. It was (kinda) frustrating since I want to know more about the king's dead, and its impact. And since I didn't read this book in one sitting (have to put it on hold to do my works, to have dinner and even to sleep) when I continue reading it I was kinda forget the stories from the previous chapters. So I have no choice to go back to it. However the more I read, it's clearer that each chapter in fact intertwine each other, even when it seems so simple and all.

As for the characters, my favorite is Mary. She feels more real and I can connect easier to her than to other characters. The four main characters have their own virtue and vice, in a way I just couldn't tell who the good one is and whom I should believe. But one thing for sure is they all seem so naive and trust others easily which kinda bothers me, to be honest. Take Haakon for example, he's the prince, the heir of the Realm, I

think it's understandable that I assumed he has a prince qualities. Surely his parents and also the council train him for his whole life of how to become a king and his responsibilities, right? But it isn't what I got. He seems so lost when his father died. At first I thought it was because he's in shock knowing that he will become a king sooner than later, but then he keeps his unsureness, and doesn't know what he has to do all the time. This makes him to have to listen to the council which leads him trust them while I think he's too easy trusting them. As a prince I kind wish he has curiosity and questioning everything that happened around him. But then again, he doesn't seem have prince qualities in the first place, so he being naive might understandable, I guess.

I also think that the way the characters solve the problem is too easy. I felt like suddenly everything falls in pieces and in a rush. Yet I really liked the story and the feel that I got when I read this book. I thought it's purely fantasy story but when I got to know more about Realm, I felt like it's also a dystopia world, though the setting is in present time.

All in all, I think this is a good story that beautifully written. Before I read it, I thought it's a standalone but reading the way it ends, it's clear that there will be another books since Gwendolyn and Haakon's story haven't finished yet. And I'll read their next journey for sure.

Jen Ryland says

I've enjoyed Cat Patrick's sci fi books so decided to try this, but after about reading 37%, I'm not sure this is for me. Since I am a fan of the author, I'll try to describe the part I read, and maybe it will be for you ;)

Court is sort of ... an alt-history contemporary fairy tale. The premise felt rather like Vampire Academy, but without the paranormal vampire stuff. In Court, this secret royal court exists in Wyoming. (Just like VA has their court in Montana.) And there are dukes of things like Natural Gas, Coal, Wind, Oil and Tourism. I didn't really get that. And without any vampires, I didn't really get why these royals needed to hide out from the rest of the world. They were sort of like a religious cult without the religion. In the part I read, they were just there being secretive for no reason I could figure out.

The POV characters are Haakon, the heir to the throne, who has to become king when his father is murdered. There's Gwen, who is betrothed to Haakon, but likes to sneak around and play ice hockey. There's Mary, and I wasn't sure what her role in the story was in the part I read. And Alexander who was.... I can't remember. Either guarding Haakon or spying on him or maybe both.

The book DID have potential conflict -- the murder (which was kept secret) and the fact that Haakon and Gwen are betrothed but each getting it on with someone else, but in the part of the book I read, none of this conflict had really started to brew. Nothing much happened. Haakon told Gwen she had to marry him and then slept with someone else. Mary complained. Gwen played hockey and flirted with some guy. It just wasn't grabbing me....

Asheley says

Read my full review [HERE](#) at Into the Hall of Books, which includes a MAP!

Okay WOW, **Court by Cat Patrick** was a book that took a little bit of time to lay out but by the time I got to the end, I was blown away by the big reveal. I didn't see it coming in a million years! The only way I can really get my thoughts out in an organized way on this one is to just list a few of them:

1. **Backstory.** In the late 1600's, two men created a kingdom way out in America's unknown west because they wanted to create their own version of paradise. Their kingdom mixed of the best parts of England with Native cultures. One man came over from England with his daughters after his wife died from the Great Plague but found that the Puritan culture here was not suitable for his girls: he did not like the extreme submissiveness and he wanted higher education for his girls; this was not allowed. He also did not agree with the extreme religious beliefs in the area. The co-founder of the kingdom was married to a Native, and found that there were hardships associated with this intermarriage. The two men wanted a place to live in harmony and freedom, and established their kingdom but wished for it to be hidden in plain sight.

2. **The World.** Inside of what is known as the state of Wyoming exists The Realm. This is actually a Kingdom, complete with a ruling Monarchy, and has its own rules and laws that go back for generations. They take their government and codes very seriously. For example, when the Tenth King is killed, the law states that the oldest child of the King shall take the throne (the Crown is inherited by way of blood, not marriage), which is how Haakon is to become King at the age of 17, rather than his mother. These rules are similar to England's!

The area outside of Wyoming is called The Democracy. There are some very interesting things going on with how traffic is monitored between the Realm and The Democracy - also with trade, the census, and some secret government programs. The politics mesh well with this world.

3. **Main Characters:**

**Haakon-James Haakon McHale III. 17-year-old Eleventh King of Eurus, after the murder of his father. Haakon is freaking out a little because he knows that he isn't ready to be king. A recovering alcoholic, he still struggles with wanting to drink when he gets stress and OH GUESS WHAT NEW STRESS HE'S JUST ACQUIRED? A new kingdom! Also been told that he is to be married to his betrothed in order to look "more mature" to the people. Not thrilled about that one either because he is currently involved with someone that he actually *likes*.

**Gwen-Gwendolyn Rose is to be married to Haakon two years sooner than expected due to the recent passing of his father, which means she is about to be Queen! Gwen knows that she isn't ready for that role AND she isn't ready for marriage. Plus she is currently involved with someone she actually *likes*. Gwen secretly feels suffocated by life inside of the Realm and often sneaks outside into the Democracy where she participates on a Roller Derby team. If found out, she faces some super stiff punishments, particularly given her station in the kingdom.

**Alexander-Alexander Oxendine is a member of the Court as he is the son of a Duke, but he is also Haakon's best friend. Assigned to be the King's protector, he isn't performing well at this right now...because he is involved in a few things of his own. Alexander is in the middle of a big, life-changing "finding-himself, coming-of-age" issue that is happening at the worst possible time as it coincides with his Court duties. ALSO Alexander is being manipulated by other members of the Court, which stands to really destroy his life if he doesn't *Do. Something. About. It.*

**Mary-MARY IS SUCH A WILD CARD! Mary is a high school student living in a poor-ish, less desirable area of the kingdom. Very smart. Raised by her father only. Early in the book, Mary is approached by a stranger and asked to trade information: info about her mother for other certain specific info. She has no idea why this guy wants this information, but what has Mary got to lose? She's never known her mother and has always wanted to! She has NO IDEA what she's involved in and what she has set in motion. NO IDEA. *It takes a while to figure out what Mary's role is in the story, but once I did, I was pretty impressed with how much of a big deal little ole' Mary is.*

4. **Structure.** The story is told through the four points-of-view I've outlined above. This may seem daunting but it isn't really. These four people are very different in personality and it is easy to tell who is speaking at the time.

5. **Politics.** Tons of Court politics. Backstabbing. Manipulation. Lies. ALSO PEOPLE DIE.

4. **Romance.** Even though Haakon and Gwen are betrothed and have a date set to wed in public, they both have relationships that they enjoy and don't wish to end. This is a HUGE deal and a big driving force in the book, although it isn't AT ALL the only driving force in the book.

5. **Coming-of-Age.** At least two of the characters have massive coming-of-age moments. HUGE.

6. **Ending.** WOW, what a twist! I have no idea at this point if this is to be a series or not, but I'd love to see what happens next if there is another book. HOWEVER, if this is a standalone, I feel comfortable with the ending. My mouth was hanging open and I wanted to high-five the character that blew everyone's mind.

IN SUMMARY: **Court by Cat Patrick** started slowly but built up well as I was reading until it ended with a BANG! that I never saw coming. I attribute the four POV's to the slow start because it takes some time to build the world and lay the story when it is done this way, but that ending was hella worth it.

I became wrapped up in the political happenings as they were unfolded one by one. The manipulation? The lies? The secret projects going on? I also was interested in how all of this was affecting Haakon, as he was trying hard to hold himself together in the face of MASSIVE stress and no knowledge of how to manage his new position. Will he be able to stick with his alcohol and drug recovery? How will this affect his friendships and other relationships? I was very wrapped up in the romance aspect of this story because HELLO how would I feel if I was seventeen and suddenly not only in charge of a kingdom but also forced into marriage?

Speaking of this kingdom, Haakon finds out that his kingdom is doing some pretty underhanded things and that some of his Court is manipulating him into some things that are a little on the shady side. What will he do about this? Should he keep going with this or not? Everything, everything, everything makes him want to pick up the bottle again and also perhaps a few pills, which is NOT GOOD. Where is his friend when he needs help? OH YEAH, he's dealing with a big *thing* of his own! No one knows who to trust in this story; there are friendships made and destroyed, and lives are built and lost...all in the wake of one death. Oh, by the way, JUST WHY was the king murdered again? That kind of blew my mind. WOW, that ending, that

ending you guys.

If you want a story that comes of as part-contemporary and part-other things with political intrigue, betrayal, twists and turns, and an ending that is like WHOA, you just might enjoy **Court by Cat Patrick**. I had no idea what to expect when I began this book but I was pleasantly surprised and I secretly kind of wish for another book so I can find out what happens next.

Jolien says

Review first published on my blog [The Fictional Reader](#)

WORLD

I'm still not sure how to put this book in a genre. I mean, it's set as fantasy. And I guess it could be urban fantasy. But there aren't really (m)any fantastical elements. I don't really know how to describe it. It plays out in the US, more specifically Wyoming. For 400 years, a Realm has been situated there, separated from the US -which is called the Democracy in this book. The Realm has existed for generations, founded by the Father who came from Great-Britain, and the Mother, who was a Native American.

I liked part of the world these characters lived in, because I do think the Realm had some good things to offer. Like free healthcare, and affordable education. Living in Belgium, I never truly appreciated this until I realized that countries like the US don't really have this. So in a way, it's a good commentary. But I also wasn't truly intrigued by the Realm. They have different "noble" families, who controlled important aspects, like wind energy, coal mining and so on. And then there was the royal family, of course. But I didn't like how they had such a superiority complex, and complete xenophobia.

It also left me with a lot of questions. How can the US not know? Do these people not have to pay taxes to them? How do they keep normal families from moving into a house in the Realm -unknowingly? I just have a lot of questions on the workings of the system.

PLOT

I feel like the plot might be the biggest reason I didn't truly enjoy this. Or well, maybe it was the characters who did it. Anyway, I was expecting something different from this story. I was expecting a young guy to fight for his right to be King, because his father (the previous King) died. I was expecting noble families to try and manipulate them, or someone to try and assassinate him to take over the throne. But I didn't really get any of that.

Instead, this was a story about everyone screwing up, in my opinion. Haakon (the guy who will become King) didn't want to be King, and has a serious drinking problem (and drugs problem). He didn't want to be king, yet he still barks at everyone who suggests he should try and get his act together when he announces he will take the throne -that's not a spoiler, trust me. And yes, there was a giant cover-up thrown in there, but to me it just felt like an afterthought. I wasn't really intrigued or interested in finding out the truth.

Even the big reveal at the end -of the killer- left me cold. I just didn't care. And I think that's mostly because

I felt like I was missing a giant chunk of relevant history. If you haven't read this book, you may not understand what I'm saying here. But I feel that to truly understand and figure out the killer on your own, you needed a different book before his death. Because there is no way to have found out who the killer was on your own.

CHARACTERS

Let me start by saying that I disliked every character except for Roarke, who didn't even have a POV. Everyone in this book is so extremely selfish and self-absorbed. I mean, I get that you have problems, but would it kill you to ask someone else how they are doing?

So the first person is Haakon. At first, I quite liked his POV -and his character. He seemed like just another teenage guy, with a lot of responsibilities thrown at him suddenly. But then he turned into an absolutely disgusting person. I mean, disgusting. The kind of person I want to slap and spit on.

Then we have Gwendolyn. At first, I wasn't really into her character, because I felt so cheesy while reading her story. She met this guy, and the tropes just came out. Like, the fact that she felt like she had known him forever. While that was literally the first date. Or that he thought it was out of character for her to curse. You have known this person for one short date. How could you even know? I liked her more at the end, even though she did a complete 180 on her feelings about the Realm.

Next up, Alexander -Haakon's best friend. I don't think these people know what best friends are. I liked Alexander well enough, even though at one point he thought his best friend was capable of murdering his own father. I mean, really? Who would believe that about their best friend? I'm happy with his character growth throughout the book though, because he ends up doing what is best for him.

Lastly, Mary. At first I loved her, because she seemed like the underdog. And I still like her. I think she's an extremely strong woman. But I also think she could have gotten a lesson in communication. It's ridiculous to become so jealous that you treat your crush/best friend horribly, after you saw him talking to a girl. Really? I get that she's a teenager, but still.

Anyway, every character here could have gotten a lesson in communication. And How Not To Be Selfish 101.

Overall, I liked this book well enough. I have to admit that I was expecting something different from the plot though. I would have enjoyed this more if I felt more for the characters or the mystery, but I didn't. If you like YA urban fantasy, and find the synopsis intriguing, I'd say give it a go. My rating was one of the lowest, as many people gave it 4 or 5 stars.

Ruthsic says

For more than 400 years, a secret monarchy has survived and thrived within the borders of the US, hiding in plain sight as the state known as Wyoming. But when the king is shot and his seventeen-year-old son, Haakon McHale, is told he will take the throne, becoming the eleventh ruler of the Kingdom of Eurus, the community that's survived for centuries is pushed to the limit. Told through four perspectives, Court transplants us to a world that looks like ours, but isn't. Gwendolyn Rose, daughter of the Duke of Coal, is grudgingly betrothed to Haakon -- and just wants a way out. Alexander Oxendine, son of the Duke of Wind

and Haakon's lifelong best friend, already grapples with external struggles when he's assigned to guard Haakon after the king dies. And commoner Mary Doyle finds whispers in the woods that may solve -- or destroy -- everything, depending on your bloodline.

Money. Love. Power. Community. What's your motivation?

Court is like a YA Game of Thrones. The power plays, the drama, the intrigue - yep, all of that. So, there is a secret kingdom of mixed ethnicity (Caucasian and Native American) existing in the state of Wyoming, ruled for three centuries by a powerful family. The kingdom runs on its five main resources, which are also the regions and consequently seats of power. Using four POVs, the story of Haakon's near-succession to the throne is narrated, amid the tumultuous atmosphere in the kingdom.

This book is heavily character-driven, and the four characters have distinct storylines that ultimately merge towards the end. Gwen is supposed to be the perfect bride, the Queen-to-be, but she wants anything other than that. She loves someone else, but knows it won't go anywhere as their kingdom won't allow it. Next is Haakon, a spoiled prince who doesn't want or know how to rule a kingdom at the age of seventeen. Mary is a commoner caught in the dynamics of court politics through a stranger, and Alexander is a queer character who chafes against the norms of the kingdom. Out of all the character arcs, Haakon's is the most intriguing - since he kinda goes down the Joffrey Baratheon route. His naivete for court politics is twisted in such a way that he goes paranoid and dark. Alexander could probably have helped him, if not caught up himself in the same mess of misunderstandings. He also is a passive character that doesn't seem fulfilling as a POV. Granted, he was confused about himself and his future, but damn, way to let your friend down. Finally, Mary is a supporting character that rounds up the other non-royal parts of the story, as well as being a piece that completes the puzzle. The skipping around the different POVs, though, made it a little difficult to keep each story thread straight.

As far as world-building goes, the construct seems shaky. It wasn't explained how exactly a private dictatorial kingdom flew under the radar for three centuries. It has layers, I know - the one the tourists see, and what it really is, but I find it hard to believe no one ever learnt about Eurus, not even through defectors? As for the character development, the oppressive traditional kingdom stuck in time works for the suffocation each of the main characters feel in Eurus. Coming back to the character-driven arc, I feel maybe this is why the world wasn't given as much focus. It certainly does fail when compared to other such fictional kingdoms, like Genovia or the Court in Vampire Academy. They at least blended well into the storyline, but Eurus seemed stuck in the last century and this, and even the Democracy and Realm felt like two different time points. I kept imagining them in period clothes all the time, and not as the modern teenagers they are. So, I felt the descriptions needed more work to paint a distinct picture in the mind.

In conclusion, I would say that this is an interesting start to a political-themed series, especially with that big bomb dropped near the climax. There will be a revolution or a coup, I don't know - but I am looking forward to it!

Dark Faerie Tales says

Review courtesy of Dark Faerie Tales

Quick & Dirty: The lives and secrets of Court told through multiple points of view could have made for an interesting tale, but sadly this wasn't one for me.

Opening Sentence: Before he was the enemy, James Haakon McHale III was just a seventeen-year-old in what most people knew as the state of Wyoming, wishing he was somewhere other than the predawn forest with a rifle in his grip.

The Review:

As the name suggests, *Court* is about the lives and secrets of people in and around the court of Eurus, which is a secret country separated from the rest of the Democracy. At the centre of the story is Haakon, who must take the throne following his father's, the King's, murder. But at 17 years old, with no political awareness and a history of alcoholism, Haakon isn't the perfect candidate to lead their country, nor does he want to. Unfortunately for everyone concerned, he doesn't have much of a choice and to look more stable, he must marry his betrothed, Gwendolyn Rose, and quickly.

To begin with, Haakon bored me. My first impression was of a sensitive and vulnerable boy, craving his parents' attention. Once his father dies, he resorts to drugs to help him cope, begging for sympathy, and it all went downhill from there. People cope with grief in different ways, but Haakon handled it very poorly, and his aggression and paranoia don't bode well for his future reign. Only at the end did Haakon transform into a true villain, which was when he became interesting!

Gwen was my favourite character, and the one I think most readers will form an attachment to. She is an almost-royal because of her engagement to Haakon and as she is daughter of an important leader, but she feels suffocated by her life at Court. Gwen cleverly finds a way to leave the country for short periods of time to pursue her interests and make new friends who know nothing of her 'royal' life. I love her secret goth/punk skater girl identity and her romance with Will is cute. What I liked most was that despite having very slim chances of success, she won't give up without a fight.

'It was nearly eleven and, not for the first time, Haakon wondered if Gwendolyn had been inside the whole time, either sleeping, listening to music while wearing headphones, or simply electing not to answer. She'd always been odd that way: the type of person who seemed to live in her own world, content with being alone. Haakon didn't trust people who enjoyed their own company so much.'

The numerous characters in *Court* confused me at the start, particularly as the story is told from multiple points of view. Although I now understand the links between most of the characters, it still took me a while to connect the dots. This was truer for the background/supporting characters whose importance I overlooked at first, although I still can't get my head around who leads the different kingdoms/regions of coal, water...

The language used in this book was too simple, almost like it was aimed at the youngest of young adults, with only a couple of graphic scenes situated at the very start and end. Simple language is useful when world building but I felt my attention wandering more than once.

It's frustrating because characters like Roarke and Gwen stood out, there were some good twists in the story and I genuinely wanted to enjoy it but I just could not connect to *Court*. I am in two minds as to whether I would continue this series (if there are subsequent books) but let me know if you do give this a read; I might just be persuaded...

Notable Scene:

"For God and King?" Haakon asked the sky, balling his fists, setting his jaw. "FOR GOD AND KING?" he asked louder-probably loud enough for those in the library to hear. "FOR GOD AND KING??" he screamed,

his voice cracking with emotion.

If they were listening, they didn't care.

Looking from the sky to the steps beneath his feet, resuming the ascent, destroyed, Haakon hoped at least the two could hear. He wanted God and King to know.

"I hate you both."

FTC Advisory: West 26th Street Press provided me with a copy of Court. No goody bags, sponsorships, "material connections," or bribes were exchanged for my review.

Marianne (Boricuan Bookworms) says

Boricuan Bookworms- Book Reviews.

I should say that first of all, this book is definitely very complex. It's full of monarchy, secrets, conspiracies, revolutions, and revenge. While the protagonists are all teens, everything they go through is so mature. It was very well thought out and never confusing.

This book is narrated in 4 different points of view: Haakon, Gwen, Alexander, and Mary. All of these characters are connected in one way or another. I feel like the story could not have been told without any of them. My favorite narrators were by far Haakon and Mary. Haakon, because of the way his character was built; his complexity and development was amazing. Mary, because of her unflinching honesty and character. While I thought Gwen at the end developed into an amazing character, at first I could not take her seriously because she was involved in a bit of insta-love, which made her seem naive. Alexander was a character that I wished I could have read more of, because whenever his point of view appeared, I was interested in his character's inner struggles and situations.

This story goes in so many directions! First the conflict is the death of Haakon's father, and who might have done it, then there's another conflict going on in Gwen's life, then Mary discovers something which adds to the conflict, and then Alexander discovers something else. This whole book just has you reeling and passing the pages as fast as you can to figure out what's happening.

As brilliantly written as this book is, it isn't without its faults. There's a lot of suspension of disbelief that has to go on in order to truly enjoy this book. For example, the idea of a Kingdom hiding in Wyoming, a popular tourist destination, is a bit hard to believe. As well as the thought that people could easily drive in to see it, but don't.... It's explained a bit with a couple of info-dumps, but I wish it would have been a bit more believable.

The ending of this book is so amazing. Everything finally comes together and it is mind-blowing. Finally all the characters come into their own, all the intentions are revealed, and everything *makes sense*. I am surprised and still awestruck at how many of the characters evolved into something much different from what they were at the beginning.

Overall, I can definitely conclude that this book is like Game of Thrones for a Young Adult audience. There are twists, turns, revenge, deceit, conspiracy, lies, deaths, and many, many secrets. You'll really enjoy

learning more about the Kingdom of Eurus and will want to read more once you turn the last page. Cat Patrick has really done a wonderful story.

Verdict?

A review copy of this book was provided by Rockstar PR & Literary Consulting in exchange for an honest review .

Jenn says

I thought this was a cool idea. I like the Kingdom of Eurus was hiding in plain sight in the US. I liked they gave a reason why they originally separated and how they kept quiet. I didn't like how strict they were to the people living there but I guess I can see why to keep others from finding out.

I liked that the story switched between 4 different people in the kingdom. Haakon, the prince that suddenly has to become king. I did not like him whatsoever and it's a good thing because by the end of the book, I wanted to seriously hurt him. It started with him whining that he has to become king to someone that becomes the most disgusting human being ever by the end. Gwendolyn, the girl that follows what is expected of her but yearns to be free and herself. I liked her. She had two sides and she had to hide both depending where she was at. I liked that she played roller derby. Sucks with what happened with her romantic interest. Loved her at the end. She finally figured out what needed to be done. You go girl. Mary, the girl that's a nobody. I liked her too. She told things how it is. Loved her friendship with Roarke....I just wished that went a different way though. So sad. I liked that she was entrusted with getting clues and helping the realm out. Alexander, the boy that is confused with his feeling. I like him too. I like when he finally came to terms with what he was feeling and I liked how things ended with him (and with who). I just wished there was a little more with him that went with the plot. His story doesn't really fit in like everyone else's does.

Overall, I thought it was a good story but I felt the ending was rushed. It was good though! I like everything was tied up but left open for more. I'm wondering if the story will continue. If so, I'd read it.
