



False Covenant

Ari Marmell

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It's been over half a year, now, since the brutal murder of Archbishop William de Laurent during his pilgrimage to the Galicien city of Davillon. During that time, the Church of the Hallowed Pact has assigned a new bishop to the city—but it has also made its displeasure at the death of its clergyman quite clear. Davillon's economy has suffered beneath the weight of the Church's displeasure. Much of the populace—angry at the clergy—has turned away from the Church hierarchy, choosing private worship or small, independent shrines. And the bishop, concerned for his new position and angry at the people of Davillon, plans to do something about it.

But a supernatural threat is stalking the nighttime streets—a creature of the other world has come to infiltrate the seedier streets of Davillon, to intertwine its tendrils through the lower echelons of society. Faced with both political upheaval and a supernatural threat to its citizenry, the local representatives of the Church are paralyzed and the Guardsmen are in over their heads.

And then there's Widdershins—who's tried, and failed, to stay out of trouble since taking over Genevieve's tavern; who's known to the Church and the Guard both, and trusted by neither; who may, with some of her Thieves' Guild contacts, have unwittingly played a part in the bishop's plans; and who, along with her personal god Olgun, may be the only real threat to the supernatural evil infesting Davillon.

False Covenant Details

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From Reader Review False Covenant for online ebook

Dr susan says

False Covenant is even better than Thief's Covenant. The news of 2 more Widdershins's books helps to mitigate the sadness of finishing book 2.

I had forgotten that the horror in False Covenant is not subtle. I should not like these books. I do not like books with multiple points of view, deaths of multiple liked characters, monsters that would give Buffy's the Gentlemen (Hush) nightmares, and only bits of romance. False Covenant is so well written and so enthralling that it overcomes all those negatives to earn 5 huge stars. If you are ignoring this series because it is labelled YA fantasy, you are an idiot. The Widdershins books are an incredible dark fantasy series, and Marmell is an awesome writer.

Elizabeth says

Wonderful! I love the writing style :) And the story was awesome!!!

Iruoch and his rhymes...Iruoch was such a wonderful monster, a wonderful bad guy. Not that he had morals at all. He was just constructed so well. From his floppy hat that never moved to his dance-like/pirouetting style of walking. And how it looked like he should have gone every direction (there's only One Direction!) but ended up coming right to you. His dual voices and his guant scarecrow form were so well described. The childrens voices in the background was one of the creepiest parts of him! And his long spider like fingers were portrayed so well, with the normal thumb and then the other four fingers with joins and bends where there shouldn't be...plus the way he killed people was creepy as well. His outlook on 'life' was VERY interesting the say the least...that one time when he arranged the dead childrens bodies in the room while their parents were all at that dance...creepy! And when he got the candy for the 'good little girls and boys' and then massacred them all...i actually felt really bad for Squirrel.

And now to Julien...HOW COULD HE DIE!?!?!?!?!?!?!?! I loved how he sacrificed himself for Widdershins. But seriously HOW COULD HE DIE!?!?!?!?! I loved how at the end he felt happy, because he had saved her life, and because he had no more doubts or fears when it came to Widdershins, he had told her he loved her and...just HOW COULD HE DIE? They were supposed to get together and be happy. It was also a great part when he found out about Olgun, and that she was Adrienne, the only one who had survived the first demon...

I loved the book and definitely plan on reading the next one!!!!!!!!!!

Elevetha says

2.5 stars.

WHY.

WHY THE HECK DID YOU DO THAT?????

Lala_Loopsie [fire breathing B!tch Queen] says

First of all, I'll give you my actual rating: 3.5 Stars. I would've given it more, but I didn't really like Irouch. And yes, he's essential, but still.

I don't know what to write about. Well... Except that I love Widdershins, or Madeline, or Adrienne. She's soooooo cool. And badass. Even if it's with Olgun's help.

And Olgun. You. Are. So... (ummmm)... *bumps head against wall (purposly)* aaaaahhh mazing. Yes, that's it. 'Cause godly is quite obvious.

Anyway, I hope I can read the next books!!

Blodeuedd Finland says

First I have to say, evil author alert (in a good way of course!). This time I stopped reading and shouted no!!! (and by now my poor bf is used to me going crazy over a book). So he "listened" while I rambled on and cursed the author and then hurried and finished the rest of the book. I think Marmell might just take the first place for biggest shock in a book this year. *still in shock*. Well done there.

As for the book, I do like Widdershins and her constant companion Olgun, and I am so curious about him. I do want to know more about this Northern God that no one knows about anymore. And Widdershins is kick-ass and cool. A great thief, not so great at keeping a tavern though. And a knack for getting into trouble, with everyone! This time with the church, among others as things are not good in Davillion at the moment.

There is action, adventure and even a hint of romance, a tiny hint but hey I do not need much and I like Julian who is everything she should stay away from, a Guard. But there is something there and he is also someone she can trust. And of course I like him, he is also a great side character to just have around. Poor Widdershins needs some good people around her.

Now I starting to feel at a loss for words again. Great book, and it sure made me want more. I need more! More please with sugar on top. Like now.

Final thoughts:

Recommended series that will keep you on the edge of your seats. Widdershins is my kind of heroine. Go forth and read.

Angie says

After really enjoying the way gods were presented in *Thief's Covenant*, I was excited to continue learning about them in *False Covenant*. Based on the blurb it seemed like the focus would be even more on the occult

side of the the world, and I certainly wasn't disappointed on that front! A dark, shadowy figure is terrorizing the people of Davillon, but oddly no one is killed or even injured. That's because it's just a ruse set up by the new bishop in order to turn the people back to the Church. However, an actual dark, shadowy figure appears and that one has no qualms about killing anyone and everyone, including young children. Of course, Widdershins has a run in with this creature and is soon falsely linked to it. Now she has to prove her innocence while also trying to stop this horrific being before it strikes again.

So I thought that the demon in the first book was disturbing, but really, that one has nothing on the monster stalking the citizens of Davillon in *False Covenant*. No one knows exactly what he/it is, so they call him/it Iruoch, after a common children's tale. Iruoch is manlike but with gaunt features and fingers like spider legs. It also sucks people dry. The monster also seems to be followed by a chorus of invisible children. I don't know about you all, but anytime children are involved in a horror story, I'm immediately terrified. If this were a movie, I'd have to change the channel. The author really outdid himself with this villain. Not only is Iruoch absolutely terrifying, but he's an extremely tough opponent that Widdershins' can't handle on her own, even with the help of her personal god. That final battle scene was a nailbiter (if I bit my nails)!

While I quite enjoyed this demonic plot along with the accompanying religious intrigue (if you want to call it that), I was less impressed with the other, smaller plotline happening. After the events of *Thief's Covenant*, Widdershins has inherited the tavern, The Flippant Witch. It's not doing so well, since Shins it certainly not a business woman. Then a mysterious male appears and is not only trying to take the tavern from her, but challenge her to a duel hoping to remove her from the picture permanently! This story isn't in the forefront for very long, which I was glad, since it added very little to the overall story. It just seemed like one more worry for Widdershins to deal with on top of being accused of murder...again, while also avoiding being murdered herself.

I'm definitely enjoying this series! Widdershins seems to get herself into trouble a lot, since she's always in the wrong place at the wrong time. She's also made quite a few enemies in her years as a thief, who want nothing more than to bring her down a notch or two. The ending of *False Covenant* is a little open ended, but not in a cliffhanger sort of way. It's clear that Widdershins has some stuff she needs to deal with, but there are certainly more adventures awaiting her outside of Davillon.

Read more of my reviews at [Pinkindle Reads & Reviews](#).

Joshua Palmatier says

Just finished **False Covenant**, the second *Widdershins* novel, which I read immediately after receiving it since I liked the first book, **Thief's Covenant**. These are YA books, which I don't normally read, but the first sounded interesting (kind of like my own *Throne of Amenkor* series) so I decided to check them out. I'm glad I did.

The premise of this book is that Widdershins, a thief in the city of Davillon, has taken control of her friend's bar and is discovering that it isn't as easy to run as she thought it would be. Part of this is her own lack of experience running a bar, but most of it is because the Church has declared Davillon off limits to traders and travelers because of the recent murder of the visiting archbishop. The city is in desperate need of an economic boost. Unfortunately, after fending off a summoned demon the year before, another supernatural creature has begun stalking the streets, preying on everyone but targeting children in particular. And it appears that Widdershins and her own personal god Olgun may be the only ones capable of stopping its reign

of terror. But Widdershins is distracted by a budding romance with a local guardsman . . . and an aristocrat and excellent duelist intent on killing her for a crime against his family.

As you can see, lots going on, and Widdershins quick wit and sparkling personality is still front and center here. She's one of the best parts of these books, but in this case I'd have to say the creature that's stalking the city steals the limelight. It's what snags your attention in this novel and keeps you reading. It's cruel and deadly and the fact that it's main focus is stalking children (not to mention all of its physical features and voice) is downright creepy as well as horrific. I'm sure that it will haunt some readers' dreams, even though this is a YA book.

That said, this wasn't as intense in terms of horror as the first book, and it certainly didn't feel as fast paced. It rockets right along, but still felt somewhat relaxed. One aspect that has also changed is that there aren't multiple timelines with the author having us jump from one to the other. In the first book, this was rather distracting, honestly, so the linearity of this book was better. But somehow it didn't have the same impact as the first. It just wasn't as . . . gritty and dirty and rough as the first. I rather enjoyed that roughness.

So, I enjoyed the book, but it wasn't as satisfying as the first (even factoring in the sometimes confusing time jumps in the first). This book was more tame in comparison. A fun read--Widdershins and her antics with her personal god are always fun--and with a goodly touch of horror with the creature stalking the streets, but just not as satisfying as the first.

Choko says

*** 4.40 ***

This was another very fun and fast read, and I ended up reading all night, trying to not be freaked by the storm which was destroying the trees and roofs around... But the action kept my mind occupied and before I knew it, storm was gone and the sun was creeping up the horizon. ... And the more than 250 pages were done!

This was soooo much creepy fun!!! It still is a YA Fantasy with a kick ass girl protagonists, but this go around the reminiscing is gone and the absence of time jumps has made this book more coherent and easy flowing. The writing is actually better! And the action starts rolling from the get go and does not let up until the end! I honestly enjoyed the heck out of it! And the monster, even if a bit simplistic, was just creepy and goosebumpy!!! If you like your YAF with some kick-ass action, this book is for you!!!

usagi ?? says

Our favorite thief and god are back in "False Covenant" - another adventure where the supernatural haunts the streets of Davillon, there's romance in the air, and more shenanigans with the Finders' Guild and the crew at the Witch. With this installment of the series, Marmell takes us to soaring highs and plunging lows and takes the George R R Martin school of fantasy very seriously and reminds us that no character is safe. I loved this volume in the series, and I can't wait for the next one!

Widdershins has grown considerably between the end of book one and the start of book two - when you

begin the book, you already get this sense that she's matured, both physically and emotionally. And considering what happened to her over the course of book one, this is a good thing. Her relationship with Olgun seems to have matured as well, and this made for a lot of mental fist-bumping moments for whenever he helped out during a street fight or when trying to dodge Iruoch. She feels more and more like a real girl during the course of this book, and Marmell fills her out very realistically - through grief, love, first crushes and kisses, and of course, lots of thieving shenanigans.

We also see the world expand a little more in this volume to outside of Davillon itself as a city - we know that it's a Galicien city, but up until the end of the book, we don't know much of anything that happens outside of it. The way that Marmell sets this up is heartbreaking, but necessary - we lose a very dear character, but it's only to make Widdershins grow and ready for her for yet another journey to come in book 3. We also see the reach of the Church and the Hallowed Pact, along with the other fables of Davillon literally come to life in the streets. For a tiny god, Olgun seems to attract a lot of trouble, as does Widdershins, and we see that in the world that Marmell expands around us. We see the economic effects of the Church's meddling, and how that trickles down from the very top of the aristocracy down to the poorest urchins on the street. Well done in your worldbuilding, sir.

Now to my favorite part - Marmell once again proves that he's not afraid to kill his darlings in order to get the payoff he wants. And yeah, I'll admit, I did get angry/teary-eyed at the end of this book in terms of the darling he offed. I think a lot of fans of book one will feel the same way by the end of book two, but will also recognize that it was necessary in terms of reinforcing both to Widdershins herself and to us as the audience that no one is safe and anyone can be taken out at anytime. (I call this the George R R Martin School of Fantasy and Worldbuilding.) Sad? Yes. But utterly necessary as the characters and the world itself cannot grow without this sacrifice. You know an author has achieved his goal when you love a character so much you get angry when he dies.

Final verdict? Fans of book one, you simply cannot miss this second one. But beware: there will be a LOT of feelings to deal with at the end of this installment. To newcomers, definitely read book one first, as you might feel more than a bit lost here. "False Covenant" is out in June from Pyr/Prometheus books in North America - definitely not a sequel to miss this year!

(posted to goodreads, shelfari, and birthofanewwitch.wordpress.com)

Laurel says

IT HAS BEEN PURCHASED.
IT WILL BE READ SOON.

Soon, my darling...
Sooooooooon.

Jacob Proffitt says

This one is much improved over the first in the series as both the problems I had with it were removed (the time jumps) or at least improved (the intrusive authorial voice). I still like Shins as much as I did in the first,

and her supporting friends were as strong or stronger here.

You can't really read this one without reading the first (at least, I strongly recommend against), so I'll keep the rest of this short. I liked the story immensely. It was creepy and dark and yet the antagonists had an appropriate amount of gray when push came to shove. I particularly liked that Shins had the chance to get at the human side of at least some of her detractors and her methods in doing so were fantastic.

This is somewhat ameliorated (not in a good way) by how it seems Marmell doesn't know any other kind of love than romantic love. Shins' life is complicated enough without some of her allies twisted by jealousy—particularly as it is pretty clear where Shins' heart lies. I get the admiration. Shins is awesome and you can't help but admire her as you get to know her. But she's also pretty good about not sending mixed signals. So at least some of those feelings should have had time to become stronger and more supportive and start looking for ways to swing towards her obvious happiness in the love that she chose.

Also, I have problems with some of the ending events. I'm not even going to spoiler tag this because it's just too big, but I think Marmell bit off more than his talent could handle. His touch is too light for some of the depth that needed to be there for events as they transpired. I almost admire the attempt but found it too jarring, instead.

Which sounds way worse than the book is. The good stuff was pretty constant and the two things I'm complaining about were occasional and thus didn't affect the rating much. Oh, I went from a four and a half down to rounding up to a four, but the final star rating didn't actually change any. It's a solid fantasy adventure book and one I relished and had a hard time putting down.

Hacen says

Actual Rating: 3.75

The bad guy in this creeped me out *shudders*

Gavin says

This second instalment in the *Widdershins Adventures* series was of a similar quality to the first. Which means it was fast paced and fun! That said, I'm no longer sure I'd call this a light fantasy series. It is full of humor and action, but has plenty of dark happenings.

Widdershins is laying low after the devastating events at the end of the first book. She is trying her best to run Genevieve's tavern, but it is not going particularly well. The economy has taken a severe downward turn in Davillon due to the indirect economic sanctions being imposed by the Church, who are unhappy with the murder of the archbishop.

Davillon has supernatural as well as economic problems as a nightmare creature from fairy tales starts terrorising the citizens. Before too long the terrorising escalates into brutal murders and Widdershins and Olgen seem the only people capable of dealing with the creature! Just to complicate things further a noble from Widdershins past returns to the city, at the worst possible moment, seeking vengeance for a past wrong.

The story was fast paced and fun. Widdershins was her usual smart talking, ass-kicking self. Most of the secondary characters from the first book were back and as likeable as ever.

The ending was as shocking and impactfull as that of the first book! I'm eager to see where the third book will take Widdershins.

Rating: 3.5 stars.

Audio Note: I listened to the Graphic Audio version of this and it was very well done.

Tammie says

False Covenant is a good follow up to Thief's Covenant. I'm knocking half a star off my rating though because of yet another heartbreaking death of a character in this series. I'm not sure how much more of this I can take. I'm going to take a break from this series now and think about whether or not I want to continue.

Kirsty (Amethyst Bookwurm) says

This and my other reviews can be found at <http://amethystbookwurm.blogspot.co.uk/>

Widdershins is trying to be law abiding tavern owner after the events of Thief's Covenant. However, a sinister creature is terrorising the city of Davillon and the fate of the city rest on her and her friends. Widdershins just cannot catch a break as everyone is distrustful towards her and Olgun; however I did like how we got to know more about her friends in this one and their feelings towards her. This is a really good book and I cannot wait to get my hands on the next one.

Bec says

WHY MUST MY OTP BE UTTERLY DESTROYED LESS THAN 100 PAGES AFTER THEY FINALLY SORT OF GET TOGETHER

Also, Iruoch is so creepy. I've never had a villain make my skin crawl so much.

Jessie (Ageless Pages Reviews) says

[Except, of course, my ship sank. THIS IS MY SECOND SHIP IN TWO BOOKS TO SINK. First Widdershins/Genevieve and now Adrienne/Julien. Rude. (hide spoiler)]

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

4.5 stars at The BiblioSanctum <http://bibliosanctum.blogspot.com/201...>

First let me begin this review by stating how much I liked the first book of the Widdershins Adventures series, Thief's Covenant. That, however, still left me quite unprepared for how much I enjoyed this book, its follow-up. To be honest, I'm still reeling from the ending, and feeling not just a little bit heartbroken, but only because of how the story impacted me so emphatically. A book that makes me feel like this, even if it's like a punch in the gut, surely deserves my admiration and compliments!

But more on that later, after I revel in how much fun it was to return to Davillon, catching up with Widdershins and her friends. The events of the last book have not left our protagonist in a very good place, however. The guilt over the deaths of two people close to her still weighs on her conscience, and she has taken to thieving again in order to support the beloved tavern she inherited. The minor god Olgun, whose worshipper-base consists of only Widdershins, is still a constant presence in her life, enhancing her abilities to sneak and steal.

Then, reports start coming in about a creature of nightmare stalking the streets. At first, no one is hurt, but soon the attacks turn deadly. The city guard are baffled and are in way over their heads. And as much as Widdershins would like to stay out of it, trouble always ends up finding her. Drawn into a battle against a supernatural terror, she must use all her wits to save her friends and Davillon against the greatest threat the city has ever faced.

That I liked this book more than the first one is probably an accurate assessment. Don't get me wrong, Thief's Covenant was no slouch, but there were some slow parts I had to get through before I started warming up to it. I guess one advantage of subsequent books in a series is that the story can start right away, without having to go through all the motions of explaining background or character history. Unlike my experience with the first book, I was drawn in by False Covenant almost as soon as I started.

Also, I think I remember calling this a "cute" series. Time for me to re-evaluate that, perhaps. Not that there aren't a lot of light moments in these books; I still find lots to laugh about, especially in Widdershin's fiery and impulsive personality, not to mention her humorous banter with Olgun. Once again, Ari Marmell does a fantastic job pulling off their strange relationship as well as the their conversations that to all outward appearances seem one-sided. I don't think I'll ever get tired of those scenes, which are an endless source of entertainment!

However, there's a darkness to this series as well, which I'm just now starting to fully realize and appreciate. False Covenant strikes a good balance between that and the lightness, injecting mystery and even a bit of horror into the story. I found myself downright creeped out at times. This second book really raises the stakes, taking things to the next level and keeping you on your toes because you never know what might happen next. Ari Marmell doesn't pull any punches here.

Speaking of which, the ending. Ugh. It's hard merely thinking about it let alone having to write about it, which is just as well because I wouldn't want to spoil anything. Definitely, the characterization has gotten a lot better, and I feel a connection to Widdershins, feeling as she does about the other characters around her whether they are friend, foe, or not-sure-which. The book keeps you guessing, while still developing those character relationships and even some romance. It was all very engaging, which is why I find myself now still feeling so stunned. Those final scenes were phenomenally well done and suspenseful, and the way things ended was totally unexpected.

This seems to be one of those series that gets better the more I read. I'm so glad I caught up in time for the

third book coming out in December, because now I can't wait to see what comes next.

Nidofito says

Excellent writing,
Super scary villain, and
A great cast of characters

Honestly, this is so much better and more developed than any of the mainstream fantasy drivel you're reading.

mich says

Yes, I gave it 5 stars, but still, *Damn.This.Book.* because:

- that twist near the end was just -- ugh, nevermind, I don't want to talk about it!
- the next book is not out yet. Where the hell is it? I need to know what happens next!

I loved this book even more than the first one, and I liked the first one a lot. The story is excellently paced with enough action and adventure to appease even the most impatient reader. Also, in comparison to the first book, I found a vast improvement in the character development, in particular, I liked Widdershins a lot more in this sequel. In *Thief's Covenant* she had that spunkiness that, yeah, was cute and all but to me bordered on childish a lot of the time. Not to say that she's changed so much here that she's no longer our familiar sassy thief, rather, I was just able to take her more seriously this time around and was very happy with the result. I also liked that we got to know the supporting characters on a less superficial level, especially Robin and Julien.

so, in conclusion...where the hell is the next book? I read this one as soon as it came out, which feels like a really long time ago and -- oh, and I just checked and oops, it was only last summer. but whatever, I want the next book already! Highly recommend this series.
