



Avarice

Annie Bellet

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In the Free City of Pyrrh, murders and other serious crimes are investigated by the Cordonates of the Considerable Crimes Division.

Struggling with his grief over losing his last partner, the last thing Cordonate Parshan Koury wants is someone else. Zhivana Nedrogovna, his new partner, is fresh out of the City Watch and not even human, and unsure she wants to work with the broody, angry Par.

As Parshan and Zhivana rush to solve a case of mugging gone wrong that soon proves far more complex, they must learn to trust each other or this first case together might be their last.

Avarice Details

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Author : Annie Bellet

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From Reader Review Avarice for online ebook

A.M. says

In the Free City of Pyrrh, murders and other serious crimes are investigated by the Cordonates of the Considerable Crimes Division. Zhivana Nedrogovna has a new job and a new partner. She's late for one and unimpressed by the other.

Cordonate Parshan Koury is struggling with grief. His last partner, both emotional and work-wise, died. He thinks it was his fault and he's not coping. The last thing he needs is a new partner. Plus, his new partner isn't strictly human. She's one of the Kirgani cat people; the six fingered calico furred sheathed clawed types. She's also married to a super wealthy sculptor and she shouldn't need to work. Especially in such a dangerous job.

Their new case is a young man found stabbed to death but with a shiny new sun coin (the highest currency) in his throat. His mother is a drug addict, his wife is heavily pregnant but she's obviously lying and she's also packing to move.

The man was employed at the alchemy division where they make coins.

Can the two get past their issues and work together?

A very intriguing world. Overlaid with recognisable things like medical examiners and lawyers.

4 stars

This was in a boxed set: Witches and Warriors: 6 Fantasy Novels

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/3...>

Thank goodness for Annie Bellet. This boxed set was sadly disappointing and this is the only book in it I rate above 2 stars.

This feels like the start of a series and it's marked as #1 - but so far, no #2. *pouts*

4 stars

Bob Milne says

An interesting concept, but the execution just didn't do it for me. What we have here is a typical police procedural transplanted to a 'light' fantasy setting. It feels as if it could have worked better as a more typical urban fantasy tale. Overall, it just felt too thin for the material, without the depth of world building and imagination I look for in fantasy, or the depth of mystery I look for in a good police procedural.

Originally reviewed at Beauty in Ruins as part of the Great Self-Published Fantasy Blog-off

Stephen says

I usually don't like a short story but this one was different. I found the characters compelling and the story left me wanting more. This was different from the normal and I think that is the reason that kept me reading. I believe you will enjoy it too. Great Reading Everyone!

Lana says

This book was quite a surprise as it was part of a box set called witches and warriors so I really was not expecting to read a cops and robbers sort of mystery read and these are not my novels of choice at all however I got into the story as it is very well written and has interesting characters especially those which are not humanoid ones! Would have liked to have had a bit of background as to what these characters were but this was quite a short novel and turned out to be a very exciting read right till the last line! Seems some things never change such as the carrying out of justice when political intrigue and the higher classes are involved but I am so glad that the officers did not give up before they were happy to call the case finally closed themselves! There is a slight hint of magic but it is very minimal.

Janet Piele says

I've completely enjoyed this book. It was entertaining from start to finish and I feel there are secrets still to be revealed in the next part of the series.

It's tricky to make an interesting adventure story, with likable engaging characters, and then leave you wanting more after resolving the mystery at hand. These books are not intended for deep social commentary on the evils of our society. This is pure escapism and just what I needed.

I'm following author Annie Bellet now and I'm really looking forward to reading more of her work.

Margaret Fisk says

Originally posted on Tales to Tide You Over

Avarice lives up to its subtitle Pyrrh Considerable Crimes Division perfectly. It reminds me a bit of Tamara Siler Jones' fantasy police novels though this is following modern procedures more closely. I was also doing a binge watch of Castle when I read Avarice, and the commonalities between this novel and the contemporary police work in the TV show were amusing, but I found, at the heart, the draw to both was the same: the characters. The book and program are also both episodic with the book focused around one murder like most of the episodes of Castle do.

Zhivana and Parshan are complicated characters with secrets and a drive to help people even when they would be in real trouble if anyone discovered what they hide. Parshan is also wracked with guilt and grief over the loss of his old partner (in both life and police work), making for an interesting dynamic because he doesn't want to become close only to lose again. This makes him both angry at the world and somewhat unpredictable as that anger makes him lash out. What he doesn't know, because Zhivana will do anything to keep him from discovering this, is she can't be hurt and suspects she cannot die.

The answers to those mysteries are revealed later, but the hints and teases early on create a lovely layer of mystery on top of mystery, making the reader just as eager for the information about the characters as piecing together the mystery of the murder.

Speaking of the murder, the actual case has neat twists and the same kind of putting together disparate

information as I've enjoyed in Castle, plus the main team is likely to bend the rules and ignore politics in favor of justice for their victim. In this case, as with most mysteries I read, the existence of additional questions is welcome since I pegged the mastermind early on. The case has good seeding that most would notice only in retrospect, but the character interactions and the complex world building kept me going even when the characters didn't recognize a clue I'd picked up on for a bit. Between the character interactions and the story behind the crime that they put together, I was perfectly happy to ride it out until I learned whether I was right or not.

The layering in of character and world details is also done well. Zhivana is not human. We learn that almost immediately. However, the details of her nature are parceled out like a dot-to-dot picture where you see it take form as you go rather than knowing what you're trying to reveal. There's never a huge dump of information, most of which I'd forget soon after reading. Instead, it's a movement here, a coloration there, and a fact tossed in only where relevant. There were many secondary characters that I connected with as well, making this introduction to Pyrrh a fascinating and multi-layered event.

I had a lot of fun with the read.

Patrick Lum says

As someone noted below (also named Pat, I believe), this is a fantasy police procedural that is not terribly good at being either. The fantasy is too low-key to factor into the storytelling much, being largely of a simple find-and-replace nature where guns are swords, drugs are poppies, etc, etc. There is an exception to this rule but it largely comes out of nowhere, without much prior mentioning or setup. The police procedural elements are also lacking, primarily because facts and plot points are kind of just thrown at the reader with little time to actually absorb or ponder over them. The female protagonist is more interesting than the male protagonist, but jumping between the two actually may hurt the story more than it helps it because it removes some of the mysteries regarding each character. There are hints of a larger, more interesting world, but unfortunately the story doesn't actually take us there at all. Still one of the better fantasy police procedurals out there, but still not great.

Modrukinstealer says

I picked this book up after reading Annie's other series, the twenty sided sorceress and gryphonpike chronicles. It's a good solid fantasy novel. It doesn't have the humor and gaming references that 20 sided does. The two main characters seem pretty interesting, the two non-human races seem unique and interesting as well. There's magic in the world but you don't get to see much, but what you do see shows an intriguing glimmer of possibilities. It's sort of a Fantasy NCIS/CSI, maybe not as deep into the technicalities of science that those shows have but was a fun aspect of the book.

Looking forward to checking out the next book in the series. Annie is quickly becoming one those authors that I can't wait for their next offering because I know it'll be something I'll enjoy.

Selaya Morton says

I enjoyed this title. Annie Bellet always manages to grab your attention and not let go. This series promises to do the same; at least, I hope it'll become a series. So different from the usual old-style mysteries we get all the time. The playing off of the two main characters is actually very refreshing and once they start to understand each other and their own abilities the story just takes flight. More please!

Paul Hancock says

Avarice starts out being very awkward and out of place. A crime thriller that is set in some fantasy world is not something that i was looking for and not something that i thought would work. Im still not 100% convinced that it works but this book makes me think it could be possible. The story starts off rather boring and i almost gave up, but about 1/2 way through i started to care again and decided to finish the book since its so short.

I eventually started to like the characters but i feel that there was too much magical reasoning for how the crime case unfolded. Not the sort of thing that i could figure out myself since i don't know the rules of this strange universe. For me that means I'm just following along rather than trying to think about, anticipate, and solve the mystery. Since that is something that i enjoy in a crime novel I was disappointed to have that taken away from me. Also the reprieve at the end didn't really make much sense to me.

There are more books in this series but i don't think I'll continue.

Sharon Schafer Bennett says

Interesting and Different

This is an intriguing book. It takes place in another world with 3 different species of sentient beings--human, kirgani a cat like species with shorter lives than humans, and a reptilian species, anuran. The protagonists are a female kirgani, a rookie detective and a human detective getting over the loss of his human partner. The world building by Ms. Bellet is phenomenal and I felt as if I was there with the characters. This is a great start to a new series.

Crissy Moss says

I absolutely love the mix of crime detective, and fantasy. What starts as a normal investigation of a pick pocket goes astray really fast. Arrows and blades start flying, and bodies start hitting the floor as this pair of detectives try to find the threads of what happened.

I don't read a lot of mystery novels, but the fantasy elements, and the mystery surrounding both of the detectives kept me wanting to read more.

The only short coming, for me, was that there wasn't enough description for some of the things. One of the

main characters is a human, the other is some sort of cat like creature, but isn't a cat. The book never really says exactly what she is, but does say that she isn't a dog, or a rat at several points. There is a third species that is lizard like, and there is a little more description of that race so I could picture it, but the cat-ish species wasn't described a lot other than the short fur, and various colors of the species.

Other than that, Annie Bellet did a wonderful job of laying out a ground work for her world. There is forbidden magic, holy magic, and lots of slow movement from one side of the city to the other in a horse drawn hack. She really made the world come alive.

And I also loved that I did not see the ending right away. Bellet lays out evidence for several different suspects before we finally get to the end, and the truth. And then there is yet another mystery around the corner. I'll definitely be watching for the next book.

Angie ~aka Reading Machine~ says

Zhivana Nedrogovna moved from the Watch to work in investigation. Zhivana also has partner named Parshan "Par" Kouri, who lost his partner recently, and still grieving. The case they're given is murder but none of the pieces are adding up. They are slowly adjusting to each other but don't completely trust each other either yet. Will the murder be solved? Whose behind the murder? Can Parshan let go of the past? Will Zhivana be accepted? Your answers await you in Avarice.

This is a new to me author. I must admit that I found the book very enjoyable. The characters were unique, flawed, and interesting. The title of the book is aptly named. This book is what I call a page turner because you gotta know what happens next. I will be definitely interested in more of this author's work in the future.

Shannon says

Avarice combines the well-loved genres of mystery, crime solving, and fantasy, giving it terrific agility between action and social commentary.

The story occurs in the free city of Pyrrh, in which live three different species of sentient creature: human, kirgani - described by the author as "like the Kajiit from the Elder Scrolls games:

<http://elderscrolls.wikia.com/wiki/Kh...> but with a little more fox in them" and anuran - in the author's words, "The Anuran are more human. They are amphibious and have scales."

Racial and social tensions exist between the three and are explored within the relationships between colleagues and adversaries solving a violent attack. Avarice displays these dynamics carefully, showing them without editorializing their existence. Avarice allows the reader to decide for himself.

The world building is extraordinary and the details are shared with great patience. The action of a late night mugging, the internal conflict within the law enforcement branches trying to solve the case, the political pressures from social groups all carry the story quickly along. Bellet does not labor over setting the scene, and doles out her descriptions carefully. It is as if she assumes that we can see the action unfolding before us, and therefore only needs to describe the appearance of the kirgani or anuran when they change or react to circumstances. It is an elegant form of fantasy, confident and self-secure in its world and its story. Avarice does not need to impress with how intricate its world is; it knows that you will appreciate it as it unfolds naturally from the plot. It is sophisticated.

Its sophistication does not make it pretentious. In fact, one could ignore the softly spoken social commentary

about race or loyalty and just enjoy a good crime novel. In this manner, Bellet satisfies the audiences of mysteries and the audiences of fantasy. The result is compelling, exciting - and fun. Avarice is a satisfying and provocative introduction to what promises to be an enjoyable series.

Link to online post:

<http://wp.me/p262AS-mM>

Debbie Barnette says

Great! Can't wait for book2

Good plot, great characters, well written - what more can you ask for? I loved the pace of the book and it brought out the who-done-it in me.
