



The House on Durrow Street

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Her courage saved the country of Altania and earned the love of a hero of the realm. Now sensible Ivy Quent wants only to turn her father's sprawling, mysterious house into a proper home. But soon she is swept into fashionable society's highest circles of power—a world that is vital to her family's future but replete with perilous temptations.

Yet far greater danger lies beyond the city's glittering ballrooms—and Ivy must race to unlock the secrets that lie within the old house on Durrow Street before outlaw magicians and an ancient ravening force plunge Altania into darkness forever.

The House on Durrow Street Details

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From Reader Review The House on Durrow Street for online ebook

Mel B. says

After scanning a couple of previous reviews, I struggled with my own. I think this book was more solid in some ways -- I no longer had to wonder what the three main characters, Ivy, Rafferdy and Eldyn Garritt had to do with each other. I mean, certainly, they were all interrelated in some small way always, but not enough to write a lengthy tome around. But Garritt's presence becomes far more necessary, and in fact, more interesting, in this second novel. [return][return]I am highly irritated by the fashion, no doubt a deliberate copying of the tendency to use Mr. and Mrs. even amongst married couples. Lady Quent prefers to still call her husband Mr. Quent instead of Sir Quent? And then why is Rafferdy always called by his last name, but Eldyn almost always by his first? GRRRR![return][return]OK, that little quibble aside, I think this book was more solid and had more reason for what happened, given the slightly scatty beginnings of the first book. [return][return]Both are gripping and do an excellent job of emulating Regency or Victorian fiction, but taking it beyond to the fantastic. I'm still slightly bewildered as to why it had to be set on another planet, other than to provide the support for the planets and how they so drastically affect both night and day as well as magic itself, to some extent. I don't think you can have it both ways: regency fantasy AND on another planet. [return][return]One thing that puzzles me about this book and the previous book is the relationship between Ivy and her husband. They are apart much more than they are ever together, and I don't know how they love each other as much as they do. Especially with her continued association with Rafferdy. What, because she's married, she's become safe to associate with? You'd think it'd be even worse...[return][return]Still, I am eagerly awaiting the next book. I'm torn on 3.5 stars or 4, but I guess I'll go with 4 because I enjoyed it much more than I should've. :) And it is well written, for all the quibbly stuff I said earlier.

Tiffany Reisz says

I love this series. I find it so pleasant (in the meaning of "pleasing"). I love a nice long winding tale. This is a series to be read while drinking tea on a long stormy afternoon.

CoffeeTimeRomance andMore says

Rating: 4 cups

In lyrical Regency style, this story winds through a fantastic world historically similar enough to ours to draw the reader in, yet with intricate rules all its own. A slow building story, it is somewhat frustrating at times when things finally start to happen, and Ivy decides that she will go to the Park or otherwise do something that she feels Society requires rather than something interesting to the plot. Also, the reader is left with a burning desire to see her husband die and have her involved with the much more interesting Mr. Rafferdy; however, the reader will have to pick up the third in the series to see if this comes to pass.

Virginia

Reviewer for Coffee Time Romance and More

Katharine Kimbriel says

This book is recommended for folk who like their fantasy subtle, thick, and intricate. Think Charlotte Bronte with magic, only this is a novel in that spirit, not a pastiche. Beckett wondered what would happen if a fantastical cause lay under the social constraints and limited choices of Bronte and Austen's heroines? This world is the result, a British/European-flavored stew with a varying planet rotation that causes long days and nights peppered with short ones – sleep cycles clearly not in tune with the people forced to live that way.

What if magic was somehow behind that? We see the continuation of using familiar Gothic tropes from *The Magicians* and *Mrs. Quent* – impoverished sons of noble houses struggling to support the remains of their family, jaded young aristocrats forced to pick up the family burden when a strong father falters, young women living idle lives in the upper classes seeking a place for their intellect and talents.

In *The Magicians* and *Mrs. Quent*, sensible, intelligent Ivy Quent used her courage and intellect to help save her country, though most know it not, and earned the love of a solid and dependable hero of the realm. Now, she would be delighted to spend her time turning her family inheritance – a sprawling, mysterious magician's house – into a proper home for herself, her husband and her sisters (and, hopefully, her mentally ill father, currently in a hospital.) It's a strange and wondrous house, with magical eyes that observe everyone who passes. Ivy's mother hated the house, which is partly why they moved out, but now it is home, and Ivy is enjoying the transformation.

It becomes a greater transformation when her husband's years of service are finally recognized with rank and income. This catapults her into fashionable society, among the great and powerful – a world vital to her family's future, but rife with temptations and danger.

In the end, it is the secrets of the old house that must be unraveled, as Ivy must race to find answers before rogue magicians and an ancient ravaging force overwhelm her tiny country. Once again she will need the help of young Lord Rafferdy, a magician despite his own desires, and Eldyn Garritt, impoverished gentry with many, many secrets of his own to protect.

This book moved more swiftly and smoothly for me than the first, with still more interesting pockets of arcane knowledge to be revealed. We find that those who kept magic alive mostly used it for ill, whether for or against the interests of the nation. There are dangers to some of these magics – fatal dangers. The corruption nibbling at the government has spread to the church, and the underground. Now Lady Quent, Ivy cannot know who to trust, and the others have similar dilemmas.

If you like a lyrical journey where even the language slows you down to another time and pace, give this one a try. You might like Beckett's world and heroes!

Kit★ says

I just had to rush out and buy this book within days after I read *The Magicians* and *Mrs. Quent*. I needed to

know what was going to happen next! I'm happy to admit I was not disappointed, not one whit. This book lived up to my expectations, the characters were the same interesting people I had come to care for, if not a little better. Ivy was her same smart and good self, and a little stronger in character. She finds more power within herself in this book. Mr. Quent, the few brief times he appeared, really served to only make me want much, much more of him. There was a bit more depth, and affection too, shown in their relationship, and I was a little saddened that he wasn't around more often. I understood, as Ivy stated to herself a few times, that his job as an inquirer was highly important to Altania, and for the good of everyone, he must be dutiful, but it does put a strain on their relationship with him being gone all the time, whether off traveling around the country checking on the stands of Wyrdwood for days at a time, or working all day at the Citadel in Invarel. I could feel her sadness every time he had to leave again. Mr. Rafferdy also is again a huge character. He becomes Lord Rafferdy due to his father's death, and starts taking a reluctant interest in Assembly. He also meets some other young magicians, and joins their arcane order, becoming more adept at working magick. Eldyn Garrit plays the other major role. He's been clerking at a church, but he becomes closer with his friend Dercy and the other illusionists at the Theater of the Moon. He even learns to create more illusions, and learns to do things besides conceal himself in shadows. There's a lot going on in this novel, and I sort of don't even know what to say. There's been mysterious and gruesome deaths of the Siltheri, wherein the corpses are found with their eyes gouged out, leading to some fear in the illusionist community. There's problems going on in Assembly, because the king is old and ill, and wishes for his daughter to succeed him, but there's a group of magnates who won't hear of it. No one seems to be able to handle the idea of a woman on the throne. Then there's some bad magicians, who want to unleash the Ashen and cause mass destruction, and they plan to destroy all the Wyrdwood in order to do that. There's mysterious doors found behind the walls in Ivy's house on Durrow street, and a journal written by Mr. Lockwell, but the pages are blank and only show up at certain times for a short period of time. Through some of these entries in the journal, things are explained a little more, and also new questions are opened. All through this, poor seemingly senile Mr. Lockwell is still stuck in the asylum, although gladly in much more comfier conditions than before. There's also mysterious and evil happenings with some people within the church where Eldyn works. Plus, there's the suspicious (well, to me anyway) matter of the witch in Torland that Mr. Quent released (without the knowledge of his superiors), and why he did it. Also, why is he mumbling about the somewhat scary Lady Shayde in his sleep? Whew! That's a lot, and I don't even think I mentioned it all. But this book was just so exciting. Yea, sometimes the pacing was a little slow in the beginning, but it built up steadily until, by halfway through, I was rushing with the wind in my face, going ever faster down to the end, which came way too quickly once it was there. I'm terribly sad for this book to end. It ended wonderfully though, with much excitement, especially when Ivy used her power with the trees and Mr. Rafferdy used his powers of magick and the day was saved (albeit temporarily). I can't wait until the third book is published. *Can't wait!!* Please Galen Beckett, please get it out soon! Please? I need to know where these wonderful characters are going next, and I'd love to find out more about the world within these novels. I *need* it! I'm begging... :)

Paula Kalamaras says

so far it's a fine sequel to the delightful and magical, "Mrs. Quent and the Magicians". I have to go back and read that one, as I am feeling a bit lost as there are a lot of characters being developed. The only thing I am not thrilled with is that Galen Beckett, who claimed Mrs. Quent was his debut novel is really a pseudonym for another more established writer, so I felt a little cheated. But I do like this book so far and will gladly read the third one when it is released

Wealthweow says

The lackluster sequel to *The Magicians* and *Mrs. Quent*. The first book was an uninspired mashup of *Jane Eyre* and *Pride & Prejudice* that became interesting near the end. This book didn't have the crutch of using another author's ideas, which I assume explains why the first hundred pages were so slow and repetitive. I'm sure the plot eventually gets underway, but the first 100 pages are simply the following elements repeated ad nauseum:

- Mrs. Quent is vaguely puzzled by clearly magical happenings, but decides to focus on other things
- Garritt wonders whether he should pursue theatre work (and maybe lurve) or devote his life to the church
- Rafferdy thinks about how he's wasting his life and wonders what he should do with it, whilst moaning about how perfect Mrs. Quent is.

Presumably at some point *something* happens, but I didn't bother to read further to find out what. The dialog is cheesy and unnatural, the characters only half-formed, and the tone can't decide whether it will ape formal 19th century style or be breezy and ironic.

Esther says

Ugh. Just. What a disappointment. This had so much promise, but it ended up silly, incoherent and dumb. Plot threads dropped like flies, enraging characterizations, a total buying-into of the Empire and all it does, weird social issues brought up and never addressed, SURPRISE EXPOSITION out of nowhere at the very end... I can't believe I read this. I wanted to be able to justify all the time I sank into it, but in the end, I can't even care.

Felicia says

Soo I kinda wanted to give this 4 stars, but I'm struggling because the ENDING was really nice, but it was SO HARD to start the book, the first 1/4th was almost making me give up because of structure stuff. Part of that is because it has been a while since I read the first in this series, so I guess there's that, but I consider it part of the author's job to give a recap, or at least write a BIT of refresher for people who liked the previous book but don't wanna go back and read the whole thing.

If you are familiar with the world, it's a re-imagining of the era of Charlotte Bronte, or Jane Austen, but with magic. I really like the concept even more than execution, but I will admit this second book felt way better paced and better laid out than the first. I LOVE the house and uncovering all the secrets. This is a DENSE read but after initial bumps I really enjoyed.

My problem I guess was that in the beginning it's hard to understand why the book is done from different people's POVs (same problem I had with the first one). I wish the characters had interacted more together to kind of justify why we were following them so disparately, and when it finally adds up WAY into the book, that's when things pay off, but it feels too late to me.

SLIGHT SPOILER:

I also don't quite understand the relationship between the main character and her husband and this unrequited love interest thing going on. It feels like the husband is gonna get killed off and the other two will end up

together, but it's taking a long time, and the wife/husband duo relationship is not really getting fleshed out, so you don't really root for them to be together. I dunno.

Upshot, I will definitely read the next one because I felt this one improved on the world, and I love the main character and her sisters and wanna see where it goes!

Elizabeth (Miss Eliza) says

*Special Content only on my blog, Strange and Random Happenstance during Regency Magic (March & April 2016)

Ivy has more than she could ever have wished for. When she went to Heathcrest Hall she had hoped to earn enough money to open up the family house on Durrow Street and remove her sisters from odious familial obligations. Now returned to Invarel she has opened up her old home, with her husband and former employer Mr. Quent by her side. The house undoubtedly belonged to a magician, but to Ivy and her sisters it is home despite all its oddities. The ever watching eyes carved out of wood, which tend to be unnerving to the workers refurbishing the house, are there to protect Ivy's family, constantly observing their well-being and safety. But what else might they be protecting? Ivy's father was a great magician and the house definitely has its secrets. Soon a door is discovered bricked up behind a wall, and awhile later it's mate on the other side of the room is stumbled upon. Doors of great craftsmanship and beauty that no one would rightly cover, unless they needed protecting. Items in the house are also behaving curiously. The clock on the mantel is more accurate than the most up-to-date almanac and there's a journal of her father's that Ivy discovers is slowly revealing its entries in a haphazard manner. If Ivy knows her father, all this is to lead her on her path to becoming the heroine and savior of Altania her father believes her to be.

But distractions are in Ivy's way, in the form of societal obligations. Mr. Quent is always busy. Before he was away from home all the time, but now that he's in Invarel he's just as occupied, rising in the ranks of society. While Ivy's sisters are excited about the prospects of their higher stations, Ivy has hundreds of concerns, from bringing her sisters out into society, to new friendships with the likes of the great Lady Crayford. With unrest in town can she trust these new acquaintances? Because a dear old friend, Dashton Rafferdy, is at the heart of the unrest. Rafferdy has taken his father's seat in the Hall of Magnates. Being so politically placed is making a man of this rake. The king is ill, he is in fact dying, and factions are forming within the Citadel. There are two warring parties of magicians, and Rafferdy is on the wrong side, not aligning himself with Lord Valhain, the king's black dog who has the terrifying Lady Shayde as his personal weapon. With the lack of rebellions and risings associated with the "rightful king" Huntley Morden these other magicians are determined to keep the rebellion fomenting by publicly turning against magic itself. Because magicians will be blamed for terrorist acts. Even illusionists are threatened. Yet could all this be tied to the threat Ivy and Rafferdy faced before? Could all this be in aid of the Ashen? And will they attempt an even greater rising, this time at the Evengrove? But most worrying of all, what happens when the red planet Cerephus gets even closer?

It is a rare occurrence for an author to create a group of characters and make you love each and every one of them. It's even rarer for this to happen in a love triangle. I quite literally can not think of one where all three of the characters held equal space in my heart. And if you say you actually like George Wickham I will smack you right now! He was so up to something from his first appearance in *Pride and Prejudice*. There is always a weak link. One character that just isn't up to snuff and therefore you're secretly rooting for them to fail. Since the first page of *The Magicians and Mrs. Quent* I was shipping Ivy and Rafferdy. By the very title

of the first book you *know* that Ivy isn't going to end up with him. She's going to end up with the, at that point unknown, Mr. Quent. So going further into the narrative Mr. Quent already had a black mark against him. I didn't know him but I knew he was going to cause trouble. And then he arrives and is stalwart and upstanding and just an all around good guy. Yes, I still wanted Ivy to be with Rafferdy, but I couldn't fault her marrying Mr. Quent, he is so wonderful in his own way. Galen Beckett has created his own little Catch-22. He has made such wonderful characters that I am conflicted as to who would bring them greater happiness. I keep thinking, it HAS to be Rafferdy because he helped Ivy defeat The Vigilant Order of the Silver Eye and she makes him a better man! But then she completes Mr. Quent who was so wounded by the death of his first wife all those years ago. Seriously, if this was a pick your own adventure book I would be screwed.

Of course there is always an exception to every rule. It's like it's own rule am I right? So when I say "I love every character" what I mean is "I love every character except..." And I'm not talking about the characters that you are meant to hate, because you eventually come to love hating them. I'm talking about the characters you just don't like. In this case it's Eldyn. You're probably saying, who's Eldyn right about now. In my review of the first book I mentioned him in passing as Rafferdy's best friend. In this review I've glossed over him almost entirely with lumping him in as one of the illusionists, which he is. Yet he is one of the three principal characters in this series and a third of the narrative belongs to him. So perhaps I should explain why I've omitted him. In *The Magicians and Mrs. Quent* he has a rather boring storyline about his sister and some rebels. These sections were excruciating. If I had to read about him at least Rafferdy could be present right? The fact that he didn't die in the first book was a major source of contention with me. I should have given more credit to Galen. Because in *The House on Durrow Street* if there's one surprise it's the redemption of the character of Eldyn Garritt. I know. I'm as surprised as you that my opinion could be changed so drastically.

With books this big it's hard to cover everything that happens in one review. I could write several reviews of *The House on Durrow Street* and never repeat myself and still have things to talk about. But this redemption of Eldyn is, I think, the most interesting. Yes, his learning to become an illusionist and eventually a performer at The Theatre of the Moon is fascinating, as is his paramour Dercy, but what's more surprising is that Eldyn's story is the driving force of this book. The simple line of "even illusionists are threatened" from above encapsulates more than you can imagine. Because what lies underneath is a dark mystery that keeps you turning the pages waiting to find out the truth. Because illusionists are turning up dead. Of course only fellow illusionists could make this connection. Eldyn, in trying to support that rebel loving sister of his is straddling the world of the church, where he works as a clerk, and the world of illusion, where he is learning his art. The church has strong opinions on illusionists, all of them bad. But it's only through being a part of both of these worlds that Eldyn is able to see the greater picture, to uncover the conspiracy of the church using magic to exert control. They are harming and harnessing magic to their own purposes. Purposes that are almost too dark to discuss. But when you see the full extent of the conspiracy in it's reveal you will be astounded and hopefully agree with me that you were seriously doing a disservice to Mr. Garritt.

With Mr. Garritt being revealed as an illusionist the three branches of magic are represented in our three protagonists, Mrs. Quent, the witch, Rafferdy, the magician, and Eldyn, the illusionist. What's interesting about Galen's worldbuilding is that he doesn't just go into the customs and mores of society, he goes far into outer space and alien forces, and closer to home with genetics. Because witch, magician, and illusionist are all born this way. Which given that illusionists are homosexual I think it's nice to have someone pointing out even in a fantasy world that they are born that way. It's genetics people not something that is in need of deprogramming. Witches are born to witches, in fact it is very rare for a witch to have a male child, but if she does that child is an illusionist. Magicians just descend down the male line of the seven great houses with some having the power and some not. Hence the Hall of Magnates is literally littered with real and wannabe

magicians. What comes about in *The House on Durrow Street* is a distinct segregation of the types of magic and fear-mongering. The magicians in power in the Hall of Magnates use their influence to make war on magic, particularly the "natural" magics of witches and illusionists, though if push comes to shove they will totally use those "natural" powers for their own gain. Likewise they instill fear in the populace to hate all magic, hiding their own. Because of all the branches of magic, magicians are the most easily corrupted by the power they need in order to work their magics.

Going back to outer space I have one question lingering at the back of my mind, and that is, is this world of Altania perhaps our future? Go with me on this, it's kind of a reverse *Star Wars* with our future looking like our past, but it's possible. The days and nights are of varying duration and the planets are all akimbo, but perhaps over time that could happen. Ivy talks of a time when days and nights were fixed. Here in our world after the winter equinox we gain a few minutes of sun every day until the summer equinox where we lose a few minutes of sun every day, unless you live at the equator and then it's twelve hours of light and twelve hours of dark everyday, year round. But this is to do with the moon and the tides and the planets. Now imagine something happening to knock them off course, or even just as time passes and the planets paths start to degrade, might Ivy's world come to be? Could night and day no longer be dependable? Could Earth's rotation be random? I wonder how this plays into crops and trees and even grass. And here again is why I love this book, it makes me think, it makes me imagine. I wonder about things and question things that I thought of as just accepted. Yes, there are stories I've read about night falling, forever, but never have I read a story where it's handled so deftly and also so woven into the society and their customs. I seriously just need more of this world, more of this story. I literally never want it to end. Ever.

colleen the convivial curmudgeon says

Last year I read and really enjoyed *The Magicians* and *Mrs. Quent* - so much so that it ended up being in my top 10 for books I read that year.

This book, based on the rating, was still good, generally, but it was lacking in a lot of ways.

For one, it was a very slow build. Now, I can appreciate this sometimes, and I think with the tone of the book - the whole faux-Jane Austen thing - it both generally works and makes sense, but that didn't stop me from, time to time, especially in the beginning, wondering when things were going to really get started.

And then things would get started, and I'd get excited, but then things would sort of slow down again.

I don't think the slowing down again would've been so bad save for two things: 1) A lot of stuff seemed to happen off-page and 2) What was on page was often repetitive.

To point one, often you would be in a scene which is building towards something - a party or something, for instance - and then they would get to the party, only for the book to change perspectives, and when we returned to the person going to the party, several days had passed, we would get a summary of the party as a sort of memory, and then we would proceed forward again. This type of thing happened repeatedly throughout the story, and I couldn't help but feel that a lot of the most interesting parts were being summarized instead of experienced.

Now, I understand some degree of summary. It is a nearly 700 page book, and there is a lot going on; however, that brings me back to point number two - repetition.

*** Minor possible spoilers ahead ***

How many times did we have to see a scene with Ivy talking with the viscountess, and the viscountess telling Ivy how interesting she is, and how everyone wants a chance to meet her, and for Ivy to be surprised and demure, and turn into a gobsmacked idiot every damn time she was complimented?

How many times did we have to see a scene with Eldyn writing the legers, and thinking of being an illusionist, and being an illusionist and thinking of the Church, and his struggle between his desires and his responsibility? Not that it's not important - but the same scene, essentially, played out at least five times.

And how many times did we have to see Rafferdy lament about *her* and her happiness, when it's his own damn fault, and I sort of wanted to smack him.

So on and so forth.

Also, one of the things that really made the first book sparkle was the interaction between the main characters, Ivy and Rafferdy especially, the little bits of social commentary and wit, and just the general amusement of the dialogue. But, again, a lot of that was missing from this book. The three protagonists, bossom buddies in the first book, hardly seem to have time to interact at all in this book.

Also, once again, while I found Eldyn's bit interesting and enjoyable, and while it did loosely tie into the main plot, I couldn't help but wonder if all the time spent with him is entirely necessary.

And Mr. Quent was, again, rather absent most of the time. (Oh, and the cover, yet again, gives away a fairly important plot point, though I guess it's not that big of a deal since you can guess it long before it's revealed anyway.)

Lastly, in the last third of the book or so I didn't want to stop reading. The tension was building, things were coming together, everyone was running one way or another, the bad guys were being revealed, shit was going down... and then... and then...

It fizzled. I mean, complete and utter anti-climax. All that build up, and it was over in, like, a paragraph. Honestly.

But, for all that, I still enjoyed it. When I wasn't reading it, I wanted to be reading it. Not just to finish it, and not just to find out what was going on or going to happen, but also just to be immersed in it. I can't even really tell you what was good about it - but, for the most part, I liked reading it.

But - and this is a big but - this does not lessen the fact that I'm hoping that the rumored third and final book is better, and works out some of these kinks. Perhaps I am kinder to this book than I ought to be because it is the middle book of a trilogy, and they are reknowned for being the weakest link - often serving more as a bridge than as a landscape.

But, like I said, I did quite enjoy the reading of it, despite it's myriad flaws. Go fig.

Mary says

Galen Beckett continues his winning streak with his second amazing book!

Ivy, Rafferdy and Eldyn face new challenges and grow as people through this second book and you grow to love them as characters more and more.

Mr. Beckett is a phenomenal writer that has a fresh and wonderful creativity that captures a reader and holds them fast til the very last word. I can only wait with VERY high anticipation for his third book in the series to come out in March 2012!

Wm says

While acknowledging its fault I very much enjoyed the precursor to this title -- The Magicians and Mrs. Quent -- there was enough wit to the drawing room and interest to the socio-political and class dynamics to forgive some of its faults. And it looked like this was going to an interesting place.

Sadly, that's not what happens. All the faults of the first book are magnified here and what's worse are delivered in almost 700 pages of text. The book is slack -- in its plotting, in its characterization, in its wit, in its world-building, in its writing. Frankly, it bores. I stuck with it in the hopes that the ending might provide some hope, but it does not. It is quite anticlimactic. There many mistakes, including glossing over what could be the most interesting scenes (really Rafferdy is entirely wasted in this book), but the key one is that the real bad guys are kept entirely off-screen. That's okay if they become big-time bosses in the final fight, but in fact, they're not. Just pathetic schemers.

I'm sad to report that this is quite the disappointment.

Rosemary says

It took me six years to get around to book 2 in this series. But a feverish cold, a day in bed, and a lukewarm cup of tea proved to be the perfect accompaniment to this fantasy. The author's weird world charmed, the multiple plot strands all end nicely crossed, and the touch of Lovecraft spiced up the Jane Austen sensibility.

Sarah says

This book probably should have focused less on the manners and morals of the time and more on the plot - but alas, since it failed to pay sufficient attention to the plot, the author ended stealing the same plot devices from the first book to save the day in this one.

It made the book terribly predictable. Bah.
