



The Cormorant

Chuck Wendig

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Hired by a wealthy businessman, she heads down to Florida to practice the one thing she's good at, but in her vision she sees him die by another's hand and on the wall written in blood is a message just for Miriam.

She's expected...

The Cormorant Details

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From Reader Review The Cormorant for online ebook

Dan Schwent says

Miriam Black is lured to Florida by a rich man wanting Miriam to reveal how he dies. This turns out to be a ruse concocted by someone who wants Miriam dead, someone who knows of her gift, and the only person she can turn to is her mother. Can the two angry Black women stop the killer or will they fall prey to the horrors Miriam saw in her vision?

I got this from NetGalley. Thank you, Netgalley!

In the third installment, Miriam Black goes down to Florida and tries to stop a hellish vision. Along the way, she goes through the meat grinder, runs afoul of the law, drinks the contents of a sizeable liquor store, and does some world class swearing. In short, she's still the Miriam we know and love, though she's transitioned from a thief profiting from her gift to someone who's not afraid to kill to prevent the glimpses of the future she's getting.

How do you stop someone who knows your ever move? That's the problem Miriam is up against for almost the entire book, making for a very chilling villain. To be honest, I was slightly disappointed with his identity but Wendig did a lot to make me forget about that. The ending was great and I'm hoping to see Miriam explore her abilities a little more in the next installment.

Wendig's writing is as polished as ever, both with the similes and the depictions of torturous violence. Throughout the series, his love of the Chekov's gun principle is apparent, both with Evelyn Black finally making an appearance in this book and the plot device of the mysterious box that puts a nice cherry on top of the climax of this volume.

The framing sequence with Miriam being help captive by two rogue FBI agents was very nicely done. Since we're all aware Miriam is a series character, we know she'll live and letting her tell the story in her less than linear fashion did a lot to build tension. With all the collateral damage Wendig normally inflicts on the cast, Miriam was the only one we knew would survive, though she's got another batch of hospital bills that we taxpayers will be footing the bill for.

Brutal, hilarious, and a lot of fun. That pretty much sums it up. Four out of five stars!

Jason says

3 Stars

I am giving this 3 stars even though it was a major let down for me. I absolutely loved the first two Miriam Black books and love her equally. My expectations as a result were quite high for The Cormorant.

Chuck Wendig is a fantastic writer and that is evident from the very first page through the closing words. This book is well paced, well structured, and a lot of fun to read. The first third of this book was top notch. I

loved the scenes and the banter between Miriam and the FBI agents. The backstories were all great and I loved seeing the tragedy and the confusion behind the beginnings of Miriam's gift.

““I think I might kill myself some day,” she says suddenly. The words just fall out of her. Like rocks out of a sack.

“Why?”

“I don't know. I'm young but I'm tired. I close my eyes at night and it's just – my dreams are like a boat anchor, man. The things I see. It's like, it's not just the traumatic deaths – the car crashes and fires and stabbings. It's the slow deaths. AIDS and diabetes and kidney failure and liver failure and kid's cancer and rectal cancer and breast cancer and cancer cancer cancer. “

Unfortunately, around 33% into this book the plot takes it's true shape and direction. When this happened, I felt cheated, played, and thought, damn it here we go again. For the first time, I felt that Wendig took the easy way out. Things get worse from here. Without spoilers, I hated the direction that the antagonist took this story. Talk about corny and cheesy. It made me quite mad.

The book comes to a very obvious conclusion with an ending that I did like despite my misgivings. I love Miriam, I love Wendig, unfortunately, I did not love this book. It felt like a cheap version of the first two.

If you have not read Chuck Wendig than I implore you to go and pick up one of his books. He is amazing. This book will have to be read to continue the series but it is a let down...

Milo (BOK) says

The Review: <http://thefoundingfields.com/2014/01/...>

“Chuck Wendig once again excels with another awesome look into the kickass character that is Miriam Black – delivering a page-turning thriller that is a must buy for any readers who enjoyed the first two books. Wendig has created a compelling read here, and The Cormorant might just be one of the best books in the series yet.” ~Bane of Kings, The Founding Fields

"Miriam is on the road again, having transitioned from "thief" ... to "killer".

Hired by a wealthy businessman, she heads down to Florida to practice the one thing she's good at. But in her vision she sees her client die by another's hand – and on the wall, written in blood, is a message just for Miriam.

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Before we begin I just want to touch on the Cover Art for the Miriam Black series. It's something that I don't normally do – bring up cover art in reviews, but I can't help but do so here – mainly because all covers in this series have been utterly phenomenal. Seriously – each cover is amazing – and The Cormorant just

screams as a must-read. If I saw any of these books in a bookstore having no knowledge of what they were about – I would probably snap them up based on the covers alone. Joey Hi-Fi is an incredible artist and each new cover from him is exceptional. Now with that out of the way, let's get started with the review.

And it's a review that I could literally just stop after saying "It's Awesome." I mean, what more is there to tell about Miriam Black that hasn't been said already? Chuck Wendig's unique, engaging and daring take on Urban Fantasy is not for the faint of heart and if you're familiar with Blackbirds and Mockingbirds then chances are you will know by now what to expect. Wendig's writing takes no prisoners, pulling you along at an incredibly fast pace and the end result is always unpredictable. You never feel like you're getting the same book twice with a Miriam Black novel and you can always count on Wendig to entertain you – three books in and the series shows no sign of losing its quality just yet, instead feeling fresh and exciting and another welcome break from all the standard, run of the mill urban fantasy stories that we've seen from female and male authors alike. The Cormorant and the preceding books are different – and if you think Urban Fantasy can't surprise you then look no further than this series. It's captivating, engaging – and if you're reading this review without knowledge of the previous two books then I strongly recommend you buy them as soon as you can. Trust me, you won't regret it.

In the third installment of the series, Wendig takes Miriam Black to Florida, where she's trying to stop a nightmarish vision of the future from becoming reality. Of course, it's never as easy as it sounds – and she's in pretty much over her head with the Law Enforcement, Gangs and Old Friends. It's an action packed book that's very well written with a unique voice, one that's particularly foul-mouthed. However fans of the series should be by now familiar with Miriam's swearing and this is something that really didn't bother me at all, having already gotten used to the character in the past three outings and it was welcome to return to the strong, independent and kickass female character that is the driving force behind the three books so far. It's always great returning to Miriam's life, even if Wendig drags her literally through hell and back with a gritty narrative that's unpredictable far from disappointing.

Each book in the Miriam Black series has been exceptional and The Cormorant is another excellent addition to that list. It's clever, engaging and unputdownable – I've been saying that a lot about Angry Robot's novels lately but this is very true on pretty much every one. If there's one thing that can be guaranteed when picking up an Angry Robot novel, it's that I won't be able to stop reading it. This was very much the case with The Cormorant - which was helped by its fast pace and short chapters allowing me to speed through the book like I was reading a much more awesome version of a novel by James Patterson. It's just so good, and I can't help but heap praise after praise upon this novel.

Chuck Wendig's The Cormorant then, is another great success from the author. I've yet to read a book that I didn't like from him and each has been very good indeed. I hope that we return to the Miriam Black Universe soon – because I can't wait to read more. Miriam is a badass and an incredibly strong female character who is just as awesome as the more popular female characters in literature. She certainly can leave an impression on the reader, and is easily one of the strongest parts of an excellent novel. Highly Recommended, but only if you've read the other two first.

VERDICT: 4.5/5

Ashley Daviau says

These books are like a bag of candy, I open it and POOF, before I know it the bag is empty and I'm left satisfied yet regretful that I didn't savour it. But there is no savouring these books, they just BEG to be devoured. This time around the stakes are even higher because its personal and Miriam will do anything to save those she loves. It's kind of crazy when you look from the first book to this one, Miriam has grown so much as a person and it's kind of beautiful to see. She's still badass and foul mouthed but we begin to see a softer side of her and I'm all for it! The end of this one broke me, I felt like I could actually FEEL my heart breaking and I enjoyed every second of it. That's the beauty of these books, there's swearing and gore and mayhem but at the same time they just make you FEEL so much!

Brandon says

He leans over toward her. She smells his breath. It smells of roadkill ripening in a wet ditch. He taps the end of the feather on the dashboard, click, click, click. "I'm just warning you Miriam Black. Forces have been aligning against you for a while. You've been fucking with this Jenga tower for too long, and it ain't long before it all comes clickety-clackety falling down."

Responding to a Craigslist ad she wasn't aware had been posted on her behalf, Miriam finds herself travelling to Florida to meet up with a man wishing to know how he will kick the bucket. In exchange for her services, the unknown party is offering up a cool five grand – thus making it an offer she can't afford to refuse. Of course, the whole thing sounds shady to begin with and when Ms. Black finds out who's really pulling the strings, you can bet your ass shit is about to hit the fan.

The third book (and thankfully not the last) in the Miriam Black series is an outstanding read. If you've read what I have written about the first two (Blackbirds, Mockingbird) then you're aware that I'm a huge fan of these books. They're fast paced, witty and consistently entertaining – a true page turner by the very definition. At this point, I feel like Wendig would need to have been given a frontal lobotomy to screw this up.

If you liked the first two in the series, I can guarantee you're going to like this. Miriam is still her tried and true self, spewing verbal harpoons at both friend and foe. The road that lies ahead of her is no less bumpy nor is it a straight drive as it's littered with both twists and turns galore. Wendig explores more of Miriam's past and what makes her tick by bringing her mother into the present day for the first time in the series. Given their tumultuous past, their back and forth is awkward and rough around the edges. As we all know by now, Miriam isn't one who exactly forgives easily.

While it was touched upon in Mockingbird, The Cormorant kicks down the door on the fact that Miriam isn't alone when it comes to her special "gift". In fact, it's known that there are indeed others out there that possess altered versions of what Miriam can do and they aren't always friendly.

Following the acknowledgements, Chuck states that Miriam's due for a return in the fourth novel of the series, **Thunderbird**. I was spoiled in being able to read the first three books back to back to back – now I have to wait. And I'm not a man known for patience. Write faster!

Bradley says

Dark and gritty as ever, I have to admit that I also had a slight bit of an issue with the first half or so of the read. It jumped all over the place between the present and the past and while it all eventually became obvious why it might have been necessary, it was still slightly off-putting. There were slightly less raunchy/funny descriptive elements than before, too, but that's a grab bag of happy oddities and discoveries that not everyone might enjoy. In other words, I loved them but not everyone would.

What really worked was the cat-and-mouse game between these death-birds. :) Psychopomps? Yes. Absolutely. Psychopomps utterly using and using up their hosts? Absolutely. Poor Miriam. She had it bad before and all of that old dark past becomes clear in this novel. It's quite a big reveal her as a character and despite any issues I might have had with the reading, it all gels together by the end.

It's definitely still one of the grimmest and darkest UF/mysteries with supernatural elements I've ever read. It's hard to like the main character, but she does grow on you like a piece of necrotic flesh. :)

Holly (The Grimdragon) says

He's got the muscle tone of a crumpled jerk off tissue.

The Cormorant is the follow-up to the fantastically raucous Blackbirds & Mockingbird. Are you sensing the theme here? Yes, BIRDS! And we get to meet quite the bird in this instalment, Corie the cormorant. She is sassy & I adore her! And Jerry. The scenes with the two of them are top notch entertainment!

Miriam is on the move, making her way to Florida. She is now a killer.. but a killer that is trying to change the fate of innocent people who she sees die in her visions. Blood for blood. Her story from common thief to killer is quite the journey! Miriam doesn't necessarily find this change in.. profession, an easy one. We get to know our girl Miriam on a deeper level in this novel. You should know by now that not everything is always so black & white with her, but with The Cormorant we get a closer look at her past, what she has gone through. We learn more about her mother. It is just a really tragic story. One that Wendig intersperses throughout.

With The Cormorant, we find out that Miriam's powers are more complicated than we originally thought. There were hints of this in Mockingbird, with the connection to birds displayed more prominently. Wendig teases the reader with what may come in Thunderbirds & I for one am super excited about it!

Like with the previous books, The Cormorant has brutal violence, profanity, mystery, dark humor & a fast paced plot (is there a better paced series than this? I THINK NOT!) Most of all it has heart. This isn't just some stabby stabby gore porn trying to be cutting edge & different. No. This is so much more. Wendig doesn't have to try. He just IS. It is a genuinely badass series. I can see how others may be put off by something like this, but I absolutely cannot get enough of it! Sometimes I feel as though the bearded Wendig is sitting in my head, pulling out my thoughts while drinking whiskey & cackling mischievously!

This is the book that completely outdoes anything else Wendig has put out there with Miriam Black. It is a gloriously weird, gritty, fucked up ride. He keeps punching me in the face with the crazy & I continue to allow him to do it over & over again. He leaves his mark on me, the foul-mouthed deviant that I am!

This series is ridiculously enthralling. I cannot get enough!

Skip says

With the forthcoming publication of the 4th Miriam Black novel *Thunderbird* next week, I thought it high time to read the 3rd one. Unfortunately, I did not like it as much as the first two. Miriam is lured to Florida, with the promise of a \$5,000 fee for using her special power of seeing someone's death by touching them. It turns out to be a fraud, as one of her nemeses who has his own equally impressive talent is out for retribution against Miriam and all she holds dear. The story's timeline bounces around with periodic interludes, which were not distracting. My favorite character is the fortune teller, Sugar, who tells you what you want to know and what you need to know in tandem. The old geezer with the cormorant is also well done. I guess I thought there was too much foretelling of deaths and I did not care for the two FBI agents, whose mission was always unclear.

Mr. Matt says

I like books that make you think. And *Cormorant* made me think - big time. *Cormorant* continues the story of Miriam Black. Miriam (for those of you who haven't met her) has a terrible curse. When she touches people she experiences the moment of their death. Worse yet, she knows to the minute and second when they will die. Not surprisingly, Miriam is one messed up woman. In *The Cormorant* Miriam grapples with her curse.

Miriam is no longer content to be an unwilling witness in the deaths of everyone she meets. In this book Miriam fights against fate. Are people predestined to their fate? Miriam discovers that she can change fate. She can save the people that she meets - sometimes. It gives her a purpose. It also causes some serious bad mojo. There are forces/powers/beings/trespassers out there that don't like Miriam messing with fate. These sinister forces - ill-seen and ill-understood - move against Miriam, resurrecting a person she thought long gone and striking against those that she connects with. The best part is that this nemesis has been gifted/cursed as well. They are able to tell/to know what will happen. If they were to look at you, they would know exactly what you would be doing in the next moment.

This is twisted stuff. And I like it. Are we predestined towards a certain fate? Or do we possess free-will? Or is it just the illusion of free will? This is the type of stuff that really sets this whole series apart. So why only four stars? My gripe with this book is Miriam herself. I am growing tired of how caustic she is. Why is she so nasty to everyone she touches? (Yes, the curse, I know). It gets tiring to read. I had hoped after the last book to see a little more development - a little more progression - out of Miriam. I'm not sure she's moved at all and it was a disappointment.

Paul Nelson says

The Cormorant is a damn clever book and the most personnel of Miriam Black's stories to date, it's told through multiple timelines, one of my favourite story telling methods and highly effective when done right. Thankfully Chuck Wendig does it right and *The Cormorant* is arguably the best of the series yet.

This time Miriam goes up against someone who has powers not too dissimilar from her own curse, someone

she knows all too well and they're sending messages through the lives they take, as Miriam in turn reads their final moments, the game changes as she is taunted by messages written in the blood of those about to die.

Hired by a wealthy businessman she's off to Florida to earn a hefty pay packet and to tell this guy when he's going to die, also gives her an opportunity to drop in on her Mother. She goes skin to skin with said businessman and is absolutely stunned to see his death, I mean she knows it's coming but the vision shows a hooded figure, he stabs the guy with her knife and the message he writes in blood 'Hello Miriam' and it's about to get much worse.

The personnel aspect of this story is the relationship with her Mother, with a chequered history there is unease but things have tempered off, they can talk and it's devastating when she sees the vision of her death.

In the second timeline Miriam is being interviewed by two dubious looking FBI agents, as if she's a serial killer and she tells her story after the events have taken place.

As I've said before Miriam Black is my favourite hard as nails female protagonist, she smokes like there's no tomorrow, swears like crazy, drinks like a fish and is not too shy in the sexual liaisons department. She tries to do the right thing, tries to save people but the grim reaper always wants his cut and she knows if she attempts to prevent a death, there has to be a replacement.

The Cormorant is loud, brash and a barrel of laughs, plot and pacing are exceptional, a great addition to the series.

A 4.5 Rating rounded up.

Recommended.

Sadie Hartmann Mother Horror says

"It is what it is."

This book was **almost** a four star rating as compared to Blackbirds and Mockingbird which were both BIG FAT 5 Stars but then, WHAM, BAM, thank you, Ma'am! The ending just sucker-punched me and earned itself that fifth star.

I was concerned at first. I missed my Louis. I didn't like the beginning. I was disappointed a certain character from a previous book was back. I thought maybe the plot line was becoming formulaic or predictable.

PLOT TWIST

Shit got real. Really, real and I loved this side of Miriam. I don't want to give **any** spoilers so I'm just going to say, Miriam evolves yet again. She is constantly growing, learning and with this painful process, her gift/curse adapts and changes too.

I love the new characters we got to meet: Gabby, Jerry & Corie, (not the FBI agents, I didn't care for their personalities at all) and Sugar. I liked Sugar a lot and it proved that Wendig is good at making very distinct, unique voices for his characters--none of them blend in together or sound the same like in so many other books with a strong protagonist. Sugar was light and ethereal and refreshing--like a drink of crisp, clean water when you've been slopping around in the gutter.

I loved this third installment of the series and I'm excited for where the story is going. Thunderbirds, is going

to be BAD ASS!

Lisa says

Full Review: <http://www.tenaciousreader.com/2013/1...>

I this may have taken seat as my favorite of Chuck Wendig's books and put the fourth Miriam Black one on my must read list (please tell me there will be a fourth!). So, yeah, go read it. Miriam once again kicks ass.

Kristin (MyBookishWays Reviews) says

<http://www.mybookishways.com/2013/12/...>

If you've kept up with this series, then you know what Miriam went through in Mockingbird. To say that she's physically and spiritually exhausted is an understatement, but she's a survivor, our Miriam. When she saves the lives of two young men at the hands of a deranged homeless man, she finds a temporary home, but not paying rent is not a good thing, and her "work" as a street psychic isn't bringing in nearly enough cash. Soon it's eviction time, but it turns out one of her roomies has hooked her up with a job in Florida: a man who will pay her \$5,000 to tell him how he dies. So, with reservations, but no other options, to Florida goes Miriam, and when she takes the hand of the man waiting for her, she's shocked to see a message for her written in the man's blood. Turns out someone from her past is expecting her, and is out for revenge.

So begins Miriam's journey through the Florida Keys and beyond, trying to stay one step ahead of a killer that seems to be out to get everyone that Miriam cares for, but staying ahead of him proves to be pretty darn difficult, because he always seems to know what Miriam's next move is. Also in pursuit is a pair of FBI agents that have suspicions of their own and are determined to interrogate Miriam...off the books.

Miriam is her usual bitingly sarcastic, scrappy self (seriously, the girl is like a Timex), but it's the underlying layer of seething emotional pain, and the desire to do the right, and good thing, that makes her such a sympathetic girl, in spite of her own efforts to make herself as unlovable as possible. She's torn and ragged and pushes everyone away, but ultimately is desperate for the love that she doesn't think she deserves. This is part of what makes her surprising reconnection with her mother, who has relocated to Florida, all the more poignant. On the surface, the Miriam books are, at times, unrelentingly grim, but if you pick back the scabs, they're the chronicles of a very damaged girl on a constant search for redemption while struggling to stay sane in the face of her unwanted physic "gift." Cormorant, as is usual for this series, delivers action and creeps in spades, but the dim light at the end of the long dark tunnel of Miriam's life is now just a little bit brighter. Miriam's story remains an undeniably addictive one, and I finished this in one sitting. Wendig's writing is better than ever, and this series continues to surprise and terrify in equal measure.

Tabitha says

Miriam is back in The Cormorant with as much in your face spunk as you've come to expect from her. She's

been through a lot since Blackbirds and I must say you'll see here come quite ways here as well. There were some very some turns that I did not expect and frankly a few that I was somewhat disappointed in, but overall a good showing and great character growth was achieved for Miriam.

I was of course immediately sucked in with the violence, mystery, thrills and the typical awesomeness which Chuck Wendig had indoctrinated me to with Blackbirds and Mockingbird.

The Good: I can promise you more graphic grizzly deaths, a positive for me because hey Im just that twisted. A kicking sweet scene with birds the likes of which Hitchcock himself couldn't top, I shit you not. SPOILERS BEWARE: Jailtime, kidnapping, and attempted dismemberment and maybe perhaps a night of drunken debauchery? Top that all off with some good old family feuding and self loathing and what have you got but a deliciously toxic mix of kick ass.

Now, some of the Bad: Unfortunately, for me The Cormorant started to fall short after about the 40% mark, lacking some of the punch that I had experienced in the previous two books. I could blame this on myself as I was amping myself up for an even bigger and badder nasty villain than before. In that respect I have to say I was...let down. Ok so was the villain sick, twisted, and a realistic type creep? Yes, yes and yes. So why then Tabitha were you disappointed? I can't say that I know exactly why. This and several things about the latter part of the plot just didn't quite light my fire in the same way. Perhaps I was just anticipating more than what I got or something different. There was some good, there was some bad, there was the hurt me so good ugly but even so I find myself fence sitting on this one a bit.

The Cormorant was still a good addition to the Miriam Black series. She does go through some reality checks and a smidge of growing up and self realizations that no doubt have been a long time coming. I can tell there is definitely more in store for her and hopefully the next installment will return me to the heapings of love for Miriam's badassery. Because of course you know I plan to continue.

Sana says

When you want your most hated character in the book to die the worst death possible and he fucking does. Amen.

This book, though. So fucked up and awesome.
