



Midnight Thief

Livia Blackburne

Download now

Read Online →

Midnight Thief

Livia Blackburne

Midnight Thief Livia Blackburne

Growing up on Forge's streets has taught Kyra how to stretch a coin. And when that's not enough, her uncanny ability to scale walls and bypass guards helps her take what she needs.

But when the leader of the Assassins Guild offers Kyra a lucrative job, she hesitates. She knows how to get by on her own, and she's not sure she wants to play by his rules. But he's persistent—and darkly attractive—and Kyra can't quite resist his pull.

Tristram of Brancel is a young Palace knight on a mission. After his best friend is brutally murdered by Demon Riders, a clan of vicious warriors who ride bloodthirsty wildcats, Tristram vows to take them down. But as his investigation deepens, he finds his efforts thwarted by a talented thief, one who sneaks past Palace defenses with uncanny ease.

When a fateful raid throws Kyra and Tristram together, the two enemies realize that their best chance at survival—and vengeance—might be to join forces. And as their loyalties are tested to the breaking point, they learn a startling secret about Kyra's past that threatens to reshape both their lives.

In her arresting debut novel, Livia Blackburne creates a captivating world where intrigue prowls around every corner—and danger is a way of life.

Midnight Thief Details

Date : Published July 8th 2014 by Disney-Hyperion

ISBN : 9781423176381

Author : Livia Blackburne

Format : Hardcover 376 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Romance, High Fantasy, Young Adult Fantasy

 [Download Midnight Thief ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Midnight Thief ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Midnight Thief Livia Blackburne

From Reader Review Midnight Thief for online ebook

Rusty's Ghost Engine (also known as..... Jinky Spring) says

3.5 stars

Review can be found on my brand new blog [Here](#)

Rebekah says

What to make of the AMAZING book! Where do I begin? The author has a PhD in neuroscience for heavens sake! Go figure she wrote such an incredible book! And for the love of all that is holy I have to wait a whole year for book 2! Let me just say I was riveted by the end of page one. I could not put this book down. Everything about it was worth reading every word, line and savoring the picture she created as you get involved in the world and it's characters. This book truly has everything a story needs to make a good story. Likeable characters, political situations that were not presented as pure black and white but showed many gray areas, good vs evil, historical context (language/setting), romance, mystery, action, adventure, twists, plot changes, characters killed off that tear at your heart strings, etc. I could go on and on about what this book hold that makes with worth reading and owning.

The writing alone in this book was fantastic! The detail described is enough to give you the framework, but not too much that you were overwhelmed with too much information. Make sense? The author also did a great job of pacing. There wasn't a time I wanted to book to go faster or I wanted to skim to move on with the story. No, this was so well written that I was able to really enjoy the pace of the book. I've read some people complain that this book as "too slow" I would have to politely disagree with those who felt that way because I sure did not feel like this book was slow. There were to many twists and turns in the story I really was reeling by where the author took me. I thoroughly enjoyed the writing and it's pace.

This story follows a girl named Kyra who is an orphaned who grew up on the streets and doesn't even know her real age, but living on the streets taught her how to survive. She has an amazing ability to scale walls and bypass guards in order to steal what she needs in order to survive. As a character she is pretty stinkin awesome. She always kept things interesting, and what was so great about her as a character she isn't this completely sword wilding bad-A-don't-mess-with-me type of chick that is becoming so big. No, she is flawed, she makes mistakes, but she isn't whiny, she is strong and real. Someone readers can relate to. Through out the story you really get to see growth from Kyra as we watch her choices and actions and the consequences (good or bad) play out. She is a character to admire. When Kyra is offered a job from a mysterious James who needs her help and only she can do it since she is so skilled in the art of doing things without getting caught. She hesitates but then desires this new challenge he presents to her.

Tristam is a wonderful character. He is just someone you automatically like. He is just trying to get by while doing what he thinks is right. He has a desire to uphold his family's name and honor. He doesn't aspire to be anything but good. But when his friend is killed by the Demon Riders, a clan of vicious warriors who ride bloodthirsty wildcats. Tristam seeks his revenge and vows to take them down. When Tristam's world collides with Kyra things get intense as the plot in the story thickens and twists and turns in way you were completely not expecting.

Overall I would own this book, it's a good decent sized book that is clean and full of adventure. I highly recommend this book

Sexual Content: mild

Drugs/Alcohol: mild

Language: mild

Violence: moderate (knowledge of murders, fight scenes, throat cutting-not graphic)

Thank you to the Hyperion for a copy of the book, which I got in exchange for an honest review

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

Actual rating: 1.5

She didn't look like an assassin. She looked like a young girl—a pretty one at that, with her small stature and delicate features.

Why hello there, generic special snowflake Mary Sue heroine who's a dumb, weak, **pussy-ass delicate little flower** with every guy desiring her and powers that she never earned.

"You're beautiful to watch, you know...Your grace—it's impossible to ignore. Did you notice the way my men looked at you? And it wasn't just them."

Oh, and there's a sad attempt at **love triangle**.

Whoop dee doo!

If a good high fantasy is a sumptuous feast for the imagination, this book would be the equivalent of **a few carrot sticks, with half a teaspoon of fat-free ranch dressing**.

This is one of the most poorly crafted "high fantasy" books I have ever read. I used quotation marks for high fantasy, because **within an actual high fantasy, there is some semblance of world building**. Explanations. Context. There was none of the above within this book.

I'm going to forgo one of my long-winded metaphors and simply say that this book was "incredibly bad." Like the equivalent of Defy bad. So why a 1.5 instead of a 1? No breeding houses. But that's not really saying much.

This book is **incredibly fucking dull**. There is **no world building**. It moves at the pace of **a snail with a broken leg**, if snails had legs, that is...

The writing is completely **unremarkable in every way**. There is little to no character development.

To top it off, **the main character is one of the worst high fantasy heroines I have ever had the**

misfortune of meeting. There's usually a method to my madness, I have a separate section where I analyze the main character. Fuck it, I'm having my little character rant first, it's been a long day and I'm feeling rebellious.

The main character is **Kyra, a 17-year old thief.** She so suffers from a serious condition that has been spreading around many book heroines known as **too-stupid-to-live syndrome.**

She scrambled back as the demon cat launched itself off a tree, landing softly on padded feet right where Kyra had been standing.

She should have remembered that cats could climb trees.

She has been a thief and a street urchin for most of her life. Cool, right? Well, no. No, because she is the most unwise, least street-savvy thief in the whole damn world. Kyra is a thief who **won't carry around a weapon** to defend herself.

"Rand says you don't carry a knife."

"I don't need to. I can usually get away," she said.

And consequently, she is completely fucking useless at self-defense. Kyra is not a fighter. She needs saving. She is saved by the act of god, or **deus ex fucking machina** almost every single time because she is incapable of defending herself. Like this time.

Someone pulled him off her, and Kyra dragged herself onto her elbow, breath coming in painful gasps. Both her attackers lay on the ground, unconscious. Above them stood a man who looked vaguely familiar.

And again, and again, and again.

She screamed, only to cut off as she choked on her own blood. The pain was unbearable, growing unimaginably worse when he twisted his knife.

"We would like to take her with us," a man said.

AND BOOM, SAVED FROM INSTA-DEATH.

She constantly flushes and blushes.

- *She flushed and drew her arm away.*

- *She flushed red, unsure as to whether she imagined his mocking tone.*

- *She looked away, taken aback at the flush rising in her cheeks.*

She is the worst liar in the world.

"You're not telling me everything," he said.

"There's nothing to tell," she said too quickly.

She has no sense of loyalty. She will betray a group who takes her in at the drop of a hat. **She betrays just about every group that takes her in.** From a group of **Robin Hood** wannabes...

"It didn't take long for you to switch your allegiance, did it?"

...To the "**barbarians**" who rescued her.

Could she betray them after they had saved her life?

The answer is yes. Always fucking yes. To the one new friend who saved her life.

It was true. [She] had saved her life, fought for her, and taught her the ways of the clan. And Kyra had betrayed her.

She will **reveal her greatest weakness**, her love for her friends, to the enemy to be used against her without a thought.

She likes small children. Cute. But when I read a book with a high fantasy heroine, I want **less cuddly maternal type and more kick-ass**. I didn't get much ass-kicking at all.

Because, as I said, she FAINTS AND FLUSHES ALL THE FUCKING TIME.

And naturally, everyone falls in love with her. She is so bloody special. **Rebel bad boy assassin** sees something **special** in her.

James pushed back from the table, studying her again with a thoughtful expression. "I've never met anyone quite like you, Kyra." His voice was soft, lacking its usual edge.

Knightly nobleman adores her for no bloody reason.

He didn't let her go, though his gaze softened in a way that bruised her pride. "You're a puzzle, Kyra."

And she's speshul. **SPESHUL**.

How did he really feel about Kyra? She was like no one he'd ever met before, and he couldn't deny that she was beautiful when she worked.

The Summary:

"You've noticed that you're different, have you not?"

We're in a high fantasy world, the most generic one in the entire fucking universe. Want explanations for something? Good bloody luck, you get none. I mean, things are easy enough to figure out, like if someone has a vampire in a book, you don't need to be told that they're fucking bloodsuckers, but SOMETIMES I WANT AN EXPLANATION. Who knows, the vampire in that particular book could suck the juices from oranges, instead of humans.

So yeah, back to Generic High Fantasy World. Is there magic in this world? Don't fucking know. For some reason, a felbeast will appear. What the fuck is a felbeast? A...demon...thing...obvi, but STILL, SOME FUCKING EXPLANATIONS WOULD BE NICE.

Boom, there are barbarians. OMG THE POOR ARE BEING OPPRESSED BY THE WEALTHY WITHOUT ANY CONTEXT AT ALL YAY.

Oh, and there are demon cats. Whooooooo! And felbeasts. What the fuck are they? Where the hell did they come from? ENJOY HAVING NO EXPLANATIONS AT ALL.

Into this mess of a fucking setting, enter our fucking idiot delicate flower of a heroine. **Kyra is 17, a**

beautiful thief (well, she doesn't think she's beautiful, but OBVIOUSLY WE FIND OUT LATER THAT SHE IS, HYUK HYUK HYUK. She is a competent thief who fucks up a job, and for some reason after that, the **Robin Hood-like Assassin's Guild** who steal from the rich to give to the poor, only they want, nay, NEED the irrepressible Kyra's help. And then there's darkly handsome, deadly leader James who makes her heart flutter. Who makes her blush.

*She was a professional, not some giddy farm girl.
"It's what I do."*

Riiiiiiiiight. But no, it's not just James, there's handsome nobleman, knightly SER TRISTAM who makes her heart pound like the beating of a very small mallet.

And there was something in his eyes that hadn't been there before. Had it only been a few weeks ago when they'd been enemies?

Much excitement. So love. Grand passion. Wow.

WHAT IS HER SECRET? WHY IS KYRA SO SPESHUL?

*He was scrutinizing her, eyes wary.
"You're different...."*

And more importantly, WILL KYRA EVER STOP CRYING?

She clutched her blanket tighter and blinked back tears.

Kyra looked at him, and the forgiveness in his eyes made her want to burst into tears again.

Kyra could no longer hold her tears back.

Kyra squeezed her eyes tight against the tears that threatened to spill.

To her horror, she felt tears prickle behind her eyes.

Her body gave way to racking sobs. She lay there, curled in a ball, hugging her legs through the convulsions.

Kyra let it all out then, clutching the girls as she sobbed.

And will she ever be able to NOT fight like a kitten with its leg in a splint?

With a ragged cry, she launched herself at James, slashing wildly. There was a brief flicker of triumph on James's face as he stepped aside, wrenching her knife arm behind her and twisting her down. She landed face-first on the ground. Two sharp kicks to the ribs knocked any remaining breath out of her.

By the way, there is also has a completely pathetic attempt at copying the premise of one of my favorite books...*Poison Study*. No. Don't even *snaps fingers*

"We've anticipated that and have instructed the healer Ilona to withhold the last few doses of

antidote.”

Tristram tensed. “Sir?” he asked.

“The small amount of poison left in her body shouldn’t interfere overly much with her health,” said Willem. “We believe that the need for her final dose should motivate her to return to the Palace.”

Needless to say, just say no.

I realized, as I read to the end of the book, that the author has some seriously impressive credentials. A Ph.D from MIT, one of the best institutions of higher ed in the US. Wow. Bravo to her. I can never hope to rival her intelligence.

With that said, the education and the intelligence of the author does not necessarily make for a great book, and this is living proof. No matter how much I respect the author's smarts, this was an absolutely terrible book for me.

nick says

This was really good. I loved watching the main character, Kyra, go through all these situations and actually make mistakes (Yay for a non-perfect YA fantasy heroine!) and watching the world building expand was an absolute thrill. I did wish that the plot were a bit tighter but I don't even care because this book was still very entertaining. I'm looking forward to reading the next book.

Series Review

Why should you check out the Midnight Thief duology?

1. Loveable main character

Midnight Thief and Daughter of Dusk have some very endearing characters. The protagonist, Kyra, especially was a character I loved from the very start. She was feisty, fearless, but also had vulnerable sides to her. Perhaps the best part about her character though how she was not this perfect fantasy heroine who got everything right. She actually made mistakes which was so much realistic to me than having this perfect badass character who is able to face any obstacle without ever falling into traps. She often found herself regretting some of her decisions and I liked that a lot. Besides that, Kyra was also kind-hearted and cared for others, especially street children known as the "gutter kids". She looked out for them and her bond with two young girls, Lettie and Idalee, was sweet and lovely to experience. There's nothing more I enjoy in books other than strong female relationships.

2. James- good or bad?

In Midnight Thief, Kyra was hired by a mysterious leader of the Assassin's guild. Completely enigmatic, James was such an interesting character from start to finish of the series. While we get snippets of why he was the way he was, we never really got a complete grasp of his character, which I think worked really well in this case because he wound up being so memorable for me. He also straddled the line between good and evil and you never really knew what his intentions were when it came to his guild's goals. It was an interesting experience trying to figure out who he really was and I liked that even by the end he was still this huge question mark. I think it made for an intriguing character for sure.

3. Complex and twisty politics and world building

With a fantasy world full of assassins, thieves, knights, corrupt powerhouses and Demon riders, there was no doubt that the world building in both *Midnight Thief* and *Daughter of Dusk* was exciting in every way. It was rich, solid and very well-developed, which is all I look for when it comes to fantasy world building. There were also lots of themes of poverty and corrupt politics that I really enjoyed reading about, especially because they could be reiterated into the real world. Livia Blackburne did a fantastic job at crafting her world from the bottom, making sure to explain every nook and crook that existed. I know some people shy away from fantasy books because the world building tends to be complicated, but this isn't one of those books where you can't figure out the world. It's well-written and easy to understand. It was definitely a highlight of the duology for me.

4. Realistic relationships

Kyra forged many relationships in this book and they were all pretty memorable for me. Her relationship with Flick was I one that I particularly appreciated. Theirs was a relationship that never swayed from friendship. I love that the author decided to show this platonic relationship between a boy and a girl, that never once moved into romantic territory. The romance in this duology was between Kyra and Tristram, a Knight. I can't say that the romance was a huge part of this series - it was more of something that developed in the background. I liked the slow pace however, and enjoyed the sweet moments between the two of them as they got closer to one another.

Minor Quibbles

5. Same old fantasy plot

I did wish that the plot in both *Midnight Thief* and *Daughter of Dusk* went beyond the "try to take down the corrupt leader" storyline. Livia Blackburne wrote in an entertaining way that still made the book stand out despite the plot being rather cliched, but I also feel like she could have gone a bit beyond that and explored a different area to make this unique.

6. Loose ends in conclusion

While the conclusion to the *Midnight Thief* series was pretty solid and I was for the most part satisfied with it, there were some things I wish the author had delved more into, such as Kyra's relationship with her new-found father and her past with her mother was something I would have liked to have learned more about. Despite that though, I thought the ending was good.

Overall Thoughts

I enjoyed binge-reading this series back to back. I preferred *Midnight Thief* a bit more than *Daughter of Dusk* because I thought the plot was a little tighter in that one, but I enjoyed watching everything come together in the last book. This is certainly a series that I think is worth reading because the characters, world building and the different relationships between the characters were all phenomenal. I look forward to reading more from Livia Blackburne.

Isa Lavinia says

actual rating: 2.5 stars

ARC provided by Disney-Hyperion through Netgalley

Kyra is a thief trying to make ends meet when she's taken into the Assassins Guild. There she hones her skills and learns a few new tricks.

Tristam is close to his knighthood when barbarians riding demon cats attack and kill his best friend. This makes Tristam choose a path which will allow him to seek justice for his fallen friend.

I was really, REALLY excited for this book, but that excitement died down within the very first chapter. Now, don't get me wrong, there is nothing bad about this book. There is nothing particularly good about it, either, and that's the problem.

The setting is the usual lacklustre standard pseudo-medieval fantasy, with its usual clichés, right down to most of the characters meeting in an inn.

There wasn't much in the way of worldbuilding. We're told the general layout of the city, some vague description of social classes and their hierarchy, and that's it.

I didn't dislike Kyra, but I didn't like her, either. She was just... *there*.

She starts off badly right on the first chapter - the head of the Assassins Guild blatantly hires her to test her skills, and she can't even figure this out. A 17 year old girl who spent most of her life fending for herself on the streets... lacks the street-smarts to see this?

I wanted her to be cleverer! Mind you, perhaps I am a bit spoiled by Megan Whalen Turner's *Eugenides*, but Kyra never really shined...

She was a good thief because she'd trained herself to physically be so, out of necessity. There is very little of her outsmarting anyone else.

And there's the sense that there was a bit of chickening out in this book: Kyra joins the Assassins Guild. I expected her to learn how to become an assassin? But she can't even bring herself to watch someone take a beating, and spends her time drawing maps and harbouring vague concerns over the morality of her employers. When she kills, she's horrified at what she's done.

"There were steps she wasn't willing to take. The kill had been an accident. She wasn't an assassin, and she wouldn't kill a Council member. She couldn't."

Then why did she join the **Assassins** Guild?! How stupid is this girl?!

Obviously, I'm not advocating murder as a viable professional choice for young ladies, but why have one of your protagonists join an Assassins Guild if this isn't used in her training and growth as a character? To sound cool?

Tristam isn't any more interesting. I guess, perhaps, he is even less: at least Kyra has a few protégés and some kind of life outside of her work...

Tristam's story starts with the usual Friendly Target trope - you know, his best friend dies so Tristam can have a purpose in the plot.

He wanted to patrol roads (I didn't really get the concept of knighthood in this book? Wouldn't patrolling roads be a task for a guard?) but his friend's tragic (and *inevitable*) death makes him pledge his service to Sir Malikel - probably the only interesting character in the book: a foreigner whose cunning and skill elevated him to the role of Minister of Defense.

Tristam expects to fight the barbarians who "*kind of*" killed his friend. I say "*kind of*" because let's be honest: it was mostly his friend's own incompetence that got him killed.

Instead we're treated to Tristam building aqueducts and supervising evictions of shopkeepers who can't keep

their business afloat with all the raids depriving them of their stock.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this review, the barbarian invaders raiding farms and cities attack with demon cats. As if there are any other kind.

©FeelAfraidComic

There needed to be more of a marker to signify a change of point of view. We go on for 5 chapters told from Kyra's point of view, and then the 6th is told from Tristam's with no warning whatsoever. I mean, after a few chapters I noticed Kyra's chapters started with a:

And Tristam's chapters started with a:

But these are somewhat obscured by the initial at the beginning of the chapter.

Wouldn't it be easier for the reader to just have the name of the character from whose point of view we're reading stated at the beginning of each chapter? Just my opinion...

This book is aimed at readers 12 and up, so it's YA, I guess? But I've read plenty of Middle Grade books more complex and advanced than this...

I'm sorry to say this, but I found this book incredibly boring and extremely simplistic.

Take this with a grain of salt, though. What doesn't work for me, may very well work for others...

Maja (The Nocturnal Library) says

Completely unexpectedly, *Midnight Thief* was a very pleasant surprise. It came at a time when I had a hard time focusing on any read and I really needed something different and well done to pull me in. In many ways, *The Midnight Thief* was both those things.

This book is told from two perspectives, that of Kyra, a skilled thief, and a young knight named Tristam. Tristam's point of view came as a surprise somewhat late in the story, just when I was starting to get comfortable with Kyra's voice. Aside from the poor timing, his POV was a welcome addition – in the end, he was my favorite character, the one that showed consistent integrity, intelligence and strength.

Throughout the novel, Kyra makes many mistakes. She is a flawed character with good intentions. She tends to take the path of least resistance, and it's very hard to blame her for it after the childhood she had. She always comes to her senses, no matter how long it takes, and she does whatever is needed to correct her mistakes. I loved that she was always ready to take responsibility for her actions, it made me respect her all the more.

Midnight Thief is full of exciting twists and turns, with betrayals and surprises around every corner. Aside from the two POV characters, it's very hard to know who to trust when even those closest to them have some kind of hidden agenda.

After listing all the advantages, I should mention what I thought was *Midnight Thief*'s biggest flaw. As much as I liked the characters, I thought the worldbuilding was sadly lacking. The world wasn't nearly detailed enough, which made me feel disconnected at times. Perhaps more details were given in the prequel, but I shouldn't be obligated to read it in order to enjoy the full length novel. I wanted to know more about absolutely everything, and yet details on this world were few and far between.

All things considered, though, *Midnight Thief* is a very strong debut and Livia Blackburne an author to watch. I can't wait for more of this story, there is so much more to learn.

Livia Blackburne says

This story is my homage to the medieval fantasies I grew up reading. Most notably, Tamora Pierce's *Song of the Lioness*, which I've read and reread countless times. Unlike the *Lioness Alanna*, Kyra is a thief instead of a knight, and the challenges she faces are different. But I hope I've captured the same spirit, vulnerability, and courage that drew me to my favorite girl-power fantasies from my childhood.

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

4 of 5 stars at The BiblioSanctum <http://bibliosanctum.blogspot.com/201...>

I was introduced to the world of *Midnight Thief* late last year when author Livia Blackburne offered me a review copy of the prequel novella, *Poison Dance*. After reading it I came to two conclusions. First, Ms. Blackburne obviously puts a lot of care and effort into her writing, and knows how to tell a great story. And second, if what I saw in her novella was any indication, the actual book is going to be awesome.

In *Midnight Thief*, we get to meet a couple of brand new protagonists: Kyra, the thief who barely manages to eke out a living by stealing or doing the odd job, and Tristram of Brancel, the newly promoted Palace Knight (or glorified Palace Guard, depending on how you look at it). If you've read *Poison Dance*, some familiar faces turn up too, like James, now leader of the Assassin's Guild, who approaches Kyra with a lucrative offer. All she has to do is train with the guild, run a few errands, and he promises her that she will never lack for anything again.

Meanwhile, trade in Forge is disrupted as a clan of vicious raiders begin targeting the caravans to and from the city. These Demon Riders and their wild cats keep young Tristram and his fellow knights busy on patrol as gradually the attacks grow bolder and closer to Forge. On one fateful raid, Tristram and Kyra's paths cross and their lives become irrevocably intertwined. Thief and Knight must join forces and learn to work together if they're going to uncover a greater conspiracy rotting at the heart of Forge.

Though classified as Young Adult, the book feels like it could be aimed at younger readers, perhaps closer to upper Middle Grade. There is a strong thread of romance, but it isn't a big part of the novel, nor does it come into play until much later. Tristram doesn't even make his first appearance until after a handful of Kyra's chapters, and it also surprised me how long it took for them to finally meet face-to-face for the first time. This struck me as an oddity, until I realized I didn't actually mind. It's nice to see a YA novel once in a while that doesn't follow the formula, and we were able to get to know Kyra and Tristram a lot better individually

without the overbearing pressure to thrust the two of them into a relationship right away.

The story was also in line with my thoughts on the target audience -- straightforward and suitably complex, if a bit predictable at times (there were a lot of not-too-subtle hints at Kyra's "startling secret" about her past, for one). In spite of this, I still found this book greatly enjoyable and entertaining; the plot may not have held any unseen surprises for me, but the characters sure did. The dynamics were so intricate and layered that I never could determine which faction were the "good guys" or the "bad", because nothing was ever so simple or black and white. In the end, I just gave up trying to put a label on anybody's motivations and ultimately settled for rooting for Kyra. I liked her, and no matter what I knew I wanted to see things end up well for our talented young thief.

Which reminds me, if you haven't read *Poison Dance* yet, I do highly recommend making the effort to pick it up first before tackling this novel. It's not required, but it's a short read and won't take up much of your time. More importantly, the novella will help you see a certain character in *Midnight Thief* in a whole different light, and perhaps make him a lot more sympathetic in your eyes. It definitely served to enhance my experience.

If you're looking for a good medieval era inspired YA fantasy and don't mind a narrative that skews a tad towards younger readers, I would recommend this novel. It's fun, adventurous, and strong on character development.

Tanja (Tanychy) St. Delphi says

Review also posted at [Ja ?itam, a ti?](#)

When Livia Blackburne approached me last year and asked me to read the prequel to this story, *Poison Dance*, I jumped to it. Assassins are always my favorite bunch to hang out with and luckily it turned out for the best. Ever since then I've been frantically checking NetGalley for *Midnight Thief* and finally it is here.

First I'd want to start this review by saying that you should read *Poison Dance* before reading this book (it's free on Amazon so go and grab it) because you'll be able to understand this world a little bit better and what is most you will understand James better. When I first saw him in this book I was taken aback. Everything seemed the same only he was older, wiser and with what happened before changed his way of thinking. When it comes to Kyra she was one of those characters I assume many (together with me) will love. She is brave and extremely resourceful because life tough her that. Then in came Tristam, whom I didn't expect, but like any real knight he swept me off my feet. Even though romance is not main focus in this story it was sweet and slow.

Now, we're getting to the my favorite detail in the story. It's that you never know who is in fact good and who is bad here. The rolls switch every now and then and mostly villains are in facts heroes in their own minds. It's so easy to see every Kyra's doubt as you never know whom to trust. It kept me on edge throughout the whole book and I enjoyed it so much. Also there is clash of different worlds here and it was a puzzle to put all of them on the right sides. Still is to me.

That being said, I must add that I enjoyed the plot here which was full of unexpected twists and turns, with great characters - both main and supporting, who are all portrayed realistically, with dose of magic which I enjoyed.

Only thing I wish to have here was a map. I can imagine it but sometimes it was hard to follow all the places.

I really hope that the finished copy will have one.

Alicia Batista (Addicted Readers) says

4.5 Stars

MIDNIGHT THIEF was a fascinating, emotionally-punched, action-packed, thrilling, fantasy book that I devoured so quickly it had me tripping over words trying to get them read so fast!! It was SO much fun, with twist and turns that just kept coming!! It will definitely go down as one of my favorite fantasy's of 2014!!!

Livia Blackburne delivers WAYYYY more than I anticipated in this novel!!! When I read the synopsis about the Demon Riders, a clan of vicious warriors who ride bloodthirsty wildcats, I really didn't know what to expect with that. But WOW, what it turned out to be was definitely a pleasant surprise, that kept throwing twist at me!!

THE PACING:

BUT.... I have to admit that the beginning had me doubtful! I was tempted to put it down for a later date!! I know, I know, I'm ASHAMED of myself for even thinking that now!!! Because if I would of put it down when I was contemplating it, then I would of been kicking myself in the butt later! Because ANYONE who loves fantasy would definitely be missing out, BIG TIME!!!

The beginning started out really slow, and kinda boring! I'm guessing Livia Blackburne had to have a slow start so she could build the foundation and the surrounding walls of this novel. Because it's so complex, with layers that have to be peeled back for us to get the full picture of this book. But something told me to hold out, that it's gonna get better. And sure enough, about 25 to 30% in, I was HOOKED!!! I literally couldn't put it down without sneaking in a chapter or 2 when I was suppose to be doing other things (Like cooking or cleaning, Oops!

THE WRITING:

The writing was okay. It wasn't the highlight of this novel. It didn't captivate me or anything like that. But it was still enough for me to get the feels of what the characters were going through. One thing that kinda bugged me, was that this book was supposed to be in 1100 or 1200's, but it didn't feel like we were in that time zone. Well besides the obvious things. Like washing outside in a basin, and the little things like that. But the language and wording didn't make me feel like I was in the 1100's. But that was easy to overlook when I got to the 25% mark!!

THE CHARACTERS:

I LOVED the main characters. Even the side ones were pretty awesome too!! The main character Kyra was an awesome protagonist. She always kept things interesting when she was around (Even if she wasn't trying

too) And surprisingly, she wasn't this badass, sword wielding, not to be messed with type of chick that I'm use too! (Which is a BIG change for me) But she was still an awesome real character, that was just trying to stay alive in the Forge while scaling the walls and thieving to stay alive and pay the rent. But what I really liked was that we get to see so much growth from Kyra in this novel. We get to see her make BIG mistakes in the beginning, and watch it all unfold and play out. Then slowly watch Kyra go through the motions of working through them, and to right the MANY wrongs she made!!! And I admired that about her! By the end of MIDNIGHT THIEF, Kyra became a fierce, strong, not to be walked on, determined, fight for what she believed in, kick-butt, character that I'd grown to love!

THE PLOT:

Kyra has been on her own since she was young. Living on the rough, no nonsense streets of Forge ever since she can remember, just trying to stay alive and find her next meal! Until the day she meets her new found adopted brother Flick, and he offers Kyra something she never had, a family!!! But even with a new family, Kyra's troubles are far from over. She struggles to pay the rent and has found that scaling the walls and breaking into the wallhugers property, thieving from the rich, has become an easy means to survive. I mean it's not like their going to go without anyway! *Cough* Selfish bastards *cough cough* ;) But when James, a mysterious guy offers Kyra a chance to make more then enough money to get by and some, she feels compelled to give in to the comfortable life that she's never had. So she accepts his offer and later realizes just how much of a mistake that was, and she'll have to pay for it, maybe even with her life!!

James is the leader of the Assassins Guild, and he has bigger plans for Kyra then she thought! He wants more then just the thieving and scouting that they agreed upon! But when Kyra realizes that, it's a little too late, and now she's stuck in James's lethal trap, and everything and everyone she loves will be at risk! Before it's all said and done Kyra will have to decide if she's willing to play by James's rules, or if she's willing to risk it all for an out! But if Kyra chooses wrong, it could not only change the course of her life, but the whole kingdom!

Tristam, a Palace knight wants revenge! He's on a mission to avenge his best friends murder by the Demon Riders, a clan of vicious warriors who ride bloodthirsty wildcats, and disappears into the forest. He will stop at nothing to bring his friends murderers to justice! But when fate intertwines Kyra and Tristam's world, they will have to put their differences aside and join forces, to accomplish a common goal. But as they start to dig deeper, and truths start to surface, they come to realize that everything is not as it seemed, and if they don't stop the plots and schemes against the Palace and lands, then they both might not make it out alive, let alone the innocents in the kingdom!!!

OVERALL:

MIDNIGHT THIEF is an action-packed, fast-paced (After you get to the 25% mark), adventure-filled, heart-pounding, fantastic fantasy, that is not to be missed! I got more then I bargained for with MIDNIGHT THIEF, and it is a series I will be reading years down the road!!

NOTE: I received an ARC for reviewing purposes! All opinions express are my own, and are not influenced in any way!

Christina (A Reader of Fictions) says

Amount Read: 169 pages

I tried, guys. In fact, I got 40% into this book. The thing is that it's NOT bad. The world building is cool, the writing is totally acceptable, and the plot is, so far, quite promising. I didn't want to DNF because there's so much that's right about this book.

That said, I just DO. NOT. CARE. The characterization really isn't here for me, which leads me to not care about the interesting plot and world building. If it's a fantasy plot line of "oh no, these humans might die," I'm not on the edge of my seat if I don't actually care whether the humans die. It's a damn shame, because I feel like I should love these characters. The heroine is a female thief with mad skills. Hello, this should so be my thing.

I've spent a lot of time thinking about why the characters didn't click with me, why they felt flat even though they're not. I think it's the utter lack of banter in everyone but Flick. They're so serious all the damn time. I don't understand being without a sense of humor and the sheer number of characters that seem to lack that here is astonishing. Also, the switch in POV between Kyra, who's kind of interesting, and Tristram, who is NOT, is rough.

I've got too many books to read right now to struggle my way through this and give it a 2.5-3 star rating.

Tl;dr: If you're a reader mainly into character, this will probably be a struggle. If your thing is plot or world building, carry on, wayward sons and daughters.

~Tina~ says

Wow! Now this was impressive!

Midnight Thief, is a brilliant medieval fantasy adventure that was such a blast to read. I love fantasy books, but for whatever reason I really have to be in a certain mood to get into them, so color me shocked when I opened this book just to catch the first chapter, only to be instantly hooked. I could not put this down.

I can't believe this is Livia Blackburne debut novel. I'm in love with the way she can write. For some reason I thought this was a historical fantasy, which is why I was hesitant to pick this up at first, but I was pleasantly surprised to see that the dialogue was smooth and easy to absorb. The pacing and the flow was pitched perfectly for feeling out the characters, learning the plot points and enjoying the world building. It was beautifully detailed without being dull or dragged out by the usual politics I find in fantasy books. This just had pure intrigue, suspense and amazingly witty well developed and likeable characters that had me completely invested from minute one. I also really loved the twist and turns Blackthorn took, especially when we are introduced to the Markvani clan. At first I wasn't sure if I liked the direction the story was going. On one hand the clan is a very intriguing group, but I'm not overly fond of their customs and means of survival. 'For the good of the clan' seems barbaric and vicious, but then I realized that it's not any different how manipulative the Council or the Guild's actions were when they wanted something done. It seems that the running theme is motivated for selfish gain no matter who is caught in the crossfire. Still, my conflicts aside, I have to admit that Blackburne is a skilled writer. The storyline wasn't as cut and dry as I thought, it's unpredictable and it kept me on my toes and entertained throughout the entire length of the novel.

With any fantasy I read comes with a large cast of characters and **Midnight Thief** is no different. But I truly

loved every single one of them. The good and the bad.

Kyra is an amazing put together protagonist. She's an orphan living on the streets of Forge who has a specific skill set for thieving for food and lodging, but she's also a thrill seeker and loves a good challenge as well, something that always gets her into trouble. So when she took up the offer to join the Assassins Guild for more coin than she can count, despite feeling like something was wrong, she still accepted. Kyra isn't a perfect character but her remorse, revenge and redemption was extremely commendable. But a big part of me believes that her faults weren't entirely her own. Yes, she made a bad decision that became costly, but the Guild, Counsel and even the Markvani seem to have their own agenda where she is concerned and tended to use her emotions against her. This makes it very hard to know who to trust and where her true allegiances lie, which is one of the factors I'm looking forward to seeing play out in future books.

Tristam was the second perspective we got next to Kyra and I'm very thankful for that since we learn more about him and his emotional situation first hand. He's a palace Knight that is clever and skilled in combat and strategy. He joined the city guards to avenge his friend, Jack who was killed by the Demon Riders who ride on ferocious wildcats. He's a firm but fair character who was easy to admire and respect for his kindness and morals.

Flick was also an instant character that I loved. I adored his banter, good humor and brotherly protective nature. He's one of the rare characters that I can faithfully depend on. At one point I even cared for James. I was easily charmed and deceived by his convincing tactics. There are also three secondary characters that I really liked but didn't make it. It surprised me how affected I felt at each lost. A testament to fantastic writing.

There is no real romance in this one, but there are strong suggestions of attraction between Kyra and another character. Those moments were light, but very sweet and I'm greatly looking forward to seeing that being explored.

As for the ending, it wraps up quite nicely, which I found refreshing since fantasy novels tend to leave us on evil cliff-hangers, this book left me content, but I still anticipate the potential and promise of so much more.

Bottom line, I couldn't have love a book more. It has everything I like in my escape. Incredible storytelling, action packed adventure with an amazing cast of characters. This is my new favorite fantasy and I can't wait to read the next book in this richly riveting and heart pounding new series. Loved!

Lindsay Cummings says

One of the best books I've ever read! It was an absolute pleasure, and Livia Blackburne is now one of my top authors.

MIDNIGHT THIEF starts out with a bang. With a killer plot and really great motivations behind the characters, the reader is sure to fall in love with this story.

MIDNIGHT THIEF bounces back and forth between two characters: Kyra and Tristam.

Kyra is a teenaged thief who is one of the best climbers around. She's grown up on the streets of Forge, and she knows how to survive because of it. When Kyra ends up getting recruited to join the Assassins Guild, a group of men who want to bring down the power of the palace, her life suddenly becomes full of nighttime raids. Kyra is the only one who can sneak in and out of the palace undetected, with her incredible ability to climb (and she can also speak to dogs...how cool is that?!)

The other character in our story, Tristam, is a knight who's recently lost his best friend to a group of wild outsiders called Demon Riders, who control giant panthers. Yes. I said GIANT PANTHERS. Eventually, during a city attack where Kyra saves Tristam from death by panther, their stories intertwine.

The plot of MIDNIGHT THIEF is my favorite part about this book, so I won't give much away in my review. I will say that when Kyra ends up behind "enemy lines", she soon discovers that not everything she thought about the Assassins Guild was true. Her loyalties twist, and soon Kyra discovers that Tristram might not be so bad after all.

The writing style of this book is absolutely fabulous. Every chapter seems to have been meticulously thought out, and it reads like a movie on the big screen. What a unique, fantastic debut. I will be purchasing a finished copy, and I can't wait to see what Livia Blackburne comes up with next.

Jo says

4.5 stars

Absolutely riveting! I kept putting off reading this one, and now I am left wondering why. Kyra is a great addition to the canon of kick butt heroines (Katniss, Celaena, Elisa, Tris, Katsa, Saba, Enna, you get the point). I truly fell in love with Kyra's character from the first chapter. She is just the right balance between being vulnerable and being steel. Her drive to survive is incredible and makes you cheer for her from the start.

This is a great world to lose yourself in. It is well imagined and creative. When I read, I felt a part of Kyra's world. The detail described is enough to give you the framework, but not too much that you were overwhelmed with too much information.

Blackburne did a great job as far as pacing. There were no lulls or places where I wanted the story to move faster. It kept you always interested and not sure where the story was headed. The twists and turns were expertly done. I knew I was in the hands of a master wordsmith.

I definitely will be looking up this author for more works. This was a great book that will satisfy fantasy lovers.

Faye, la Patata says

I must admit that I was first smitten by this book because of the synopsis. **Anything that involves going sneaky and stealthy earns itself my full attention, as there is something about assassins, and well, I guess in this case, faux-assassins, that utterly fascinate me.** They come like thieves in the night, arrive when you least expect it, and are super silent in the things they do. So when I was able to get an ARC of this, I was totally screaming, "GIMMEEEE!!" complete with an out-of-the-world flailing. That's what assassins do to me. They make me high.

And *Midnight Thief* by Livia Blackburne indeed was a **pleasant read**. It has the complete package that remind me of the Middle Ages - knights, thieves, assassins, and oh, wild cats, although I highly doubt the last one was apparent back then. **While I wasn't 100% in love with it, it was still a book that made me flip pages, something that doesn't happen often.**

What I loved about this one the most was how the situation wasn't a "black-and-white" scenario. It's not like you're in a boxing ring, and the referee goes, "*In the red corneeer, we have the goooood guuuys, and in the bluuue corneeer, we have the baaad guuuys!*" I'm quite tired of this kind of set-up because in the real world, not everything is so... clear-cut. Sure, there are psychopaths who see the world in a narrow-minded

way, but not all of the people who do what we deem "bad things" do them because they're inherently evil. Whatever they have done may not be justifiable, but it should be realized that if they did something, there's a reason for it.

And this is what I loved most about this book. **The fact that there were so many parties involved, but there were reasons behind their actions.** Why did James want to cause trouble and steal so much? Why did these demon riders wreck havoc in the city? Why did Tristan decide to quit being patroller and take on more active, far dangerous, roles? I loved how there were so many angles, and how the book didn't really give me a reason to completely root for that guy and completely detest this other guy. **I mean, yeah, the book obviously favors one side (the MC's) but it at least made me empathize with the other ones. You don't always get that.**

PLUS, IT'S A YA FANTASY THAT ISN'T CENTERED ON THE ROMANCE. It's troubling that this concept is more the exception than the norm since I believe romance shouldn't come first in a fantasy, but alas, many of the ones in this genre that I've read in the past years went that route. **I mean, yes, the romance was there... but not there at the same time.** There were obviously some chemistry between Kyra and some of the guys (Anti-Love-Triangle people, don't fret! There is *no* love triangle here heehee), but **they don't really act out on their feelings.** Or fine, brewing feelings. They don't really have time for love yet and are still in the process of getting to know each other so there's no rush, but do you see anyone complaining? Nope, nope, and nope. **Slow and steady wins the race.**

Also, usually I get really pissed off when there's an assassin and they become hesitant to kill somebody. I, of course, don't condone killing or maiming or stabbing or flaying or anything of that sort at all, but before you can be considered an assassin, you should be able to do these things. It comes with the job. You can't be an assassin without getting your hands dirty, so all those existential crisis some assassins get in books annoy the heck out of me. "To kill, or not to kill?" Um, hello, you're an assassin. **IT'S WHAT YOU DO.**

Of course, Kyra here underwent the same things, but thankfully they didn't annoy me as much. I thought she had ample reason for her internal conflict because she was a thief in the first place. She wasn't meant to kill, only to steal, especially from people who she believed "deserved to be stolen from". That's why I found her struggle quite realistic and believable, and they truly served as a catalyst to make her grow as a character and see what was really important to her.

If there was one thing that struck me as "off", it was the Demon Riders. I found them and Kyra's "place" in their tribe quite... random. Like they didn't really mesh together quite well, and I couldn't help but feel something was missing while reading that part of the book. Suffice to say, it was a struggle getting through their chapters...

This book wasn't as atmospheric as the prequel, in my opinion. The setting may be low/light fantasy, Middle Ages-ish (?) because of the jobs and roles of the characters, but the words chosen for the dialogue and description made it feel quite modern sometimes. The prequel is certainly stronger in that respect.

Overall, this was a pleasant read. I may have found a few flaws, but those are more subjective than objective, and if you're not as nitpicky as me, you won't find a problem with them. I definitely recommend it for you fantasy-nuts who want more fantasy than romance in their books. People who also want a "black-white-and-gray" kind of story will also appreciate this one.

Alyssa says

Review posted on The Eater of Books! blog

Midnight Thief by Livia Blackburne
Book One of the Midnight Thief series
Publisher: Disney-Hyperion
Publication Date: July 8, 2014
Rating: 5 stars
Source: ARC sent by the publisher

Summary (from Goodreads):

Growing up on Forge's streets has taught Kyra how to stretch a coin. And when that's not enough, her uncanny ability to scale walls and bypass guards helps her take what she needs.

But when the leader of the Assassins Guild offers Kyra a lucrative job, she hesitates. She knows how to get by on her own, and she's not sure she wants to play by his rules. But he's persistent—and darkly attractive—and Kyra can't quite resist his pull.

Tristram of Brancel is a young Palace knight on a mission. After his best friend is brutally murdered by Demon Riders, a clan of vicious warriors who ride bloodthirsty wildcats, Tristram vows to take them down. But as his investigation deepens, he finds his efforts thwarted by a talented thief, one who sneaks past Palace defenses with uncanny ease.

When a fateful raid throws Kyra and Tristram together, the two enemies realize that their best chance at survival—and vengeance—might be to join forces. And as their loyalties are tested to the breaking point, they learn a startling secret about Kyra's past that threatens to reshape both their lives.

What I Liked:

I KNEW I would love this book, I just knew it! I love epic fantasy, and this is the first one I've read in a while. I discovered this book early last year, and have been hounding Livia and Disney-Hyperion for it since. I was the first reader and review of Poison Dance, the prequel novella of this series, that features James' back-story, with Thalia. I loved the novella, and I loved this book. So much love!

Kyra, an orphan and "gutter rat", hesitantly joins the Assassins Guild. She excels at climbing anything, at making zero sounds, at not getting caught. The payout is excellent. James, the head assassin, is mysterious, deadly, but has confidence in her. The only thing is, Kyra has no idea why she is doing the jobs she's doing for the Guild. She doesn't know what the Guild is doing, but she has her suspicions. Meanwhile, on the other side, is Tristram, a Palace Knight, charged with investigating the recent raids, the mysterious Demon Riders, and the mythical Assassins Guild.

I have so many things to talk about, that I loved! Let's see if I hit them all. I loved that this book was written in dual perspectives, but NOT in first person. Both perspectives are in third person, but we get Kyra's point-of-view, and we get Tristram's point-of-view. Each character's story is very important, when they aren't interacting, and when they are. In fact, the two characters' paths do not really meet until quite some time into the story. Tristram's view of things is just as important as Kyra's. Neither character had a more or less important

role in this story.

I really, really liked both protagonists. Kyra is an extremely intelligent girl, brave and fearless, yet kind and selfless. She takes the Guild job partly to use the pay to help two street orphans, Idalee and Lettie. She is always looking out for Bella, The Drunken Dog's cook, and Flick, a friend she's known for ages. Kyra has a strong personality, and her character undergoes a subtle but remarkable development, throughout this story. I love it when I like a character from the beginning, and like the character even more, in the end. Especially the protagonist(s).

The same can be said for Tristam. He is also brave and strong, though his character change is much more pronounced. After his best friend Jack is killed by Demon Riders, Tristam grows a spine and thick skin. He will stop at nothing to hunt down the Demon Riders, to stop them. I really liked Tristam, from the beginning. His perspective is just as necessary as Kyra's. Usually, in a book told by two people, I'll prefer one or the other, but never both. In this book, I liked both!

The thing about fantasy stories is that they can tend to be repetitive or a little unoriginal after a while - especially the epic fantasy ones. That's why, when I get a really original one, I love it, cherish it, parade it around like nobody's business. **THIS IS ONE OF THOSE BOOKS.** In my opinion, this novel is very fresh and unique, in the epic fantasy world, and in literature in general. The kings and queens and kingdoms aspect isn't really in this book (though I love that aspect so much, I'm not complaining), but the story still has the same feel. Even still, the story and plot and whatnot were not what I expected, in a good way!

Blackburne's world-building is very well-done! One thing about fantasy novels is that the world-building **HAS TO BE GOOD.** You're creating an entirely new world from scratch; you can't just leave things for readers to figure out - you have to explicitly create and show readers your story's world. Blackburne outdid herself in the novella, and she outdid herself in this novel. There wasn't much guesswork or many holes in the world, so hats off to Blackburne!

Speaking of the novella... the novella gives the background of James, and how he came to meet and fall in love with Thalia. The novella is heartbreaking and beautiful and dark, but it is a perfect prequel novella. We get a peek at the world of the Assassins Guild, and we get a good look at James. I really liked James in *Poison Dance*! I felt for him, so so much.

The thing about this book is that James isn't always portrayed as a "good guy". His intentions aren't always noble or "good". The lines between good and bad aren't always clear in this book. So what does this have to do with the novella? Well, I really liked James in the novella, and despite several things in this book, I really like him still. Getting background on a potential antagonist is **VERY** rewarding - we get to see in the mind of James, and in this way, we see his humanity. We don't always see "villains" or antagonists as human or good or whatever. But every villain thinks he is a hero. We see this so well in this book. Not that I'm saying that James is a villain or antagonist, necessarily. You'll see what I mean when you read the book.

As for romance - ahhh, lovely, it really is lovely! At first, I thought there would be a pair. Then a love triangle. Then a love pyramid? In which three different people are in love with Kyra. But that is **NOT** the case in this book! There is no love triangle or pyramid or anything of the sort. I have it on good authority that Blackburne will **NOT** be including a love triangle in this series. And there wasn't one in this book. In fact, the romance is basically nonexistent, in this book. It's so subtle, it doesn't really appear until the very end. And I love it!

Okay, dual perspectives, plot, story, characters, character development, worldbuilding, novella, romance... I think I hit most of everything I loved? I probably forgot something, I know I didn't do this book justice. But if you've read up until this point, then you'll be able to see and understand why I love this book so much! And hey, the gorgeous, awesome cover doesn't hurt! Not that the author can control the cover, but it is very

wonderful, and represents the overall feel of the story very well!

Okay, okay, I'll stop now, I promise...

What I Did Not Like:

Nothing for this section at the moment! I try to be as objective as possible and point out as many positives AND negatives that I note, but I have no negatives. Don't judge me.

Would I Recommend It:

YESSS!! I knew I would most likely love this book, because I'm a huge epic fantasy fan and all. This book encompasses the epic fantasy that I absolutely love - the "medieval" type of fantasy that always captures my heart. Like *Fire* or *Graceling* by Kristin, or *Brightly Woven* by Alexandra Bracken. I'm not saying you have to be a fantasy fan to love this book. But if you ARE a fantasy fan, add this to your must-read-ASAP list. I want no one to miss this book! Step out of your comfort zone, if you usually don't read fantasy!

Rating:

5 stars. How about we make that ten stars. Or ten thousand. My most anticipated novel of 2014... is now one of my favorites. If I could recommend any one book to you so far, it would have to be TWO books, and they would be *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* by Jenny Han, and *Midnight Thief* by Livia Blackburne (this book). SO GOOD.

Jilly says

As I have mentioned many times, I am a dog person, definitely **not** a cat person. So, any book with giant killer cats has already got a strike against it in my eyes. Cats give me the creeps with their independent attitudes and crapping in a box. Seriously? I have to keep a box of your shit sitting in my house all day? I have yet to walk into someone's house and be surprised they have a cat. Why? Because they have a box of cat shit sitting in their house.

Exactly my point!

Obviously, the crap in a box is a problem for other people as well as myself.

...but I digress....

Back to the book! So, we have Kyra, a thief who can do amazing things, like scaling the sides of buildings and sneak in to places that others can not get in to. James, the head of the Assassin's Guild, decides to offer her a job that involves her sneaking in to the palace and mapping out the place. She is happy to get the security that the money will mean to her and accepts the job. She also develops a bit of a crush on James himself. In the meantime, we have another story going on with a palace knight named Tristam, who had his partner killed by these wild barbarians with "demon cats" that rip people and animals to shreds. He is determined to stop these vicious attacks and to protect the palace. The two of them end up crossing paths a few times.

The character of Kyra was okay. She was a small girl who had been orphaned and raised on the street, only to learn to steal from an older boy who took her in. She seems pretty simple, for the most part, and very very naive for a girl who was raised on the streets as a thief. She is super soft considering her background, which gives her character less credibility. The character of James is a tough one because I read the prequel book and he was a sympathetic character. I kept expecting the best of him, and I still am hoping that something will change in the next book for the three main characters to work together. The prequel mind-f*cked me. And, the character who seemed the most likable, in my eyes, bites the dust as usual. Why not just name him "Deadmeat" like in the Hot Shots movie?

The story, itself, was pretty good. There were plenty of twists and turns to keep things interesting, and the pacing was fast enough. I wasn't a fan of the wild cat society (see above), but the book held my interest. I will read the next one. I'm hoping some giant wolves come along to kick these cats' asses.

Viktoria Winter says

“When you lose a friend in battle, it’s natural to feel like you’re to blame. But don’t let those thoughts consume you. War is fickle. Just fight your best and let the ghosts of every battle rest in peace.”

It’s rare when I find a book on my own?without all the cluster of social media or friendly recommendations. At some point or another, I’ve probably heard of a book through blogs or Instagram or BookTube, and when I see it at Barnes & Noble I have a sort of *“ah-ha!”* moment (it’s quite exhilarating). This was not one of those times. And I freaking loved that. Never have I even heard of the title *Midnight Thief*, and I was merely browsing through an old indie bookshop two towns over when I came across the interesting cover. So naturally, I had to read the synopsis. Assassins, knights, and kingdoms? Sounds a bit like *Throne of Glass*. *Count me the hell in!*

The writing style was fast paced and ambitious, but there were times when I felt that it was too quick. I’m all for clipped sentence structures when they’re needed (ie. for action scenes), but there were many moments that had unnecessary reductions. One moment Kyra would be frustrated or upset, and walk out of the room. I figured she is a growing YA heroine and a break-down is only natural. However, when only a page later she returns back inside the room full of the same people she just stormed out on...it was a bit unsettling. It made her character unstable, and with little support as to why she performed her actions other than the obvious stress. I was hoping for more build-up in the romance department (I’m a real sucker for fictional love, ok?) but sadly it was a poor metaphor of the writing style. Short and lacking depth.

Although I do applaud Kyra for not throwing herself on men (like so many other YA female characters *sigh*), I was hoping her budding romance with Tristman would be stronger than just a mere peck on the lips and a nod. Their romance felt more like a friendly handshake rather than the beginning of a tragic love story. And don’t get me wrong, I adore platonic romances/friendships (ie. ToG) but this was just overly platonic. Forgive my cliché phrasing, but there wasn’t any spark to this pairing. And truthfully, it was one of the only pairings I was looking forward to.

That being said, I actually did enjoy Kyra’s character. Although being a bit unstable, I admired her soft heart and moral complexity. She grew up a “gutter-rat” yet after her unsavory rise from poverty, she still goes back to look after the other homeless children, especially two sisters who remind Kyra of herself. Her love for challenges allured me to believe that she’d be of the Celaena Sardothien badass type, but I quickly found

out that she was a lot gentler than that. There's nothing wrong with showing emotions and being a sweet character, but Kyra's brighter side verged on childish at times. Seeing as we're around the same age, I think it's allowable for me to say that I was hoping she'd be stronger.

The world-building was invigorating and I applaud Blackburne for her originality with using Demon Riders, shape-shifters who change into predatory cats, as the antagonists rather than the stereotypical vampire or werewolf. (I knew there was a deeper reason behind my dislike of cats!) But other than those cats, it was a fairly common medieval-inspired realm wielding knights and forests and social classes. If anything, I wish these things were more focused on so that Blackburne could further explain the workings behind this supposedly fictional realm, so that (aside from those Demon Riders) it didn't feel like a history book. Historical fiction is great, but that's not the genre I thought I was reading. For a high-fantasy novel, I felt that this book could've used some more mystifying aspects.

Overall I was pleased with this novel and I would recommend it to anyone who desperately needs more fantasy books to read. However, I'm still on the fence about whether I truly love it. If you're a Sarah J Maas fanatic such as myself, you might want to give it a try. It has some parallels and other entities (however stretched). I will most likely give the sequel a try because I'm interested in seeing where Tristram and Kyra go with their relationship, and I also want to know what becomes of Pashla, my favorite side-character!

Jessica ❁ ⇒ Silverbow ⇒ ❁ Rabid Reads-no-more says

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads

Before I read MIDNIGHT THIEF, I took the advice of various and sundry others, and read the prequel, POISON DANCE, and I really liked it. Having since read the book, I'm going to hazard a guess that the point of the prequel was to, if not make a sympathetic character out of MIDNIGHT THIEF's villain, then to at least explain why he was the way he was.

But it didn't quite work that way for me.

I feel like I've said this recently, so if I'm repeating myself, I apologize, but in real life, we make allowances for people based on their life experiences: what they've been through, how they've suffered, etc.

In a book . . . maybe it's all the same for you, but I'm not much interested in the characters who have turned into meek, little mouse-things, b/c they can't handle what life has dealt them, or in this case, the character who has turned into a bitter and manipulative, cold bastard, b/c someone from the upper classes did him wrong.

For a character to be redeemable, he has to show that he possesses (<-----present tense) the tiniest shred of humanity. Who cares that he used to be an okay guy, but then life happened, so here we are?

Not me. #sorrynotsorry *shrugs*

Kyra is a thief. She's a thief who gets recruited by the Master of the Assassins' Guild (James) to . . . well, she doesn't need to worry her pretty, little head about that. He'll tell her when she needs to know.

frowns

Initially, I didn't think it was strange for the Assassins' Guild to headhunt a thief--they're all criminals, right?--but by the end . . . I felt I should have been more suspicious. I can't decide if I should fault Kyra for making the same mistake, BUT you'd expect someone who grew up on the streets to be a bit more savvy.

And she *is* reluctant.

Ultimately the decision to join the Guild is made after a series of events, that even as they were happening, I couldn't help but wonder, if James had set the whole thing up. Or at the very least, laid in wait until an opportunity presented itself. I still don't know, but it was carefully orchestrated by *someone*--James or Blackburne, take your pick.

In fact, the entire story felt carefully orchestrated.

Kyra is an orphan and doesn't have much in the way of even an adopted family: Bella is a mother figure who lost her only child at sea, and Flick, the several-years-older-than-her bastard son of a nobleman, who inexplicably took an interest in her when she was child. There are also two street children she's bonded with, b/c they remind her of herself at that age.

But there is no gang of rough and tumble we-grew-up-on-the-streets-together friends for life.

And that's not really surprising, b/c Kyra is the most *noble* of thieves . . . so noble that it's hard to imagine her having any friends at all. I can't see her moral high ground being a crowd favorite when they're all hanging out in their street rat clubhouse.

She's also painstakingly crafted to be a victim of circumstance: Kyra is only a thief, b/c 1. she was starving and had to do something to feed herself, and 2. her almost unbelievable cat-like reflexes, balance, fearlessness, etc. It's almost like thievery was her only option, so who could possibly blame her?

Carefully. Orchestrated.

I had to keep reminding myself that Kyra was a thief, *not* an assassin, when her adamant refusals to expand her criminal repertoire started making my eyes twitch. Don't misunderstand, it's not that I wanted her to go on a killing spree or something, but her protests were so . . . self-righteous: "I don't mind hanging out and working with assassins, and I *desperately* want their respect and acceptance, but don't you *dare* ask me to be one, b/c I'm better than that," (view spoiler)

The further I got into the book, the more it felt like it was following a predetermined formula. Kyra, who I initially liked, became more and more two-dimensional. She was like one of Nimue's paintings that lacked life from *Hunting Ground, Alpha and Omega #2* by Patricia Briggs. The other characters were the same.

I saw every plot twist a mile away, and the ending was laughably maudlin.

I really wanted to like this book, and for the first 150-200 pages, I thought that I did. But the world-building was superficial--I still have no idea why the Demon Riders migrated to Forge beyond a vague reference to

humans poisoning their land. I know that the Head of the Counsel is a stock Noble of the bad variety, but is there a King or a Queen? And the characters . . . I couldn't connect with them. The end.

However, I have been increasingly unimpressed with YA fantasy's recent offerings, and MANY respected friends and bloggers have had a decidedly different take on MIDNIGHT THIEF. Check out Marcela's review at **The Bookaholic Cat** or Tabitha's review at **Not Yet Read** for compelling reasons to try this book. Just b/c I didn't like it, doesn't mean you won't. I have been known to be a crankypants.<-----true story.

Stephanie Diaz says

A fast-paced adventure story with lots of intrigue, danger, and a kick-ass heroine. If you like YA fantasy with an exciting twist, definitely check this out!
