



The Flesh Cartel #19: Promise

Rachel Haimowitz , Heidi Belleau

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In the exciting final season of the Flesh Cartel . . .

With the help of the FBI, Mat Carmichael has let himself be re-taken by the Flesh Cartel. Objective? Rescue his brother, exact revenge, and destroy the entire organization from the inside.

FBI Special Agent Nate Johnson will be playing backup, of course, but to get Dougie out alive, Mat will need to make sure his brother is out of Allen's clutches before calling in the troops. Now that Mat's back in bondage, though, there's no way he can do it alone. He'll have to ask for help from the only man within the Cartel who cares about Dougie's welfare: Nikolai. And even knowing it will destroy him, Nikolai delivers.

Bringing down the Cartel should have been the hardest part, but it doesn't take long to realize that the real challenge has only just begun. Dougie doesn't know how to be free anymore, and Mat is forced to admit that he may no longer be strong enough to help himself, let alone his brother. But with loved ones in their corner and their love for each other banked but not extinguished, Mat and Dougie learn that you can come home again, no matter how desperate the circumstances you've left behind.

The Flesh Cartel #19: Promise Details

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From Reader Review The Flesh Cartel #19: Promise for online ebook

Shile says

5+++++++ for book 19
All the Stars for this series

MAY CONTAIN SPOILERS OR NOT

WE DIIIIID IT!!! 19 Books later and here we are!

First i would like to thank the Academy ?and all my Friends ?who have been with me, during this roller-coaster read.

This is the best series I have ever read, for now it will be number 1.

The Writing

It was flawless, the dialogue flowed from page to page, at no point when I was reading this book where I was like, the writing is so-so, nope it was perfection at it's best.

The characters

Oh dear Lord! We have some questionable, depraved characters in this book and then we have the heroes who come in form of our main MC Mat .

Mat - bless his heart! This guy is my favourite character he now shares number 1 with Logan. I can't bring myself to demote Logan. He is everything and Mat is too. The guy went through hell for the first 16 books but not once did he show the bad guys he was defeated. He did everything in his own terms while suffering through the beatings, rape, torture and everything else in between and at the same time staying strong and loving his brother Dougie unconditionally. He is my hero.

They weren't ruined yet. No, they weren't ruined at all. They'd beaten it. Gotten so much better. Here they were, out to dinner with their family, sharing a nice evening, dreaming of the future.

Dougie – Well let's just say he is proof that with the right torture, a human brain can be reduced to dust. Dougie suffered and developed some weird sick love for his captor, Stockholm syndrome at his best. I want to believe that he did it to survive but then again, I wanted him to be strong for Mat too. Dougie's personality change made me loathe him at times, even with all his suffering, then at the same time i felt sorry for him, wanted to hug him and protect him, just like Mat. His road to recovery was a difficult one to read, and more realistic. There were no magic dicks here, just plain old family and friends support and therapy.

“Responding to men, liking men, it was a thing I had to convince myself was true to survive, you know? I

couldn't . . . I couldn't fake it, not with Nikolai, and not to myself and still get up every day. So that programming went deep. Who knows, maybe it'll never go away. But at least now I know it for what it is. And you know, if a man asked me out right now? Like, wanted to date and he was nice and even wanted to take it slow, I don't think I'd say yes anymore. It wouldn't be fair to either of us, because even if I can't know

Allen- Let's not talk about this piece of fucking trash, I might end up breaking things I can't afford to replace

Roger- Another example of Stockholm syndrome, this beautiful soul was reduced to a shell by Nikolai for his own pleasure.

Nate – Fresh breath of air that this series needed, the one person who never gave up on the brothers when everyone else did. And Mat's love interest. We all need Nate to be on our side.

Mike and Coach Darryl – just the parents Mat and Doug needed, their unconditional love for the boys had me all mushy.

Madam and the Guards ??

And the character we would all love to hate!

NIKOLAI! Fucking NIKOLAI! - His character was villain perfection. The authors created a character that no matter how much I hated him, I was intrigued with him at the same time. Nikolai the slave trainer, did his job using the most deplorable torture and mind games. We get a glimpse of his past and it was a horrible one, but does that justify his carrier choice? I would like to think no! Nikolai is the best Villain. By the end of this series, I have decided I love him and hate him at the same time.....and I would love to read his book where he is the main MC.. Ummm! Yap It is a weird case of Sympathy for the Devil.

“You really do love me?” he asked, barely above a whisper.
“Forever and always, above all others,” Nikolai promised. Just say yes.
For a moment—a perfect, fleeting moment, so beautiful it couldn't survive—Douglas's expression softened to Nikolai, softened like the face of a man about to be kissed.
He stood. “You don't even know what love is, Nikolai. And you never, ever will. You're going to die alone, just like Roger, and it serves you fucking right.”
For the very first and, gods willing, last time, Nikolai Petrovic found himself at a loss for words.

The Story

Well! This series is about two brothers, Mat and Dougie, who are kidnapped by human trafficking cartel and auctioned to a slave Trainer by the name Nikolai! (you don't want to meet this guy anywhere, he will make you love him, hate him, want to kill him, then love him again) and the brothers go through hell while in captivity. They are(view spoiler) get their minds played with by Psycho Nikolai, sold to another low life named Allen where they undergo more torture and the list goes on and on. The sad thing is that, this also happens in RL, the human trafficking is still going on even to date, reading this made my stomach churn, turned me into a Vigilante, i killed so many character in my head but also opened my eyes.

I just read the most interesting story, that will stay with me forever.

We get a HEA for the brothers and it is well deserved.

I would recommend this to anyone who wants to experience the dark side of everything.

That last page was everything and held so much promise.

Barbara says

***shuddering breath* It's over...**

The intensity of this series literally took my breath away, an Epic series that left me a bittersweet taste, and it's simply hard to say goodbye... and after some episodes I felt like I was finally getting air again after holding my breath btw episodes.

On this series truly unforgivable things are done to Mat and Doug... the reader have to be brave...

but was so so worth every single tear and every single anger attack I had, because now I'm freaking happy, very happy for Mat and Nate!

Heidi and Rachel did a wonderful job in wrapping up my outstanding issues, AMAZING!!!

Incredibly challenging but highly recommended!

Claude says

Where do I start? Sorry for the spelling mistakes:/ it was a long review ?

I'm gonna make just one review because i don't feel like i'm capable of summarize each of the 19 hard books.

It took me more than a year to end this because WTH. Even if my worst nightmares I really can't imagine THIS. Can't. Just Can't. WTF? How humans can be so f***** bad?!

Two very young boys, whose lives have been shattered in a frightening evening.

Douglas Carmichael is a young man like many. A simple psych student. One night at home, his life just took

a turn....euh...tragic? unbelievable ? incredible? I don't have words but wow. Many men entered his house and kind of « kidnapped » him. In the same time his big brother Mathias Carmichael come home and just fall on it.

We don't have to wait for the horror in this. It started the moment this men entered this house. **They started to rape Doug right away** . All the way in the truck, to the bastard who ordered this, IN FRONT OF his big brother. Douglas wasn't even gay. So a kind of virgin to gay sex. His first time was with so many rough men in the back of a truck. I've read it last year and I remembered that was so schoking I've just stopped the book. I mean 19 like that? not for me.

And someday I was reading some reviews in Goodreads when I read a review about the end of this, the girl told about Mat and his boyfriend who worked together to take the bad people down. So it made curious. So I restarted it...till the plug punishment. It wasn't just the plug, it was all. These two were raped everyf***** day, multiple times by multiple men/women. Sometimes they used their bodies, sometimes they used things (a bottle sometimes full of wine) just to make them scream, bleed, beg, cry.

After a little time with their first kidapper named « Madame », they've been bought by a « pet trainer » named Nikolai Petrovic. This man IS my nightmare. He bought « slaves », broke them and rebuilt a « new » personality, a « slave one », born to obey.

He broke Douglas and created some kind of Stockholm Syndrom where Douglas kind of fell in love with him . I mean I never hate someone like I hate Douglas the day he...turned again his brother. I know it's unfair. I know that I just can't understand the small thing about what he was going through but still...Mat was always alone in this. Always. The ONLY reason he fought everyday was HIS little brother. He lives to protect him even when he can't, he fought. And after all this brother still betrayed him. I was so angry. So so angry. It wasn't like Mat didn't receive the same treatment.

Mat is a UFC fighter. Not the best but his force is not in his fist but in his head. **.He has such a mental strength** . He impressed me. He never ever gave up. He fought even where he wasn't supposed to be. In addition to constant rapes, he was tortured, humiliated, abused by all ways I couldn't imagine before reading about it. And that's the reason I'm having hard time with Doug because it wasn't like Mat wasn't receiving such a horrible treatment too.

After an awful treatment in Nikolai's hands, I just can't share details about it: rape everyday, torture (plug or a serum that makes you scream in pain for 7 full hours), manipulation, big lies; suicide thoughts. The two boys are send to a new buyer named Allen. He was stupid. Not smart like Nikolai. Just a brutal rich guy who thinks he can own people and make them do whatever he wants when he wants. He's so self-centered. He was disgusting. Treating people like shit, hurting them, even going as far as killing them.

He didn't care about Douglas at all so he was relegated to the background with other slaves who where there for some time. Their time is kind of « limited » until the boss get bored. Doug had a hard time being friends with them because it isn't really a best environment to link best friendship. It's all about surviving. And Douggie didn't really care because his only focus was to get back to his lover Nikolai.

Mat was Allen's favorite one. He made him do some nasty and unbearable things. Horrible things. I was so afraid Mat would just let go at some time because everyone has his limits. By using the last thing he was enjoying. He buried the last pleasure of this miserable existence for Mat in addition to the constant abuse (rape, whipping, torture).

You know when I saw them land of in a private island I lost hope. How to escape? Just impossible. But there is Mat. Mat this amazing survivor. He fought to take advantage of the only opportunity that has been given to

him to make the difference. I was crying when I saw him in the hospital. Literally crying. Happy tears because wow. After months, after we've been embarked in this scary « adventure », at no time, really no time we saw an ounce of light at the end of the tunnel. Over time, the only way out I saw was suicide because in my eyes death is better than living...no surviving like that. How Roger (another slave) survived twenty four years in this? God. How?

Not only Mat was able to escape but he CAME BACK for Doug, returned to bring down all those disgusting humans (with my babies Ty and Zane) and he was successful. I read, re-read, re-re-read the scene where Nate made Nikolai taste his little serum. I was so happy. A small thing brought me so much pleasure haha.

Fortunately the two authors made us 3 more books to watch Mat and Doug rebuilt their lives. Mat has an incredible relationship with Nate (the cop who handled his case). They were so cute once the BIG discussion was done. I love them. But more, I just love the fact that, after all of this Mat found the one. The one person who's gonna help him to re-love his body, to re-love the sex with another man, and finally to re-love himself because that's the purpose of all of it. Mat has trouble to see himself like a hero while he deserves this title everyf***** day. The best big brother in the world. The best man.

Doug on the other hand was always fighting with his love for Nikolai or his love/hate for Mat. He made so many mistakes. Too much. And I probably wouldn't be that angry if he hadn't hurt Mat in the process. Instead of focusing on him, as usual Mat focuses on his brother and as usual this ungrateful child only focuses on himself. Until he did « again » the irreparable and Mat reacts badly (totally deserved!). After having learned about (view spoiler), he finally decided to make an effort to rebuilt again. To not be Nikolai's boy anymore. In the end I was very proud of him.

But I do not know why but I was waiting for him to apologize to Mat. About his behavior during their captivity. I needed this discussion between these two so that we can all move on. This is my big regret because even if it wasn't Doug's fault, Mat deserved real excuses

Now I can't recommend this book for everyone because it's 90% of human horrors. The bad facets of humans that we never ever hope to meet a day. I haven't read many many scenes because they seemed unbearable to me.

Bravo to the authors. I don't know how you did this but encore bravo!

Lucy says

5 stars for the entire series.

Mat - You are amazing. One of the best characters ever written. So strong, so loving, always resilient. I rooted for you hardcore, nobody deserved a happy ending as much as you did.

Dougie/Douglas/Doug - You pissed me off, and I hated you most of the series. You were weak, whiny, and frankly an entitled bitch. Having said all that, I'm sure in your shoes I would have fared much worse. You did what you had to do to survive and I understand that. Seeing you regain your love and trust for Mat was a beautiful thing to read.

Nikolai - Best villain ever! Damn you were a monster but so compelling. I love well written villains, the authors did such a fantastic job with your character. You were no cartoon, you were well fleshed out and complex. (view spoiler)

As disturbing and graphic as this series was, at the core was a beautiful love story between two brothers who despite it all were able to regain their brotherly/family bond and become even stronger. I shall miss reading about these characters, they are all unforgettable.

Sara says

In my review of Episode #18, I said I trusted the authors. I do and I did and they gave me, yes ME, one hell of an ending to a fantastic story. I was a scared and anxious mess when I got the notification in my email that this was ready for download. I wanted it. I feared it and I was so unsure how this would play out in less than 100 pages. I was so sure we would get a triple length book so everything I wanted to happen could happen but I got all of that and then some despite the page length.

This review will be short, per my usual, though I could go on and on for thousands of words telling you what I loved: – Nate and Mat – what I was tickled to get a bit of – Nikolai – and what I wanted to see a bit more of towards the end – Dougie – but I won't because I did get that. Maybe not to the extent my OCD was hoping for but I got. Dammit I got it and I am speechless with the final episode and all these boys have been through.

I remember when I first heard of this series; I had a serious talk with myself on starting it. Could I handle it? I wasn't sure of that answer until I finished this and of course the answer is a Meg Ryan in When Harry Met Sally at the restaurant style YES! This series, it is so hard to explain why I read it and why I kept reading it when folks read the first episode and never go back. I couldn't leave Mat and Dougie. There was never a time when I considered not continuing on with the series, I just had to take longer breaks in between the harder episodes to read. Ugh, those ones were tough but there was always hope for the boys and that hope that I had, paid off. I got the hope and I got a bit of romance and I got swoonage and I got the boys where they needed to be at the end.

The end? Goodness it was so good. I mean, that bit with Nikolai and Dougie; once again I was so torn with where the younger Carmichael should and would go and I just held my breath until it was over. I absolutely adore what the authors did with Dougie. I had no idea how they would end his story and make it, make Dougie okay with all that he has been through but they did it and they did it well. It was well done and believable, which, to be honest was huge for me. Dougie had been so brainwashed and controlled I needed his Happily Ever... whatever to be something I could believe in and I did. I am babbling I know.

***Vindicating. Satisfying. Safe. A reclamation of a life cruelly stolen.
Together, they'd figure it out. As long as they had each other, they had everything they
needed.***

So it's over. Nineteen episodes read and reviewed. Nineteen episodes full of the biggest roller coaster of emotions that I have ever been on and I would do it all over again. Why? Because this series was unique, it was taboo, it was amazingly written and it was just, well... fucking perfect.

Alona says

Wow!

I did it! I actually DID IT!

I finished the series, and loved every moment of it!...

OK, no I didn't, I suffered through some of it, I cried, I hated, I needed breakers...

But let me tell you: this was an experience I am so happy I took!

I can't review the whole series here, and I can't review this book without spoiling it, so I'll only say:

Thank you so much Rachell and Heidi!

Menna says

I can't believe I'm saying Goodbye to them, they have grown so much on me, it's a bittersweet separation, it's like saying goodbye to an old friend and it's just sad even though I'm happy for them to finally being able to move on and try to start a new life!

This episode was everything I wanted and wished for them. It was like the icing on the cake (it wasn't practically a cake thou *wincing*) but well, you get what I mean. ;)

Doug has grown out of his shell and his brainwashed foggy state of mind, I never expected to say that about him, but I was so damn proud of him in the scene between him and Nickolai; the anticipation and tension was so freaking palpable, I was holding my breath and for a moment there, I thought Doug might go crazy and be convinced by his bullshit (view spoiler)

As for my boy Mat...I'm so freaking happy for him, he deserved a man like Nate to care and love him no matter what. He'd protected and cared for everybody around him especially Doug. He forgot about himself for a long time and it was about time for someone to love and value him!

I can't say I'm happy about what happened to Nickolai but I understand that it's just a sign that -like Nate said- there is still sexual slavery around the world and the case will always be open but that didn't stop me from wishing that he would rot in some cold dirty corner and find no one to even give him a second look!

finally, this series has affected me and made me see things from new prospective, I LOVED it a lot. It wasn't an easy read, there were some difficult scenes I couldn't continue reading through it, but I couldn't stop or put it down. I was addicted to it no matter how cruel it got.

It made me cry, curse, broke my heart and infuriated me, but it also made me laugh and give me hope that no matter what happens, no matter how your life might seem dark with no hope in sight, you should never give up, never stop fighting because you might find your ray of hope in the most darkest and unexpected places, after all it's after the darkest moment of the night that sun rays come up! :)

GOODBYE..I'll miss you guys so much
!

Therese says

[
The trial was handled well, the only thing I was kept wondering about, was Nikolai's punishment. Can a criminal (no matter if he was also a

Elena says

5 million stars!!!

OH. MY. GOD!!! It was a brilliant, emotional journey...

This review is of the entire *Flesh Cartel* serial!

Or rather, it's a host of my thoughts and feelings provoked by those books. So, I'm sorry for my babbling...

I actually have no words to describe this incredible, heartwrenching story.

But know this: the writing style was outstanding!

I've read quite a lot of **Rachel Haimowitz'** books, but it was my first by **Heidi Belleau** - and boy, do those ladies know how to create a complex, dramatic plot with many twists and changes of circumstances.

Although the main events happen almost entirely in only 2 places, 2 sets of our play, it's never boring or repetitive.

Warning: it's a **SERIAL**, not a series of standalones, the instalments must be read in order. You can read it as either: 19 separate parts or 5 *seasons*, combining a few parts in each "season book".

The story concentrates on 2 orphaned men: **Mat** a 29-year-old MMA/UFC fighter and his younger brother, **Dougie**, who's 23, and on his way to a PhD in clinic psychology.

I don't want to give away too many details because each and every book of those 19 brilliant instalments depicts a more or less complete "chunk" of Mat and Doug's ordeal in the clutches of the Cartel. And they're all short, about 75 pgs each.

Generally, the whole story evolves around **human trafficking** and a complete "cycle" of "*procuring*" (a nice euphemism, isn't it?), "*training*" to a particular order, and finally "*selling*" to a specific buyer of **sex slaves**.

Our 2 brothers find themselves in the situation where they have to endure this whole process, fighting tooth and nail to escape and to maintain their humanity and mutual love.

Mat and Dougie are purchased by **Nikolai**, a top shelf slave trainer of Russian descent. Nikolai, and his loyal slave, lover and right-hand man, **Roger**, begin to "transform" the brothers into the pliant, sweet and obedient pleasure slave = Dougie; and the half-feral, not-entirely-broken fighting dog/fucktoy = Mat.

Nikolai and his cronies use a lot of mind games and brainwashing (which was brilliantly well-thought-out!!!)

and an entire array of BDSM implements, including: (view spoiler).

And as far as Nikolai and Roger are concerned? I'm sorry (especially to my GR friends who've already read the serial) but I can't say anything positive about those 2 MCs. I just CAN'T acknowledge and understand a desire to OWN and to completely control another human being. (And I'm not trying to deny that such things like human trafficking don't exist in real life!)

If you want that, enter into a consensual, 24/7, live-in, D/s relationship, for goodness sake! I'm sure there are people ready to give up control over their bodies and to give in to a lot of such fantasies and rough sex with a lot of implements...

As for Roger? He was as much a victim as Mat and Dougie but after so many years in captivity he was so brainwashed he didn't know any more what was right or wrong and he became as skilled a torturer as his "master". Yes, he showed affection towards both brothers but if Nikolai asked him to do something terrible to Mat and Doug, he would do it without a blink of an eye.

The other minor characters: Madame, Allen, Penelope, Jeremy, Mike, Coach Darryl, Louise, Beth and especially **Nate** made the *Flesh Cartel* feel less "claustrophobic" and gave the books a depth and a RL feel.

Two more things, very important from my POV...

The first 2 books: The Flesh Cartel #1: Capture and The Flesh Cartel #2: Auction are ones of the most brutal, gut-wrenching and bleak pieces of fiction I've ever read!!! And it's spot on, people! At least from the start you know what you get yourself into and if you survive THAT, you know you'll be able to get through the whole serial.

The other thing: I don't post any pics in this review (although I very often do that) cause I want to do justice to the **BEAUTIFUL cover images** made by Imaliea - she's a genius!

My best part: The Flesh Cartel #10: False Gods.

My weakest part (still 4.5 stars!): The Flesh Cartel #7: Homecoming.

Highly recommended, but not for those faint of heart!!! It's a very brutal, psychologically twisted and generally very dark read!!!

Chappy says

I can't believe it's over...

The trial raps up with all the bad guys getting put away, well except for Nikolai. I wanted a bit more details about the trial, testimonies and more follow-up on the other survivors like Reginald...etc. But to accomplish this, the authors would have needed another 19 installments I think.

We still get a very good resolution with Mat finally taking the next step with Nate and Doug making excellent progress in therapy. I love their plans for the future...picture perfect.

JustJen "Miss Conduct" says

A review by The Blogger Girls.

This has been a long, exciting road, especially if you've read this series in pieces, as I have. Every installment leading up to the sting operation that freed Doug and took down a chunk of the Cartel has been extremely intense. Then there was the recovery period where the boys had to try to acclimate back into normal lives, followed by the closure of the trial and what appear to be a new direction and beginnings for the guys.

One of the things I loved in this segment was seeing that Doug is not miraculously healed. He understands his issues better now and sees them for what they are. He comes to the understanding that he may not be gay even after his experiences but leaves that door of possibility open. He also addresses his need/desires for being dominated resulting from his experiences. This was my favorite therapy session by far.

As for Mat, he seems to have grown by leaps and bounds, especially where Doug is concerned. He and Nate are in a better place and seem perfect for each other. Being with someone who has first-hand knowledge/understanding of what he went through is monumental in helping him overcome his issues, and Nate has the patience and desire to see him through.

So, I'm sad to see the end of these guys but am really happy they made it to this point as well as they have. It was nice to see the possibility for happiness in each of the characters.

I must mention Nikolai, the man I love to hate and hate that I love. Right to the end, I wanted to kill him yet wanted to see more. Sounds like he may be back in action some day so perhaps we will get to see him doing what he believes he does best.

It has been difficult to rate this series in segments, as some just had that extra umph that wasn't present in others, but that is to be expected given the content. However, overall, I'm giving this series 5 stars for taking us full circle. Is everything all sweet and rosy at the end? No. After what they went through, especially Doug, that is not only understandable but expected. They do seem to be on the right path now that they've moved beyond the trial and are actually able to move forward with their lives. Kudos for a fabulous wrap up on this. I'm glad I was along for the ride.

Cory says

What a long journey it has been for Mat and Doug. This was a really good one as they are starting to heal and it looks like they are going to have a chance at a normal life (at least as normal as it can be considering).

Martin says

HOLY SH*T!!!

I think I just read some of the best fiction in my life!!

The Flesh Cartel is the most intense, the most complex m/m series I have ever read! What genre is this, actually? Thriller? Erotica? I can't even tell. It seems to be everything and nothing of any genre at the same time.

So... what happened here in detail? Spoiler orgy ahead, so beware (spoiler tags in place)!

Mathias and Douglas Carmichael are brothers. Mat is 29 years old - and gay. He's been a UFC fighter for many years, fighting in the cage to earn money to support his brother after the death of their parents 10 years earlier.

Dougie is 23 years old - and straight. After being handed from foster family to foster family following the death of their parents, Dougie finally moved in with his big brother at age 18 and is currently studying psychology and social studies, appreciating - but also worrying - that his brother is earning their money fighting and thus risking his own body for him. He knows that once Mat is too old or too injured to fight, it will be up to him to earn their money after finishing his degree to support his older brother.

Whether this whole arrangement is the sanest agreement for these guys is a question that this series largely draws from.

Anyway, one absolutely ordinary day, (view spoiler)

And that's how this wonderful, amazing, gut-wrenching series ends after 19 books (!!).

I feel like having finished a marathon. I'm usually reading a couple of books simultaneously, but I haven't picked up another book in almost a week. It would have felt like betrayal. Like leaving Doug and Mat alone... I'm such a nutcase, LOL.

What really struck me as odd while reading the series was the absolute carelessness about STDs. Sure, Nikolai once mentioned that everyone in his household was tested and therefore no condoms were necessary for the many many rapes he orchestrated, but you can't tell me the same about every other person in the Cartel who abused Doug and Mat. I don't even want to think about Allen's place. If this happened in real life, both Mat and Dougie would certainly not walk away without permanent medical issues... But then, I'm glad this fear wasn't in their heads on top of everything else. The story was certainly intense enough as it is...

I am so sad that the series is over. Of course, I'm happy that Mat and Dougie got their lives back, but I will miss them so much.

And yeah, Mat is DEFINITELY one of my top 3 favorite characters of all time, right next to Vadim Krasnorada from Special Forces and Jake Riordan from Adrien English.

He is one of the strongest, most beautiful people (inside and out) that I know in fiction. He may not always have made the right decisions, but he has a good, loyal, loving heart and he would literally have died for his brother. He never stopped loving him, even when Dougie did terrible things to him and considered him a monster. Mat always reminded himself that this wasn't his little brother, but what Nikolai turned him into. Mat even hated himself when he couldn't help but hate Dougie for what he did. It seriously broke my heart.

And since I'm reviewing the whole series, let's not forget about Roger. (view spoiler)

So, here's a big hug for Roger... I definitely forgave him.

What an amazing series!

I'm not posting any quotes, because I already posted tons of them in my updates. But please, please please check out this series. It is incredible and I can assure you, no matter how terrible the things you see here are, there **are** good guys and they **will** win in the end. Don't ever forget that.

Halfway through, I almost expected a GRR Martin type of ending:

BUT that's not the case.

Be sure to check out the beautiful and painful development of these two characters, their growth and their love that withstands so many terrible, awful trials.

I'm gonna miss them dearly - but boy my whole family will be so glad this series is over, LOL. I was a wreck most of the time...

5 STARS! And on my list of ALL TIME FAVORITES!!!

P.S.: OMG, make sure to read the final pages after the author's notes and other recommendations by Riptide. I'm just saying...

Sandi ♥'s way too many M/M books says

Unbelievable finish 5 star series of crazy.

A Girl Has No Name says

5 stars - *No matter what ...*

This is it - the end of a series I have been reading in little pieces for the last year. First of all ... it's difficult to let **Mat, Doug and Nate** go. Considering all the terrible things they had to go through, I found myself caring for them a lot and I would like to know more about their future. But I have to say that the authors did well ... they make it possible to **leave them behind** with the feeling that - one day - they will reach the point where all the terrors can be left in the past and were they will be able to reclaim their lives. **They are definitely already on the way to that point.**

Reading *The Flesh Cartel* was a **real challenge**. I'm not afraid of dark and painful reads, but this one was an extreme in many aspects. But I'm happy that I gave it a try. It was an interesting experience in a lot of different ways.

However, a light and funny read is in order!
