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Date : Published November 2012 by ?????-?????

ISBN : 9785992213355

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Format : Hardcover 441 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Cultural, Russia, Paranormal, Ghosts, Adventure

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Kara-karina says

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Dima says

Epic!

Tiaburn Stedd says

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Evgeny says

Golden Fires (The Guardian, book 3).

Anybody familiar with the series knows the previous books consisted of six novellas. This one is not an exception.

Crucified. Following a rumor of a dead body of his colleague Ludwig finally learned about the fate of his closest friend. Trying to dig deeper he ended up in a monastery with warrior monks. It looked like the humble monastery had too many dark mysteries they would rather not revealed to outsiders.

So far the best story overall, period (tragic too). Has very morally ambiguous ending which I loved.

Lesser Evil. Continuing its investigation Ludwig ended up in a besieged city about to fall. The conquerors promised to obliterate the population for its resistance. The Guardians are supposed to be neutral and thus untouchable, but Ludwig got hopelessly tangled in Big Politics - to the extend which was not good for his health.

Our hero learned about behind-the-curtain manipulations and they were not pretty at all.

Blade of Rain. In his travels Ludwig ended up in a big city. For starters somebody tried to rob and killed him in a dark alley. A little later he learned that Gertrude found him. Despite being his love, a very competent witch, a niece of the Pope, and a decent human being overall for Ludwig her appearance always meant getting in big trouble. This time Gertrude outdid herself as the trouble was truly monumental.

As standalone the story is great; in the overall plot it feels like a filler.

Devil's Concubine. Ludwig finally was able to make a breakthrough in his investigation which he started in the first story. For his trouble and curiosity he ended up face-to-face with two high-ranking demons that wanted him to do two mutually exclusive tasks each threatening painful death in case of failure.

Who ever said a Guardian's life was boring?

Kiss of Death. Ludwig was hired by a brothel owner to investigate a mysterious death of its patron. Obviously the last thing the brothel needed was a rumor that its customers drop dead like flies. Very soon Ludwig realized he was way over his head and a call to Inquisition was in order.

The Inquisition came and dealt with the problem in efficient, but absolutely ruthless manner. For this reason the story is quite gloomy.

Golden Fires. Ludwig's investigations came to bear a fruit. He learned a lot of things he wanted to. This automatically meant he knew too much and the guy ended up with a dilemma: forget everything and hope he had not attracted attention, or continue poking a wasp nest making his prospects of long and healthy life nonexistent.

I said that the first story was the best overall. This one is the best in terms of the big plot.

It took the series a while to get really interesting (2.5 books to be exact), but now that the overarching plot explicitly appeared the series promptly entered un-put-down-able territory. I also need to mention that the last story ended right when the things became very exciting. 4 firm stars is the final rating.

Tatyana Gaiduk says

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