



Game of Shadows

Amanda K. Byrne

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The girl next door just got deadly.

On the outside, Cass Turner looks like any other beautiful California college girl. But besides studying at UCLA, she's hiding a shocking secret: she's a highly trained assassin with multiple kills under her belt. After a year spent avoiding the family business, she takes what she hopes will be her final job and winds up saving her target's life and getting way more than she bargained for...

As a lieutenant in LA's largest crime family, Dominic Kosta is determined to find out who wants him dead, and he's convinced Cass can help him find out. But the longer they search for the truth, the more questions arise...and the deeper their attraction grows. Nick has his own reasons for wanting to resist Cass, but it's a losing battle. And together, they're free of secrets and lies. Still, getting involved with Nick has put a target on Cass' back—and in this game, it's either kill or be killed.

Game of Shadows Details

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Author : Amanda K. Byrne

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From Reader Review Game of Shadows for online ebook

abby says

This book surprised me in a couple of ways. First, this is not the thriller I expected, but more of a "romantic suspense," and the suspense part is minimal. It's not the type of book I usually go for, so the second surprise was how much I enjoyed it.

Cassidy is a college student who moonlights as a hit man (hit woman? person?). It's the family business. But things take a turn when she isn't the only one stalking Nick Kosta. She makes split second decision not to kill him, and finds herself embroiled in LA's organized crime world. In a twist of fate, she's now the one being hunted.

Even though this book skews more heavily on the romance than I would have anticipated or really liked, it's done well. Cassidy is in lust, not in love, with Nick. She's a girl who isn't afraid to be honest and go after what she wants. Even at the end of the book, she's quick to remind Nick, "we still don't know each other that well." It's as realistic a romance perhaps I've ever read.

The "bad guy" is identifiable the second he appears on page. The mystery/thriller portion of the book is not nearly as well executed as the romance, which is a pity.

* Thank you to both the publisher and netgalley for granting me access to this title

Sandra says

I like it. It reminds me of some older books by Nora Roberts. A lot of action, suspense, hot scenes etc... wrapped altogether in a good book

Liana Smith Bautista | Will Read for Feels says

***I received this book for free from the publisher and author via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review, which was first published on book blog Will Read for Feels.

The first book I read by Amanda K. Byrne was her novel Fracture, a romance set in war-torn Sarajevo that might as well have had Rihanna's "We Found Love" as its theme song. I was intrigued by her shift toward romantic suspense in her new book, Game of Shadows, the first in a series of the same title launched just yesterday by Lyrical Press.

Reading this book, I began with a slight problem achieving that willing suspension of disbelief in and around the main character's circumstances. Cassidy Turner has an interesting personality but seems a disaster as an assassin. Not only does she not have the butt-kicking, all-about-the-job emotional detachment you'd expect of a career assassin (think Angelina Jolie's character in Mr. and Mrs. Smith or Wanted, or Elektra in Netflix's Daredevil, or even Kick-ass's Hit Girl, and you'd be closer to my mental image of an assassin), but

she only has basic close-quarters combat skills, courtesy of what sounds like a fairly run-of-the-mill self-defense course—certainly not what I'd expect of someone who's been training to kill since before she wore training bras.

So I found myself having to brush aside these preconceived notions of what a freelance assassin should be and focus instead on Cass herself. And I found that the character's decision early in the novel to quit her shadowy trade for the reason that she wasn't cut out for it was my key to appreciating her, and it also locked in the New Adult nature of this novel for me. NA is something I've always associated with main characters' need to find and define themselves, and this is definitely a journey Cass undertakes through the course of this story.

I think the reason I didn't believe in Cass as a female assassin was because, at heart, she didn't believe it either. Cass the college student suddenly faced with a situation way outside her comfort zone? Cass the girl who has spent her life trying to conform to her trainer's expectations, only to decide she must choose her own path? Cass a woman who decides to walk away from a life she realizes she doesn't want and isn't suited for? Those aspects of the character are completely believable. More, she became a character I not only believed in, but cheered on, because once I came to this realization, I found I quite enjoyed the novel.

It didn't hurt that the book's hero, Nick, is hot as summer in LA—and if this guy is the new face of fictional mafia men, a life in organized crime suddenly sounds appealing! He's definitely an alpha male, with the prerequisite arrogance and protectiveness, but he also has moments of humor and gentleness that round him out as a character.

As far as the plot goes, there was a good amount of action, and some of it right at the start, so you won't be bored reading *Game of Shadows*. But I'll say that more of the fun lay in guessing who the bad guy was (especially considering that everyone is working outside the law at least part of the time)—or maybe I'm just saying that because I guessed correctly and figured it out fairly early!

While I found the ending of the book fairly satisfying, there were still some threads that hadn't been tied up, so I am certainly hoping to get my hands on book 2 in the *Game of Shadows* series, *Game of Vengeance*, when it's released in October this year.

Laura says

Cass Turner is a typical college student trying to figure out her path in life. She just happens to have an unusual job, she's an assassin. Lately, she hasn't been a very good one, she's avoided taking jobs for almost a year but she can't resist the latest offer. Upon meeting her target, she's stunned to see someone else is trying to take him out. She tries to keep him as an impersonal mark, but after being injured and then targeted herself, he sweeps her up and changes her life. Dom Kosta is a lieutenant in his family's business, they own most of LA's underground. He's surprised by Cass and her choice of occupation but it feels good to have someone understand his world. He's definitely got some hang ups and hesitates to jump into anything with the young female.

It was a relatively fast speed read, action packed. A 3.5 star book for me. The ending was a bit of a cliffhanger, so I'd read the next one to find out what happens between Dom and Cass and catching the bad guys.

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest opinion.

Paula Phillips says

Cass Turner was brought up as an assassin as it is her family's business. Her grandfather was one, her father was one and being the only child - it was her duty to join the family business. The thing though is that Cass couldn't separate her emotions from the job, no matter how much she tried. Her last job eleven months ago hit her hard. Cass decided to try her hand away from the business and find her place in the world. Until recently when she accepted a job to kill Nick Kostova. Things though didn't go to plan, and it was an ambush. Now Nick has tracked Cass down, and they both seem to have become the hunted. Can Cass and Nick survive to discover who wants them dead and why? Is it someone from Nick's family and is the beef against Nick or was it revenge for someone Cass killed in the past? To survive Nick and Cass must now join forces which would be great if they could both keep their emotions at the door but now that they have feelings for one another starting to develop, things are headed towards the messy side of life. If you love Assassin novels, New Adult Spies, and adventure, then check out Game of Shadows by Amanda K. Byrne. This is The Godfather - Next Generation style as it's move over parents as the young ones are leading the show. Game of Shadows ended on a small cliffhanger and is part of a trilogy that I am looking forward to continuing.

Mandi Schreiner says

This had potential but I'm not 100% sure I was on board with the dynamic between the hero and the heroine. I wished it had been harder for them to trust each other to start.

Mini review coming
