



# The Furies

*Mark Alpert*

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## **The Furies** Mark Alpert

For centuries, the Furies have lived among us. Long ago they were called witches and massacred by the thousands. But they're human just like us, except for a rare genetic mutation that they've hidden from the rest of the world for hundreds of years.

Now, a chance encounter with a beautiful woman named Ariel has led John Rogers into the middle of a secret war among the Furies. Ariel needs John's help in the battle between a rebellious faction of the clan and their elders. The grand prize in this war is a chance to remake the human race.

Mark Alpert's *The Furies* weaves cutting-edge science into an ingenious thriller, showing how a simple genetic twist could have inspired tales of witchcraft and sorcery, and how the paranormal could indeed be possible.

## **The Furies Details**

Date : Published April 22nd 2014 by Thomas Dunne Books

ISBN : 9781250021359

Author : Mark Alpert

Format : Hardcover 320 pages

Genre : Fiction, Fantasy, Science Fiction, Mystery, Thriller

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# From Reader Review The Furies for online ebook

## Cara Coleen says

The description was intriguing, the first chapter was interesting (even if the author's use of "thy" and "thou" bugged me - it felt forced), but... the next chapter? I immediately and forever shut the book after their horribly awkward and creepy sexual encounter was interrupted by a gun shot.

This book felt like it was written by a 15 year old boy. The dialog was stilted. Being inside the mind of the main character, John, was tedious... and the fact that he tried to justify his interest in the stunning red head as anything other than shallow was laughable. All the twenty-somethings in the bar were silly, but \*this\* twenty-something was different because "red hair" and "she likes me."

I don't hate myself, so I'm not going to finish the book. I'm disappointed that a great premise was lost in awful writing, but I'm so relieved I checked the book out of the library and didn't actually buy it.

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## Liz Barnsley says

Publication Date: 22nd April by St Martin's Press.

Thank you to the author/publisher for the review copy via netgalley.

For centuries, the Furies have lived among us. Long ago they were called witches and massacred by the thousands. But they're human just like us, except for a rare genetic mutation that they've hidden from the rest of the world for hundreds of years.

Now, a chance encounter with a beautiful woman named Ariel has led John Rogers into the middle of a secret war among the Furies. Ariel needs John's help in the battle between a rebellious faction of the clan and their elders. The grand prize in this war is a chance to remake the human race.

Right this one is a funny one for me. I've marked it as a Thriller but I guess you could tag it Science Fiction/Fantasy as well – this is why I hate genre boxes! To be fair I'd say this is a bit of a mish mash.

The premise is fairly intriguing – what if “Witchcraft” were a simple gene mutation away. On top of that what if living amongst us were people who had this gene mutation. The “Furies” of the title.

I liked the idea and I also liked the first part of the book which was action action action – it was what I was in the mood for and I was right there – ok a bit far fetched but still a lot of fun, as John meets Ariel, bad guys arrive and they have to run.

After that it lost me a bit. It lacked cohesion for me – the science didnt seem too likely if I'm honest although I'm no scientist. And certainly I think there is a fair bit of a different kind of “fantasy” going on when you have red haired green eyed beauties everywhere who happen to have “magical” qualities. One for the guys perhaps?

I didnt really connect to any of the characters enough to feel motivated to care what happened to them. Which was sad because on paper this looked like just my sort of thing but ultimately, whilst the action

portions were well executed the rest of it fell a bit flat.

A solid 3 stars, a fairly pleasant distraction but nothing to write home about.

Happy Reading Folks!

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## **Michelle Hauck says**

I received a copy of this book from Net Galley in exchange for an honest review.

John Parker meets a beautiful women and their one-night stand turns into a middle of a gunfight when strangers appear to kill her. After saving Ariel's life, he soon finds there is much more to this woman than striking green eyes and long red hair.

Despite being in the science fiction/fantasy section, I found the Furies to be much more a thriller. All the hype of witches dissolved into scientific explanation which involved no magic and little fantasy. That said, I did enjoy the read which had a fast pace and many locations. Plenty of action mixed with guns, fast boats, and even the Amazon jungle.

I think the weak point for me was the beginning when some of the talk of drugs and gangs made the story a little darker than I prefer. Also John was rather passive at times, doing whatever Ariel instructed him to do, instead of taking the initiative. Like a lot of action movies, this is a read for the thrill and not for the attachment to the characters.

I gave it three stars because it kept my attention and never got tedious, but it never quite had me hanging off my seat either.

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## **Marvin says**

*The Furies* first starts out like it may be supernatural but quickly corrects the reader's assumption and reveals itself to be science fiction. It reminds me of Arthur C. Clarke's famous adage that says "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." Yet to call it science fiction may be a stretch too. After all the author Mark Alpert makes it clear on the cover that this is primarily a thriller and that is how it should be read.

That's a good thing because it isn't a very good science fiction novel. As a thriller, it is enjoyable and holds it own. John Rogers is a troubled young man who meets Ariel in a "chance" encounter and hopefully a one night stand for our usually luckless hero. Of course, it doesn't work out that way and soon guns are blazing and John inexplicably is following Ariel into almost sure death instead of running for his life which any sane man would do, raging hormones or not. We find that Ariel isn't who she appears to be but is a member of a long standing and mysterious group who have plenty of secrets of their own. In fact, the best thing about this novel is how the author describes and builds Ariel's community and the secrets it holds. *The Furies* have all the ingredients of an exciting thriller and, aside from the creation of an interesting "cult", some nice bio-technical voodoo for the sci-fi freaks. But it never really gels together and eventually gets overrun by the

predictable trappings of a mainstream thriller. Part of the problem is that I found the dialogue rather stilted and on the melodramatic side. But overall, Alpert's cast of characters just never came to life for me. They felt pat and pasted into unbelievable situations and actions. Most importantly, I never quite understood John's instant devotion to Ariel except that it must of been one hell of a one night stand. The best I can say for *The Furies* is that it is enjoyable in a generic thriller way and it show some promise for its intriguing scenario. However I doubt that it will stand out in my mind a few hours after I post this review.

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### **Annie Slasher (Booked & Loaded) says**

This is an original book review from <http://bookedandloaded.com> I received this book via NetGalley and all opinions are my own and not influenced in any way.

The Furies: A Thriller by Mark Alpert is a stand alone thriller/sci-fi type of paranormal. I flipped pages. I consumed the words. This book made me think and discuss the contents, history, and story. What more can one ask for?

I am going to have a little confessional first. I kind of broke my own rule about reading reviews on this book before writing my own. I couldn't help it! I am just a weak individual. OK. Cut me some slack! Before discussing this further I am going to tell you that I come from a Stephen King, Christopher Pike, and all around weird background as a VERY young adult. These were my go-tos for entertainment. Don't judge me, I already know how strange I was....or...am. The Furies reminded me of this pastime. That background and original spark for storytelling and literature is where my passion lies. I think many of the reviews expected a much higher romance and paranormal themed story. Although many elements did exist, I think the overall execution was just more of a King kind of feel.

Yes, romance might have been threaded through the story, albeit in not the traditional manner. Paranormal might have been threaded through the story..again..not in the traditional matter. However, what The Furies: A Thriller brought to the table was a complete thought provoking experience. The threads of true history weaved into the story of a race of "witches" not defined by our conventional terms brought hours of thought and personal dialog that was enjoyable and unique. The background and history of both Ariel Fury and John Rogers came together with a beautiful mix of how two completely separate shapings of ones environment can lead to a common thread. An intense thread that could possibly effect the course of many people.

Redefine witches with a complete scientific explanation and invoke your imagination in how someone could influence our history if so inclined...is a very fascinating concept. I think sci-fi and thriller lovers with love this title and not be disappointed!

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### **Lolly K Dandeneau says**

Having been granted an arc through netgalley, I finished the novel even though I was scratching my head often. I had high hopes from the blurb of magical happenings and I expected the mystery of the Furies to be mind-blowing or at least interesting. But the reveal inspired more of an 'eh' for me. I did not like John Rogers and that is a bad thing unless the reason you dislike a particular character is because they stir conflict in you (think of villainous characters that you don't like but are fascinated by). From the start when he is lusting

over the girl at the bar I wasn't going to think much of him.

Too many silly things happen here to suspend belief, and I am not talking about supernatural occurrences. Without giving away everything, I have to say that I don't think things would run so smoothly stealing from a hospital, or running around shooting off a gun. There has to be believable moments in a novel, at the very least we have to see some realistic reactions.

I cannot say I like it just because I think the ideas were good. Having a genetic mutation explain why the Furies were accused of witchery is a very solid explanation. There were times when illnesses were seen as evil and myths blossomed from them. But this novel isn't really true science fiction nor magical realism and to call it that will disappoint people who really love novels of either genre. I was expecting far more magic, and was let down. I think this novel would have been better if I had liked the characters. You have to have a connection to one character, at the very least, in order to really enjoy the journey. I am sure there are people out there who will like this quick read and can overlook the details. I am not one of them. Wanted to like it but it was just okay.

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## **Dan Schwent says**

When John Rogers meets a pretty girl in a bar, he has no idea what he's getting into, a clan war between two factions of mutant humans called Furies. Can John and Ariel escape the clan on their trail?

### **I got this from Netgalley.**

First off, I see a lot of reviews that complain about the rest of the book not going very well with the prologue. Well, read the summary. The main story takes place in the present and the prologue takes place in 1645. Yeah, they're probably not going to have the same tone.

That being said, this book was mostly a thriller with some urban fantasy and sf sprinkled around the edges. I like the idea of a secret, long-lived race living among us composed mostly of hot redheads that need an outsider's seed... Wait, what was I talking about again?

Right. For a book that mentions a race burned as witches in the past, there's not a hell of a lot distinguishing this from your paint by numbers thriller in the first 40% of the book, complete with specific models of firearms and the instalove/forced hookup. It almost reads like someone dusted off a thriller novel they had in a trunk and said "You know, urban fantasy is very popular these days..." Arthur C. Clarke's quote about sufficiently advanced science being indistinguishable from magic at the beginning is very apt and pretty much sets the tone for the rest of the book.

Gripes aside, it is an engaging read, though. Lots of twists and turns, shooting, running, etc. The Fury society seemed fairly well thought out. It was interesting to read about a society where women have most of the power and all the men are infertile. I have to mention that there are a few infodumps about genetics, though, and I did find some characters' motivations questionable given the Fury society.

Once the book hit the 75% mark, the manure hit the windmill and cats and dogs started living together. The Furies had their world turned upside down quite a few times but it was an odd number of times so it was still upside down when the book ended. One thing I loved was that it didn't feel like Alpert was gunning for a sequel or neverending series, a rarity in this day and age.

That's about all I wanted to say. Oh, the one sex scene was surprisingly dirty. I think I covered everything

now.

The final grade is going to have to be a 3. I wasn't cuckoo for cocoa puffs over it but I liked it more than I was indifferent toward it. It wasn't awesome but I didn't dislike it. Isn't that what the three stars are for?

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## Crystal says

Note: The Furies was an Advanced Reader Copy I received from NetGalley in exchange for a review.

I found the premise of this book to be very interesting which is the very reason why I requested it from NetGalley. The blurb explained that there are a set of people called Furies who, once upon a time, were called witches and were burned at the stake, etc. but instead of really having magical powers or anything there is actually just a genetic mutation that sets them apart from “regular” humans. Sounds interesting and unique, right?

The prologue started off strong in 1645 England with a woman named Elizabeth Fury hiding from the men who was on a witch hunt for her. It was clear from the start that the focus would be on the power of the women because she notes that she fears for her daughters and her sisters. I was excited to see how powerful these women really were.

But then the story switched over to modern day times where a man named John Rogers and a woman named Ariel in a bar and the two eventually become immersed in what kind of appears to be a gang war. At this point I figured the author was just trying to build up anticipation for the “big reveal” (aka the link between the part of the story set in 1645 and the modern day one). And of course a little bit of anticipation was a good thing but other than a strange anomaly with Ariel's tooth there wasn't even a hint of what the reveal as until I got 28% into the book. By that point I almost didn't care anymore.

The major issue I had with the whole genetic mutation thing was in how it was handled. In the prologue Elizabeth made it very clear that she knew her fellow villagers cried “witch” whenever something was off and that she knew exactly how she was “special” and “different.” Then why in the world would she have risked living so close to town for over twenty years? Why wouldn't she have done the logical thing and kept the family moving or better hidden? There had to have been a way to do that.

Then once we learn more about the why the Fury women are so special I was confused (because first of all it really wasn't even that big of a deal, it wasn't even remotely “magical” just very convenient.) You want to stay hidden but you still send people out to get pregnant and further the family to the point where it's getting ridiculously difficult to hide? At this point I'd think it far more likely for the family to have split up into different smaller colonies all around the world or for them to have come out into the open and have the Fury women basically running the whole damn world.

Now let me touch on the characters a bit. We have Ariel the researcher who wants the answers to everything but won't give answers to anyone else. She doesn't make any sense at all but is one of the of the only people with a motivation that I could even remotely empathize with, i.e. wanting to know exactly what she was dealing with before proceeding with the experiments. Then we had John Rogers who from the get go had a sad past and wouldn't let the reader forget it. Yes his past was sad but all I got out of it was that the reason he

hangs onto Ariel through thick and thin is because he was attracted to her and then they are thrown into a situation where he feels he needs to save/protect her. Yeah, that's a good reason for a love story.

And the antagonist Sullivan. Oh dear. He's about as stupid as they come. I can understand how the men in this Fury family feel like they've gotten the shaft. But he's all upset because Ariel wants to research a formula instead of just injecting it all willy nilly. Really, that's his whole motivation. He wants to be more like the women and thinks the women are being all selfish when basically they're just trying to make sure that one: they don't cause harm with their experiments and two: that they don't expose the Fury family. Basically his motivation is that he doesn't understand common sense. Oh and he likes to torture people.

There are just so many things that were wrong with this story: the characters motivations, the lack of common sense, the pacing (it took nearly 30% of the book to reach the big reveal and less than 10% to reach a resolution).

All I have to say is that I find obligated to read this book since I was granted an advanced copy from NetGalley. If it wasn't for that I would never have finished the thing.

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### **Jamie Barringer (Ravenmount) says**

The mutated gene idea behind the Furies is cool, and this story certainly is entertaining. I had a hard time accepting John's motivation for sticking with the Furies. The way all of them, including Ariel, treat him throughout the story, it's hard to believe he would still be on their side. I would have expected John to side with Archibald and to team up with Gower and Archie to modernize the Fury family and improve the way the Fury men lived. His ending up in a sort of Eden with Ariel makes for a nice, romantic ending, but seems too contrived. Oh well. It's still a fun book, and the genetics in this book, while dated, is at least based on real, modern science.

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### **Ericafoferica says**

I'm slightly disappointed that this book has such a low score from my other fellow readers. I guess I'll be one of the few to say "I really enjoyed this book!" I must admit, I did read a few other reviews prior to actually reading the book, which is something I typically don't do. So right from the beginning I was a little hesitant based on what my fellow readers said. Do I think the story runs along the line of Stephen King or Michael Crichton? I certainly think not. However, I did enjoy the plot and the action was kept at a steady pace. I will say, there were moments where I found myself drifting off to sleep. For example, the entire chromosome talk. I'm not a scientific person, so those kinds of conversations tend to fly right over my head sometimes. I also thought the "secret" Rogers was hiding in connection to the death of his daughter was extremely anti-climatic. Let's be honest, I was expecting something a lot bigger than what was actually revealed. The ending was just okay. I honestly wanted more than what we ended up with. However, without revealing too much, I was quite entertained with the outcome of Sullivan and his accomplices.

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## Brittany says

John an unemployed, ex-gang member, meets a beautiful woman in a bar. They spend the night talking, and connecting, leading up to what was suppose to be a night of lust. It ends much differently than expected. This novel is full of action, secret societies, genetic mutations, biker gangs, and betrayal. The Furies has such potential to be a great novel, but there were things that just didn't work for me in this book. The first and most important thing that would have helped me to connect with the story is the introduction. The novel wholly takes place in the present; do not put something from the Elizabethan area, when the reader will never be brought back to that time period. Everything that is shown in the introductory chapter is explained later in the book. I would really drive the mystery of the story if the introduction were cut out of the book. The second thing that was confusing to me was creating God, or 'birthing' God into the world. I can understand wanting to make the world a better place, or creating heaven on earth, but how exactly would this group of people 'create God', it just didn't make sense to me. Also if this group of people doesn't believe in a God or a deity, then why are they always thanking a 'Mother' or asking a 'Mother' for help. It seems to me that they do believe in God, just a female representation of God. Also, I'm not wholly buying into an FBI agent being as gullible as Agent Larson was in this book. The last thing that bothered me was the second sex scene, it was downright clinical. Maybe, I didn't get it because I am a woman and it was written with a male audience in mind, but it made me uncomfortable reading it. I have read books with a lot of sex in them, so it's not that I am shy and feel ashamed reading about sex, it wasn't unconventional dirty sex either... I guess I am going to have to stick with it being too clinical. I really hope that a second addition of this book is released, maybe with some rewrites, because I really like the idea behind the book, and I really enjoyed the science fiction aspect of it.

This was originally published on:

<http://cozycornerandcafebookreviews.b...>

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## Andrea ♥Ninja Bunneh♥ says

\*\*\*\*\*Spoilers ahead\*\*\*\*\*

I have never read a book where I loved the prologue, got all excited for what was to come, and ended up with a major fucktastrophe. But, I digress.

*The Furies* opens up with a massacre occurring in the past. A mother desperate to hide her child while at the same time hearing the agony of her husband being killed. It was a great beginning. Then the story started.

John is a 30-something unemployed ex-gangbanger who winds up in a bar in NY. Into the bar walks a 20-something girl and John begins to think with his other head. Her name is Ariel ~~my apologies to The Little Mermaid~~. She approaches John (much to his astonishment). They drink, they flirt, he becomes all enamored, they head back to her hotel. Before they can consummate their sudden lust affair, a random shooting occurs, people die, and Ariel gets shot and breaks her legs.

Does John call the police? NO.

Does John take Ariel to the hospital and dump her ass? NO.

Does John think this whole thing is completely crazy? YES. He doesn't care because Ariel is speshul and he has speshul feelings for her now.

John decides to take her to his friend who is a former doctor, now heroin addict. Oh, yes. Let's take our new "love" to a doctor who is high. Good move. While holing up hiding from the dudes that just tried to kill them, Ariel asks John to get her a few things from the store. For example, cat tails and some other assorted witchy sounding things. What does John do and does he think this is seriously bizarre? FUCK, YES. Yet, he runs right out and gets them.

Long story short, the bad dudes are coming. John and Ariel flee. (Remember she has *two* broken legs). Ariel tells him they need to head to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. She tells him they cannot take the bridge because there will be a trap. They must take the ferry to Mackinac Island and then another ferry to the UP. This is where shit becomes so utterly ridiculous.

John and Ariel take the ferry to the island but realize the bad guys are there waiting for them. They run back onto the ferry and hijack it. Yes, you heard me correctly. How is this possible? It's really fucking *not*. I have been on that particular ferry as well as others. The crew does not just bail off the ferry the minute the passengers do. They stay, cleaning, making sure everything is fine, or are getting ready for the return trip. Not to mention, the control room is not simply *that* easily accessible. That part was beyond fucking ridiculous, bordering on annoying.

I'm not going to go through the whole book. I'll give you the highlights of fuckery. The bad guys are men that have broken off from Ariel's group. Turns out that Ariel is a witch (although one is **not** allowed to use such a derogatory term). The women in her group are blessed with longevity and healing abilities due to an extra gene. Oooooooh, and they all have red beautiful hair and green eyes.

The men are shit out of luck. They get the red hair and green eyes, but are sterile and don't have the longevity. They want a cure, they want Ariel to develop one, and blah blah blah. I must mention that this break-away group is led by Ariel's half brother. Darling brother has a thing for Ariel and won't allow her to have any other man. Yep, pulling the incest card. Always a winner.

Since the men are all sterile, the women have to either artificially inseminate themselves or the alternative. Going out into the real world and sleeping with some random dude until they get pregnant. Ariel chose John pretty much based on a google search to father her child.

Did I mention that the cure uses aborted baby fetuses? I am totally pro-choice. I enjoy gore and blood, creepy and twisted. Yet, there is a line into the disgusting that perhaps should **never** be crossed. This is one of them.

I was going to write more, but to be honest, I don't feel like it. I am boring myself rehashing this book, and therefore, probably boring you.

## **1 Ninja-Bunneh-SHDH**

*(ARC received in exchange for an honest review)*

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## Dark Faerie Tales says

Review courtesy of Dark Faerie Tales

Quick & Dirty: Based on its synopsis, *The Furies* sounded like the kind of sci-fi/paranormal match-up stories I typically enjoy. Unfortunately, getting to the last page was more a matter of grueling determination than enjoyment thanks to detestable characters and a poorly executed plot.

Opening Sentence: She was smart and sexy and beautiful, but all that didn't matter.

The Review:

Books about witches usually fall into one of two categories. The “double, double, toil and trouble” one most associated within the paranormal genre features women (or male warlocks) with magical or spell-related powers. The other uses the label for women who don't quite fit into the mold that society cast for them or who have an “abnormal” knowledge of the world. In this category, it's easier for male-dominated societies to attribute a woman's intelligence to a demonic power than to think a female could be a male's intellectual equal. To label a woman a witch was a way to balance the scales, to condemn her knowledge of which plants healed which injuries or illnesses as unnatural and reestablish the comfortable paternal rule. *The Furies* very firmly fits into the second category.

The female descendants of the Fury family are gifted not with paranormal magic, but with a genetic mutation that allows them to live for centuries without appearing to age. The intelligence these women exhibit thanks to decades of collective knowledge, as well as their seemingly eternal youth, has made them perfect targets for witch hunts throughout their long history. Which is definitely a good reason to be wary of outsiders. They've gone to exceptional lengths to hide from the others, accumulating wealth and building secret homes around the world.

They'd be perfectly content to never interact with strangers...with one very important exception. The genetic mutation that allows the Fury women to live a semi-immortal life seems to be abnormally fickle when it comes to producing offspring. Turns out that baby making for Fury women is a tad more complicated than for other women. Fury men are at the bottom of the genetic jackpot. Not only do the males not inherit the gift of living beyond the normal lifespan, but they're also infertile. (A fact that is for the best since they're all related to every woman in their family, but I digress.) What this lack of man meat means is that the Fury women must find a paramour, the Fury family version of a sperm donator, in the outside world.

Only specially trained members of the family are allowed to interact with strangers but women seeking their paramours are allowed the contact under very specific rules. A paramour is never allowed to know the truth about the Fury family, not even the real name of the woman he's sleeping with, and he's never to know if a child comes from their one night stand. A paramour who discovers any of these things, regardless of the circumstances, will be killed. Which is truly unfortunate for John Rogers, Ariel Fury's chosen paramour. What's even worse is that Ariel's brother has declared open war against his female relatives. He's dead set on getting the formula Ariel has been working on to transfer the genetic mutation to the males of the family – and John is right in the middle of the fight.

Besides being a cautionary tale for any guy who has unprotected sex with a stranger, *The Furies* is also an example of how to turn a so-called “thriller” into a story about as exciting as a three-hour wait in the doctor's office. Alpert didn't come close to delivering on his interesting idea thanks to his horrible characterization.

From the moment he's introduced, John's internal dialogue was as grating to read as listening to nails on a chalkboard. Despite only being thirty-three, his character's mentality seemed to fluctuate between that of a fifty-year-old man and a teenage adolescent. He's too old, too slow, too woe-is-me one moment; madder than hell but a slave to Ariel's beauty in the next. He allows a woman he just met to completely destroy his life and all he focuses on is how pretty she is. Every time I think John has finally reached his limit with Ariel's crap, he asks for another helping.

And Ariel. Ugh! She asks him to deliver her to her family home in the Upper Peninsula knowing that he'll be killed once they get there because he helped her. She doesn't stand up for him, doesn't try to protect him. She uses his obvious infatuation with no regard for his feelings and gets angry with him when he tries to stand up for himself. I kept waiting for things to turn around, for either John or Ariel to show some redeemable quality that would make me root for their survival. I was woefully disappointed.

It's sadly telling when the homicidal incestuous brother is the most sympathetic character in the entire story.

Notable Scene:

She slipped off her shoes as they sat on the edge of the bed. Then she looked John in the eye and squeezed his hand. "Are you okay with this?" she asked.

Amazing, he thought. She was ten years younger than him, and she was asking if he was okay. "Oh, I'm more than okay with it. I'm freakin' ecstatic. You're wonderful, you know that?" He lifted her hand and kissed her smooth knuckles. "But what about you? How do you feel?"

"I don't do this very often. Almost never, in fact. I guess you made a big impression on me." She reached for the lapels of his jacket and peeled them over his shoulders. John wriggled his arms out of the sleeves and let the thing drop to the carpet.

"I feel the same way," he said. "I was bowled over the minute I saw you. I didn't think I had a chance."

"Why not?" She grasped the knot of his tie and loosened it.

"You're so beautiful. And smart. I'm just a regular guy."

"Don't sell yourself short, John Rogers." She undid his tie and threw it across the room. Then she started unbuttoning his shirt. "You're special."

Don't ever forget that. You're one in a million."

FTC Advisory: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press/Macmillan provided me with a copy of *The Furies*. No goody bags, sponsorships, "material connections," or bribes were exchanged for my review.

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## **Janet says**

Last night I was reading this book and halfway through a paragraph, at 47% of the way through the book, I quit. I am a champion of muscling through books I'm not into, I will typically say, well I like this one character, the world is interesting, I like the technology...whatever.

First off, I feel grossly misled by the netgalley page. This book is compared to Michael Crichton, as was praised for its scientific merit. As a biologist, using words like "squamous cells" and "genetic mutations in the X chromosome" doesn't just give you science street cred. Maybe somewhere in the next 53% there will be a large explanation that I'm sure sounds like it was based on a blog article about a mouse study from 2004 that hasn't actually panned out into anything in the last 10 years. My money on telomeres. If you look at the cover, you think that a majority of the book takes place over a large period of time. Absolutely not, it's 2014, with a random prologue paragraph.

The first 30% of this book is GUNS! RUNNNING! PEOPLE SHOOTING PEOPLE! DRIVE FAST! Which I made it through. The second we hit the land of the furies was when I was done. The random insertion of the word "Nay", the way too many resemblances to Stephen Baxter's Coalescent series (minus the rape, plus awkward sex scene), the guarding of my "Treasure" (which because super awkward when its all women who have really specific sexual selection criteria talking about guarding their Treasures), I just couldn't go any further.

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## **joey (thoughts and afterthoughts) says**

**[See the full review at thoughts and afterthoughts.]**

**Rating: 3/5**

### **Should this book be picked up? the tl;dr spoiler-less version:**

- A "chase-thriller" with a variety of fast-paced action sequences involving guns and explosives, a ferryboat, and many bullet ants.
- Despite romance driving the protagonists actions and the synopsis sounding as if it's a paranormal romance... it's not.
- Speculative-fiction that considers a variant genome which has caused disparity and civil unrest between the genders of the Furies.
- Generally immaculate world building that gives nod to historical timelines and paints a realistic landscape of various settings.
- Narrative pacing is a hit or miss as perspectives change between major and minor characters.

### **Initial Thoughts:**

Sooooo...the Salem Witch Trials lay the groundwork for this mixed grab bag of witchy woo-woo speculative fiction which isn't as paranormal as I initially thought. To be frank, I thought the Furies were the name for a species or something. Nope, it's actually a family lineage. With the tagline of being a thriller, its success is a toss-up erring on the side of being flat through the course of its journey. While not a disastrous read by any means, there is a considerable nod given toward historical attributions emphasized by differing societies concerning the unordinary superstitious behaviours of [insert-your-religion-of-choice-here]. With this in mind, it isn't executed to the potential that I thought it could have been. But the cover is kind of rad though.

**Full disclosure:** *I received an advanced reader copy of The Furies: A Thriller through NetGalley for an honest review. I extend my thanks to St. Martin's Press for providing me the opportunity to review this book.*

**Disclaimer:** Potential spoilers inherent to this review from here onward.

(view spoiler)

he premise is quintessentially a chase-thriller with integrative wishy-washy speculative-fiction elements that inquire the what-if scenario of misunderstood humans that have enjoyed a variant mutation in their genome which has caused for centuries of their lineage to be slandered with the witch namesake. This gene deviation has prominently birthed red-haired and green-eyed individuals. However, the women enjoy prolonged lifespan (and healing capabilities) due to an enhanced X-chromosome; while the men are shafted and don't receive anything but infertility. While times have certainly changed, there's an innate terror that boils within humanity that surely engages the depth of one's character in reaching and attaining a longer shelf life. If you held the cards in your hands of near-immortal life, how far would you go to preserve and protect it? By the same measure, to what extent would you go to be gifted with such possibility? It's these two defining questions that drive the protagonists and antagonists to clash with conflicting views on the course of actions that is most promising to their kind.

There are layers to the premise that deftly highlight the importance of character ambition in an attempt to justify varying perspectives of the same story. Yet as much value as it adds to understanding each characters back story, it doesn't actually play out well for this particular high-velocity novel. Its one thing to have quick bursts of action in pacing followed by downtime in a character's journey, but it's another to have fast action sequences and then completely change the perspective from one character to another. Not only does pacing become of concern, it's the readjustment required by readers when a new voicing is heard. By peaking with suspense and then throwing in a pseudo-cliffhanger, the frantic and thrilling build-up becomes forgotten and we're back to square one. While this may be my own reading bias, it makes the read feel clunky and stagnant at times that really affected the pacing I'd expect in a thriller-centric novel. For the most part the beginning ten-percent and the ending seventy-to-ninety-percent mark were action-filled, robust, and definite page turners. It's the middle section muddled with infodumps and tacky scenarios (and revelations) that do little in supporting the world building or value of the journey and feel like simply pages that the reader has to trudge through.

To tangent the on-and-off world building, we're taken into a meticulously crafted contemporary setting of the slums and its dirty-money littered streets to the polished and technologically-savvy abode in Haven. Further to this, the travels through the expanse wilderness of the North American wilderness and the Amazonian jungle were pretty immaculate. The impressive aspect of the entire concept is found in the grit of weaving together relevant history with scientific relevance. While it might not cater to science heavyweights, there's simplicity and finesse in being able to craft a simple concept readers can run with without immense burden of trying to forcibly consider wishy-washy science. Remember, it's speculative-fiction after all. Alternatively, I do have some reservations with how Haven was designed; mainly pertaining to the higher echelon of authority being closer to ground level than the opposite. It would seem, to me at least, that as a secret society you wouldn't put your important assets closest to the earth's surface in-lieu of top-down

invasions – but to each their own.

She used to say, ‘The flapping of a butterfly’s wing on one side of the world can cause a hurricane on the other. That’s what makes it so difficult to predict the future.’” Ariel removed the ring from the box and held it up to eye level. Its stones sparkled even in the cargo hold’s dim light. “But it has another meaning, at least for me. People are like butterflies. We’re lovely and fragile. And in the long run, we’re powerless. The wind is stronger than us.”

While the story is told in third-person and follows John Rogers as the main protagonist, it’s safe to say that Ariel/Lily Fury shares as much book-time as he does. From a character standpoint, John has a lot of baggage that can portray him in a very multifaceted way. From being a person-of-colour raised through an inadequate alternative family system and growing up through the slum and gangster lifestyle to then come to terms with death and divorce, John is pretty much handed the shit end of the proverbial stick on multiple occasions. He’s extremely passive and readers are often reminded of how malleable he is because he answers to Ariel’s beck-and-call throughout the novel. Like, literally, he’s her bitch. Ariel is the poster child for women in Haven with the desire to seek answers yet doesn’t reveal anything to anyone (for the most part, anyways). This motivation is what gets her into flack with her half-brother, Sullivan Fury, who’s the story’s antagonist and potential love-interest (if you dig incest and that kind of stuff). Although he’s the driving force behind the brewing conflict, the pacing in events make him seem like a real stupid character with a less than stellar intelligence capacity in reasoning his revolt. Add to this that he for no good reason over communicates and essentially buys time for John and Ariel to get out of predicaments just makes me want to bash my face in. I mean, seriously, if you’re going to be the bad guy at least be more direct and brash about it and not meander through pages of pointless taunting detail and then have your goons get their asses handed to them. I digress.

Readers may not really connect with these two protagonists, or feel motivated to root for them as individuals any more than the mission they are set on achieving (if running away is a goal anyways). The journey they face is much bigger than the characters themselves and there isn’t enough conviction to really sell the idea that these two are capable in achieving the feats and getting out of the predicaments that they become entangled in. It’s really wishful thinking in some circumstances presented as angst-and-suspense building with last-minute escapes which sell the narrative short in favour for these two individuals. This isn’t to say that they don’t face hardships – they do. But more often than not, I felt as though there were unrealistic inclinations that supported their endeavours at the expense of the many other characters’ fates.

**[Continue reading the full review at thoughts and afterthoughts.]**

(hide spoiler)]

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