



# Murder In Absentia

*Assaph Mehr*

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## **Murder In Absentia** Assaph Mehr

A young man is found dead in his bed, with a look of extreme agony on his face and strange tattoos all over his body. His distraught senator father suspects foul play, and knows who to call on.

Enter Felix, a professional investigator. In the business of ferreting out dark information for his clients, Felix is neither a traditional detective nor a traditional magician – but something in between. Drawing on his experience of dealing with the shady elements of society and his aborted education in the magical arts, Felix dons his toga and sets out to discover the young man's killers.

Murder in absentia is set in a fantasy world. The city of Egretia borrows elements from a thousand years of ancient Roman culture, from the founding of Rome to the late empire, mixed with a judicious amount of magic. This is a story of a cynical, hardboiled detective dealing with anything from daily life to the old forces roaming the world

This is a story of Togas, Daggers and Magic - it will appeal to lovers of urban fantasy, detective murder mysteries and ancient Rome.

NOTE that this novel is written in British English, which uses different spelling than US English.

## **Murder In Absentia Details**

Date : Published (first published October 1st 2015)

ISBN :

Author : Assaph Mehr

Format : Paperback 308 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Mystery, Historical, Paranormal, Historical Fiction

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**Download and Read Free Online Murder In Absentia Assaph Mehr**

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# From Reader Review Murder In Absentia for online ebook

## Assaph Mehr says

[Editorial Review] This is a story of Togas, Dagger, and Magic - the book I always wanted to read. It balances my favourite genres of historical mysteries, ancient Rome and fantasy.

The best compliment I got was from one of my beta readers:

*This book gave me a 'book-hangover' - I could not get my head out of the world of Felix for days after finishing it!*

I hope you will enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it.

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## Jane Jago says

Murder in Absentia introduces us to Felix the Fox and his world.

Felix is the son of a bankrupt suicide who makes his living solving mysteries. He lives in Egretia - which is not Rome.

I choose to emphasise not Rome because Egretia is the author's own creation. It is a world based on ancient Rome but with its own life and its own particular ideas and ideals. This is an interesting and complex notion, that is handled with some skill. The world Felix inhabits quickly takes life, and the sounds, smells and geography are very well portrayed. Felix himself feels as if he is a handsome devil, who could well know he is attractive to women, but is not written as smug or vain. In the end, I liked him even if it took a while. He is well drawn, but I could wish for a little more meat on the bones of the other characters, especially the females. As an aside here, on character development, the person, aside from Felix, we come to know best is dead when we meet him.

Now to the story. In its essence it's a simple whodunnit. A young man dies and our hero is tasked with finding out how, why, and who is responsible. I don't think it is in any way a spoiler to say that this is no ordinary death, there is no poison, and no fatal wound. So what killed Caeso? Finding out is a dangerous and complex business, and one that draws the reader deep into Egretia and the world in which it sits.

This is a cracking story and a guaranteed page turner although I felt it took a few chapters to get properly into its stride. It's an excellent read, and is twisty enough for the most dedicated of mystery readers, complex enough for lovers of fantasy, and scholarly enough to feed the interest of alternative history buffs.

I shall hope to meet Felix again

4.5 stars rounded up to 5

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## **Anindita, at A Bohemian Mind at Work says**

This review was sitting in my draft collection of posts for a long time. Today, I made time and had decided to do a makeover before taking my bohemian mind out for a walk. That's how I found Felix lurking in the corner of my forgotten posts.

A detailed review of this book and others appear on my blog [A bohemian mind at work](#).

*Murder in Absentia* is the first novel in the series.

Set up in the imaginary Rome-inspired territory of Egretia, the story runs as a typical murder mystery/crime thriller with a smart detective. There stops the similarity.

This story is about adventure, rich world-building, a variety of food (yum yum yum), and yes, murder.

An important government official calls the curious Felix, also known as The Fox, to investigate the circumstances and cause of his son's death. Felix, of course, is offered a hefty price to solve the crime with discretion. Looking at the dead body, Felix and his readers can safely assume the involvement of sorcery in the boy's death.

Now we take a journey with our beloved Fox through the various social strata of Egretia leaving no stone unturned in the search for clues. The world-building is gradual, well spread-out, and very satisfying. By the time I had finished reading the book, I had a fair idea of Egretia's geography and the island's, without looking at the map.

The author's website offers a detailed and high-resolution map.

You will find a glossary at the end of the book which explains all the Latin terms, characters and places.

Felix introduces us to the lovely and intelligent Amelia, besides a few allies and enemies of The Fox.

While we are busy hunting down the people involved in the boy's death, his friends and potential foes who were in touch with him in his last days and near past, we get glimpses of Felix's past.

A smart man, Felix makes sure of his safety by hiring muscles to protect him, while he goes on a particularly shady deal. I appreciate the fact that this is no Superman detective. He fears for his life and is smart enough to seek help.

The suspense is drawn out till the end of the book, but the conclusion isn't as outstanding as the build-up. That's my opinion, of course. Without adding spoilers, it would be tough to discuss the closure, so I leave it to your taste.

The length of the book, in my opinion, could have been shorter. A few scenes felt forced and unnecessary after I reached the resolution. The obvious red herrings weren't that intriguing. I found the adventure and world-building aspects of the book greater than the murder mystery.

Overall, *Murder in Absentia* is an exciting, detailed, gripping murder mystery that will keep you hooked.

I recommend this (as the author has suggested) for those who like murder mysteries with an unusual flavor of dark fantasy. If you like the rich culture of ancient Rome, you will live Egretia and her gastronome of a toga-wearing detective.

I offer 3.5 Bohostars to The Fox (oops, sorry), Murder in Absentia.

Yes, a lurker and sorcerer detective who loves food is the ultimate fantasy, isn't it?

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## **Mary Woldering says**

CSI – Ancient Egretia -A Great fantasy Whodunnit!

Murder in Absentia

Imagine a place called Egretia which is quite like ancient Imperial Rome. Now imagine an important politician's son has been found dead in his bed. The youth's body reveals his death was of a questionable nature. In fact, there is evidence that arcane magic of the darkest order brought about the young man's demise. Not wanting to have this event investigated through normal means (because the scandal could ruin his career) the man reaches out to one Felix, known as "The Fox". Felix was an Incantatore – minimally trained magic user who left the study when his own family issues arose.

With all the skill of a modern-day crime scene investigator and a little bit of Sherlock Holmes thrown in, Felix follows leads, journeys to mystical places and studies forbidden manuscripts. He fights pirates and sorcerers as well as a few common street thugs and wrestles with the charms of beautiful women as he solves the crime.

Author Assaph Mehr masterfully blends well researched historical Roman culture in a fantasy setting with mystery, magic, action and suspense. Murder in Absentia is winner of several Indie Author awards. The title description says Felix the Fox Book 1. I am eagerly waiting for Book 2.

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## **Archit Ojha says**

**Just how potent was this!**

When a murder happens in mysterious circumstances, you better should know whom to contact. This suspicious death asks us to invite the lead protagonist, Felix. Because of the political influences, the murder gets its full publicity. Sounds interesting, doesn't it?

Egretia (ancient Rome) is the place where this mystery has occurred. Thriller and Magic, both combined offer an engrossing urban fantasy read. Vivid and well-written plot.

Set in the times of ancient Rome, detective Felix has to solve the mystery and get the criminals behind the bars very soon. But we have to keep in mind that he has a life too, a past too which he has to deal with.

I enjoyed how the story developed and got me thinking. Realistically built, fast paced and balanced description contained the charisma of the mystery.

Black Magic, voodoo and ancient art forms appealed me. Assaph Mehr has woven entertaining and adventurous characters.

The character sculpting takes time and prepares a base for a tense finish. The plotline of the murder flies off right off the bat and you are in for a swing. Non trivial information : The newer cover trumps the previous one. *Yes, I do judge the book by its front graphic.*

*The voodoo angle of the story was a first for me in a crime setting and savored did I!*

*Recommended for readers who love Mystery + Dark Fantasy + Action.*

*Verdict : This author holds a remarkable pen.*

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## **Dianne says**

Magnum P.I. in a toga? Long before Sherlock Holmes, Paul Drake or even Lassie, there was Felix, a magic wielding Private Investigator in a make believe Rome. Assaph Mehr has written the perfect murder mystery with a touch of who-dun-it, a little humor, danger and a LOT of food. No wonder they wore togas.

No, I'm not pointing fun at the author's tale, I am marveling at how engaging it was. A son of a wealthy and powerful politician has been brutally murdered in a most painful way and his body is covered in ritualistic tattoos. Is this a magical killing of dark intent? Felix is on the case, a case that will lead him on a round-about journey through the darker sides of life, magic and power. At the end of that maze, will he find justice for the dead? Will a murderer be brought to justice?

Follow Felix as he dons his perfect facades to suit each occasion, from charming to seemingly simple, all while calculating the odds on what may have happened and uncovering dark magics and their practitioners. As he collects each clue, the plot thickens, but as the pieces all fall into place, no one could have guessed who dun it and why.

Felix is the slightly quirky, always entertaining ancient version of today's P.I.s. Without a computer in sight, his limited magic isn't even as sharp as his brain or as far reaching as his connections. Assaph Mehr has taken us to a fantasy Roman world with some crusty characters that will make you smile, stodgy characters that you will roll your eyes at and of course, those characters you love to hate. Through it all, you will have to love Felix, because nothing keeps him down.

A wonderfully told tale of murder, mystery and mayhem with a bit of magic thrown in.

I received this copy from the author, Assaph Mehr in exchange for my honest review.

Series: Felix the Fox - Book 1

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Print Length: 306 pages

Available from: Amazon | Barnes & Noble

For Reviews & More: <http://tometender.blogspot.com>

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## **Roberta Franklin says**

Private eye Felix 'the Fox' takes on a case for a rich and influential citizen of Egretia: to find the people responsible for his son's death. Felix realises from the moment he sees the body that the case, though well paid, will be both difficult and dangerous: it is a case of necromancy, an ancient rite that has long been prohibited in Egretia...

With this clever and intricate murder mystery, Assaph Mehr takes us way back into time to an ancient state modelled on Ancient Rome; in a fascinating way, playing around with the names of ancient places and peoples, but also introducing us to many aspects of life, politics and religion in antiquity, he makes us feel as if we were actually there, 2000 or more years ago.

The story is a feast for every mystery fan, a complicated plot involving politics and power, enriched with supernatural elements; in those days, everybody believed in spirits and magic, so does Felix - and very soon, we start believing in it all as well! The protagonist and narrator is a wonderful fellow, a hard-boiled loner with a nice sense of humour who makes us follow his adventure with the utmost interest; a variety of supporting characters make the story most lively and enjoyable. A truly great read with not a moment of boredom!

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## **E.P. says**

His father disgraced and impoverished, Felix the Fox uses his cunning and magical training to ferret out secrets for paying customers. When he's called upon to investigate the mysterious death of a young man from a patrician family, Felix finds himself in the midst of a black magic cabal with sinister intentions.

"Murder in Absentia" takes the tropes of the fantasy genre and combines them with the detective novel, set in a world that's based on Ancient Rome. The Roman-esque setting is fully realized, reminding me in its detail and verisimilitude of Deborah Davitt's Valkyrie books, Ben Kane's Eagles of Rome historical adventure books, and, most of all, Steven Saylor's excellent Roma Sub Rosa series. The difference is that "Murder in Absentia" is set in an actual fantasy world that only resembles the Roman Empire, rather than in Rome itself. Readers looking for some kind of exact, historically accurate recreation will be disappointed; for readers who enjoy something with that "Roman flavor," it's all great fun, and provides much entertainment if you want to figure out which of the characters are "Greek," which are "Egyptian," and so on.

The plot is also great fun, with not one but TWO conspiracies, the main one only being revealed at the very end, not to mention pirates, mages, sibyls, etc. etc. The characters are fairly stock standard, and I may have rolled my eyes a tiny bit when Felix ended up in bed with yet another sexually available/aggressive woman, while experiencing romantic tension with the haughty and virginal maiden in need of rescue due to her own impetuosity, but for fans of the fantasy, detective, and adventure genres, this book provides plenty of thrills and excitement, with an unexpected twist at the end.

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## **Susan Marcus says**

Assaph Mehr's *Murder in Absentia* takes place in a fantasy offshoot of ancient Rome. It borrows artifacts and settings from different periods in Roman history and seasons them with knowledge and the application

of magic unknown to the republic and empire fans know and perhaps love. The murder mystery driving this narrative involves a rebellious cult, or so the super sleuth Felix the Fox thinks as he pursues clues along the coast of Mehr's creation, Nuremata. Mehr has a deep and abiding interest in ancient Rome. It shows. Contrary to the opinion of a few other reviewers, I enjoyed all the cultural and societal details informing the story, but most of all, I liked the work's architectural mise en place, the sense that all the ingredients were ready and the reader entered a well-constructed work strengthened by all its details. And I liked the feel of entering a variety of built environments providing a strong sense of place. When I think of Rome, I imagine imperial palaces and public spaces. Murder in Absentia invites the reader into such a realm and transports her securely until the final page.

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### **Brent Harris says**

Murder in Absentia is one of those rare books published by an indie outfit that sets the bar high for the rest of the publishing world. Mehr makes us believe we are in a magical version of Ancient Rome (Egretia), immerses us in a historical richness that even some purveyors of historical fiction lack depth in, and yet still delivers a compelling whodunnit which keeps the pages flying. The magic is no mcguffin -- Mehr offers his protagonist, Felix the Fox, no easy shortcuts. His mission: solve the murder of the son of a high-ranking (and rich! as Felix might point out) Egretian Patrician, and do so quietly. Felix must use his reasoning, his limited knowledge of the arcane, and his instincts, to piece together the mystery before his body is the one that turns up next. A solid read, a well-crafted mystery, and togas! An easy 5 Stars.

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### **Mihir says**

Overall rating = 3.5 stars

OVERVIEW/ANALYSIS: Murder In Absentia is Assaph Mehr's debut and a book which snagged my interest simply with its description of being a mixture of Harry Dresden & set in a magical Roman facsimile world.

The story begins with Felix the fox our protagonist who has an intriguing past (hinted at throughout the book) and is asked by a high-ranking member of Egretia's political class to look into his son's death. The death of his son while abnormal has more of an effect on his senator father and the weirder nature of the death (including morbidity after-effects) leave Felix stumped. Thereby soon beginning his case as he decides to look into the son's recent undertakings. It will be a case that might change Felix's outlook but also have a deeper meaning to it.

This book is classically a mystery gumshoe PI story but kudos to the author for encasing it within a secondary fantasy world that's strongly influenced by Roman history & Latin under-pinnings. Our protagonist Felix is a remarkable individual whose past has shaped him and helped gain the extra abilities that he needs in his current profession. One thing that the author has to be lauded for is the world and the details that he laces throughout the story. The world of Egretia is a remarkably familiar one thanks to the Roman influences however the author has put his own spin on things and the world that the readers will be entranced.

The main plot is one which will be very familiar for mystery readers and for those who are familiar with



Steven Saylor & Lindsey Davis' remarkable historical mystery titles will find plenty to enjoy here. Infact if they are eagle-eyed then they might even spot a generous to both the author's favorite creations.

More to follow in full FBC review...

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### **Carolyn says**

I thoroughly enjoyed this detective story tinged with a little magic and set in a version of ancient Rome. Felix the Fox is an investigator who started training in the magical arts as a young man but had to abandon his studies when his father's business collapsed. Nevertheless he is sensitive to natural magic and is able to cast simple spells. Normally employed to find lost jewelry or follow cheating spouses he is called in by a rich merchant to investigate the death of his son, Caseo who has died horribly in what appears to be an act of necromancy.

Against a background of everyday life in a roman times, Felix carries out his investigations piecing together the last actions of Caseo, trying to work out he could have got mixed up with such powerful, illegal magic. Mr Mehr has done a great job bringing the sights and smells of life in a typical roman seaport to life in this mystery. Felix is a very likeable character, not perfect but resourceful and thoughtful and tenacious in the pursuit of justice. The use of magic to find answers feels really fitting for this time period when people believed the Gods were watching them, animals entrails were inspected for omens and sybils and astrologists could predict the future. I look forward to what I hope will be a series of mysteries featuring him and his band of friends and acquaintances.

*With thanks to the author, Assaph Mehr, for a copy to read and review*

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### **Terri Wilson says**

I know nothing of ancient Greece and Rome except what I read in Edith Hamilton's book when I was forced to read it in school. However, I enjoy urban fantasy in any time period. I also like historical fiction. So when given the opportunity to read historical fantasy I jump on it. This book was awesome and I'm so glad I read it.

Before reading it, you need to know that the author sprinkled in many Latin words and phrases. He seemed to find the magical balance between authenticity and overkill. The names are a little hard to pronounce so, my apologies to the author, I just renamed them in my head.

These characters are so incredibly developed I loved each of them. The plot drew me in and would not let me go until I came to the end. I just had to keep reading. The combination of mystery, fantasy, and history appealed to every one of my book fantasies. Reading this book was a lot like watching the movie version played out in my head. I could easily see these characters in any time period. But the fact that the author took the time to develop this story in a unique environment, proves he has a ton of talent and needs to write more.

So, Assaph, will there be another one?!

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## **Nerdish Mum says**

I was lucky enough to receive an ebook copy of *Murder In Absentia* directly from the author Assaph Mehr in exchange for an honest review.

*Murder in Absentia* is a crime story set in a fictional city called Egretia in ancient Roman times. The main character is Felix the Fox who is a private detective of sorts, who is called upon to solve the murder of the son of a senator. He must use all his cunning, wits and magic to solve the crime.

The story is fast paced and well written and is extremely enjoyable to read. The world is well built to fit into Roman times but without being tied to anything specifically historical that may affect how the story pans out. I like how the magic works within this world and how its explained throughout, a lot of time and thought have gone into making it a realistic and workable magic.

Felix is a fantastic character as he is a "good guy" but he has his own demons and struggles with them on and off throughout the story. I feel he is a very realistic character and he is easy to relate some part of your life to. I like the way he works even when he's in the shadier side of his business.

As well as mystery, murder and magic, there is action and there's just enough of it to make things interesting without it taking over the story. The action that occurs during Felix's travels across the sea is particularly well done.

The only thing I can say in complaint about this book is sometimes there is a whole heap of information and description given at once, it kind of overloads you. But this happens very rarely, so like I say, it is only a very small complaint.

I'd definitely recommend that you go out and try this book as it's something familiar in a different package and its very well done.

This review was originally posted on my blog <http://lifeofanerdishmum.blogspot.co.uk/>

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## **E.M. Swift-Hook says**

**Rara avis.**

*'Our city may be named after the regal birds that grace our shores, but our people march on squid.'*

Egretia is Ancient Rome, but Ancient Rome in a parallel universe where magic is real. This is historical urban fantasy at its best and it will appeal to all who have enjoyed the works of Lindsey Davis, Rosemary Rowe, Steven Saylor, David Wishart, Ruth Downie, Jane Finniss and a handful of other authors who have set their whodunit solving heroes loose in a Roman setting. But Assaph Mehr's hero, Felix the Fox, has both the advantage and the disadvantage of living in a world where magic is real. He has some small command over it himself, but he is up against those who know much more powerful spells than he does.

Then story opens with Felix being asked to look into the strange death of a local official's son. It turns out an ancient and powerful magic had to be involved and Felix has to call on the knowledge, skill and ability of

several friends and enemies to try to get some idea of what is going on. Secret cabals and ancient manuscripts, death curses and pretty actresses, sea voyages and gladiatorial games, mysterious prophecies and mythical beasts that are real in his world, all play their part in helping Felix track down the reason the young man died.

*'I am not usually afflicted by bouts of honour and disposing of the bodies in the nearest sewer would have been quicker, but I have seen enough vengeful shades of the dead not to want one associated with my home.'*

This is a well written book with a well developed and believable world. The author has clearly spent a lot of time researching into Ancient Rome and then taking the history and using it as a brilliant raw resource to craft his own landscape of an alternative Ancient Mediterranean world. It is not only Ancient Rome we see on display in Egretia, but Ancient Greece (Hellica) and Egypt (Mitzrana) as well. The characters are very well painted into the background scenery, even those we only meet in passing like Crassitius, the lanista who hires Felix a bodyguard gladiator, have their own personalities well shaped and on show, the result is a very solid and totally credible world.

The pace is well managed, a little slow perhaps at the beginning due to some scene setting, but quickly picking up to a pleasing clip which is then maintained throughout the rest of the book. The story has some extremely intriguing twists and turns and I would be telling fibs if I were to try to claim that I saw the final denouement coming in advance. To make the whole even more of a delight, the book is lightly garnished with touches of humour.

*'She tried to snatch her hand back, but found it bound to the table with the shimmering tracery holding her wrist tight.'*

My main criticism of the book is in the earlier pages when the amount of information delivered almost turns into a lecture. Correction, it does turn into a lecture at a couple of points. A slightly less heavy hand would have created a better impression from the off, but I have to say it is swiftly forgotten once the book gets going. The other issue I feel which was skated close to, but never quite breached, was the limits on the magic Felix could command. On a couple of occasions it did brush very lightly against being a bit too convenient that he just happened to have a spell that could do what was needed.

Overall, I loved this book. Anyone who, like me, has hunted out just about every author of Roman whodunits or who loves urban fantasy with an alternative historical twist, will want to read this.

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## **Faustus Eugenius says**

Murder in Absentia is a thoughtful and complex novel which superbly blends Historical Fantasy with Mystery - engaging the reader in the material with both a well-structured and historically rooted fantasy world, with both the deep drama and the dark conspiracies of an ancient Roman society. The main character has a well-developed personality, and a keenly observant and methodical nature, but the writing style of the author also allows the reader to identify with him, and more personally experience his journey as he conducts his investigations. The thematic elements of the world and the story have a lot of texture to appreciate, from the way the author describes the detail of ordinary Roman life to the way he describes the style and fashion of it's people, without feeling too semantic or relying too heavily in exposition. This novel very aptly utilizes the advantages of an intrinsically historical setting while still being eager to take creative risks with anachronistic or fantastical embellishments. The pacing of the chapters is very well balanced, and a lot of the

more archaic references are made clear to the reader without coming off as condescending or tedious.

I highly recommend this book to any fan of Historical Fantasy!

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### **Phrynne says**

This one was intriguing - a murder mystery set in a version of Roman times with some paranormal activity thrown in as well! So a historical murder fantasy. Whatever, it made for interesting reading.

I enjoyed Felix, the main character and intrepid detective. He was clever, cunning and persistent and eventually solved the case. The word eventually also gives a clue to my only issue with the the book. It was far too wordy. I liked the descriptions of imaginary Roman life and the seaside town where it all took place but sometimes they went on for pages and I was very tempted to skim. So maybe about fifty pages less and this would have been an excellent book indeed. Still very worth reading.

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### **Jessica Jesinghaus says**

Check out this review, and many more, on my blog <https://jessjesinghaus.wordpress.com>

4.5 out of 5 stars

A young man from a politically powerful family is found dead under strange circumstances. A wily investigator with wit and resourcefulness to spare is hired to investigate the matter and help the boy's family keep the sordid details from a gossip-hungry public. Sounds like the makings of a great detective story, right? Absolutely! But did I mention the tale takes place in a fantasy city called Egretia (inspired by Ancient Rome) where magic, mythology and intrigue abound? This unique combination elevates *Murder in Absentia* from the morass of detective stories out there to the level of something truly remarkable.

Felix the Fox is a down-on-his luck detective with some truly hard times in his past. Hailing from a formerly well respected family that has fallen from grace, Felix has learned to rely on his cunning (hence the nickname Fox) to survive. When he is hired by a distraught father to investigate the death of a young man, Felix has his work cut out for him. The boy's death is clearly the result of some forbidden, arcane magical rite, his body twisted by the pain of his final moments and his heart transformed into a giant gemstone. Felix's investigation takes him from the pinnacle of Egretian society to the darkest, most dangerous back alleys, and from secret backroom cabals to public gladiatorial games. The combination of fictionalized history, mythology and magic lent Felix's investigation many unique aspects.

The pacing of *Murder in Absentia* was well developed. Felix's investigation was realistic and thorough, without bogging the reader down in minutiae. Felix is a fun character; he is quick on his feet and able to either charm or con his way through almost any situation. The world building is solid, with enough relatable history to balance the fantasy and all done in such a way as to weave a beautiful tapestry. I applaud the author for his obvious love of Roman history and his willingness to thumb his nose at certain historical conventions, thereby creating a wonderfully entertaining read! I'm looking forward to more adventures with Felix!

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## Clare Meyers says

*Murder in Absentia* creates a fantasy world not too often seen in most modern stories these days. We don't often see Ancient Rome used as inspiration, and those that do have a habit of paving over the bits that would clash with modern sensibilities. This setting is detailed, obviously well-researched, and full of the kind of character that both draws the reader in and also keeps them interested.

But this book is a murder mystery first and foremost, and the Roman-inspired setting doesn't draw away from that. Our detective is an experienced investigator, but the story doesn't take the reader's expertise for granted. Felix's thoughts are there to bring the reader along rather than leave them wallowing behind, unable to follow the leaps of logic the characters make. Nowhere is evidence pulled from nowhere, or inspiration suddenly acquired, it's all there on the page which is a must for any good mystery story.

The story itself can come across as a bit dry. The long sequences of Felix questioning leads and sources is exactly what any good investigator would do, but it doesn't always make for very exciting reading. Despite this, the story is full of a charm all its own and is definitely a worthy read

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## Richard Knaak says

From my review site <https://www.facebook.com/KnaaksKnoll/>

Please Like the review page to keep up with it.

MURDER IN ABSENTIA  
by Assaph Mehr

(Purple Toga Publications 10/15)

For those who like to cross genres a bit, MURDER IN ABSENTIA by Aussie writer Assaph Mehr is a skillful blending of historical fantasy with mystery set in a realm very much like ancient Rome. In fact, fans of the Falco mysteries by Lindsey Davis (which I also recommend) should very much enjoy this novel, first in a series featuring The intriguing Felix the Fox.

Felix, the son of a dead, disgraced antiquities merchant and who himself had an abbreviated education in the school of magical arts, has been asked to check on the horrific death of the son of a rising citizen. The murder clearly involves necromancy, long outlawed. The trail Felix follows sends him several places, including across the sea, and forces him to relive horrors of his own past.

Mehr creates a vivid cast and an equally vivid setting in which magic just seems to fit in perfectly. The last line in the story is also a perfect tease for the sequel, although clearly this highly-entertaining novel stands alone.

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Assaph Mehr lives in Sydney, Australia with his wife Julia, four kids and two cats. By day he is a software

product manager, bridging the gap between developers and users, and by night he's writing – he seems to do his best writing after midnight.

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AssaphMehrAu...>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/assaphmehr>

Website: <https://egretia.com>

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Murder-Absenti...>

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Richard A. Knaak is the New York Times and USA Today Bestselling author of the Legend of Huma, WoW: Wolfheart, the Dragonrealm, the Black City Saint series, and much more. His latest releases include the Turning War Trilogy for the Dragonrealm, Black City Demon (2nd in the Black City Saint series), and the urban fantasy, Frostwing.

Splitting his time between Chicago and Arkansas, he is currently at work on Knights of the Frost for the Dragonrealm, Black City Dragon ( 3rd in the Black City Saint series), and the new epic fantasy setting, Rex Draconis. To learn more, please like his pro Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/richardallen...>

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