

urban fantasy ratings & reviews

★★★★½ **GOLD PHENOMENAL** — In a Class by Itself. ★★★★★½ **FANTASTIC** — Keeper. ★★★★★ **COMPELLING** — Page-Turner.
 ★★★ **ENJOYABLE** — Pleasant Read. ★★ **PROBLEMATIC** — May Struggle to Finish. ★ **SEVERELY FLAWED** — Pass on This One.

NEW BOOKS FOR SEPTEMBER

Steampunk, E-book

ENGRAVED

Karina Cooper

★★★★½

TOP PICK!

Cooper continues to mesmerize with her fabulous steampunk fantasy series, the *St. Croix Chronicles*. The progression of Cherry's sobriety lends realism to the story and even some inspiration to readers. Returning to her past tests Cherry's resolve, reinforcing the admirable strength of her character — one of the many elements that makes this series so consistently incredible. The fascinating foundation of the saga remains with an innovative world of steampunk gadgets and moody atmosphere. Cherry's adventures are not to be missed!

SUMMARY: Leaving behind her addiction to laudanum, Cherry St. Croix has embraced alchemy and the wellness it inspires within her. Returning to her beloved yet dangerous streets of Victorian-era London, she discovers wars between gangs and men torn apart — and she means to learn why. The evil Karakash Veil is likely at the root, and Micajah Hawke is a prisoner in his own Menagerie. Equipped with magical abilities and accompanied by her loving guardian, Cherry endeavors to rescue the ringmaster who showed her so

much passion and loyalty. (CARINAPRESS. COM, dl \$3.99)

Terri Dukes

TRACE OF MAGIC

Diana Pharaoh Francis

★★★★½

TOP PICK!

When an exceptional author kicks off an exciting new series, it's reason to rejoice. From the start, *Diamond City*, located in an old volcano caldera in Colorado, is nearly a character itself as its denizens are stuck in the middle of a magical gang turf war over diamonds and drugs. Pharaoh Francis' gift for characterization shines through immediately as adversaries, tracer Riley Hollis and compromised cop Clay Price, spring to life. The action is nonstop and the danger palpable in this amazing tale.

SUMMARY: Since she was small, Riley Hollis has been warned by her father never to let anyone know about the extraordinary power of her tracer talent. If the Tyets, a magical gang, found out, they would either kill her or force her to work for them. Ever since the Tyets killed her mother and her father disappeared, Riley has been looking for answers. When her sister's ex-fiancé disappears, Riley has little choice but to join forces with Det. Clay Price to try and find him. As the bullets and magic start flying,

can Riley trust that Price will have her back? (BELL BRIDGE BOOKS, Sep., 250 pp., \$7.99)

Jill M. Smith

HOUSE IMMORTAL

Devon Monk

★★★★½

TOP PICK!

Incredible worldbuilding, exciting characters and a plot that will keep you up all night mark the beginning of this wonderful new series. The action doesn't stop at the final page, so you'll want to keep this entry close as you wait impatiently for book two. With this engaging series opener, Monk has rocketed to the top tier of urban fantasy writers.

SUMMARY: Several hundred years ago, a strange and devastating event happened that has slipped into the mists of history. What is known is that there are 12 beings, the galvanized, who are stitched together and cannot die. What is not known is that there is one more galvanized — a new one, a girl named Matilda Case, hidden away on a small farm. When Matilda is discovered, and when she meets the world, the balance begins to shift as she discovers the secrets that are — literally — inside of her. Abraham Seventh is the one to find Matilda, but even though he has lived several lifetimes, he cannot stop the unfolding catastrophe. If Matilda doesn't master the present tangle, time

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4	Kevin J. Anderson	SLIMY UNDERBELLY	9781617731143	Kensington
4½	Patricia Briggs	SHIFTING SHADOWS	9780425265000	Ace*
4½	Amanda Carlson	RED BLOODED	9780316404334	Orbit
4	Beth Cato	THE CLOCKWORK DAGGER	9780062313843	Harper Voyager
4½TP	Karina Cooper	ENGRAVED	9781426898815	Carina**
4½TP	Diana Pharaoh Francis	TRACE OF MAGIC	N/A	Bell Bridge
4½	Simon R. Green	VOICES FROM BEYOND	9780425259948	Ace
4½TP	Kim Harrison	THE WITCH WITH NO NAME	9780061957956	Harper Voyager*
4	Benedict Jacka	HIDDEN	9780425264942	Ace
4½	Seanan McGuire	THE WINTER LONG	9780756408084	Daw
4½TP	Devon Monk	HOUSE IMMORTAL	9780451467362	Roc
4½	Colleen Vanderlinden	STRIFE	9780692220627	Colleen Vanderlinden
4½	Tad Williams	SLEEPING LATE ON JUDGEMENT DAY	9780756408893	Daw*

TP = Top Pick * Hardcover ** E-book