



Hush

James Maxey

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THE SECOND BOOK OF THE DRAGON APOCALYPSE

The invulnerable, super-strong warrior Infidel has a secret: she's lost her magical powers right at the moment when she needs them most. To keep a promise to a fallen friend, she must journey to the frozen wastelands of the north.

Her quest leads her through the abstract realms of the Sea of Wine, where she uncovers a conspiracy that threatens all life. Hush, the primal dragon of cold, has formed an alliance with the ghost of a vengeful witch to murder Glorious, the dragon of the sun, plunging the world into an unending winter night.

Without her magical strength, can Infidel possibly survive her battle with Hush? If she fails to save glorious, will the world see another morning?

Hush Details

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From Reader Review Hush for online ebook

Elena Alvarez Dosil says

Review originally published at: <http://www.lomeraniel.com/audiobookre...>

This is the second book in the Dragon Apocalypse series. What is so special about these series is that the story is told in first person by the ghost of one of the main characters, Stagger. Infidel, who has lost her powers, is in need of fulfilling the promise she made to Aurora: taking the Jagged Heart to Aurora's people.

I am absolutely loving these series. The characters have soul, they are complex, and one soon starts feeling for them. Stagger and Infidel's story is heartbreaking, but I also was able to connect to secondary characters, each one with a more surprising story. But not all is sadness in this book, there is humor too, although bittersweet at times.

The world building in this series is amazing, and I find this world quite original and a breath of fresh air comparing it with other epic fantasy books. There are many complex details, and I felt that the books are peeling off layer after layer. I'm curious to know where this will lead us.

Jake Urry's narration is incredible! He is not only the perfect Stagger, who has become more insightful, more wise; but he also brought the rest of characters to life, giving each one a unique style and voice. There are many emotions in this book, and Urry has known how to transmit those well, sometimes bringing tears to my eyes.

I am looking forward to the rest of books in this series to be released on Audible, I just need more of Stagger, Infidel, and Jake Urry!

I received a copy of this book in audio format from the narrator in exchange for an honest review.

April says

I really love these books. I had to dock a star because there are some minor errors such as typos and using wood when you should have said coconut.

They're really fun popcorn reads so far. Lots of crazy magic with seemingly very little rules. I look forward to the rest.

Robert says

One of the most creative, corny, mish mash of comedic fantasy. Mind blowingly ridiculous and wonderful! To hear a synopsis of this series would make me sneer in contempt, but I love every bit of it. Strange how that works sometimes.

Gavin Gates says

The second book of the dragon apocalypse series had a lot to live up to. The first which I also had the pleasure to review was great fun and packed full of dragons and magic, the two things that will instantly sell any novel to me.

From the get go though Hush appears to have matured into a much deeper and darker tale than it's predecessor, the main characters left over have all had massive changes in their abilities and perspectives which considering the lay out is a huge gamble, luckily one that has payed off easily, also the introduction of more, in particular a character called 'Sorrow' who introduced a new dynamic into the mix and took out a lot of the unnecessary stalled humour which at places slowed the pace before. With a lot of the major players in the first novel gone and massive changes to who is left Maxey has been able to push a lot more through, he obviously had a big plan for the entire series before starting and has kept the pace up brilliantly exploring not just other continents on his world but also an excellent look at the other realms and also the history of the dragons that were mentioned only in passing in the previous. Hush is not in any way just a 'second book' but a brilliant continuation and just like the first ends with the perfect opener for the next. Maxey has in this novel cemented himself firmly in place as a top notch fantasy writer.

Rob Slaven says

As a slight variation to a usual theme, I received this book as a result of a GoodReads giveaway but somewhat indirectly. I won the third book in the series but the author was exuberantly kind enough to send the entire series. Despite this wonderfully kind consideration, my candid opinions follow below.

Like Maxey's immediately previous novel, Greatshadow, this book has a touch of everything. Sex, violence, and humor abound in optimal proportions. Hush picks up exactly where Greatshadow leaves off and continues the same basic plotline. While this is a continuation of previous work Maxey does a good job of helping the second novel stand on its own if you haven't made time for the first.

Hush is a novel almost identical in tone to the first though at one point the story does become rather maudlin. Otherwise our author does very well at build a milieu for the reader that is not only entertaining but thought provoking. As usual Maxey proves himself a master of the fantasy genre.

James says

I absolutely loved the first book in this series--it was a unique twist on modern fantasy blended with classic elements with some super-powered heroes to boot. Plus the writing was brilliant and clever, and there's nothing I like more than cleverness. This sequel was on par with the first...up until the end that is.

Clever writing, interesting and memorable characters, and a good solid plot. But the end kind of fell apart a bit into "Huh? Well, I guess that works, but still...what? Really?" The cohesion of the plot was a bit loose as well in the last couple of chapters. Plus, this book ends by abandoning (hopefully seemingly?) the two main characters (one is more likely to come back than the other), and the teaser chapter for the next book focuses on one of the supporting characters who really wasn't as great a character as she should have been. So...the

next book is all about her? Weird, but I hope Maxey's proven cleverness combines with his writing skill and fans demanding their beloved characters back (!!! wink wink, nod nod !!!) to create another excellent story. Here's to hoping.

Alan says

Wow, Just Wow,

Second in the series. I got the complete set of 4 on Kindle for just £0.99 pence and to be honest that probably the reason I bought them (cheapskate).

The first book Greatshadow was fantastic. I have not read any fantasy for probably 20yrs and it gripped me from page one. The story of Infidel & Stagger and a very enjoyable assorted cast was wonderful and I carried straight on into this book.

In the first book Stagger narrated the story for us, a lot of it as a ghost. He has multiple roles in this book but still the unlikely love of He and Infidel continues. This book has a few favourite characters from first book and many new ones.

I won't really go into the story plenty of other reviews I am sure will do that far better than I can. But, again it involves a Dragons, Ogres, Crazy Religious Types, A Cross Dressing Midget and a Lady with big pins stuck in her head (read the book).

I read this book in 3 days which for me is very fast as it's a much bigger book than my sweet spot which is normally around 250 pages. I spent my nights reading this into the early hours.

I highly recommend it and I am just about to start the third book WitchBreaker.

Amy says

Solidly written with great characters and a rather different plot for a "sword-and-sorcery" novel. I've seen some people complain about Stagger as the hero, but I find him absolutely lovable and adorable--and not at all misogynistic (and I'm definitely a feminist). This sequel perfectly compliments *Greatshadow*, and I would highly recommend it to the adventurous types who want to enjoy the ride with some atypical heroes.

Additionally, I happened to win one of the Goodreads signed copies of *Hush*, and it came straight from Maxey, personalized and all! Made my whole summer. Very kind of him!

Mieneke says

Earlier this year I read and reviewed *Greatshadow*, and I thought it was brilliant. As I said in my review: '*... any story that can legitimately clothe its main character in a chain mail bikini and make it functional can only be genius!*' Having enjoyed *Greatshadow* so much, I was looking forward to reading *Hush* rather impatiently as I wanted to find out what would happen to Infidel and Stagger. So you could say I had rather high expectations when I started *Hush*.

Happily, my high expectations weren't disappointed. I loved *Hush*, perhaps even more than I loved *Greatshadow*. Other than obviously being part of a continuing story, *Hush* never felt like a second book in a series; Maxey knew where he was going with his tale and keeping a tight rein on it, never letting it meander or bog down. Instead we get action by the minute and travel by the mile, as we leave the Isle of Fire, the

main focus of the action in the last book and follow our intrepid adventurers to icy Qikiqtabruk. Of course, it wouldn't be much of a story if everything was as straightforward as that sentence made it seem, so there are plenty of interesting characters and shenanigans to keep us occupied on our way there.

Action, travel and shenanigans aside, *Hush* had some surprisingly philosophical leanings thanks to Stagger. Returning in his capacity as narrator, this time round he isn't just along as a ghost observer, he actually gets in on the action thanks to Sorrow, a materialist who binds him as a wood golem in her service. This semi-return to life – Sorrow makes it clear that the binding won't last and once Stagger's spectral energy runs out he'll move on for good – prompt a lot of musing on the meaning of life and love for Stagger and give him a chance to, for once and for all, tell Infidel the whole of his feelings for her. There are a lot of lovely passages in the book, unexpectedly touching in this hard-hitting tale of high adventure, such as the one I added as a quote to my Tumblr. It made reading *Hush* a pleasure beyond that of a fantastic story, it made me appreciate the prose as well.

Beyond the addition of Sorrow as one of her travel companions, Infidel also adds the Romers, a family of Wanderers and the owners of the Freewind. She hires them to take her to Qikiqtabruk and they are a fabulous set of characters. Consisting of the captain, Gale, and her children, they are a handy bunch to have a round in a pinch, as they each have gifts given them as rewards by the mermen – the tale of which must be interesting in its own right and which we don't fully get here, alas – and they are very resourceful. They are joined by their dry man Brand, who is the one who conducts their business on land, as Wanderers can't set foot on dry land, because of their deal with Abyss, the primal dragon of the sea. However entertaining and intriguing the Romers are, the real star to join Infidel is Sorrow. Not only is she a materialist – a witch who is able to manipulate matter after hammering the relevant nail into the correct position on her head (!!) – she's also the estranged daughter of one of the judge-captains of King Brightmoon's fleet and as such has a lot in common with Infidel in the daddy-issues department. Sorrow is a fascinating character, at once coldly analytic and strangely empathetic; I never was quite sure whether she didn't have a hidden (nefarious) agenda.

Beyond a new set of companions for Infidel, we also get a new set of dragons, Hush, Rott and Glorious, a new villain, Purity, and a lot more information on the world, its links with the abstract world and its magic. Hush and Glorious are awesome – well duh, they're dragons, but even beyond that – I loved that they were at the same time all too human, I mean they're whole animosity was based on a lover's quarrel as Greatshadow told us in the previous book, and far beyond humanity as the humans don't even rate in their decision-making process. The world seems to have far more depth to it than I suspected after last book, which was mirrored both in the races and people we encounter and the way the different magics we've come across so far are connected.

Needless to say, I thoroughly enjoyed *Hush*. Despite its sometimes a little more serious passages, it was still a fun romp and anyone just looking for more of what made *Greatshadow* such a great read (no pun intended) will definitely find it in *Hush*. For those who found *Greatshadow* to be mostly light entertainment, I think you'll find more heft in *Hush*, with a world that has more depth, a narrator given to more serious introspection and some more rounded motivations for its characters. *Hush's* ending left me spinning and I can't wait to see where Maxey will pick up Infidel's tale in the next book, *Witchbreaker*, next year! *Hush* was released by Solaris Books earlier this month and should be available from all the usual venues, both online and off.

This book was provided for review by the publisher.

Abhinav says

You can read the full review over at The Founding Fields:

<http://thefoundingfields.com/2013/08/...>

Shadowhawk reviews the second novel in the Dragon Apocalypse trilogy from Solaris Books.

“James Maxey is a freaking genius. I want more. Hush is a perfect sequel to Greatshadow and it has one hell of a cliffhanger ending.” ~Shadowhawk, The Founding Fields

Greatshadow happens to be another top-rated read of mine from last year. It was epic fantasy with a twist, quite unlike most other epic fantasies I’ve read to date. James Maxey created a really vibrant and engaging world in the book, populated with nuanced and colourful characters who were a joy to read. And much as with books like Helen Lowe’s *The Gathering of the Lost* to *The Heir of Night* or Jean Johnson’s *An Officer’s Duty* to *A Soldier’s Duty*, Hush is a mind-bending sequel to Greatshadow, one in which the stakes are raised ever higher and the scope of everything – the characters, the world, the story, etc – is that much grander.

In my experience, books like *The Heir of Night*, *Greatshadow*, and *A Soldier’s Duty* are really tough acts to follow. A lot of that has to do with the charm of reading and experiencing the novel and the setting and the characters for the first time. That first moment of immersion into this brand-new world. First novels often set a high bar and the follow-ups can often be quite disappointing, which is where the “second book slump” phrase comes from, especially when applied to trilogies.

I’ve read a fair few series where that happens, and it is one of the most disappointing of experiences, since the promise of the first book goes unfulfilled and the writer becomes a one-hit wonder of sorts.

However, as Helen and Jean do, or other authors I’ve had the pleasure of following on through with second (or even third books as it happens), James Maxey delivers a wonderful, snappy epic fantasy story with Hush, featuring two of my favourite fiction characters ever: Stagger and Infidel, a most mismatched romantic couple if there ever was one.

In the previous book, we saw Stagger, Infidel and their companions take on a mission to destroy Greatshadow, a primal dragon who rules over fire in all its forms. In Hush, things aren’t quite as straightforward and ultimately the surviving companions become involved in a conspiracy involving Hush, the primal dragon with a broken heart who rules over ice, and even Glorious, the primal dragon who makes the sun go round and round and round. In essence, what Hush is about is a love triangle between three dragons and a resolution of sorts of this triangle. Stagger, Infidel and the other characters act out their roles in this entire drama, and the entire story as it develops is incredibly fascinating.

Especially when the companions leave their world behind and journey on to meet Glorious, with Hush hot on their heels roaring for her vengeance.

The novel picks up on a lot of plot-lines from the previous one, such as Infidel and her powers, Stagger being a ghost bound to a knife, Hush’s vengeance against Glorious and Greatshadow, Black Swan’s own preemptive vengeance against all the primal dragons, and so on. Each thread carried over from Greatshadow

is given room to develop further, and we learn a lot more about the world this time around, which was exactly what I wanted to see here. The unearthly relationship between Infidel and Stagger is once again a highlight, and in many ways, the story is about sacrifice rather than mere survival and a mission fulfilled. James Maxey doesn't exactly write a romance novel or anything, but he still makes their relationship a gut-wrenching and heart-breaking story.

Of course, James also returns with his trademark variety of humour, in all its forms, whether dark or morbid or otherwise. There's something about a Paladin-esque Infidel quipping at Hush to her face and calling her names that I found quite charming. Or Stagger's often colourful commentary about the weirdest situations he finds himself in, such as being chased across a glacier by an ogre champion riding a flying whale. Some of the moments in Hush are absolutely hilarious and James handles it all brilliantly, never letting the reader lose sight of the ongoing chain of events, or where everything is leading towards.

Speaking of which, the entire final act of the novel is one long, grand adventure of the type I remember reading in Raymond E. Feist's various Riftwar novels. Forays into space, the "great beyond", the "nether", with dragons on all sides, and a people howling for blood and vengeance, with two unremarkable heroes doing what they can to save the world and everything they hold dear. Not exactly something unique as a concept, but James Maxey makes it so, and he does it all in style.

Melissa Hayden says

The world is expanding for us. We learn of more magics and history in the world. We know the world is full of history and magic, and we are seeing more of it now. We seem to dive into the thinking of magics in the world and belief in it. This is a spiral of thinking Stagger falls into. And we start to get an inner view of magic.

I think the end is worth it. I like where everyone ends up here. It all feels fitting for what we've learned and the paths they've taken.

****FULL REVIEW TO FOLLOW****

James Marsh says

Disclaimer: I was a beta reader for this book and was provided a free copy in exchange for an honest review.

I was asked to read this book without having read the first volume. As a new reader, I was able to jump into the story with no real problems, which is saying quite a lot because this novel picks up very shortly after Greatshadow.

During the course of the first novel, a promise was made and this volume sees how the main characters attempt to fulfill that promise. Despite the fairly linear goal, Maxey weaves new characters in deftly that expand the scope of the quest, new and original powers and continue to develop the mythology in entertaining ways.

The Dragon Apocalypse is notable as a fantasy novel that does not seek to retread Tolkien or others' paths

through fantasy. In many ways, it is fantasy by way of Jack Kirby with larger than life threats, vast new worlds to explore while maintaining an intimate view of the unusual cast of characters. Expect jokes, wordplay, fantastic action sequences and surprisingly nuanced discussions of love, death, philosophy, religion and everything under (and in) the sun. Ghosts, shape changers, magic pirates, witches, princesses, ogres and of course gigantic elemental dragons and more await!

It's not quite like anything you've read before and leaves you guessing what is coming next right up until the final page.

You can pick this up on it's own or start with Greatshadow (which felt like a HeroQuest mission with fanatasy superheroes in the best way.)

For those of you who are adverse to starting series that are not finished - have no fear. All 4 volumes are written, published and available in your preferred medium(Audible audio books currently have 2 out of 4 with more on the way)

Susan says

In this installment, James Maxey gives us a new set of interesting characters and an ever more complicated plot. I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it. In only one place did I think the dialogue lagged a bit (there's a conflict of dragons in the second half and I thought it was resolved a little too easily), but Maxey rallied for an unexpected ending twice over. This is one of those books that has all sorts of facial expressions crossing my features and the occasional 'No Way!' escaping out loud at the flying orca, or shape-shifting witch, or near-death of some beloved character. Truly, I was quite noisy while reading this book. If you are looking for the next excellent fantasy adventure read, pick up this series. I doubt you'd be disappointed.

Ruth says

c2012: FWFTB frozen, abstract, witch, battle, dragon. What **did** I think about this book? Well, I thoroughly enjoyed the first book, I love the 2 main characters of Stagger and Infidel, I got a bit confused around two thirds of the way though as some of the 'abstract' was just too abstracty for me and then it did not end the way I wanted it too at all! Do I want to get the next one - yes; did I read it almost in one sitting - yes; was I anxious to find out what was going on? -yes. So, all in all, I would recommend it to the normal crew. There are dragons, ships, witches and a 'quest' of sorts. FCN: Infidel, Stagger, Sorrow Stern, Glorious, Menagerie. "*It mattered nothing to me if you were a rag-picker or royalty. If you could tell a good joke and were generous enough to laugh at my attempts at wit, you were fit company to share a pint.*"

Erdahs says

Won as part of the Goodreads first reads program.

I enjoyed this book way more than I expected to. I used to be an avid fantasy reader, but they all started to blur together for me, and consequently I hadn't picked up a fantasy novel in a long time. This was a good one

to come back to. It definitely embraces the classic fantasy tropes, but the characters have enough personality and the world has enough depth and originality that this book manages to pull away from the crowd. It's also genuinely funny on occasion. I would absolutely pick up another book by this author.
