



The White Assassin

Hilary Wagner

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Book II of the Nightshade Chronicles. The next step in the journey of the Nightshade City rats!

“Fans of Redwall and the Warriors series will love this heroic tale of good versus evil in a subterranean society of rats. The world of the Catacombs is so compelling readers will wonder if it really might exist under our city streets. Expect great adventures in Nightshade City.” ~ Rick Riordan, Author of the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series

The White Assassin Details

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Author : Hilary Wagner

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From Reader Review *The White Assassin* for online ebook

Steve says

I love this series! *The White Assassin* is the second installment in the Nightshade Chronicles series, and I enjoyed it even more than the first. Redemption is a powerful feature in a novel, and it is employed well in this children's story.

I mentioned it in my review of *Nightshade City*, and I'll do it here again. I believe what makes these stories so intriguing is that the characters are so human while still being rats. They are essentially human in intellect and emotion, but physically they are rats, and no detail is spared in either aspect. It makes for a great cast of characters for this type of series.

I have already got my 11-year-old daughter reading this series. I am definitely a fan of children's fantasy, and this is one of the better series I've read in this genre.

Geneva says

This book could possibly be the best book I have ever read. And I'm not kidding about it.

Pretty much everything was good in *The White Assassin*. The only thing I have a complaint is the fact the changes in points of view confuzzled me so much I had to read a few times to understand the entire traitor plot going on. Readers, here's a hint: read *Nightshade City* before this. Seriously.

My favorite parts were the ones about Billycan. No offense to the heroes of storyland, but I find villains that aren't stricken by love more interesting. Billycan fascinates me. I was caught from the moment it mentioned his love of killing and the fact he was the only albino left. I know it's wrong, of course, and sickening. But it interests me to discover what makes villains the way they are. Pride, power, oh what could it be? Billycan ran on his hunger for power, death, and of course, his own personal pride. That much is proven by his actions in *Nightshade City*. Also by reaction to Carn's deception in beginning.

I also wonder about his son Julius. Who is Julius's mother? I sorta doubt that it was one of Killdeer's sisters, seeing how Billycan hated them all. What was his plan for Julius before the collapse of the Ministry? How would it work later? Would the old, drug-driven Billycan have killed Julius for being too soft?

I love how Billycan turns good. It makes him more awesome in my opinion. He also keeps his basic personality after the cure, unlike in other books. In some books, the drug cure is absolute and changes everything but the face and the memories. I hope Billycan returns later in the series, but happy hunting readers!

Medeia Sharif says

Reading the sequel to NIGHTSHADE CITY felt like I was revisiting old friends, of the rodent variety.

Hilary Wagner has amazing world building and anthropomorphic skills. These rats—as well as snakes, bats, and other animals—felt very real to me. I was so caught up with the emotions, intrigue, and action of THE WHITE ASSASSIN that I held my breath at certain points. Adding onto book one, more secrets and motives of these intelligent rats were exposed in this novel. And I loved how Billycan's history was revealed,

imparting deeper layers to his character, which I didn't expect. The author created a riveting, complex villain. Sure I loved reading about the good guys, but the parts regarding him were my favorite ones.

Jemi Fraser says

I love the characters in this series. They are layered, complex individuals - whether they're rats, snakes or bats. Carn is probably my favourite - he put me through all kinds of emotions!! And the villain, Billycan, is much more complicated than you'd expect. The flashback scenes are powerful and pull you in directions you're not expecting, and not always prepared for. They're so well done! It's a fabulous world of adventure and intrigue. Hilary ramps up the tension, so you just have to keep reading!

Candace | Evianrei says

The White Assassin follows three years after the events in *Nightshade City*. The rats of Nightshade City have finally found the whereabouts of Billycan after he fled, and join together with a colony of bats and two clans of snakes in order to overthrow Billycan's newfound reign on a group of swamp rats before he wages war on them.

For those who haven't read the first book, *The White Assassin* is about intelligent rats, a city, alliances, battles and deceit.

I found this book to be just as thrilling as the first, if not *more*. The twists and turns this book takes makes it impossible to put down. I read 80% of it in one day, all in one sitting because I was hooked! Each chapter leaving me with a need to know more.

Warning to those interested in this book, there are bloody details and battles within it. If you can't handle that I wouldn't suggest this book or the previous for you.

(view spoiler)

I will be picking up the third installment of this series right away! I suggest you pick up the first book if you haven't already.

Shannon O'Donnell says

The reviews for *The White Assassin* have been wonderful, and that's because the story is freaking fantastic! My three kids and I ALL loved *Nightshade City*. I didn't think Hilary could top it, but she did. *The White Assassin* is even better!

Hilary is a master at evil villains--Billycan is right up there at the top when it comes to evil characters. What's fascinating, though, is that I can't help but love him as a character, even while I hate him.

I said this when I reviewed *Nightshade City*, and I'll say it again now: This series is destined to become a classic. Move over, *Rats of Nimh*, because here comes Hilary Wagner!

Mark Buxton says

My name is Juniper, and I am keeping a life-changing secret from the other rats in Nightshade City. We've imprisoned Billycan, but many of my friends don't understand why I haven't had the murderous rat executed. I'm hoping the serum we've given him will reveal a kinder rat than the most vicious killer we've known. I fear what might happen if Julius ever discovers Billycan is his real father. However, there is a more serious problem threatening our city. There's a traitor among the council. That's the only explanation for how Billycan obtained maps of our secret tunnels as he prepared for an invasion. The serum seems to be having a positive effect on him, but will it force him to reveal the identity of his accomplice? Are the changes just another sign of his trickery? How can I doubt the trust of my friends, when I'm keeping terrible secrets of my own?

I recommend you read the first book in the series to fully understand Billycan's evilness. This book had more mystery in it due to the unknown traitor. All of the characters are suspect, but several of them will be central in readers' minds. Clues are presented to change the attention, but my first instincts were correct. The author includes flashbacks to Billycan's time in the lab, and they help to explain his disturbing behavior. A couple of other lab rats return to become key characters in the current events. Juniper is the main character in this plot, as he tries to coax the truth from Billycan and battles with his own internal struggles. Again, I suspected his big secret, but I'm not sure it was as devastating as he made it seem. This book is more similar to Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH than book one, as the lab experiments were key factors in the conflict. As in that book, it's revealed that mice were also test subjects and have unusual intelligence and life expectancy, just like the test rats. Overall, I'm enjoying the series and recommend you give it a shot.

Barbara says

Fans of Nightshade City will not be disappointed with this follow-up title. Three years have gone by since Juniper and his rat companions have rid the Catacombs of Killdeer and Billycan, the vicious albino rat. But while Nightshade City seems peaceful, all is not as it seems. Billycan has formed an allegiance with the swamp rats, and plans are in place to take back what Billycan has lost. But his plans are thwarted as the other rats band with bats and snakes, and when he comes close to being killed as the result of his greed, Billycan is brought back to Nightshade City and given a truth serum so the rats can learn the identity of the traitor among them who was helping Billycan. But the truth serum is actually an antidote for the drugs Billycan was given as a lab rat.

As secrets about treachery and loyalty are revealed, some old alliances threaten to crack while other, new and surprising ones, are formed. This touching story about rat society also makes cutting observations about the nature of humans, animal experiments, and the power of family and forgiveness. As in the previous title, the characters have depth and are complexity. Wagner forces her readers to regard Billycan in a different, more sympathetic light through a series of flashbacks in which he remembers more about his days in the laboratory.

The book held my attention from the beginning pages all the way to the last one, which left me certain that

there is much more of the tale to be told.

Brenda says

The White Assassin takes place sometime after the events in Nightshade City. Juniper has gathered a council of rats, bats and snakes to work together to try and save the City of Nightshade from an attack by Billycan, but also to save them all from his terror and destruction. The plan is to capture Billycan, give him a truth serum and interrogate him to learn who he is working with and who his targets are. But, Billycan is a pretty ruthless leader and he's also very smart, so catching him won't be as easy as it seems. Yet once he is captured, can anyone believe what he has to say anyways? Billycan so grew on me, he is pretty evil as rats go and yet once he is captured a vulnerable side to him is exposed. Wagner brilliantly shows the reader Billycan's past which gives him much more depth and adds so many more layers to the story, just wonderful. And although the story resolved itself pretty well, there were some pretty good mysteries left to solve so I was left eager to jump back into the Catacombs and Nightshade City if anything just to see what Billycan would be up to next.

Patricia Kaniasty says

I really really liked this story. It kept me on the edge of my seat. Great story for people of all ages.

Stephanie says

Disclaimer: I received a copy of this novel from the publisher in exchange for an honest and unbiased review.

My Summary: Three years after Juniper and his friends' adventure in the Catacombs, they begin to hear rumours about Billycan's plans to return. After aligning himself with snakes and swamp rats, Billycan fails. He is brought back to Nightshade City and given a 'truth serum', and though it does not have the desired effect, it ultimately causes buried secrets to become unearthed.

My Thoughts: This was probably one of the most Epic (with a capital 'E') children's / middle grade book I've read in a long, long time. I honestly didn't think that a book about talking animals (rats, no less) could be as great as this one was. The writing was amazing, and the character development... I was blown away by how much the author managed to change my feelings towards Billycan - especially after how evil he was in the first installment. She managed to turn someone who seemed purely evil into someone complex - someone that you can't really hate anymore after you find out his reasons for being the way he is. You gotta give props to an author who can do that.

Final Thoughts: I definitely recommend this novel (and this series!) to anyone who enjoys middle grade or children's novels that are complex and riveting enough for an adult to love. Check out the first book in the series! You won't regret it.

Sharon says

If you love reading or writing mid grade novels and you don't know Hilary Wagner you are missing out on something special! Hilary writes epicly beautiful stories about rats. How could a story about rats be epic? Hilary is a master writer. Her words are beautiful. She wraps you up in the story and the characters lives. She causes you to love or hate with your whole heart. (I'm really seeing a movie in her future...)

In book one, Nightshade City I fell in love with Vincent, Victor and Clover. I even fell in love with Billycan one of the evil doers. Once you open the first page of this book you won't want to put it down. You'll be fully immersed in Nightshade City and entranced by all the characters. But then the book ends...And you'll be sad...because you want more.

Thankfully, Hilary is willing to give us more! The White Assassin leaves off right where Nightshade City ends....but be ready to not put this book down until you are finished reading it. There are twists and turns and new (creature) characters introduced and some old ones creep out of the catacombs.....This is a book you will not be able to put down. I know The White Assassin has just been released, but I'm desperate for the next book already!

Christmas is just around the corner...if you have any 8-12 year olds on your shopping list Nightshade City and The White Assassin would be awesome gifts for them. Kids who read do better in school. Hilary is cranking out more books as we speak...So the lucky kids who get hooked on Hilary will have many books to read in the future.

Brian James says

The second book in the Nightshade City chronicles was just as delightful as the first. This story picks up three years after the rats of the Catacombs overthrew the ruthless Billycan and Killdeer. However, the rats of Nightshade are still searching for the fugitive Billycan, who has taken refuge in the swamps with a new band of rats.

With the help of an unknown traitor, Billycan has been planning an invasion of Nightshade with his new horde. However, the rats of Nightshade are aware of his plans and secretly infiltrate the swamp horde and thwart his plans. From there, the mystery only grows and we learn more about the origins of Billycan and the rats of Nightshade.

The book starts off slowly. It also presents a few leads that never seem to get answered, but I suppose they are building blocks for future installments. The story really heats up about a third of the way in, and that's when it really hooked me. Easily one of the best animal fantasy series since Redwall, and fans of that series will like this, as it takes the same in depth approach and challenges readers in a similar way.

Kat Goldin says

In this fictional book where animals take on human characterizes, the reader just needs to settle themselves

down and enter this fun, thrilling, adventuresome place. In the book the leading characters are great and it can be said that this text is not for either a boy or a girl, but the reader will be equally impressed with the different personalities and contributions to the storyline. This book overall theme is trustworthiness and acceptance. I would highly recommend this book (p. 250) to readers who enjoy the Redwall series, the Warriors series or to anyone who has read the first novel in the series, Nightshade City.

Naomi Morgan says

With two plot twists tossed about in the end, supplanting a previously held assumption, The White Assassin did not disappoint! Hilary Wagner's writing pulls the reader to feel each animals emotions, be it concern, wariness, hatred or joy. She heavily touches on the sensitive subject of discrimination, placing the reader in both the discriminated shoes as well as the discriminator's remorse. She has shown the power love has over all relations and has begun to explain how true hatred and anger may grow. I am eager to read the third in her series.
