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The Strange Maid (Gods Of New Asgard Book 2)



Synopsis

Fans of Neil Gaiman, Holly Black, and Maggie Stiefvater will embrace the richly drawn, Norse-influenced alternate USA in book two of Gods of New Asgard. Signy Valborn was seven years old when she climbed the New World Tree and met Odin Alfater, who declared that if she could solve a single riddle, he would make her one of his Valkyrie. For ten years Signy has trained in the arts of war, politics, and leadership, but the answer finally comes in the form of enigmatic poet Ned the Spiritless, who tells Signy she must kill a Greater Troll Mother and claim its heart. But when you follow the god of sacrifice and poetry, everything is a riddle, and nothing is safe. Unfortunately, Signy is running out of time. Accompanied by an outcast berserker named Soren Bearstar, she and Ned take off across the ice sheets of Canadia to hunt the mother of trolls and claim Signy's destiny "as monstrous as it may be."

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Customer Reviews

These books are both surprisingly good and unusually intense for young adult novels. The Norse

twist is entertaining, and I want to see more of her world.

Hell yeah

Ms. Gratton is rapidly becoming one of my favorite authors!

Can't wait for more in these series/world!!

Fascinating.

Signy Valborn has fire in her veins. Anger over a devastating childhood incident led her to climb the New World Tree where she met and was claimed by the Alfather, Odin, for his own. But being a Valkyrie in training is not what she expected. The current Valkyries are tame compared to their history. They are the consultants to kings and presidents, and Signy longs for, burns for, the old ways. The final insult comes when she wakes to find a riddle on the day she is supposed to become a fully realized Valkyrie. It's a question she must answer. One she cannot find a solution to. It keeps her from rising to the full position of Alfather's fierce servant, and it sets her on a dark, dark journey to find herself. ~~Dark, dark, dark. If you have read THE LOST SUN you will likely not be prepared for THE STRANGE MAID. This is a story about fate and death and longing. It's a story that explores 'the glory' of revenge and unlike the previous book, there is more truth to the world-building here. These people seem closer to what I would expect from those descended from Vikings, from those who live and worship the old gods. There are fewer Christian sensibilities in this book. We get new insight into the Berserker battle lust, and we get animal sacrifices. I love this book because it's more adult (and possibly not YA any longer), and because there's less dancing around the violence. I love this book because there's poetry in the writing. The use of words isn't frothy and light, but dense and evocative. And Tessa Gratton is afraid to let her characters take sex casually or lose themselves to what we might consider madness.--review copy

The Strange Maid, is definitely an exciting read! A paranormal romance for young adults that triggers the senses and pulls at the heart. Decisions and sacrifices have to be made if Signy Valborn wants to be the next Valkyrie. Two others will help her get to where she needs to be. Ned has to teach her things she needs to know of in fighting and death. Soren has his future connected to the next Valkyrie but Signy seems to love another. Will both Ned and Soren help Signy meet her

destiny or will they fail? Young love was portrayed well by Tessa Gratton inside her amazing novel. I found it intriguing and new. It wasn't like any YA romance that I have ever read. The plot was suspenseful with every new scene. Keeping me on my toes as I read further into the book. The scenes were visual and sensual too. Bringing the characters to life before my eyes. This story is full of adventure and displays the realistic feelings of young adults. I highly enjoyed reading it. I would definitely recommend readers everywhere to pick up this stunning piece. Tessa's unique writing and well written plot is a must read!

Tessa Gratton has penned her best book yet with Book 2 of her United States of Asgard series, *THE STRANGE MAID*. I stayed up late into the night, with goosebumps raised on my arms, to finish this book. The story, the writing, and the characterization are all beautiful, deep, and complex. I love a book like this that prioritizes character development over plot, but *THE STRANGE MAID* still manages to combine the two well. Most of all, though, I love the risks that this book takes with characterization, theme, and source material. Signy Valborn is a girl on the verge of Odinist glory as a Valkyrie, and she embraces the dark things she believes that should include - blood and death and violence and chaotic, passionate things stirring inside her soul. I love that Gratton was willing to create a wild, out-of-control, and fearsome female character; in doing so, she affirms that madness, desire, and a longing for revenge can be felt by all, not just males. Signy, however, is not a one-note character: she also experiences fear, doubt, and love. The other characters who flank and support Signy are also well-developed, from Soren Bearstar of the first book to Ned the truth-teller who hides behind his poetry to the gods and other Valkyries themselves. I also so appreciated the themes conveyed in the story about loss and revenge, the balance between chaos and control, choice versus destiny, and the types of relationships that matter in our lives. In addition, Gratton skillfully plays with and updates Norse mythology to create a modern tale that pays homage to the violence, strength, and madness that was celebrated in Old English works like *BEOWULF*. Because of this and the adept way the characters are portrayed, this book felt more mature than most other YA titles I've read. This is a complex and evocative tale that will be best appreciated by readers who aren't afraid to feel uncomfortable from time to time while reading. Reading the first book in the series or having a background in Norse tales isn't necessary to understand and appreciate the story, but it will likely help. I have always been a fan of Gratton's work, but my appreciation for her craft and the intentionality of her writing has been taken to a new level after my reading of *THE STRANGE MAID*. I can't wait to see what the next book in the series brings, and I will definitely be recommending this title to my friends and older students alike. Note: This review refers to an

advance review copy.

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