



The Enchanter Heir (Heir Chronicles Book 4)

By Cinda Williams Chima

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They called it the Thorn Hill Massacre—the brutal attack on a once-thriving Weir community. Though Jonah Kinlock lived through it, he did not emerge unscathed: like the other survivors Jonah possesses unique magical gifts that set him apart from members of the mainline guilds. At seventeen, Jonah has become the deadliest assassin in Nightshade, a network that hunts the undead. Emma Claire Greenwood grew up worlds away, raised by a grandfather who taught her music rather than magic. An unschooled wild child, she runs the streets until the night she finds her grandfather dying, gripping a note warning Emma that she might be in danger. The clue he leaves behind leads Emma into Jonah's life—and a shared legacy of secrets and lingering questions. Was Thorn Hill really a peaceful commune? Or was it, as the Wizard Guild claims, a hotbed of underguild terrorists? The Wizards' suspicions grow when members of the mainline guilds start turning up dead. They blame Nightshade, bringing tensions between the groups to a head. Racing against time, Jonah and Emma work to uncover the truth about Thorn Hill, amid increasing concern that whoever planned the Thorn Hill Massacre might strike again.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 7 Up—The fourth installment to Chima's "Heir Chronicles" centers around two teens, Jonah Kinlock and Emma Greenwood. Ten years earlier, a massacre killed off all adults, leaving just child survivors known as savants, who are mutants endowed with skills that, once brought under control, can be used in ways to contribute to the survival of the community. Many of the them, however, require heavy medication and rarely live to adulthood. Those that die turn into shades, zombielike creatures that retain the memories of their past life and inhabit dead bodies. Jonah is a talented musician, enchanter, and trained assassin. His skin is poisonous and he can kill from a simple touch; his job is to rid the world of shades. Emma is also a talented musician, but unlike Jonah, she is not aware of her special abilities. The teens are star-crossed lovers with overwhelming obstacles blocking their paths. As Emma's world slowly converges with Jonah's, both of their lives spin into a chaotic downward spiral. Scattered with musical references throughout, the book also tackles serious themes of disability and discrimination. The cliff-hanger ending will leave readers restless for more. For those in need of a quick refresher, the author provides a series guide on her website.—Sabrina Carnesi, Crittenden Middle School, Newport News, VA

From Booklist

Someone is killing wizards and framing Nightshade, the secret organization whose job it is to track down undead souls and dispatch them. Jonah, a 17-year-old assassin for Nightshade, is also on the trail of wizard killers, but for a different reason: he wants to know who was behind the Thorn Hill disaster, where thousands of adult sorcerers and nearly as many children died. Meanwhile, teen musical genius Emma, in search of her sorcerer father, lands directly in Jonah's path. He is smitten, but can he save her from those who think she knows the secret to Thorn Hill? There is plenty of background information in the interstices of this multifaceted narrative, but readers new to the Heir Chronicles series may occasionally have difficulty connecting all the dots. Intriguing plot and subplot teasers abound, and the book ends in a cliff-hanger that will have readers roaring for the next entry. Chima continues to excel at building tension and populating her well-told tales with new and returning characters we want to know better. **HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY:** It's a big series with a big following. Author tour, book trailer, and more promise to keep the swords a-swinging. Grades 8-11. --Cindy Welch

Review

Gr 7 Up The fourth installment to Chima's "Heir Chronicles" centers around two teens, Jonah Kinlock and Emma Greenwood. Ten years earlier, a massacre killed off all adults, leaving just child survivors known as savants, who are mutants endowed with skills that, once brought under control, can be used in ways to contribute to the survival of the community. Many of the them, however, require heavy medication and rarely live to adulthood. Those that die turn into shades, zombielike creatures that retain the memories of their past life and inhabit dead bodies. Jonah is a talented musician, enchanter, and trained assassin. His skin is poisonous and he can kill from a simple touch; his job is to rid the world of shades. Emma is also a talented musician, but unlike Jonah, she is not aware of her special abilities. The teens are star-crossed lovers with overwhelming obstacles blocking their paths. As Emma's world slowly converges with Jonah's, both of their lives spin into a chaotic downward spiral. Scattered with musical references throughout, the book also tackles serious themes of disability and discrimination. The cliff-hanger ending will leave readers restless for more. For those in need of a quick refresher, the author provides a series guide on her website. Sabrina Carnesi, Crittenden Middle School, Newport News, VA **SLJ**

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Chima returns to her best-selling contemporary fantasy series with an entry that is almost entirely setup-but such delicious setup. Ten years ago, something terrible happened at the magical commune of Thorn Hill, a refuge from vicious Weir infighting. Thousands died, leaving only a few hundred young children, horribly damaged and with mutated gifts. Jonah is one of those survivors, born a charismatic and empathetic enchanter but now cursed with a killing touch, which he reluctantly employs to hunt down the undead spawn of the massacre. Meanwhile, Emma scarcely remembers Thorn Hill and knows nothing of her sorcerous heritage, until her grandfather's murder sends her fleeing into the epicenter of Weir intrigue, prejudice, accusations and assassination. There are so many complicated storylines introduced here-characters old and new, factions with shifting allegiances and agendas, plots and counterplots and secrets and lies-that the protagonists don't even meet for over 100 pages, and the volume ends on grisly cliffhanger. Yet the twisty narrative works, propelled by the deft characterizations of tortured, frustrated, desperate Jonah and fierce, feral, determined Emma and held together by the ubiquitous soundtrack of the blues, both literally and metaphorically. Chima orchestrates a world gravid with smoke and grit and sudden death, throbbing with hopeless longings, messy affections, festering resentments, passionate hungers, inevitable betrayals, and miraculous flashes of beauty and grace. A smoldering story soaked in tears, sweat and blood, constantly threatening to blaze into an inferno. Spellbinding. (Fantasy, 14 & up) Kirkus"

When Jonah was seven, a mysterious mass poisoning swept through the Thorn Hill commune, leaving the adults dead and most of the children either dead or altered, their innate magical abilities mutated in unpredictable ways. Jonah himself, for instance, can kill with a soothing, bliss-filled touch. Gabriel Mandrake has formed a school for the survivors near Trinity, Ohio, where, as readers of the first three Heir Chronicles (The Warrior Heir, BCCB 7/06, etc.) will recall, the Weir Council has formed a shaky peace among the still suspicious and antagonistic guilds. Now, however, wizards are being killed, and Gabriel has assembled a group of young assassins to dispatch the undead spirits of Jonah's commune, who have also migrated to Ohio and are seeking bodies to possess. Jonah excels at this task, but he's having second thoughts about both Gabriel's motives and his tactics. While compulsively readable and full of features that make readers glom on to the paranormal romances, this entry has a good many gaps in the world-building that will leave even committed readers frustrated. New terminology regarding the guilds is introduced without explanation, the timeline doesn't clearly correlate to the other books', and the ending offers no intermediate closure. The romance is also problematic: Emma, a girl who somehow survived the Thorn Hill Massacre with no knowledge of the Weir world of which her parents were a part, placidly accepts the new information about her heritage without so much as a blink and inexplicably falls in love with Jonah while he is tying her up and setting out to interrogate her father. These flaws may not bother readers previously blinded by sparkly vampires, but as those readers are less likely to commit to series as complex as this one, expect some mild disappointment along with howling clamors for the next book. KC BCCB"

4Q5P An unexplained tragedy left no adult survivors from the thriving Thorn Hill community in Brazil and less than a thousand children to be rescued and brought back to the States. These children were not just left with emotional scars, they were changed at their most basic magical and physical levels. Calling themselves savants, the Thorn Hill children have become teens with serious magical complications that make them dangerous to ignore; Jonah Kinlock can kill with a single touch. Torn between his gentle heart and his magic, Jonah is starting to question what he believes about the status quo when Emma Greenwood appears. True, Emma's got her own secrets, but there are intriguing hints that she might be the key to understanding what happened in Thorn Hill. Can Jonah battle his hormones, keep his deadly secret, and still win Emma's trust before it is too late? Teens will be more than relieved when they can finally put their hands on this next, long-awaited entry in the Heir Chronicles series. Jonah and Emma, along with a collection of secondary characters, deal with half-truths and lies hidden in their own histories while finding unexpected connections that continue developing storylines from previous books in the series. The fighting and weaponry will have strong appeal for boys, while the musical references will appeal to any teen interested in crafting their own music, lyrics, or poetry. The surprise ending, with plenty of loose threads left hanging, will intrigue and frustrate fans who now must begin to wait all over again.-Stacey Hayman VOYA"

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Yvonne Wagner:

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Dana Vinson:

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Spencer Fuentes:

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