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Hammered: The Iron Druid Chronicles, Book 3



Synopsis

Thor, the Norse god of thunder, is worse than a blowhard and a bully - he's ruined countless lives and killed scores of innocents. After centuries, Viking vampire Leif Helgarson is ready to get his vengeance, and he's asked his friend Atticus O'Sullivan, the last of the Druids, to help take down this Norse nightmare. One survival strategy has worked for Atticus for more than two thousand years: stay away from the guy with the lightning bolts. But things are heating up in Atticus's home base of Tempe, Arizona. There's a vampire turf war brewing, and Russian demon hunters who call themselves the Hammers of God are running rampant. Despite multiple warnings and portents of dire consequences, Atticus and Leif journey to the Norse plane of Asgard, where they team up with a werewolf, a sorcerer, and an army of frost giants for an epic showdown against vicious Valkyries, angry gods, and the hammer-wielding Thunder Thug himself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Thoroughly enjoyable, well-written and well-researched books with an interesting premise. I am more than happy to give Kevin Hearne a 5 star rating in addition to purchasing everything he has published. I hope many others discover the fun adventures of The Iron Druid and a very entertaining cast of characters. However, the reader must jump through a mandatory hoop if you choose to leave a rating. Star ratings are not acceptable on their own. No, any star rating is booby-trapped with the requirement of a written review, further weighted with a minimum word count, no less! Write a review or no stars from you. This is a tad bit bit onerous for the buyer who enjoyed reading the

book and respects the author enough to pause and tap some stars. The demand for written review effectively prevented me from posting the 5 star rating that might encourage others to enjoy an excellent book. This is ultimately unfair to Mr. Hearn, undoubtedly depriving him of many well-deserved 5 star ratings. Guilt eventually caught up with me, so herein lies not only my enthusiastic support of this book, but a bonus review of a misguided policy: to the Kindle folks or whoever came up with this Either/Or toll: lighten up on the needy/greedy gate keeping, already.

Overall, this is a pretty fun series. This volume marked a definite turning point in the series (Atticus will have to leave Arizona -- not really a spoiler since he's planning this from nearly the beginning of the book), and it appears that there are more transitions to come. A couple of loose ends from the previous book were wrapped up (although some enemies from the previous book returned, as well). A couple of things stood out to me in this book, in particular, with reference to the rest of the series. First, there was a LOT of mental dialogue between the POV character (Atticus) and his dog, Oberon. This has been a feature of this series in the past. I think most of this mental dialogue was funnier in this volume (actually made me giggle a bit) but it also served to further the story, especially towards the end. Second, there was a lot of discussion of male bonding and manliness. I could take this or leave it. Some of Atticus's mental commentary on what men will do in order to appear "manly" in front of other men was funny. Some of it was a little tiresome (mostly later on, after I felt like I'd read the same jokes multiple times). There is a scene where the characters who are on a quest together in this book give their reasons for hating the Norse thunder god Thor. This is supposed to help them bond (which is needed for the magical aspects of a phase of the journey they're on). And we learn lots of interesting information about their backgrounds -- including the backgrounds of several recurring characters in the series. But I don't really feel like I connected with any of them. I guess because the reasons they hated Thor were kind of predictable. Or perhaps because each story was told in just a few pages, whereas we've had several books to get to know Atticus. While this maybe didn't contribute to character development as much as I would have liked, it *did* contribute a great deal to worldbuilding. We learn more about other pantheons and mythologies besides the Irish, we learn about the origins of vampires and werewolves and their politics in the world of this series, etc. The pace in this one is excellent. There aren't really any slow moments. Even a visit to a bar with an old friend turns into a big scene. And while Atticus has his triumphant moments, he can't keep himself safe all the time and he can't save all his allies. He is less of a male Mary Sue in this book than in the first (and perhaps at a similar level as in the second). I'm not sure how I felt about the ending. It was sort of bittersweet. And there was something

of a cliffhanger that I really hope gets resolved. (I'm glad multiple other volumes are already out and that Mr. Hearne writes quickly with little lag between books.) I wasn't enthralled with every aspect of this book, but I did find it to be an entertaining read. The pace was great, the worldbuilding was nice (both the part I've mentioned above and some parts relating to elementals that I haven't yet discussed), and I found the jokes to be funnier than in previous books. I'm pretty sure I've already bought #4 in the series (or if I haven't, I'll be doing that soon). If you are already into this series, you'll already have a good idea of what to expect with this book. If you're new to the series, go back and start with "Hounded" (#1).

SPOILERS It just didn't seem logical for the main character to put his friends, loved ones, Innocents, and the world at stake to fulfill an oath he should not have made, especially given warnings that two different gods gave him. It was irresponsible and seemingly out of character and led to so much carnage and collateral damage. It also seemed that they left behind a powerful weapon that also might have been used as a resurrection device. After dropping all the hints about that aspect, it felt like a big unfulfilled fumble. I did enjoy the individual stories and male-bonding of the group of companions. I also enjoyed the short story included at the end.

While I was a bit disappointed by "Hexed", I liked this one a lot more. Atticus is getting increasingly involved in other people's problems- quite a change from his previous choices to drift. That, of course makes him vulnerable- to pain within these relationships, and to threats toward his friends from without. Although he's 2100 years old, he's just beginning to learn how all this works... This book's take on Thor is not mine, but I did enjoy it. Pretty much everyone hates Thor, because he is an ass. One that gets good press, granted, but still an ass. While Atticus has no affection for him either, he gets roped into participating in an expedition to kill Thor, by several people with good reasons for wanting Thor dead. I very much enjoyed the chapters in which the members of the party told each other why they had it in for Thor, each in his own voice. I enjoyed the asides here, too, where Atticus muses on why stews in fantasy novels seem to be whipped up in less than an hour, while most stews take far longer to become edible (sing it!). Also when, after the stew, none of the other dudes is willing to risk his macho in order to wash the dishes, so Atticus volunteers- to everyone else's vast relief. I am not entirely sure why Atticus intentionally tried to deflect things onto Bacchus- a god with a known hate-on for Druids. I would have thought discretion would be more appropriate. I expect it's a set-up for future plots. Also, the book did end on something of a cliffhanger. I don't care for that. At least I'm coming to the series late, so I can get #4 fairly

soon!Very good third book in a series I am enjoying.

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