



The Conjurer's Riddle

Andrea Cremer

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Charlotte may have left the Floating City, but she's not out of danger yet. On the run from the British Empire's clutches, she leads her group of exiles west and south, plunging into a wild world of shady merchants and surly rivermen on the way to New Orleans.

But the more Charlotte learns about the revolution she has championed, the more questions she has. As she and her friends get to know the hidden tunnels that run below New Orleans, home to criminals, assassins, and pirates, and head deep into the mystical bayou surrounding the city, Charlotte must make a decision.

Do the revolution's goals justify their means, or are some things too sacred to sacrifice?

The Conjurer's Riddle Details

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From Reader Review The Conjurer's Riddle for online ebook

Kathy Martin says

This is the second book in a trilogy and sees Charlotte, with her friends, fleeing the destruction of their hideout and heading across the country to New Orleans to join with the Resistance. Along with her other friends is Grave who is an unusual character who was made from the body of a mad inventor's dead son. Grave now has powers and skills that make him very valuable to whatever side in the revolution manages to take control of him. He has also excited various religious orders who seem to feel that he is an abomination to be destroyed.

Charlotte is determined to protect her friend Grave and not let anyone - no matter what side they are on - use him as if he were not human. Charlotte and her group are aided by Linnet and Lord Ott who also have their own agendas. She also reunites with Meg who was her brother's girlfriend and who has been hiding major fighting skills.

New Orleans is a fascinating city where all the inhabitants and visitors are required to wear masks. It is also guarded by a massive and very steampunk sea wall. But, best of all, there are pirates. I can't wait for the third book to read more of Charlotte's adventures as she protects Grave and likely has to deal with her two suitors again.

Rebecca says

3.5 STARS

Like most trilogies, the beginning of this second installment was painstaking slow and uneventful. Even Charlotte and Linnet couldn't make up for the lackluster storyline up to the 40% mark. The remaining 60% was engaging and packed full of action. It was everything I've come to enjoy in this world. The ending has me optimistic that the final book will be as entertaining as the first.

Laura says

I had such a difficult time getting into this book. The beginning did not do a good job of reintroducing the characters and the plot of the first book, so I just spent the first few chapters confused and bored and thhhhiiss close to putting the book down. Fortunately, it picked up in the middle and started to become more engaging with the character's traveling to New Orleans where the Resistance head quarters was located and the city had a cool element to it where a law required the inhabitants to wear a mask at all times, which I thought was an intriguing concept. The main character though I did not find to be likable and some of the situations she got into were almost too ridiculous to be believable. The ending was the worst because it tried to end on a cliff hanger when really it just ended abruptly right in the middle of an important scene. I do feel like the series is going somewhere interesting, so while I had a few problems with this book I am hopeful that the next book will be smooth sailing (it makes sense if you read the end of the book :P).

Hayley says

Originally posted on BlueAnteater

The short: The steampunk-esque AU world remains of interest, but the characters remain stiff and the story overwhelming in detail.

The long:

I admit that I skimmed quite a bit of this one. When I picked it up to read, I was more than a little hesitant because I couldn't remember much of the first book nor that I particularly liked it (in fact, rereading my **review** of *The Inventor's Secret*, I see that I did not). My main interest was finding out what happened to Grave, the automaton with the soul of a boy, and to be fair, *The Conjuror's Riddle* doesn't disappoint in revealing more about him. It does take awhile for the story to build, however, and the most surprising thing is how much the Resistance and the Empire and all other AU elements slowly fall away to focus on the conundrum of Grave and what it really means to be human.

Charlotte has matured a lot, and her love triangle (angle) with Coe and Jack thankfully takes a back seat to the action. She reflects on the situation and has a surprising amount of clearheaded restraint when it comes to the realization that they're fighting over her and it's **not** a good thing. She therefore devotes her attention to her little group of child survivors --- who are at first prominent in the story and then slowly recede into the background --- and to Grave, whom she is both frightened and protective of.

This is the part of the book that I liked, but it's buried deep within other complex plot elements and character mishmash. To be fair, the writing is quite lovely, but it simply doesn't suit the bland characters and overstuffed story. There's a great deal of exposition, and while that's normally one of the my favorite things, I was just not at all interested in this world, sadly, and I found myself quickly working through the historical bits to get back to the action. There were also some wonky bits that may border on offensive, though I'm not in a position to really say so. When dealing with alternative history, it's too easy to give focus to the wrong people and cultures, and despite being set in a purportedly diverse New Orleans, I didn't get the feeling of universal inclusion or diversity. It's a backdrop, nothing more.

The ending was also quite abrupt; I didn't know this series was actually a **trilogy**, so that was a bit of a surprise, and it's more of an unfortunate cliffhanger than an enticement to read more. I mean, I think I will pick up the third book because I really am very curious about Grave (easily the most fascinating character, though it's hardly a contest), but I'll probably won't be any more excited than I was to read this one.

John says

Young Adult Steampunk. Moves along at a fast clip has some pretty interesting alternative history going on that I enjoyed in the first book. Basically, what if steam technology was so advanced by the 18th century that the American Revolution failed. This book sees our troop of children evacuating their home in New York and making their way to New Orleans. Also an interesting version of a city still controlled by the French, and home to the "American Resistance"

I found a few flaws in the layout of New Orleans, like the underground. I mean, it's New Orleans, it's not like

they're not prone to flooding and were surrounded by swamp in the early 19th century or anything. But I took it in stride because New York is also a "floating city" so, it's alternative reality, maybe Louisiana had firm ground or some shit, who knows? I can't let shit like that bother me when I read what in actuality is a historical fantasy.

The YA "romance" aspect was kind of there. Thankfully it didn't take up a major part of the story and didn't cause Charlotte (our heroine) to lose her head repeatedly like you will see in *so many* YA novels. The cast of characters are fun and eccentric but I do regret that I waited 4 years before reading the second book. It took me several chapters to re-familiarize myself with the characters.

Honestly, I only waited so long to read this book because I was so damned unreasonable about buying it because Amazon wanted \$10 and I knew it'd take me less than a day to read. It wasn't till I recently discovered my library had the ebook that I decided to finish off the series. So I did.

Rea K says

"Reagan, you weren't thrilled with the first book? HOW COULD YOU BRING YOURSELF TO READ THE SECOND ONE?" Well, dear reader, I don't know how I brought myself to read the second one, but I'm gonna read the third one, too. Mostly because I have it in my little hands, but partly because with an ending like that, I guess I can read through the end of the series. *heaves sigh* I guess. If I insist. I can think of worse books to pass time with at any rate.

This book was slow at the beginning, so cue my shock when I went from page 83 to page 183 without even realizing how fast I'd read or, rather, how much time had passed. My big issue from this one was WHY ON GOD'S GREEN EARTH IS EVERYONE OBSESSED WITH CHARLOTTE? Also, I noted in a different review that it's hard to figure out what the revolution is about. WHICH, UNLESS YOU READ THE FIRST BOOK, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON. Hell, I read the first book and I don't know what's going on half the time.

On the bright side, I'd like to murder both of the Winter brothers. God. I haven't had a ship that I said "Just let this ship sink and save us all" about ever. To my knowledge. Maybe if I was reading Twilight now. Haha. I originally liked Jack for Charlotte, because to me it was obvious that they were crushing on each other. And, UNFORTUNATELY, it reminded me of my horrid love life. A boy who may or may not have (I'm not sure I want to know the truth here ever) been flirting with me tried to throw me in the dumpster at work, SO I MEAN, BOYS ARE CONFUSING. But, I was like "How thick are you that you both have feelings for each other?" Except I understand that you can be incredibly thick about feelings, because the one boy that I actually did like may or may not have been convinced that I hate him. Whoops. Excuuuuse me for having the wretched childhood that made expressing feelings for boys a taboo subject because the rest of the children would be mean. And I wonder why I don't have a boyfriend. Haha. I once lied to girls I was only kinda friends with about who I had a crush on because the boy I did have a crush on was four years older and all graduated and junk and I only told like one other person that I liked him and I was NOT going to have people teasing me about that crush for the next three years.

But I digress. Sort of. I didn't really know how I felt about Coe going in, but I really don't care for him. He's pushing at Charlotte for his own gains. I mean, if she gets all bent out of shape about Jack, of COURSE she's going to run into Coe's wide open arms. LOOK. I THINK I SEE WHERE THIS BOOK IS TAKING US. TOWARDS JACK. NOW CAN WE SINK THE ENTIRE FLEET BEFORE WE GO FURTHER.

I still think this book is set in the wrong time period. Don't get me wrong. If you didn't tell me the year, I'd hop in, believe that this was the 1860s and be like "Okay. I got this. This works." BUT KNOWING HOW CLOSE IT IS TO THE DAMN REVOLUTION, I DO NOT LIKE IT ONE BIT. IT DOES NOT FIT. It

makes me itch.

The fight scenes are annoying. I don't CARE about the technicalities, to be honest. I also still have a sincere doubt in the plausibility of Meg's whole character. I also suspect that she doesn't have feelings for Ash like we all know Ash has for her. I suspect she is the token lesbian character. Now, don't tell me that it's rude to say that, but it's my suspicion.

ALRIGHT. I'M THERE. The mystery of the entire series is Grave. And quite frankly, I'm sick to death of Grave, except I understand that if we didn't have Grave, we wouldn't have any story and the kidlets would still be packed away in their stupid cave (still don't see the point of that when they left children with some nuns somewhere) and still brainwashed into the resistance. Oh. Wait. Was that a spoiler? Might have been. Don't read that line. Just pretend that you didn't see it. Quite frankly, the whole thing reeks of "You have to pick a damn side, you can't just be in the middle." I'm quite willing to sit in the middle here and say that all the sides stink. If I was a twenty-odd-year-old girl in this book, I think I'd say "I quit" and go live in, like, Spain or something.

Also, the map leaves much to be desired. I don't know where on the map the city that these kids are trying to get to is located because OF COURSE, the map is the worst map on the face of the planet. Look, ma'am, I know you were all cocky about the shape of the United States, but you're doing a disservice to the book because I would have followed much better if I was able to pop back to the front and be like "oh, yeah. that's where this river is. And this city." And, if you're making up cities, it helps even more.

The religion still bothers the hell out of me. I have not got enough ability to suspend all disbelief to convince my little self that "Hephaestus's hammer" and "holy athene" or whatever that one was ARE EVEN BELIEVABLE. I do not see the British Empire grabbing onto the whole Greek mythology thing. These are the same people who believed that chair legs were immoral. (Though that might be a little more in the future.) My knowledge of the British is that the upper class was a hypocritical group of prudes and hoes.

OKAY, I'm off to read the last in the series because, by golly, I hate myself and am stubborn as hell. But it's not like I trudged through the first two, so unless I throw the book across the room and it lands in a puddle or some junk, I ought to be able to finish and give a review and tell you to run before you get this far.

Also, before I forget. Jack is a dumbass and I really want that ship to sink. And the Coe ship (especially since I keep typing Cow). I'm going to throw up my little hands and say I ship Linnet and Meg or Linnet and Charlotte or Meg and Charlotte. And even those ships can sink. I do not care who ends up with who. I just want everyone to die. Now. Painfully.

Brenda Ayala says

Short version: There's a rebellion, I don't know why. Lots of things happen besides rebellion.

Long version: As usual, I came into this having no idea what I was getting into. Since I picked this up randomly, I didn't have any clue what the original story was, and I knew I would spend some time in the beginning trying to figure out what's happening. But I don't know much more now after finishing the book than I did in the beginning. I can narrow it all down into about four sentences, which I started to do above:

There is a rebellion, and Charlotte is part of it. There is magic and machinery both which is steampunk-esque. There is a fancy version of Frankenstein's monster, and everyone wants to abuse him. Also, Charlotte has the hots for two brothers.

There. That is basically everything that happens here. It's interesting to an extent, yes. But it doesn't make for

an actual plot, it just makes for little random adventures. It's like watching thirty minute episodes of a show with no continuity rather than reading the second book in a series.

It isn't *bad* though; far from it. The writing is well done, and Charlotte's ping ponging between the two brothers didn't annoy me as much as love triangles normally do. I think it has a lot to do with how she was more pragmatic about it. She didn't faint from love every time one of them talked to her, or become an idiotic dolt whenever one deemed her worthy enough to look at. So it's not really a bad book; quite well written in fact. It just doesn't seem to really go anywhere.

Lindsay says

Charlotte leads her group of exiles west, plunging into a wild world of shady merchants and surly rivermen on the way to New Orleans. But as Charlotte learns more about the revolution she has championed, she wonders if she's on the right side after all. Charlotte and her friends get to know the mystical New Orleans bayou and deep into the shadowy tunnels below the city—the den of criminals, assassins and pirates—Charlotte must decide if the revolution's goals justify their means, or if some things, like the lives of her friends, are too sacred to sacrifice.

The Conjurer's Riddle is a look into revolution and rebellion, the secret-gathering and the spying, the hard journeys and the dangers. The heavy cost.

Charlotte is driven, soft-hearted, and passionate about her chosen cause, about saving her friends. But doubt lingers, as it always does. Things aren't the same as they were in the Catacombs or in the Floating City. On their journey west, in New Orleans, Charlotte learns how different things are. How duplicitous and two-faced. How her ideas and reasons for fighting back might differ from other members of the resistance.

In terms of the romance, I still feel that Jack is the only option for Charlotte. I still don't understand why a love triangle was added in the first book why Coe suddenly went from person Charlotte barely knew to romantic entanglement. Charlotte is still drawn to Jack, still attracted to him, still hating him and worrying about him, while Coe just seems there. But there wasn't much time for Charlotte to worry about her feelings for most of the book. She was far too busy travelling, learning secrets, or trying to stay hidden and alive. The romance takes a back seat to Charlotte's journey and the still hidden mysteries of Grave. So hidden, so mysterious.

The Resistance is still fighting back against the Empire, fighting to be free from an oppressive ruler from across an ocean. When you fight back as part of a rebellion, you fight for your beliefs, your friends and family. But at what cost? Destruction of property? Injury? Death? Is revolution the only answer? This book, this series, will always scream America to me. Their idea that freedom is a right, that no one can take it from you, but if it ever is taken you can fight to regain it. Is violence ever the only answer? As a Canadian, it feels so American to go in guns blazing to fight for freedom. It feels like it's all they have, like their identity as American is based on freedom and without it they're nothing.

I'm still intrigued by this world, I think the building of it is creative. To speculate on what a country would look like had a major event in its history not happened, if someone else was still in control. If it was a mixture of colonies and disputed territories. It's a dangerous world Charlotte's in, one filled with deception and the impossible. I want to know more. What is the Resistance's endgame plan? What are Grave's secrets, the ones that even he doesn't know? What else is out there for Charlotte to discover? A great follow-up to the

first book.

(I received an advance copy of this title from Penguin Random House Canada.)

La république des livres says

J'avais beaucoup aimé le premier tome de ce roman que j'avais lu il y a un peu plus d'un an. J'ai eu la chance de pouvoir le découvrir assez rapidement après sa sortie.

L'histoire reprend là où elle s'est arrêtée dans le premier tome. L'auteur prend quand même le temps de nous rappeler certaines choses qui se sont passées dans le précédent livre pour mieux nous plonger dans son univers.

On suit donc nos héros dans leur fuite vers la Nouvelle-Orléans. C'est le premier moment riche en rebondissements et ça ne va pas s'arrêter tout au long du roman, les actions s'enchaînent.

On en apprend aussi plus sur l'univers que construit l'auteur qui dispose d'une imagination sans limite. J'ai pu me plonger au sein de la Nouvelle-Orléans créé par l'auteur, bien loin de celle que l'on connaît de nos jours. On découvre pas mal de choses sur l'empire Britania et sur ces méthodes pour maintenir les gens sous contrôle mais surtout on pénètre au sein de la résistance pour en savoir plus sur son fonctionnement.

Charlotte reste bien sûr le personnage central de l'histoire. Elle a muri à cause des différents événements qui se sont passés et qui vont se passer dans ce roman.

Les autres personnages des catacombes (Pip, Birch et Scoff) sont présents qu'en arrière-plan. Par contre on fait la connaissance de nouveaux personnages qui vont jouer un rôle important je pense dans le prochain tome. Linnet me fait toujours sourire par ses répliques et son attitude mais j'ai pu découvrir qu'un cœur se cache derrière sa façade de guerrière. L'auteur aurait pu éviter un triangle amoureux qui n'apporte rien à cette histoire.

Je trouve dommage par contre que Grave soit absent d'une bonne partie de ce roman. Il est censé être le « secret de l'inventeur ». Heureusement les derniers chapitres lui sont consacrés et attisent l'énigme autour de ce personnage.

En bref, c'est un roman dont l'univers m'a enchanté une fois de plus. J'ai aimé en apprendre sur cet univers. Mais j'ai le sentiment de ne pas en avoir appris plus sur Grave alors qu'il est censé être le cœur de cette saga. Par contre les actions et les révélations nous promettent un prochain tome riche surtout avec ce qu'il se passe à la fin de ce roman.

Laurapassage says

[<http://laura-passage.com/le-secret-de...>]

"L'énigme du magicien, deuxième tome de la trilogie Le secret de l'inventeur, se révèle avant tout comme un tome de transition. Bien que l'intrigue principale avance peu, Andrea Cremer ravit par son univers, son

héroïne forte et touchante et le rythme haletant du récit."

Paula Moreira says

Loved it. But ahhh every book I've been reading lately ends with a cliff hanger. Now I have to wait like two years for the next. Kinda sucks. Oh well, life goes on

Colleen Houck says

I love that I can hit so many tags with this series. There's so much going on! The entire description of this version of New Orleans was amazing! Loved the swamp guru who fights with a stick. Also the spider girls and the pirate...yummy. Very much look forward to reading more about him.

Galleane says

De manière générale je déplore un manque de substance et de profondeur, comme dans le premier tome. De nouveau je suis restée sur ma faim, tout reste bien trop en surface, et je n'ai pas été éblouie par les promesses qui survenaient par moments au travers des nouvelles choses qui apparaissaient. Je passe outre le triangle amoureux qui piétine grandement et qui de ce que j'ai lu se termine d'une façon que tout le monde n'appréciera pas dans le dernier tome que pour ma part je ne lirais pas.

Ma chronique complète : <http://bloggalleane.blogspot.fr/2017/...>

Britt says

Once again, Cremer dazzles with her lush settings of this alternative history that is still somewhat american. The division of territories is quite different though. It is set in the future yet most things seem to be dated such as clothings and social hierarchies and such. I rivaled in the introduction to the rich yet gritty New Orleans culture. The steampunk elements are of course outstanding and this time there is even some magic and possible necromancy involved. It was a nice change from The Floating City of New York where the high society seemed to dwell. This place had it grandeur, don't get me wrong but, there was a much darker more primal undercurrent to it all. This review was originally posted on Please Feed the Bookworm Click here to keep reading bout my feels!

Sean says

Not quite as engaging as the first book but still a really good sequel. I will definitely be reading the concluding novel and have a good feeling it'll be an improvement on this one.

