



The Immortal Crown

Richelle Mead

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The #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of the *Vampire Academy* and *Bloodline* series returns with the second installment in her acclaimed *Age of X* series.

Gameboard of the Gods introduced religious investigator Justin March and Mae Koskinen, the beautiful supersoldier assigned to protect him. Together they have been charged with investigating reports of the supernatural and the return of the gods, both inside the Republic of United North America and out. With this highly classified knowledge comes a shocking revelation: Not only are the gods vying for human control, but the elect—special humans marked by the divine—are turning against one another in bloody fashion.

Their mission takes a new twist when they are assigned to a diplomatic delegation headed by Lucian Darling, Justin's old friend and rival, going into Arcadia, the RUNA's dangerous neighboring country. Here, in a society where women are commodities and religion is intertwined with government, Justin discovers powerful forces at work, even as he struggles to come to terms with his own reluctantly acquired deity.

Meanwhile, Mae—grudgingly posing as Justin's concubine—has a secret mission of her own: finding the illegitimate niece her family smuggled away years ago. But with Justin and Mae resisting the resurgence of the gods in Arcadia, a reporter's connection with someone close to Justin back home threatens to expose their mission—and with it the divine forces the government is determined to keep secret.

The Immortal Crown Details

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From Reader Review The Immortal Crown for online ebook

Sandra (LadyGrey Reads) says

2015 Book Awards: Best Novel Runner-Up

2015 Book Awards: Most Action Packed Runner-Up

2015 Book Awards: Prom King Runner-Up

Awarded to *Justin March*

(information about these awards is available on my profile)

Alright, let me give you a rundown of my feelings right now

SERIOUSLY WHAT WAS THIS BOOK?!?!?!?

First, you have these amazing main characters with their backgrounds and their personal complications and their dealings in a post-apocalyptic world which I can actually see happening because of how the world is at the moment regarding religion. Seriously; I have a very, very hard time believing that zombies will show up all of a sudden and wreak havoc on the world but the world getting destroyed by religious fanatics trying to tell everyone that their religion is the right one and that everyone else is wrong is basically already happening.

Second, Norse Gods. *NORSE GODS!* I can't... like... do you even know how happy I am that someone writes stuff like this regarding the old Norse Gods and doesn't make them cliché? I think I'm in love with the bloody ravens!

Third, the ending. In a way I'm really glad I won't have to wait several years for the next book, which I would've had to do if I'd read this when it was published, but waiting until next year is *STILL TOO LONG BECAUSE THAT ENDING KILLED ME!* I'm terrified for what's going to happen in the next book because in those final two chapters you suddenly have two more characters showing up that will definitely make things go to hell if Mae and Justin don't get their sh*t together. **HELP!**

Kaitlin says

DAT COVER.

Anything mead writes is gold. I can't wait to get my hands on this book!

Faye, la Patata says

US residents! You can win a copy of this book on the blog! Join now!

I already said this before, but I'll *gladly* say it again: I was not a fan of Richelle Mead at all, but I am now because of this series. When I first (~~tried to~~) read *Vampire Academy*, I was hardly impressed. I remember going through the first ten to twenty pages and saying to myself with a scowl, "Mmm, juvenile writing. Too young. Meh. DNF." Honestly, between me and that series, we're pretty much done. Nada. But then I read *Gameboard of the Gods* and I fell for it hard. I instantly loved not only the writing, but also the world-building, the flawed characters, the setting, and the plot. It had everything I wanted in a good, perfect story and more. You can really see that Mead has matured very much in her writing with this highly ambitious story.

***The Immortal Crown* took everything in *Gameboard of the Gods* and increased its epicness tenfold.** We join the ever-so flawed characters, Justin and Mae, venture outside the RUNA in search of illegal worship of gods. Not known to his bosses, there is more to it than politics that are at play here, as he is also there for a "divine" reason. You see, for many, many years, gods have been driven out by society. They were shunned away, and since then, civilization has progressed to greater heights, and nobody believed in them ever again. Until now. Especially when the same gods are playing a game, or rather a war, amongst each other, and in order to strengthen themselves, they need believers. And that's what the Elects are for - to bring more followers to their gods. And that is also what Justin is trying not to become, but his lovely raven sidekicks are only too happy to keep reminding him of Odin's request.

And this is what I freaking love about this book.

WORLD-BUILDING

Section 1: The Setting

I don't know about you folks, but it's kind of hard to efficiently and effortlessly put gods and different kinds of mythology in a futuristic world that reeks of "Science Fiction" all over, but the author was able to do it not only in the first book but here as well with her intricate storytelling and ways of revealing the grander scheme of things. It's supposed to feel unnatural, as "religion" and "science fiction" are pretty much the exact opposites of each other, but Mead was able to weave both concepts in a single story in a brilliant manner. It just makes sense, you know? It also gives that feeling of excitement and trepidation, that feeling of humility, that in this fictional world, people go about their daily lives without even knowing there are darker, greater forces at play. In this book, our world-building expands as Justin and Mae enter Arcadia, the south-eastern part of the USA that became its own country after an event in the past. They're not as technologically-advanced as the RUNA, but unlike their western counterpart, they believe in a god, and that god pretty much rules their politics and lifestyles.

I loved how Mead was able to create a whole new atmosphere in this book. Arcadia is as backwards as backwards can get. Women are seen as inferiors and are not given voices not only in the government but in homes as well. Men are allowed to marry more than one woman, but women cannot. Since there is a shortage of women to marry in this country, they are often kidnapped to be sold to the highest bidder once they reach of age. **It was so fascinating to me how Mead can create a technologically-advanced country**

on one side, and a shithole in the gutter on the other. Women are abused left and right, the men get a kick out of it, and you can't help but feel angry at them. **As our cast of characters are there for a "political tour", it makes the tension between the two parties even more spectacular and exciting.** It kept me on my toes at all times, making me guess if something explosive or controversial will come out of this or that. If anything she makes each setting more and more interesting, and I can't wait to see what other parts of this fictional world have in store for us.

Section 2: The Gods

This is no doubt one of the most interesting and intriguing aspect of the book: the fact that in a supposedly godless world, gods and goddesses from various origins are coming back to take their righteous places amongst men. There's just something so fascinating about them. They know they're superior, they know they can do things beyond our wildest imagination, and yet they don't meddle as much... if they do meddle, they let their Elects do it for them, and these are oftentimes done in the shadows. **I loved how you get the gist of the greater and grander scheme of things involving these gods, but there is still an air of mystery around and about them, a mystery that I relish with each and every gradual revelation.** How many gods are there? What are their long-term goals? Who are these gods? Can they assume human forms? I have so many questions in my head, but surprisingly, I am in no hurry to know all about it instantly. I just want to savor each moment as I continue to learn more about them and their roles in a continuously evolving society.

So far, from what I've noted, we have these gods so far: Odin, Osiris, Morrigan, Freya, and... and... LOKI! Yes, folks. We get Loki, and I'm really excited about this. I'm sure some of you are rolling your eyes and are thinking he's not the same Loki as Tom Hiddleston BUT ME DO NOT CARE. I can't help but imagine him that way and it makes the reading experience so much funner. Will there be Thor? Will Thor make an appearance? I sure hope so, because in that case I will be rooting for him in this divine war!

CHARACTERS

Age of X has a lot of characters and uses multiple POVs, but that didn't deteriorate my experience even though I'm usually not fond of that. **Justin and Mae are as flawed as always, but they've grown a lot since the first book.** Before they would always banter and argue with each other, trying to assert their own dominance in their own ways, but now they compliment each other a lot. They watch each other's backs and pretty much care for one another. I mean, yes, they still have their own episodes where their bad sides show. Justin can be too selfish and rude. Mae can also be too proud to ask for anybody's help. But they always try to compromise if the situation calls for it and that's what I love about them so much. They're flawed, yes; they're selfish, yes; they have a lot of bad traits, yes; but they know when to man up when it's needed.

Also, gosh, the tension in the air between these two. It just sizzles like whoa.

Mae? She's a freaking bad-ass chick. I've never seen or read a stronger or more independent woman in fiction who's such in control of her feelings and actions. I love her so much.

Tessa, on the other hand... she was kind of meh in the first book, but I did like her a lot here. Granted, there were times I felt she was too innocent and naive for her own good (and in a bad way, too), but I love how she eventually realizes what's important to her. I also enjoy learning the world with her. As someone who came from the province with little to no experience of how the rest of the world works, she still has a lot of learning to do, and every time we see things in her POV, we also discover more about the world as well through her eyes.

PLOT

Now, the plot here is very special. **What I like about the plot is that we know there is a bigger story behind the scenes, but we get there through the smaller subplots.** It particularly follows Justin's adventures as he goes from one place to another dissolving supposedly "illegal" religions, which is pretty much his job as an investigator of the government. While *Gameboard of the Gods* laid out the foundation of the series, this installment jumpstarts the action and the real intrigue. Both are good, but *The Immortal Crown* gives more excitement as more revelations are revealed. It's more fast-paced, more engaging, and pretty much more *everything*.

OVERALL...

***The Immortal Crown* is an amazing installment, and if you loved the first book, it's a guarantee that you will love this one, too.** There is enough science fiction and mythological gods for everyone to share, as well as some delicious character development and relationship dynamics to look forward to. **Also, did I mention Loki? Yes - LOKI LOKI LOKI LOKI LOKI LOKI LOKI!!!!** Please read this series, even if for that one god alone. You know you can't get enough of him. But seriously now, this series is utter amazeballs. I really do recommend this one as I hold it close to my heart. Here's to hoping book 3 is as brilliant!

Μαρ?α Γεωργοπο?λου says

That was PHENOMENAL!!!!

You can see the following review also here: <http://loveandlivetoread.wordpress.co...>

****ARC provided by Dutton Adult via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review****

I've said it many times and I am going to say it one more time: I absolutely love Richelle Mead's books and "The Immortal Crown" is the best example! This book was amazing from the first page until the last! I loved the first book in this series and I couldn't wait to read the second one and I excited to say that it was as great as I was expecting!

The author managed to create a very unique world-building with complicated social structure and a world that is, basically, consisted of two areas that are rich and advanced in technology and the rest of the world is almost barbaric. In this story, Mae and Justin, after their first encounter with the gods, are found themselves in one of the most barbaric areas, accompanying a diplomatic entourage. But both of them are chosen by two different gods that are not willing to let them go. And not only these gods are now in the game and all them have their own agenda.

This book is like a chess game. Gods want to come back and they use special people in order to succeed. Mae and Justin has to fight with enemies, gods and themselves in order to keep going and they start feeling like pawns.

Mae had the worst time in this book on so many levels. Their visit to a country where women were treated like lesser beings, her connection with a goddess that let her down at the end and the fact that she was raped, definitely tell us that she had a lot to deal with in the whole book. I really liked Mae because she's strong and at the same time fragile. She wants to have the control in a situation but at the same time when she finds the right person she yields to him. Also, she is willing to do the right thing no matter how dangerous the situation is and that is something that I admire.

I like Justin also, although, there were times that I wanted to punch him! He's very smart and know how to read people's reactions and that's why I am surprised that he didn't realize what Odin meant for his relationship with Mae. I believe that he hasn't realized that he really is on board with Odin no matter what he says. He made a bad decision and now Mae pays the consequences. These two seems different but deep down they are alike and they have to be together. I don't know if it's possible after everything that happened in this book but I'm looking forward for the next one!

Best thing in this book?? The appearance of a god I love to read about! I am not going to write any spoilers about that because you have to read the book in order to understand his appearance, but believe me, you'll love it!

Definitely a great read! If you haven't read the series yet, I recommend you to do it right away!!

Katelyn Miller says

I am completely baffled that apparently some people didn't like the first book. However, it's not a complete surprise, if they were already R.Mead fans, for one main reason: aside from Vampire Academy/Bloodlines, her other series kind of sucked.

Georgina Kincaid was porn-without-plot for the most part. And Dark Swan (while pretty awesome on the whole) had maybe the worst ending of any series that has ever been written ever that basically devolved into me hating the main character with a passion. (Get your shit together, Eugenie Markham. This isn't you.)

Ipsa facto, if you liked THOSE shitty books, you will certainly not like this new series, which is a hundred times more ambitious and shows incredible growth as an author. The worldbuilding is seamless, and the character interactions are utterly believable (especially thanks to the quasi-dual perspective). AND she seems to have let go of her pet archetype: Badass Chick With Superpowers And A Troubled Backstory Who Makes Shitty Decisions, Mostly Based On Her Inability To Resist A Guy.

Mae is a Badass Chick With Superpowers And A Backstory That Justifies Her Life Choices Who Makes Rational Decisions And Valiantly Attempts to Resist The Guy Without Losing A Sense Of Vulnerability.

Sorry if this seems like a recap of my review from book 1, but I can't let people think that this series is bad just because some idiots are sad that they didn't get the Typical Mead Formula For Literary Success. If it keeps going the way it has been, this series is going to be fantastic.

Isabella says

On-hold.

18/06/13

I'm aching for this book and it's just June 2013... Damn... A year to go before me holding it=pretty babies of awesomeness everywhere.

Age of X #2..... I'm here.... Waiting....
COME TO MAMA!!

Y. C. says

This, if possible, was even better than the first book.

I'm so, so happy and it feels like I've swallowed starlight and it's going to burst out of me any second because damn it that book was awesome and I can't wait for more and I will rave about this because it deserves a shit ton of raving.

A shit ton.

In this book, Justin and Mae are going to Arcadia. Justin needs to thwart the high priest from spreading religion into RUNA and Mae needs to find her niece. Tessa is currently enrolled in another school, and is participating in a news internship.

Unfortunately, we don't learn anything about more about Leo or Dominic, or about the drugged praetorian Mae injured.

I do have speculation about Tessa. I really think she'll become an elect, or take on a god. She is clearly gifted in media, and can reach a large audience. If religious freedom becomes laxer, then she could be more valuable as a pawn than Justin or Mae despite her young age.

There's so much happening in this book and you'll be on the edge of your seat for most of it; it'll be exhausting but you won't even care because this book is wonderful and everything you could wish for in a sequel.

Maria Angelica says

4.5

Esse livros só aumentou os riscos para os dois personagens principais e eu estou adorando. Todo o debate sobre liberdade religiosa é interessantíssimo!

A única coisa que me deixou meio entediada no livros foram os capítulos da Tessa.

O final foi de cortar o coração e eu preciso do próximo AGORA!

Jennifer says

★★★★½

The Immortal Crown is the second installment in Richelle Mead's adult fantasy series titled Age of X. This multi-genre series is so complex in it's world building- it's a lot to take in. But if you can get through the first book Gameboard of the Gods, then I think you will be able to find your groove. I adore Richelle Mead but this series took me by surprise. If her name wasn't attached to it, I would not have recognized this as her writing. So far, I am not enjoying Age of X as much as her other series I have read but I would still recommend it. It's part fantasy, part mythology, part dystopia, part paranormal, and part mystery...it's very involved. With everything going on, it's sure to keep all sorts of readers on their toes. It's the kind of book that will keep your brain pretty active as you try to remember the what, who, why, how, and when's of this world and its characters. I very much enjoy the two main characters: Justin and Mae. There is a romance element that adds some tension and this component is what personally kept me invested. Ms. Mead ends this book in a way that will have readers adding the next installment immediately, even possibly regardless of their overall enjoyment. In my opinion, I thought The Immortal Crown was better than the first book and this gives me incentive to continue the series. Check it out!

My favorite quote:

"You've spent your whole life seeking the next best high from drugs or the arms of a woman, Magnus told him. When all along, all you had to was surrender to the god who wants you. Easier, isn't it?"

♥Rachel♥ says

4.5 Stars

The Immortal Crown was an impressive sequel, and even better than Gameboard of the Gods, in my opinion. I refreshed my memory (thank you Recaptains) I got right back into this story, and enjoyed the ride even more this time around.

Be warned, my review contains some spoilers if you haven't read Gameboard of the Gods.

Justin and Mae are up to their usual, investigating "religious groups and supernatural claims" making sure they're not a threat to the RUNA, Republic of United North America. Justin is still riding a fine line with the god Odin after barely escaping servitude in the last book. Sleeping with Mae almost sealed the deal, as she is his perfect match, and his taking her meant Justin agreed to Odin's offer. He barely got off on a technicality.

There's always a price to tying yourself to a god and Justin is trying hard to avoid it. Justin and Mae are "elect", "someone marked as special who have the potential to be strong servants for the gods" and that's especially helpful to those gods who are trying to reestablish power and dominance. Needless to say both Justin and Mae capture the attention of many deities out there.

When Lucian Darling, Justin's college friend and candidate for consul, invites him on a goodwill delegation to Arcadia, a country in opposition to the RUNA, and Justin wants no part of it. That is, until Mae asks that they agree to go.

Mae, a Praetorian guard is an elite, super soldier, who never had any belief in gods or the supernatural until meeting Justin and after the events of the last book. Now, however, she's been having visions about the niece her sister discarded like garbage, and the location shown gives her the chills. If they're correct, her little eight-year old niece is in Arcadia where woman are considered second class or worse. Mae has no idea how to go about getting her niece back until Lucian Darling's offer.

This story had me on edge and gritting my teeth in many parts. The customs of Arcadia infuriated and disgusted me! This is a society where woman are treated as property, sold either as concubines or if they're "lucky" as wives (as in multiple for a man) to the highest bidder as early as the age of thirteen or whenever they hit puberty!! The women slave over preparing meals and cleaning the home, often deprived of modern technology to assist, not because they don't possess inventions like plumbing, dishwashers or vacuum cleaners, but because doing it the manual way builds character and instills humility. Ugh!! Women must keep every part of their body covered so that they don't tempt men, and if they are caught making any infraction, they can expect beatings or other forms of punishment as far as even death. To say I was OUTRAGED would be putting it mildly!!

Mae's desperate worry over her niece is understandable, and so is her reliance any means of help, even if it comes from supernatural sources. However, her relationship with gods in this installment is a rocky one. I'm troubled by the newest god to reveal himself to Mae at the end. I looked up some of the gods mentioned in this series, and one of the abilities ascribed to this newest god is troubling. Does he have anything to do with something traumatic that happens to Mae at the end? I guess we'll see.

Justin has his own troubles in Arcadia with Odin's warning of a supernatural threat to his power and to the RUNA. It becomes apparent early in their trip exactly what/who this threat is, but Justin masterfully maneuvers things to his county and Odin's (reluctantly, albeit) benefit.

Mae is still somewhat icy in the beginning towards Justin after their one-night stand, and his harsh words meant to keep her away. But they work together well, naturally in sync, and having a connection where they trust each other implicitly. They reminded of a futuristic Mulder and Scully from the X-Files. They have the same amazing chemistry and underlying attraction neither wants to admit. This becomes more evident when Mae is posing as Justin's concubine in Arcadia, where they must rely heavily on each other. Justin surprised me with his courageous behavior when it came to Mae, because he didn't really step up like this in the last book. I was heartened with the progress of Mae and Justin's relationship at points, but then upset by others. It's foolish to think all will be settled happily seeing as there are more books to come, but a girl can dream! I will give you this lovely quote that made me swoon from Justin:

"All those other flings I've had are just ashes in the wind, shattered and forgotten. But you...you're the real thing. The fire that keeps burning in my life. You're the one. There's no one else I feel this connected to."

The Immortal Crown was an amazing sequel, and I have a feeling the series will continue to get better with each installment. This was somewhat of a cliffhanger, and I was torn up by the concluding events and how things were left. It's going to be a long wait for the next book!

A copy was provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

You can find this review and more at The Readers Den.

Taschima says

SUCH a GREAT sequel! REVIEW TO COME...

I like the cover... and I don't like the cover. I digress, maybe I just like the image. But it doesn't go with the first cover, at all, and that infuriates me. I really like this series, it's really good, but I like it when my covers align. It's like the planets align. So, not cool, here's to hoping they come out with another cover.

Other than that I am SO VERY EXCITED for this book!

Kyriaki says

4,5*

Να πω την αλ?θεια, στην αρχ? λ?γο βαρι?μουν! Π?στεψα ?τι θα ξαν?ρχιζε π?λι τα ?δια με το προηγ?μενο και δεν τις μπορ? τις επαναλ?ψεις! Τις βαρι?μαι! Αλλ? μετ?...μετ? τι ωρα?ο που ?γινε! Πολ? μου ?ρεσε!

Απ?λαυσα τα POV του Τζ?στιν και τους εσωτερικο?ς του διαλ?γους με τα κορ?κια. ?ταν διασκεδαστικ?τατοι! Απ? την ?λλη, αυτ? η ρεπ?ρτερ, η Δ?φνη, πολ? μου την ?σπαγε. Κ?θε φορ? που εμφαν?ζονταν δυσανασχετο?σα. Μ?λιστα τη θεωρ? και λ?γο αχρε?αστη, εκτ?ς κι αν ?χει να διαδραματ?σει σημαντικ? ρ?λο στη συν?χεια..... Και σε γενικ?ς γραμμ?ς μου ?ρεσε περισσ?τερο απ? το πρ?το!

Και το τ?λος! Τι τ?λος ?ταν αυτ?;! Αυτ? η “?φιξη” στο τελευτα?ο κεφ?λαιο τι ?ταν;! Δεν μπορο?σε να εμφανιστε? ας πο?με μισ? βιβλ?ο νωρ?τερα;; Απ? το πρ?το την περ?μενα αυτ? την ?φιξη! Και ο επ?λογος;! Το ε?χα ψιλιαστε? λ?γο αλλ? ?χι κι ?τσι! Τι αποκ?λυψη ?ταν αυτ? τελευτα?α σελ?δα;! Πραγματικ? ?ταν αν?γκη να τελει?σει ?τσι;!;

Και τ?ρα;;

Τ?ρα ΚΛΑΙΩ! Κλα?ω, κλα?ω, κλα?ω -δεν το περ?μενα αλλ?- κλα?ω! Κλα?ω την τ?χη του τρ?του βιβλ?ου που τα μ?τια μας δεν θα αντικρ?σουν ποτ? απ? ?τι φά?νεται! Μα τους θεο?ς του βιβλ?ου

το?του ας γ?νει καν?να θα?μα να εκδοθε? η συν?χεια!
Γιατ? πραγματικ? ε?ναι κρ?μα!

Anyway, μ?χρι τ?τε ?σως διαβ?σω και κ?ποιο ?λλο δικ? της.....

#κλαψσνιφλυμ

AH says

Initial Thoughts: Wow. Absolutely loved this book. Maybe it's because one of my favorite cities is the capital, but I digress. What an interesting combination of a futuristic society struggling with spiritual beliefs and the existence of all sorts of gods from various mythologies. Well done.

The Review:

Christal and I discuss **The Immortal Crown** on **Badass Book Reviews** as part of the monthly Jumble Your Genres Reading Challenge.

AH: The world building in this series is fabulous, full of details and back story. The author takes the time to meticulously build a world based on Roman politics complete with plebeians, praetorians, servitors, patricians, and senators. She adds in the mythology of various cultures and has those gods jockeying for power over the people. Then, she adds in all sorts of magic as well. It's perfect! Juxtaposed with the ancient gods is a technologically advanced population that has embedded chips, data streams, and genetic manipulation. I love that this series is set in one of my favorite cities – Vancouver. My only beef is that it never seems to rain in this world. Who knows? Perhaps in the future it rains less in Vancouver.

Christal: I completely agree; the world building in this series is fantastic! I loved our introduction to the RUNA and EA in the first book, but *The Immortal Crown* just added so much more! Arcadia is not a place that I would ever want to live in, but it made for a fascinating story. Returning character Lucian, the crafty senator, sure pulled a fast one on Mae and Justin in convincing them to travel to Arcadia. Mae with her strong, direct military bearing and lovely patrician features certainly stood out and not always in a good way, but Justin was a fish out of water as well with his practical, straightforward, dare I say a little tactless at times, way of thinking.

AH: I like the fact that Justin is a little unconventional and irreverent. He claims that he studies religion so that he can protect his country. He can be an asshole and he is a bit of an arrogant playboy. Justin has two ravens in his head as spirit guides – Horatio and Magnus – who have very astute observations of the world around him. Justin has been chosen by the god Odin to be his priest but he does not wish to be in Odin's service forever, so he refuses (and refuses to consummate his relationship with Mae).

Christal: The tension between Justin and Mae was oh so tangible in this book. They are super attracted to each other and I think they've come to complement one another very well, but they are also extremely independent. Justin is actually doing a good thing for himself and Mae by keeping his distance, but he went about establishing that distance in a terrible way. I enjoy his character; he's very intelligent and find him quite humorous at times but Mae really makes these books for me. Though she is still new to the world of the gods and the elect, she won't let herself be blindly led. She knows what she wants and she can kick any butt necessary to get it.

AH: I love this Amazon of a woman. Strong, fierce, fearless – there's something special about Mae. Her role on the mission to Arcadia was amazing, as was her rescue mission of the Gemman girls. Tessa is another female character coming into her own now and she takes on more importance.

Christal: I agree, Tessa was a much better character in this book. I actually found her to be a little boring in the first book but it was nice to see her have more of a separate plot line in *The Immortal Crown*. She is another smart cookie and it was interesting to see her taking on new roles that will shape her future and the person she is becoming. Thought Tessa still feels out-of-place some time because of coming from Panama, I feel like the differences between her homeland and the RUNA were almost negated by the differences we saw in this book between Arcadia and the RUNA.

AH: Ok, I know that Arcadia is supposed to be the Bible Belt and places southeast however in my mind I kept thinking Taliban and Afghanistan. Or maybe one of those Mormon compounds that pop up now and then to sensationalize the news. The women are kept covered up, dressed in drab colors, a group of older men get all the women, there is polygamy and violence towards women, women are bought/sold like property. The younger males are sexually repressed because of the lack of brides available. The rescue mission and Mae's return to RUNA reminded me of some of the military checkpoints you see in the news.

Christal: I can completely get on board with the comparisons to some middle eastern countries. I was also thinking that it seemed like the South back in the old, bad times before slavery was outlawed. It was an interesting setting for the story, but it did make me uncomfortable from time to time, especially with how the women were treated. I got flashes of Margaret Atwood's *A Handmaid's Tale*. I'm sure that was the point and I was glad to see how Mae's role and mission in the story turned out. Her relationship with this new deity is much different from the Morrigan and I think it will be amazing when we see everything played out.

AH: I was fascinated by how Mead incorporated the magic with the various mythologies that she draws upon. I found that I had to read this book very carefully. I had to pay attention to the small details; something that seems innocuous or obscure may pop into the narrative and shock you as you connect the dots.

Christal: I liked that very much as well. We know that there is a bigger plot going on in the background of this series and Justin and Mae are dealing with being part of the elect and their different deities, while still continuing on investigations for the IS and RUNA. Richelle Mead is able to take all of these plots plus the tiny little nuances you don't think will be important and weave them together to form a bigger picture. I'm so ready for the next book already and am just hoping that she can keep up the momentum these first two books have established.

AH: I am loving this series and I find that it really is like no other series out there. I can't wait to see what happens in the next book!

Thank you to Edelweiss and Dutton Adult for a review copy of this book.

~Poppy~ says

“All those other flings I’ve had are just ashes in the wind, scattered and forgotten. But you . . . you’re the real thing. The fire that keeps burning in my life. You’re the one. There’s no one else I feel this connected to. And if I could do all those things, stay with you, make love—with the lights on—tell you everything that weighs on me, I would.”

Oh my god!!!! It was amazing!!! I'm in shock right now !!!

Wowww!! What an ending!!

Helena Strickland says

OH MY GOD

WHOAH!!!! I mean what an ending??? So many plotwists!!!!

I can't wait for the third book!!!This is torture!!!

Valeria Andrea says

This future citizen of the RUNA requests to be thrown back into this world.
NOW!

Please. Is there even going to be a next book? Because I haven't seen anything about it coming from Richelle Mead & I tell you, I'm beginning to worry.
Anyway, I must go back, because I'm reeling with excitement.

If things that are supposed to be dead just stayed dead *sigh*

On the other hand, MAE!

Oh my beautiful amazing Mae, you are going to be okay. Worry not. For the love of Tom Hiddleston, you are a strong woman & you can get over anything. I loved that Mae let her wards crumble in order to focus on what was important (her niece, for instance). & letting Justin in as well. Their relationship has progressed to the point in which they depend on each other. Not exactly romantic relationship (yet, dammit) but the kind of relationship that goes on slowly, when you need that someone to be close & support you just because it feels right.

Someone you can trust. realize it.

& don't worry, nobody had sex with anybody just yet.

Still Mae, I don't know if you can trust the gods.

Is there such thing as a god that delivers?

I want to fast forward & see what comes next.

Lucian, even if I do like him, is in a position in which I'm not sure Justin can trust him. He's knee deep involved in stuff too foreign, even for Justin, so I'll be watching you, Senator Darling.

Regardless, I'm sure he will win the election & become Consul. The implications of that will truly set off the war *grins* *It'll be grand*, I'm sure of that.

The gods will be at each other's throats... even more so.

I'm actually worried for the implications the war will have in humans, you know.

The war hasn't started but there have been already losses & injured along the way *tear* Oh no, it's gonna be awful. Justin & Mae are too at risk.

Though they can surely handle it.

Right?

Even with the enemies on toe.

& talking about enemies, will they be revealed anytime soon?

I mean, I saw *him*. It was so very much obvious who he was, once we saw his... demeanor. That son of a bitch. If gods truly deliver, then oh please, make him suffer. Is up to you, Mae.

Now now, Tessa.

I like you. Period. Still, even though I loved her when she made the right call, her running around with that reporter was sooo boring. & pointless, considering what Daphne suspected & wanted to find out is revealed to Justin by the end anyway. That is, unless Justin figures out a way to make something worth-plot-wise of Daphne anytime soon, she was a freaking rock in the book.

A rock that used Tessa.

Damn Tessa. You better take the best of this & use it to become a citizen or something.

Also, I'm not sure if I want Tessa involved with the gods... Though I do want her involved with Darius *wink* Those two make a nice couple.

Also, that end was thought provoking.

PLEASE, let me know as soon as there are news about the next book.

Jg says

I am normally a very fast reader, but it took me several days and lots of self-encouragement ("C'mon, you can do this, you can finish this!") before I managed to make it to the finish line, aka the end of the book. Ms. Mead is one of my favorite authors, but frankly, this series has been extremely difficult to get through. There's nothing wrong with her writing (it's impeccable, as always), the "world building", the characters. It's just the actual storyline for the series that is falling flat for me; if this book had been written by anyone else, I would've given up a long time ago.

That being said, I'm still glad I persevered. Those crazy endings that Ms. Mead loves to include in her books which results in readers going into a frenzy? She's got it in this one...not enough to make me fall in love or go nuts, but juuuuust enough to make me go, "Oh!! Well, that threw me for a loop." I am intrigued enough to continue with the series, but I wonder if it's already safe for me to say that this series will *not* be one of my favorites. So I'm giving this three stars for the writing and for the fact that I love Ms. Mead, otherwise it would've garnered a lower rating.

Ferdy says

2.5 stars - Spoilers

I don't know why I bother with Richelle Mead anymore, her books used to be fun and entertaining but her latest releases have been rather poor in comparison. Admittedly, this one was *slightly* better than the first book... Things made more sense and some parts of the story were actually quite interesting. But overall, I was disappointed by everything... the world, plot and characters though improved still weren't good enough.

Random thoughts:

-The world building and plot were more cohesive and easier to immerse into this time around. It helped that there were quick recaps about the previous book/short explanations of the various facets and layers of the world. Without those little recaps/explanations I would have been completely lost. There was still a lot of room for improvement though when it came to the world and the various story arcs.

-The plot was a bit of a hit and miss... I didn't find Justin/Mae's time in Arcadia or their investigating of supernaturals/gods all that compelling. I was more interested in the roles Mae and Justin would play in the possible upcoming war between the gods... I wanted to know why Justin/Mae were wanted by various gods and what made them so special and why they had that weird connection with each other — but none of that was really elaborated on.

-I wasn't convinced by Justin and Mae's relationship at all, it was pretty one sided. Justin was hot and cold with Mae throughout and whenever he gave into his feelings for Mae, it felt more lust based than love. Mae on the other hand was all over Justin and was desperate for them to be together, she always made the first move even though he kept rejecting her. She was meant to be tough and strong but her desperation made her look like a weak loser.

-Justin's declaration of love at the end was ridiculous, there was NOTHING in his prior actions or thoughts that suggested he was in love with Mae. I refuse to believe he was madly in love with her when he was happily sleeping around and flirting with other girls. His feelings for her were superficial at best but as usual we're meant to just believe in the so called hero's love when there's been no evidence of it. Ugh, it was such a disappointing romance.

-It was irritating how Mae kept worrying about Justin, he rarely ever thought about her. But she kept wondering about him and whether he was safe or not... Meanwhile Justin just shrugged off Mae being trapped in a misogynistic country on her own. Where was his fear for her? Why didn't he try to help her? I thought he was meant to love her. Ugh, Mead really can't write guys in love any more, the heroes never come across as loving the heroines.

-The MC's reminded me too much of protagonists from Mead's other series. Justin was basically the same as Adrian (from VA/Bloodlines), only slightly cleverer and less selfish. Whilst Mae was basically a mix of Rose and Sydney. There didn't feel remotely like original characters.

-I really didn't like the whole preachy vibe when it came to how Arcadian men treated women. It was so heavy handed and over the top. I could clearly see how the men were sexist pigs, I didn't need to be hit over the head with it again and again.

Even though I'm not loving this series, I'll be reading the next book since it's the final one and I'm curious to see how it ends. But after that one and the last *Bloodlines* book, I doubt I'll read any other future series by Mead.

Jessica ❀ ➡ Silverbow ➡ ❀ Rabid Reads-no-more says

3/25/18 - ON SALE for \$1.99:

<https://amzn.to/2uhLsV3>

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads

3.5 stars

After reading the first two books in this series back-to-back, I was reminded of something that often happens while I'm reading a book by Richelle Mead. I've already admitted to loving her, and I do, but oftentimes *something*, normally just a single thing, keeps me from love, LOVE, L-O-V-I-N-G whatever it is that I'm reading.

In *Vampire Academy*, the books were YA Urban Fantasy, and that brought inevitably adolescent issues. In *Georgina Kincaid*, it was the whole, "I'm a succubus, and I can't EVER turn it off," thing, in *Dark Swan* it was Eugenie's last Big Decision that made me see nothing but tears and recriminations in her and Dorian's future when what she did inevitably came to light, and in *Age of X* . . . well, in *Age of X*, I can't quite put my finger on the problem. Maybe it was the drastic turn the religious observations took from general to specific. Maybe it was the dissatisfaction I felt at the state of Mae and Justin's relationship when the book ended.

I just don't know.

And it's weird, b/c I REALLY liked this book. A lot. Like couldn't put it down.

The Immortal Crown opens with Mae and Justin checking out an alleged Voodoo priestess in the Bahamas. The priestess is in fact the real deal, recognizes Mae as a fellow Elect, and spouts nebulous and vaguely threatening warnings about a War of the Elect. Mae and Justin head back to their hotel room where they're attacked by BUGS. Not just any bugs either—SCARAB BEETLES.

shudders

They return to where the priestess is holed-up, thinking her responsible for the attack, only to discover that she is moments from death, having suffered an attack herself. She spouts more warnings about Elect attacking Elect and future wars among the gods, and then dies.

Cue ominous music . . .

Mae and Justin return to RUNA only to almost immediately depart again for Arcardia, having been

maneuvered into the trip by the politicking Lucien, who's convinced that a successful peacemongering trip there will seal his election win.

And once again, EVERYTHING is connected.

This is where Mead excels. She flawlessly weaves together a story in which seemingly isolated incidents, casual interactions, and what appear to be coincidences are anything *but*. And again, she's subtle. So the most you can come up with on your own, is that *something* is not right, there's *more* to that person than what appears on the surface . . .

But you have no clue what's actually coming.

I love that, incidentally.

As far as the world-building goes, the most development takes place in Arcadia. We learned in *Gameboard of the Gods* that Arcadia is RUNA's neighbor with whom they hold a merely tentative peace. There are constant border skirmishes, and the threat of war looms heavily in the background.

And this is where I begin to have problems.

Mead states very clearly in the early part of the book, that present-Arcadia bares no similarities with past-southeastern US. That Arcadia is purely the result of a land area turning to religion rather than science in the aftermath of the disease that killed-off half the world's population, but this simply isn't true. Arcadia is a horrifically exaggerated version of the pre-Civil War south with some puritanical principles tossed in for fun. And just so there's no confusion:

Pre-Civil War South + Puritan value system = NEGATIVE fun.

And of course with Mead there's no smooth path to romantic euphoria. NOPE. We need to appreciate what we're given, and by golly, nothing that comes easily is worth having.

Pfft.

I'm just hoping Mae and Justin work out their stupidity BEFORE the last book in the series.

Please, Richelle Mead? Please, PLEASE, can we have a happy couple before the very end? You can even throw all kinds of crap in their happy, little path. As long as it, for the love of the gods, gets RESOLVED, I don't care. Just let them be TOGETHER.

Please?

The Immortal Crown is this year's follow-up to the brilliant debut *Gameboard of the Gods* in Richelle Mead's *Age of X* series. There was more of everything—more gods trying to gain a toe-hold, more places to explore, more secondary characters to love, more sinister villains, more kick-assery from Mae, more brilliant manipulations from Justin, just MORE.

And I don't see it winding-down anytime soon.

I still highly recommend this series to anyone interested in mythology-based and futuristic Urban Fantasy.

This is one of the good ones. And with so many UF series wrapping-up recently, or in the near future, we all need to be aware of the good ones!

Sue (Hollywood News Source) says

Review also posted at Young Adult Hollywood.

Actual Rating: 3.5 Stars

Immortal Crown is the sequel to Richelle Mead's Adult Sci-fi series, Gameboard of the Gods. On this follow up story, Mae Koskinen and Justin Marc are both busy doing a classified investigation in and out of RUNA and to add more conflict to the story, some of the humans that are marked by divine also called elects are turning one another. On their next mission Lucian Darling and his delegation along with Justin and Mae are headed to Arcadia, their neighbor country. In this society women are treated as "hot commodity" and their religion have a massive impact and influence on their government.

It is well established that I am a massive Richelle Mead fan. Almost everything she wrote, I completely devoured. Gameboard of the Gods is an outstanding book. I love every bits of it and that is so rich coming from someone who avoids the Sci-fi and Dystopian section in bookstores. Immortal Crown is one of my highly anticipated books of 2014, with a heavy heart I'm going to tell you this book is disappointing. **It sadly falls to the Sequel Syndrome.** I would have never seen it coming from Richelle Mead since Frostbite, The Golden Lily are brilliant sequels that solidify my love for her series. Immortal Crown is more of an Succubus on Top *hit or miss* for me. It's not engaging as it's predecessor but the great thing about Georgina Kincaid is it got better after each book. I hope this will also be the case for Age of X series.

Immortal Crown started out in a dull note, I reassured myself it would pick up eventually. But **no no no.** Mead's mojo didn't worked out this time. The terms was hard to grasp. I was tiptoeing for the half of the book, thankfully Mead's usual recapping helped me somehow in refreshing my mind on what happened in the first book & understanding some of the points I can't wrap my mind with.

The misogynistic views of the Arcadian netizens, It was disgusting and twisted. It enrages me. It will definitely emit aggressive response from readers. **The characters** undergo on a little character development though I still believe their story arc should've gotten a pretty great thorough leap by now. The **twist** of the story are completely unnecessary. The pent up sexual tension between Mae and Justin went overboard in the last 30% of the book.

Immortal Crown isn't the book I was hoping but I did really like it. It's not a terrible book in a long shot but I wish there are many things that could've furnish. Hopefully this will be a series that continue to get better in each installment.

An advance copy was provided by the publisher for an honest review.
