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The Hangman's Daughter



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Synopsis

Germany, 1659: When a dying boy is pulled from the river with a mark crudely tattooed on his shoulder, hangman Jakob Kuisl is called upon to investigate whether witchcraft is at play in his small Bavarian town. Whispers and dark memories of witch trials and the women burned at the stake just 70 years earlier still haunt the streets of Schongau. When more children disappear and an orphan boy is found dead - marked by the same tattoo - the mounting hysteria threatens to erupt into chaos. Before the unrest forces him to torture and execute the very woman who aided in the birth of his children, Jakob must unravel the truth. With the help of his clever daughter, Magdelena, and Simon, the university-educated son of the town's physician, Jakob discovers that a devil is indeed loose in Schongau. But it may be too late to prevent bloodshed.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I liked the start of this story, the basic idea of the tale, a hangman searching for the truth. I enjoy historical novels. I enjoy mysteries. The start of this story was interesting and well thought out. My main problem with this novel? What does the hangman's daughter have to do with this story? Sure, the hangman has a daughter. She's in this story as a minor character. The title of this story suggests this daughter has a major role, but quite frankly she doesn't. In fact, the hangman's daughter is such a minor character, she could be removed completely from the story and the novel would be virtually the same. The daughter could be replaced with a potted plant without much difference.This book isn't about the hangman's daughter, it's a mystery novel starring a hangman

and a young doctor sidekick, both male characters. So what's the deal with naming this story The Hangman's Daughter? Since she's thrown in almost as an afterthought, I can only guess she's there so women will buy this book. She has a scene towards the end of the book where she's captured as a hostage, but it's so forced and unnecessary, it's more like a "women in refrigerators" moment. In fact, ALL of the minor female characters are put in danger. Why? So they can be rescued? In the meantime, if you're a minor character living in this historical world, it seems like your only purpose is to be to chased, tortured, threatened with rape, or face being burnt alive as a witch. Yes, the hangman's daughter manages to escape, but the scene adds nothing to the novel. In fact, if the scene were removed, the writing would have been tighter. The core of the story is a murder mystery. Who is killing the orphans of the village and why? There's already one woman, falsely accused and in danger, held in the prison. Why torture another woman? The second woman, the hangman's daughter, captured and threatened, was an unnecessary clichÃƒÂ©. Negative one star for false advertising. If you're going to label a book, The Hangman's Daughter, then let the book be about the hangman's daughter.The ending of this story was sloppy and confusing. The last third of the book had tangents that didn't go along with the core of the story. Did something get lost during editing? Instead of tying up loose ends, there's more drama, then everything is miraculously solved behind the scenes. The end. I'm not going to lie, considering the quality of the writing, I was disappointed that the ending wasn't better. The author had a great idea. It's obvious he's a talented writer. He just couldn't seem to pull it all together. Too much "pantsing," not enough plotting at the end of the book. The characters reacted in a realistic way in the beginning, not so much by the end of the novel. I reluctantly removed another star.This isn't a bad book, it's just misleading. Title it The Hangman or something else, and I'd like it better. I wouldn't have been looking for the story that wasn't there. Clarify the ending a little more and this would be a five star book. I'd say this book is written for adults. The female characters could be replaced with potted plants, so I can't see myself recommending it to any of the women in my life. Guys might like it more. The main character was interesting and fun. I wanted to like this book more than I did.

I wish that I had read the negative reviews before purchasing this book. I usually love historical fiction, and anything about early medical lore and herbalism, but this book was so poorly written and disquieting that I stopped about two thirds of the way through. The hangman's daughter is a minor, and not especially appealing, character in the story so unless something important happens in the last third of the book, it's unclear why she's important to the story at all. The dialogue is stilted and often anachronistic, the plot is thin and improbable.

I didn’t expect much from this book. I don’t know why--maybe because it was a free Kindle download and I have had such bad luck with those. But, this book, I loved!The premise of the book is so fascinating and unique. I’ve never read anything like it before. It’s a fascinating history of the role of an executioner and the importance of superstition in the 1600’s. Jacob is the town’s official executioner and it seems as if he has an unfortunate and unique quality of attracting death. When a young boy is pulled from the river with a witch’s mark on him, Jacob knows he has to act fast or his executioner’s cart will be full of accused witches.I loved everything about it. I loved the front cover. It fit the mood of the book perfectly. Knowing the author is a descendant of a family of hangmen made the story that much more credible--and incredible! The character of the hangman was my favorite part of this book. And, he’s now one of my favorite main characters. Large and in charge--he doesn’t like his job as official hired killer, but he is so good at it. Plus, he’s funny and clever and comes across as warm and someone you definitely want to meet. The book was full of great characters. I also loved the hangman’s daughter and her love interest. I can’t wait to see more about them.

I loved the in depth character studies. This book brought to life the life and times vividly. The author is a master storyteller.

This is the second time I have read this book. I enjoyed it as much this time as I did the first time. There is just enough mystery to keep you coming back. Kuisl is a likable character and you cheer him on.

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