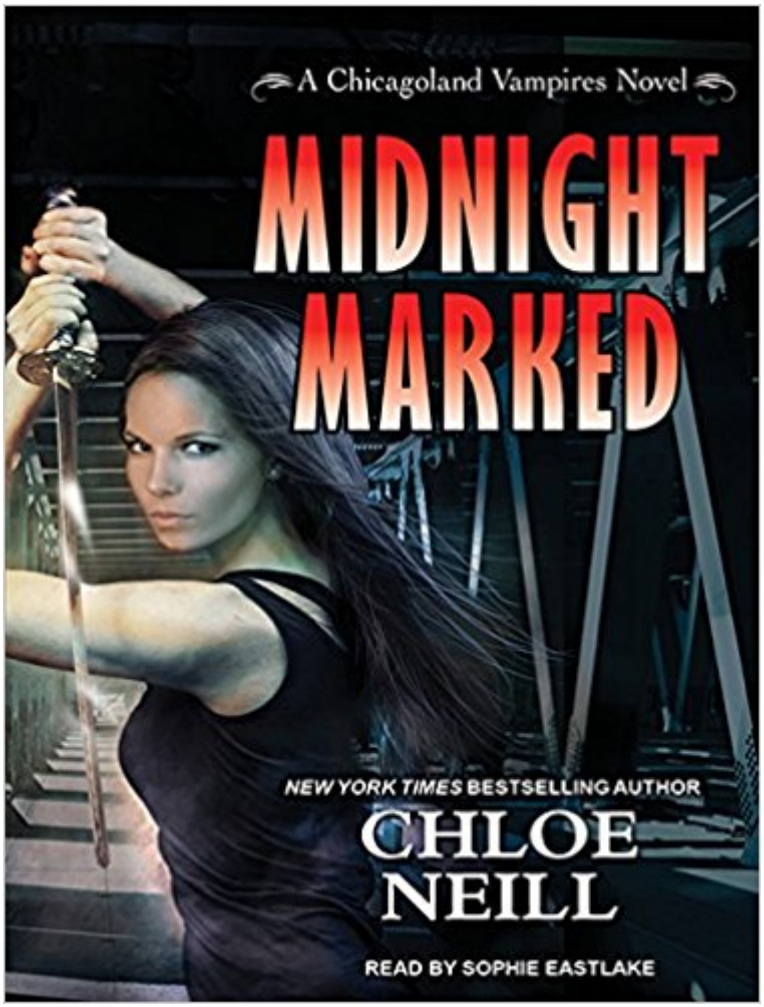
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Midnight Marked (Chicagoland Vampires)



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Synopsis

Merit is one of Chicago’s most skilled vampire warriors; these days, she doesn’t scare easily. But she and Master vampire Ethan have made a new and powerful enemy, and he won’t give up until he owns the Windy City. With his last plan thwarted, he’s more determined than ever to watch Cadogan burn. Ethan has put the House’s vampires on high alert, but their enemy will stop at nothing, including pitting supernatural against supernatural. In this deadly game of cat-and-mouse, the stakes are life or death-and winning might mean sacrificing everything.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Neill’s strong 12th Chicagoland Vampires urban fantasy (after Dark Debt) deftly builds on the heroine’s actions and emotional history while introducing new complications into her personal and political worlds. It’s been a year since Caroline Evelyn Merit became a vampire, and she has come into her own as Sentinel of Cadogan House, a leader in the Chicago supernatural community, and a capable and likable protagonist. Merit is en route to a Cubs game with her significant other, master vampire Ethan Sullivan, and their friends when they make an alarming discovery: the body of a shape-shifter who’s clearly been murdered by a vampire, near a construct of mysterious alchemy symbols. Merit engages in alliances of varying success among Cadogan House, the other vampire houses, and the local shape-shifter packs and magic-wielders, trying to figure out whodunit, as another conflict develops from the machinations of the local criminal mastermind and his supernatural empire, the Circle. Series fans will be delighted by developments in Ethan and Merit’s

romance and impressed by Neill’s willingness to take some narrative risks. Agent: Lucienne Diver, Knight Agency. (Mar.)\n --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

"[I] like [Sophie Eastlake] for all the characters and wouldn’t be happy if they switched it!" ---Fantasy is More Fun

The Chicagoland Vampires series has been one of my favorites for quite some time. ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s hard to believe that in their world itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s only been a year. TheyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve been through so much. The characters have all grown and changed through all their trials.Midnight MarkÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s enemy kind of rolls over from Dark Debt. They definitely have more tricks up their sleeves to bring down Cadogan house and the cityÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s vampires in general. I noticed a much more intense, protective side of Ethan. HeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s always been protective of Merit, but I thought he was on the edge of losing it a few times. As usual, this protectiveness brings trouble between the couple. It is nice to see a couple that grow throughout the series instead of just getting an HEA with no more problems. Ethan and Merit go through all the growing pains a normal couple would go through.It was funny to see Mallory and Catcher in their new roles. It seems like they, too, are going through normal couple stuff. Very down to earth and fun. But I love that this couple also knows how to work together. Like they have one brain and just know what the other is going to do. They play a big part in Midnight Marked. Mallory and Catcher are an awesome couple. IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve always loved them together.Merit comes face to face with an enemy of old. It was really a struggle to see if her new vulnerability was going to be her downfall in their confrontation. I couldnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t believe that this person was still actually around. I loved how Merit was able to turn everything into a great positive for the vampires.We see a bit of different magic in this book, so it is everyone on deck to decipher just what the team is dealing with. I loved the puzzle and how it was all put together. I donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t know why I didnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t see it coming, but our enemy brings on a surprise. I still canÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t believe I didnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t see that coming.So, the ending. LetÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s just say I did get a bit weepy and mushy. It was romantic, and unexpected. I had totally forgotten about this thing between Merit and Ethan. IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢m such a sucker for a bit of romance. I feel like in Urban Fantasy, the special ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“momentsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• are few, so it was really great to see this one.We have a lot of things left in the air, and I think we only have one more book to do it in. A year is going to be a darn hard wait to see how this is all put together. The book is probably going to have to be a good

1000 pages! No wonder we have to wait so long!Overall, I thought this was a really good addition to the series. We had mystery, suspense with some good relationship issues. There was also the need to bring all the supernatural beings together, so we got to see the werewolves and RG as well. It was an all hands on deck. Definitely a fun read!

AN OK installment. The story is getting to drag a bit, and many of the plot points were visible way ahead on the horizon. Ethan seems to have been dumbed down a bit, and made some choices not in keeping with his reputation as a smart, 400 year old vamp master. Most of the other characters are becoming routine (well, except maybe Mallory and I'm never sure about her!). I skipped some of the fight scenes to get to the end...guess that says something about my reaction! Looking forward to the next installment. Personally, I don't see how the supernaturals and humans will ever be able to live together in peace and comfort, but maybe this will be explained.

In Dark Debt we left our Chicagoland Vampires in a state of conflict with a group called The Circle, headed by one Adrian Reed.When it looks like a vampire was responsible for the death of a shifter near Wrigley field, Merit knows there has to be more to it. When mysterious alchemical writing is also found near the body, it doesn't take long to determine that The Circle is somehow connected. What Merit and Co. have to figure out is to what purpose The Circle is connected, and ultimately what is Adrian Reed's end goal.I really loved Dark Debt, and when I compare Midnight Marked to Dark Debt, it falls a little bit short than its predecessor. This isn't a bad thing I still enjoyed Midnight Marked more than other installments in the series, but for me Dark Debt was a really strong addition.The good things that Chloe Neill had built up in this series are all here. Merit and Ethan continue to grow as a couple. They continue to love and fight - although now I don't fear their fights are an end to their relationship - their devotion to one another is clear, and I love seeing their interactions as they continue to grow.I really felt like Midnight Marked had a great deal of the Merit and Mallory friendship dynamic, which is something from the earlier books that I love and was missed for a while in a few books when Mallory took a walk on the dark side, and was then awkward as they tried to rebuild their friendship to what it was. Things were really solid for them in this book.The actual conflict between the vampires and Adrian Reed / The Circle kind of fell short for me. Steps that should have been taken in the investigation were clouded over because personal things got in the way. I love taking time out for the personal, I really do, but Ethan acting overly protective of Merit just didn't feel right. We know she can take care of herself (we've seen this for what twleve books now?), so when he goes all Alpha-male it felt, to me, like something he was

"supposed" to do (kind of like a checklist). Because of situations like this, there were things clearly missed in the investigation - things I spotted from a mile away - and when they were revealed by the end, I wasn't surprised, it felt lackluster.Something done really well in Midnight Marked was calling out the fact that all sups need to work together instead of being on opposing sides with one another. The beginning of the book (with the shifter killed by a vampire) already amps up tension between the pack and vampires again. We've seen the vampires (especially Cadogan House) get blamed for a myriad of things, and they always come out fighting with little to no help from other sups. Midnight Marked addresses this big time, and all I can say is FINALLY! But with Midnight Marked being the penultimate book in the series, I'm very interested to know how this trickles down into the next and final installment.I feel like the last book is going to have to be about 500+ pages. I know I've been keeping a mental list of things I want to see happen in the course of the books (not assumed to happen off page), and I'm a little worried that not all those things will come to fruition on page. Chloe Neill has built up a lot of stuff (especially with certain ahem*prophecies*ahem) and over the course of the last few books they've been brought up regularly. I guess we'll just have to wait and see. Midnight Marked brings a lot of storylines full-circle. It's been a year since Merit was turned (a year since Some Girls Bite) and I liked that readers get some of the earlier mysteries put to rest so to speak.Overall, Midnight Marked was another great addition to one of my favorite series. I love how much the characters have grown and changed. If you're a long-time reader of the series, this one cannot be missed.

Even though Merit, Ethan and their allies and friends are facing another earth shattering threat, I am just happy their personal life is also moving forward. Albeit at snail speed, but at least we are reading more than a phrase about the promised child they are supposed to have. Also at last, we have the marriage proposal from Ethan **sheesh**. Why am I talking about that instead of the potential threat from their current enemy? It is because I want some romance for once in their lives.Apart from the first two books where the romance or the promise of one is balanced with the catastrophic fights, the series has been all about survival for the H and h and their friends. This book is no exception. It is full of action, but also a little bit of romance. This is one of my favorite series that I follow religiously. Love it.

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