



An Artificial Night

Seanan McGuire

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Changeling knight in the court of the Duke of Shadowed Hills, October "Toby" Daye has survived numerous challenges that would destroy fae and mortal alike. Now Toby must take on a nightmarish new assignment.

Someone is stealing both fae and mortal children—and all signs point to Blind Michael. When the young son of Toby's closest friends is snatched from their Northern California home, Toby has no choice but to track the villains down, even when there are only three magical roads by which to reach Blind Michael's realm—home of the legendary Wild Hunt—and no road may be taken more than once. If she cannot escape with all the children before the candle that guides and protects her burns away, Toby herself will fall prey to Blind Michael's inescapable power.

And it doesn't bode well for the success of her mission that her own personal Fetch, May Daye—the harbinger of Toby's own death—has suddenly turned up on her doorstep...

An Artificial Night Details

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From Reader Review An Artificial Night for online ebook

Alp says

4.25/5

I can wholeheartedly say that An Artificial Night, the third installment in October Daye series, surprised me in a way that I never expected. In fact, I didn't have high hopes for this one, given that the previous book didn't impress me much. I even expected Toby to do several stupid things, but thankfully, she didn't do such things. Anyway, she made some small mistakes but those were minor, which seemed acceptable to me.

A bad day for Toby started with a knock at the door. And when she opened it, she saw the woman standing there, looked exactly the same as her. The woman told Toby that she was her Fetch, the spirit that came to escort her to the lands of dead. And that was when reality hit her—she was going to die and she couldn't stop it.

After that, two of her friends' children were missing from their room and one was still breathing but didn't wake up. And when she thought her day couldn't get any worse, Tybalt asked her to help find five kids who vanished from the Court of Cats. They all disappeared mysteriously, and she knew right then that she would willingly risk her own life to find and save the children, no matter what.

Could Toby successfully bring all the children home? And how could she survive this deadly task?

I must admit I had a hard time getting into the story but things started getting interesting in the middle of chapter three, and then it grabbed hold of me and didn't let go until the last page.

The story itself was great. There was a good plot idea that grew even more promising and fascinating as the story progressed. There was so much happening that I felt like I couldn't turn the pages fast enough.

Despite all good things in this book, Toby is still my major problem. She is nowhere near as kick-ass as I hoped she would be, and I'm not sure if she will ever be. (But I do hope that I will be able to warm up to her someday...soon.)

Overall, this was an enjoyable read and it seems like this series is starting to pick up steam. Hopefully, it will get better from here on out!

Choko says

4

A buddy read with the coolest UF fans at BB&B!!

No review - my buddy readers wrote such great reviews, I have nothing extra to say!

Toby, our half Fae-half Human investigator has really grown on me! She is not very good at her job - she is

never prepared for the worst case scenarios, she somehow misses clues, and she tries to keep her distance from the people who love her, and they are usually her biggest help not only in solving cases, but also at keeping her healthy and alive!!!! I mean, she is lucky she has not become a road-kill long time ago - not the most observant and careful person on the streets of San Francisco! Often while I was reading I was reminded of how incompetent Stephani Plum is, but the two characters also share in being likable, having the greatest luck ever, being quick thinking on their feet, improvising with success, and once again - having friends to always have their backs!!! Those cases never get solved because of their "expertise", that is for sure:)

We got to see our fearless (read partially suicidal) Toby go against Blind Michael, the leader of the Wild Hunt, in order to reclaim the children of her best friend and some others, who have been stolen by the Hunt. The author gets to explore some of the most fascinating and established Fae Lore and we once again get entangled in the weaving thorny branches creating the tapestry of magical Fairy!!!!

Toby has help -my current favorites the Luidaeg (who often observes that Toby is not very bright), the teenage boy-wonder Quentin (who had a tough time in this volume), and Lily(I always picture her like those pretty pictures of Japanese traditional ladies). My very new favorite is May Day - Ha, what a name, hm? As the name suggest, she was a harbinger of disaster and impending death for Toby, and I am very happy with how things turned out there!

I am not sure I am pleased with any of the males of age right now, but hope this will improve as we go along....

Overall, I am really beginning to like these series!!! What I like the most, and what I think the author's strength is, is the wonderful way she uses Fae Lore and well known fairy tales to create a believable Fae world, a world in trouble and in danger of destruction... A world of established traditions which make them unique and who they are, but at the same time limits their ability to survive and prosper... A world faced with a mundane reality which threatens to either absorb it, thus taking away all that makes the Fae special, Or destroy it because of incompatibility and lack of understanding on both sides... Fairy is dying - what could be done to save it?

This series would be appropriate for Urban Fantasy or Fairy Tale lovers of all ages - nothing inappropriate for young or old alike:) It is fun and would be best to read in order.

I wish all happy reading and many more wonderful books to come!!!

Joshua Keezer says

How many miles to Babylon?

An Artificial Night is the third book in the October Daye series. Rosemary and Rue was the first and introduced us to the October Daye faerie universe. A Local Habitation, the second book in the series, drove us deeper into that world with a locked door mystery. An Artificial Night, the third book, pits October Daye against one of the first-born, Blind Michael. In this book, there is no question who the villain is. The book is all about how is October Daye going to go up against Blind Michael, rescue the kidnapped children, and survive.

In *An Artificial Night*, Seanan McGuire demonstrates that normal doesn't belong in Toby's dictionary. The book opens with our protagonist dodging a barghest, a corgi sized fae dog with a lethal scorpion stinger. After finishing the job with our old friend Danny, the bridge troll, Toby does about the last thing I would expect. She goes to a four year old's birthday party.

The beginning of the book's pacing seems slow at first. The primary mystery is presented very early when Toby learns of abductions of children of pure blood, changeling, and mortal lineage. Toby is already on the case when she is asked by the last person in the world readers would expect to come to her for help. It takes a while for Toby to figure out who is behind this problem. Most of that time, Toby is getting a faerie equivalent of the Magic 8-ball's "Reply Hazy, try again". Once the answer is finally solved, the book picks up speed and doesn't slow down. Though, for a while I did find myself checking how far I was into the book. I blame this on reading the back of the book. It leaves an implication that the book is about a single journey into a land by candleNight. It lies.

An Artificial Night is darker than the previous two books in the series. I think the analogy of a dark room lit by nothing but candleNight is more than appropriate for how dark. I was very creeped out at times and even found myself saying the "How many miles to Babylon?" rhyme as I read it. There is one particular discovery at a set of stables that left both Toby and myself disgusted. This visceral reaction is both a testament to not only just how dark this book is but to how powerful Seanan McGuire is as an author.

The typical October Daye tropes are still to be found in *An Artificial Night*. Toby is forced into a costume change. Tybalt has some unkind words to describe Toby. Toby gains at least one new scar. Toby's car is victim to her investigation. Much to my displeasure, Toby finds herself falling unconscious numerous times. However, unlike the previous books, this book opens up a new element to the October Daye universe. While I found myself annoyed at how many times Toby was staring at the inside of her eyelids, I at least enjoyed what was found there. And, if you read the excerpt from *Late Eclipses* printed at the back of the book, you will see strong hints at things to come.

Speaking of strong hints at things to come, this book is once again hinting at something stronger down the line. As if the introduction of newest May wasn't enough, a series of conversations between Tybalt and Toby suggest something that is taking place behind the scenes. I can't help but feel that each book of the October Daye series is building up for something explosive down the road.

In the end, there is something for everyone in this book. Seanan McGuire continues to use her superb mix of wit and tension to keep the reader in just enough suspense that they don't snap. The plot is captivating and just like its predecessor, *A Local Habitation*, there are pieces that careful readers can figure out before Toby does. Also, as best as I can tell, every major and minor character in the October Daye universe makes an appearance. I was hard pressed to think of a character that didn't make an appearance and even harder pressed to come up with a character that wasn't mentioned. Even April from *A Local Habitation* makes a brief appearance.

This book warmed my heart to two characters, one old and one new. There was something about the appearance of the rose goblin, Spike, that seemed not only natural, but right. The rose goblin is in the book more than some of the other major characters and somewhere along the line, I realized that Spike has become my favorite minor character. As for the new character, there is Raj. I would very much like to have Raj for a son. If anyone is aware of a Cait Sidhe adoption program, please let me know.

I'm the first to admit that I am a very picky reader. I have a hard time finding books on the store shelves that I'll even try, let alone like. *An Artificial Night* provided for me everything I want in a novel. The characters

are rock solid. The plot is phenomenal. I even found myself cheering with glee one moment and nearly weeping another. This book was overall superb and is a must read for anyone that finds at least a remote interest in Urban Fantasy.

Maria Dimitrova says

Buddy read with the UF maniacs at BB&B

WARNING! UNTAGGED SPOILERS!

Sorry folks I'm too tired to bother. And too annoyed (my Kindle decided to freeze in USB drive mode and most of my books that I wanted to read now are on it).

The third instalment in the October Daye series starts with a bang and then doesn't let you go until the very end. It's darker than it's predecessors and has a strange blend of hope and hopelessness. It was a story of family, friends and lost innocence.

Those familiar with some of the Fae lore know that the Fair Folk has a fascination with children and there a lot of fairy tales that start of with a kidnapped child. After all the original concept of a changeling is a human child exchanged for a Fae one. This time the kidnapped children (yes plural) were mostly Fae and changelings. And of course the one who would have to play hero and save them is Toby. Even though she's just received the Fae equivalent of terminal cancer diagnosis in the form of her very own Fetch. That is like a death omen wearing your face that comes to tell you: *"You're about to die. Soon!"* That would make for one rude awakening. But Toby doesn't have time to wallow in her misery cause there are children to save including three of her best friends kids and the nephew of our favourite King of Cats. I love Tybalt! I simply adore the arrogant cat :) Anyway Toby enters the domain of the kidnapper - Blind Michael with the help of my favourite side character - the Luidaeg. Chaos ensues cause Toby is as usual incapable of thinking before acting. There was more than one time when I wanted to smack her and yell at her to think. But Toby can be pretty dense at times. Eventually she makes it out with the kids she set off to rescue and you would think that would be the end of it. Well no. Cause that's Toby and she has one hell of a death wish. So she goes back. Even though she has pissed off one of the most powerful Fae in existence. Not only she went back but once she managed to pull free of him she went back again. Yup, she entered Blind Michael's domain three times. She must be the luckiest changeling in their universe cause that's a clear cut suicide attempt and she survived every time. Maybe Raysel was onto something when she compared her to a cockroach :D

The story in and out of itself was great but what really made me give it 5 stars was the blending of elements. I like how Ms. McGuire had taken the idea of universal children culture/folklore and integrated it into her story. In a way she has built the story around the idea that all children share some games and ideas no matter where they come from and what the culture of their parents is. As a non-native English speaker the lullabies and nurse rhymes incorporated into this book I found the whole thing magical. It was a glimpse into part of the culture I'll never see otherwise.

Another thing that drew my attention was the ongoing greater plot of the series. For now it's just bits and pieces here and there but it shapes to be about the fate of Faerie and why it's dying. As I pointed out in the thread at **BB&B** the Fae purebloods remind me of narrow niche species. They suck at adapting just like the Fae and are usually the first to die off once some change to the environment is introduced. And to the essentially immortal Fae the speed at which humanity moves is one hell of a change. Add to it the shrinking of their natural habitat (Faerie) and the purebloods seem in trouble. There was also some new info regarding

the missing monarchs and what started the slow decay of Faerie.

Which leads me to the third thing that I took special note of and that is the introduction of the ballad of Tam Lin to Toby's world. When I first came across the Fae it was in a book that closely mirrored that Scottish ballad. So naturally I googled the Fae and came across the wikipedia's page about Tam Lin. I was still in the beginning of the book but after that I could see the similarities. Later when I read other books that deal with the Fae that legend always sneaks in in some form. I suggest you read a bit about it if you intend to visit the Faerie Courts. It'll be useful ;)

Sarah says

Toby's day doesn't get off to the best start when she discovers her fetch (an omen of her impending death!) on her doorstep. Then when she finds out that two of her best friend's children have been stolen, along with 5 young cait sidhe from Tybalt's court, she decides that if she's destined to die she's damn sure going to make her death count by rescuing the missing kids first. Of course walking into Blind Michael's home and taking back children already claimed by the Wild Hunt isn't going to be an easy challenge, even if she does have some powerful friends willing to offer her assistance, but will Toby achieve her goal? And just how much will it cost her along the way?

This series just keeps on getting better, I enjoyed the first two books but this one was the best by far and I was hooked from beginning to end. Toby is such a great character, she doesn't always make the best decisions and she's still more than a little messed up from previous events, but her heart is in the right place and she always tries to protect the people she cares about. I loved seeing her start to realise how many people actually have her back in this book too, she has tried to keep people at a distance but in spite of that she has a lot of close friends who are willing to fight for her when she needs them the most.

Blind Michael was pretty terrifying as were the members of his Wild Hunt and I love the way **Sean** **McGuire** is bringing in all kinds of different fae myths and legends into this series. We get to explore more of Faerie here and see just how scary it is outside of Sylvester's Summerlands and it's really interesting to see how the fae are so inhuman in a lot of ways but at the same time they do have a set of rules that they must follow. I think the author has done a brilliant job of capturing that fae alien way of thinking that is present in more traditional faerie stories and I love that the series is just that little bit darker than most of the urban fantasy series I've read.

As with most series I love it's the side characters who help sell me on the world, the Luidaeg is a particular favourite and the way you're never quite sure whether she's on Toby's side or how much she will charge for her services but my favourite is still Tybalt. I'm definitely rooting for a Toby/Tybalt romance in the future (please, please, please!) but I'm also desperately curious about the hints Tybalt was dropping in this book. He makes some interesting comments that I think will lead to big revelations in the future and I'm not quite sure what direction that will take the series. May has been an interesting addition too and I'm looking forward to seeing how her relationship with October develops over the next few books.

I'm definitely fully onboard the Toby Daye bandwagon and I'm so excited to continue binge reading the series so watch out for more reviews coming very soon!

Source: Received from DAW Books in exchange for an honest review.

Emma says

3.5 stars. Hmm- still not entirely convinced by this series. I like its dark undertones; it's detailed descriptions of the world of the fae; Spike the rose goblin. No-it's Toby Daye herself I'm not really sold on. She is annoying. She ignores most of the advice she's given- her friends bale her out and she just turns around and gets herself into more trouble. She's not a hero, but no-wait- she IS a hero....she hates Tybalt, well no- maybe it's not hate afterall.....

Maybe Book 4 will be the one to convince me....

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

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads

4.5 stars

For whatever reason, the third installment is almost always a game changer in an urban fantasy series. **Iron Kissed** is almost universally acknowledged as being when **Mercy Thompson** "gets good," **Fae fever** is when Mac finally starts being more kick-ass heroine than TSTL, and **Magic Strikes** is my favorite UF installment ever.

*"How many miles to Babylon? It's threescore miles and ten. Can I get there by candlelight? Aye, and back again. If your feet are nimble and your steps are light, you can get there and back by the candle's light." She paused, voice changing cadences. "Children's games are stronger than you remember once you've grown up and left them behind. **They're always fair, and never kind. Remember.**"*

AN ARTIFICIAL NIGHT follows the well established pattern. The seeds McGuire planted in the first two books blossom into a breathtakingly faetastical world that is as dangerous as it is beautiful:

"You'd be surprised at how deep rose thorns can cut. They're pretty, not safe."

It's been a few months since I reread **A Local Habitation**, and once again I forgot how darrrrrk this series can be. I was quickly reminded when one of October's friends calls her in a panic, b/c two of her children (who adorably call her "Aunt Birdie") have disappeared, and another can't be woken from her sleep.

On her way to Golden Gate Park to take the sleeping girl to Lily, October runs into Tybalt (king of cats) who informs her that five Cait Sidhe children were also stolen in the night, one of them his nephew . . .

Brace, people. This is one monstrously captivating version of the Great Hunt.

And at the head of the hunt is Blind Michael, a *Firstborn*, son of Oberon and Titania, half-brother to the Luidaeg (*chants* *Lou-sha-k, Lou-sha-k, Lou-sha-k . . .*).

BUT.

As much as I love all things Great Hunt-related, it was all the mysteriously mysterious hints about the nature of October's mother's faeness, October's by default, that really hooked me.

Stuff like:

*“It’s been tried. Once it was even tried by my sisters and I—we belong to Maeve, but that doesn’t make us monsters. **Remember that, child of Oberon:** even we can tell the difference.”*
The Daoine Sidhe are claimed by Titania, not Oberon.

Chew on that for a minute.

Also, all of October's "changelings don't get forever, so I've always known I'll die one day," proclamations feel a mite lady-protesting-too-loudly, and given McGuire's obvious love of the Bard, I'll not be surprised if Amandine's "fairy bride" shenanigans is really a cover meant to hide the identity of October's true father.

And knowing that Sylvester has a sister named September, who named her daughter January, my money is on a Torquill . . . Which would explain Raysel's animosity . . .

Also awesome was the extreme faeness of several of the characters, this one in particular:

She was taller than xxxxx, with marble white skin and hair that darkened from pale pink at the roots to red-black at the tips. It fell past her knees, tangling in the rope of briars that belted her grass green gown. She looked like nothing I’d ever seen . . .

The rose woman opened her eyes. They were pale yellow, like pollen.

Sign me up for the **October Daye** coloring book, that's all I'm saying.

No really, that's all I'm saying. **Late Eclipses** is calling my name, but I won't let myself read it until I've written my review. Duty done. *winks* Highly recommended.

Katie says

[Maybe I've just read too many books, but Toby just didn't seem in that much danger to me! Like, obviously I knew she wouldn't die, but I didn't feel like the characters should've been as worried as they are. I should've felt the weight of that. (hide spoiler)]

Shannon says

Holy repetition, Batman! I'm beyond frustrated with this series. On one hand I love the world and the characters. Her *ideas* are fantastic, but the way the characters go round and around and back again is ridiculous. How many times can Toby make a trek to the same place? How many times can she almost die? How many times does she have to say she's NOT A HERO? How many times do we have to be told that you're not supposed to say, "thank you," to the fae? Apparently over and over and OVER AGAIN.

So the plot is; someone is stealing children and Toby has to find out who and stop them. This is basically the whole book. There's little more that goes on in between Toby trying to rescue the kids and not getting herself or her friends killed. This unfortunately brings me back to my feelings on the second novel; **her books are bloated and full of inconsequential scenes.** Tybalt is underused. Toby gets hurt a lot. It's basically the same thing over and over ad nauseum. What was worse this time were the numerous visits with Lily, Luna, the Luidaeg, and Blind Michael. So instead of Toby running around the same building back and forth like in the last book, she's running from knowe to knowe over and over again. I lost track of how many times she visited The Luidaeg, it was kind of ridiculous. Toby's life is basically lather, rinse, repeat and it's so disappointing.

The bright side to this story? Toby didn't have to solve anything. She's terrible at following clues and being a detective so at least we were saved from her bumbling around. We found answers to some of the mysteries, but not because Toby was looking for them.

I love the world McGuire has created. I like Toby, even though she can be dumb sometimes. **I haven't given up on this series yet,** mostly because there are still questions that I want answers to, **but I would never be able to recommend this series to anyone and feel good about it.**

Check out my reviews for the two books before this one: Rosemary and Rue and A Local Habitation.

Robin (Bridge Four) says

Reading with all my other buddy reading addicts at Buddies Books & Baubles

“Just once, I want to meet the villain in a cheerful, brightly lit room. Possibly one with kittens.”

Well, Toby I don't think that is going to happen any time soon or if you did meet the villain in the brightly lit room, it would be because it was on fire and the kittens would still try and eat you or kill you with their 9 inch claws.

I was on the fence with this series. In my last review I compared reading this series to dating and getting to know the series. Our first date (Rosemary and Rue) was okay, there was stuff I liked about it but it was a little dark and depressing. But since it didn't break any of my no-no rules I decided to October Skye a second date and A Local Habitation was even a little better. I wasn't ready to make out with it or anything but some

hand holding was in order. So date #3 An Artificial Night, that is the tell tell date isn't. That is the *'is this going somewhere, or should I just count my losses and just move on???'.*

The verdict is in and October Skye and I are officially dating, there might even be a goodnight kiss in the future. But let's not get crazy I'm not giving up my other books just yet.

This story had a better overall plotline and some very creepastic happenings. Anytime an omen of you impending death shows up at your door it is never a sign you are about to have a great day.

"What the hell are you?"

"A Fetch. Your Fetch, to be exact," she said. "You know, the spirits that wear your face when they come to escort you to the lands of—"

"—the dead," I finished. "Little problem: I'm not dead."

Well if that is a good start to our story I don't know what is. But there is also the case of the missing children that Toby feels inclined to take no matter the personal cost.

Before this book I was enjoying the world more than the actual characters but now I'm totally on team Toby and hope she makes it through the series alive. It seems a little questionable if that is going to happen because I'm with Lily and the Luidaeg that Toby might have a little death wish going on.

"Are you going to ask why she drugged you?"

"Alright," I said, narrowing my eyes. "Why?"

"Because, dear October, you're the most passively suicidal person I've ever met, and that's saying something. You'll never open your wrists, but you'll run headfirst into hell. You'll have good reasons. You'll have great reasons, even. And a part of you will be praying that you won't come out again."

I tend to like broken things and Toby is a bit broken. But she does always have pretty good intentions even if she gets carried away in them sometimes.

I'm still longing for a little more on the romance front. I'm definitely hoping for some TnT (Toby and Tybalt) to happen but it seems that we still have to go through Conner to get there and his wife (Conner's not Tybalts) might be an issue as she is crazy and possible a little jealous of Toby. Still it seems like there is some hope on the Tybalt front but as he is something like a cat I'm thinking he is going to toy with us a little first.

"I didn't mean to upset you."

"What?" I glanced toward him.

"I said, I didn't mean to upset you. I didn't realize my absence would be a problem." His smile widened slightly. "It seemed you were eternally trying to be rid of me."

"Yeah, well." I stopped next to the car, taking my clothes out of his hands. "I guess I wasn't expecting it to be quite that abrupt. Did I piss you off?"

"Piss me off? No. You didn't. I've been . . ." He paused, sighing. "I've been looking for someone. There are questions that trouble me and I'd like to find some answers."

Well color me interested in that for sure. I have all kinds of questions in this series and they are only being

partially answered sometimes. But I'm sure that is part of the lure of the more major story arc here. The answers are coming slowly but surely.

I didn't know much about the fae lore surrounding The Hunt and man it was a bit brutal. But the entire plot line with Blind Michael was really amazing and dark and cruel but fascinating none the less. This was the best plot line so far and I find myself becoming more and more interesting in the world and characters. So here is hoping that on our next date I feel like making out a little with Late Eclipses. Here is me hoping for a kiss from a sexy mancat or catman whatever Tybalt is.

?★Tinja★ A Court of Pizza and Laziness says

I have yet to fall in love with this series but I'm determined to continue despite of it! There are so many things I enjoy immensely. I adore all things Fae and fairytales. The world in this is so wonderful and interesting. I love Seanan's imagination. It's mindblowing! Truly.

Her Wayward Children series is fabulous and Incryptid series is one of my favorites EVER??

That being said, I had some issues..

-So much repetition. In everything!

- Back and forth we go in this one xD I was a liiiiittle bit frustrated... and by little I mean A LOT.

- I'm not liking Toby. I'm just not. She is obviously a good person but she is always like "What? What do you mean?" I feel like she is constantly saying this xD And she is a private investigator but I'm sorry sometimes I feel she just isn't the brightest. I feel bad for saying this but I mean she is a private investigator and all... uh *glances nervously around if there's a hardcore fan about to stab me*

I made the mistake of re-reading Kate Daniels before this. *sighs* BIG MISTAKE XD I keep comparing which is unfair but I can't help it.

- The narrator. I'm listening to the Audio and I'm not a fan of the narrator. She gives annoying voices to side characters. And drunk Toby sounds like 5 year old Toby. So that is also affecting my reading experience.

My complaining said, I refuse to give up on this series I adore all her other books damnit! I've heard SUCH GOOD THINGS about this series and even though I'm not the biggest fan of Toby, there are characters I love. For example the Luidaeg! Definitely my favorite character ? love that cranky b*tch lol ? also May ? And Tybalt. Can we have much more Tybalt please? I have the hots for the Cat King. :p

P.S That ending? Poor baby lemme hold you *cries*

P.P.S Is there anything better than Toby exclaiming: "Oh Oberon's Hairy Balls"?

Sara (sarawithoutanH) says

2.5/5

Okay, so this series is finally getting better. I was pleasantly surprised that this book was miles better than the first two.

I still think the world building is weird and there's way too many species of fae to remember, but the plot in this one was a lot better. I liked that more of the fae world was involved and I feel like I now have more questions that I want answered, which is a good thing for me as a reader.

The downside was that the pacing was extremely repetitive. Toby had to return to the same location four times before actually defeating the big bad. And if Toby tells us one more time that she's not a hero, I will slap her. Toby says the same things over and over again throughout the narrative and it gets old real quick. She also repeatedly gets hurt due to her own stupidity. She always survives on pure luck. It's a good thing she has so many friends who are willing to save her. Also, when are we actually going to get to see Tybalt more? He's the only interesting character and he's extremely underutilized.

So, on the one hand, this book was much better than the last two. On the other, it still has some major issues. I'll keep reading but I could not recommend this series to anyone and feel good about it.

Carol. says

Dear October,

Let me give you some sisterly advice. First, take charge of your life. Admit you are choosing to do what you are doing, not being forced to by Stacy, the Luidaeg, Lily, or Blind Michael, or anyone else. Own it. If you are the only private investigator for the fae, demonstrate some initiative and actually investigate; ask questions and stop acting like a child by whining "tell me, stop giving me riddles!" Since you of all people are constantly telling us such fae generalizations like, "never say thank you to the fae," or "undine are even more bound by protocol and politeness than most fae races," you should know better than to moan about riddles--go out and solve them.

Secondly, stop pushing people you love and who care for you away. It's cheap emotional self-protection, and it's as annoying as all hell. While you are at it, stop lying to them under the guise of shielding them. Refusing Quentin's help was enough, but did you have to be nasty to prove how toxic you are? Then push Connor away after he comes to your driving rescue, justifying it because Selkies are "at the bottom of the hierarchy of power," when at least he is full blood? Sending the fetch in to pose as you to your friend Stacy in her time of grief and reunion? It's hard to follow a protagonist I can't at least moderately like. You keep telling us "Anger, I can use--I understand it. Sometimes it can even help keep me alive," but I don't see anger. I see self-pity and cowardice.

Sincerely,

Disappointed Reader

The overarching question is, are these complaints character flaws or writing flaws? One of my biggest conflicts with this series is that I can't tell. I used to think writing flaws, but just maybe, just possibly, since we are constantly reminded about October's mother being queen of the self-involved, and Daoine Sidhe being manipulative--are we readers being manipulated by our protagonist?

Nah, I don't think so, but enough hints about her bloodline were dropped at the end of the book that the possibility exists.

Despite the inadequacies of the heroine, once October went into Faerie to find the missing children, I found the story engrossing. I applaud the inclusion of Spike the rose goblin as side-kick, and appreciate that he was also given the role of ambassador. The change worked on October to allow her to travel into Faerie was clever and added an interesting challenge for her. I love the way that the threads of the Wild Hunt have been woven into the book, and the twist on the Tam Lin story at the end is particularly creative. The wild wood and it's mad caretaker is old folklore, and it's integration into the story was done well, as well as the interconnection with the rest of October's world. I thought the atmosphere of tension and fear in Faerie and Blind Michael's kingdom (although I can't find that folktale listed anywhere) was well done. The glimpse into the world of the Cait Sidhe is interesting, as are the opportunities we have to see other sides of Tybalt besides knight in form-fitting pants. I'm relieved to see him and October behaving more often like adults (but unfortunately, not all the time) and less like fifth graders on the playground complaining the other has cooties. The Fetch was interesting, and I'm curious to see what becomes of it. In folklore, Fetches are created by somebody, not just an escort, so it'll be interesting to see if there is an agent behind her appearance.

How would I have made this book better?

First, decide on tone--are we going for snarky or serious? Neither the author nor October seems to know. I don't get anger or violence in this series; I get a sense of a modern jaundiced humor. Saying October is "angry," and then using sarcasm as a chief trait is confusing. I understand modern characters are supposed to be quick with the quips. But it doesn't work here, mostly because quips imply a great deal of emotional distance and/or confidence in an ability to handle a situation, and October has neither. Same with the author: should I have laughed at a Fetch being named "May Day?" I thought so, but why didn't anyone other characters have a sense of humor about such an obvious pun? And the chase scene with May's driving had me in stitches, but I wasn't sure I was supposed to find the death-defying experience funny, especially as October begins the scene crying.

Second, decide where we are going with October's role in the fae world--investigate or act as disposable heavy? One of the greatest inconsistencies of the series is her claim to be a "PI," and then take jobs that have little to do with investigating and basically require no personal initiative. She falls into danger and gets out, which has more to do with sheer perseverance than problem-solving skills (which would be an interesting angle if that's how she was viewed by other fae, but we have too many obvious fae of status who value her). I'd strongly recommend October's personality going through some character development--is she going to wallow or take charge?

Third, lose the "pronunciation guide" at the beginning of the book, which adds insult to the reader by adding the plural afterwards (does it matter? do we care? No.) When most of your Fae have highly modern names like "Lily," "Sylvester," "Stacy," "Mitch," and "Connor," we can skip the Tolkienesque pretensions. Again, it kind of highlights the essential identity confusion of the series--silly or serious?

Overall, three stars because it improved once past exposition, and the possibility of character growth at the end. As always, I love McGuire's integration of folklore into the series.

Anne says

Ok, Steven...this one wasn't bad at all!

I see some of my friends couldn't get on board with this one, but I feel comfortable planting myself in the group that said this 3d book was a vast improvement in the series. I was sorta *meh* about the 1st book, and was less-than-*meh* about the 2nd one, but **Ding! Ding! Ding!** #3 was a winner for me.

So, in this one Toby goes after a Big Bad that's **SO BIG** and **SO BAD** this mission is probably gonna kill her. Like, *reallyreallyreally* kill her.

But what's a girl gonna do when there are a bunch of adorable little kids that need to be saved?

Well, *duh*. She's gonna put her big girl panties on, and save the day!

Yeah. So, I'm going to keep going with this series, because it seems to have picked up the pace, and a lot of the things I was annoyed with in *A Local Habitation* aren't happening in this book. It was (to me) just a good, solid urban fantasy action/adventure story.

Denisa says

Ohh, this one was the most exciting book so far!

Fast paced and fun, that's what you get from this series. And well, so far, people seem to be right. It kind of gets better and better. Can't see what's next!

Wanda says

I'm not sure why I find this series so charming—I think it is because I absolutely adore the world of the Fae that McGuire has created here. I love how complex it is, how many kinds of fae entities exist in it, and learning the rules that govern it.

I'm hoping that the main character, Toby, improves over the arc of the series. I'm tired of her refusing to use a perfectly serviceable brain (although if she experiences too much more head trauma, I'm not sure that it will remain intact). I'm tired of her whining about how hard things are—use your head and figure things out. I'm tired of watching her push away all the people who want to help her. Just because you are a knight and a hero doesn't mean that you can't accept assistance from others, especially when there are powerful others who obviously care deeply about you. Hell, I find myself caring about her, despite all the things that drive me crazy.

I also hope that there will be more information on Toby's mother, Amandine, at some point. There was a great big tease in this book, and I really want to know more details of the crazy fairy mother.

Once I pick up one of the October Daye series, I find I can't set it down happily until I'm at the end and I then want the next book asap, please. So obviously, I will keep reading. I'm just trying to pace myself so that I don't burn out on them.

Aristea says

Another 3.5 stars read! To be fair, the first half was an incredible ride and I was certain I would have scored a 4 if not higher.

The second half was less to my liking but it was okay.

I cannot wait for book 4 though!

Jo says

23/03/2016 Buddy Read with my fellow Daye lovers at BB&B

"He takes them and he binds them. Fae children ride, so they grow strong and fierce; human children are ridden, so they learn the ways of hoof and bridle. And they are changed. Beware Blind Michael's children, Toby—beware all his children, no matter how honest or honorable they seem. I can't stop you from trying. Heroes never listen. That's why they're heroes."

October Daye is once again asked to save the night. Children, human, changeling and pureblooded has gone missing, and the only one willing and able to save them is Toby. But this time she will be facing a bogeyman, and Toby will have to remember that children's games are much stronger than she remembers, and they may be fair but never kind.

This wasn't a warm night. It was a night for endings, and for monsters.

The world this author has created continues to amaze me. The detail of it, the richness and cleverness of it. I never knew that the Fae world was so fascinating. And the writing is just beautiful and awesome.

I hate riddles, and I hate them even more when I'm forced to play along. I've always preferred the direct method: hit the riddler upside the head until he gives you the answer. Maybe it's more likely to get you hurt, but it's also a lot less confusing.

I love Toby. She might not be the most powerful but she will never choose her own safety, her own life over saving someone else's. And no matter how many times she comes close to dying, how many times she fails (and believe me, it happens a lot), she does not give up. Although she did have me worried in this book.

Toby hasn't been the same since her 14 years captivity in a koi pond, losing her daughter and her life as she tried to live it, and in this book she came very close to giving up. BUT luckily she has many people who love

her, who care for her, and who fought for her when she couldn't and I loved knowing that she wasn't alone.

This series has become a favorite of mine, filled with a wonderful and interesting world, a great heroine with many flaws, and fantastic secondary characters. My only real complaint is the lack of romance, and I really hope that something will change in the near future between Toby and Tybalt.

A must read for all who loves urban fantasy.

The Flooze says

ETA: I've continued reading this series and want to point out I gave books four and five considerably higher ratings. Four stars each.

"You mean well, but you've never been all that bright."

So the Luidaeg says of Toby, and wow, is she right. She also claims that all heroes are idiots and that October is the most passively suicidal person she's ever met. The sea witch's opinions echo my own.

Previous books established Toby as a lousy detective. I'd hoped *An Artificial Night* would run more smoothly since it focuses on Toby as knight rather than P.I. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case.

The book does have its high points. Once again, McGuire's use of mythology is stellar. She obviously has a great affinity for legends and ballads and puts them to good use. She creates interesting characters and a creepy, dreamlike atmosphere in which everything malevolent is possible.

She's also adept at comedic interludes. The Luidaeg and May (a new character) provide amusing scenes, and the fluid practicality of the children is enough to prompt a smile. Of particular note is a car chase that's both harrowing and hysterical, detailed enough to widen my eyes and cause a sharp intake of breath.

Lastly, Tybalt's cryptic statements combined with the (irritatingly) frequent mention of Toby's mother set up a larger plot arc that sparks my curiosity.

Then we have the negatives.

Toby is *still* floundering around like a fish out of water. Some of it isn't her fault, since the folks with the info are never straight with her. But if she's reluctantly decided she's a hero, I expect her to start picking up a few tricks. Maybe even habitually carrying more weaponry than a mere token knife. On this front, there's no progress. I'm all for good intentions, but I prefer my heroines to possess common sense.

October hurries here and there and back again. She has good reasons, but her travels become tedious in their repetition. The first few times she set off, I was concerned. By the fourth time, all the tension had drained out of me and I only wanted the story to end.

It didn't. There's a distinct moment where McGuire could have broken off the action, saving the hanging

threads for a future plot. But in an effort to tie up everything with a neat little bow, our heroine dashes off *again*. In the process, she becomes a terrible ingrate. Suffice it to say several people put their lives on the line for her. By running into danger so soon after, she not only displays her suicidal nature - she shows an utter disrespect for those who care for her.

Good intentions be damned. I'll be sorry to leave Tybalt, May, the sea witch and cute little Spike, but Toby's helter-skelter, illogical ways are too frustrating for me. Heroes are idiots according to the Luidaeg, and I've no patience for it.

Dark Faerie Tales says

Review courtesy of Dark Faerie Tales

Quick & Dirty: Action-packed urban fantasy where the protagonist learns a huge lesson about her true nature.

Opening Sentence: One thing I've learned in my time working as a private investigator-slash-knight errant for the fae community of the San Francisco Bay Area: if something looks like it's going to be simple, it probably won't be.

Excerpt: No

The Review:

An Artificial Night is the third in the October "Toby" Daye urban fantasy series by Seanan McGuire. This novel was action-packed, thrilling and emotional. I had a hard time putting this book down to do everyday things because I wanted to know how everything was going to play out. An Artificial Night can be read as a standalone but I highly recommend starting from the beginning. This world has some crazy fae quirks and some really awesome side characters so it helps to know everything even though there are clues to everything just in case you forgot or don't know.

At the beginning of the novel, October is back to running her Private Investigator business as usual, although most of her clients now happen to be fae. She is getting out with friends and family instead of staying home as a recluse. But life can't always be happy and simple for Toby so on the morning that her Fetch shows up Toby knows her world is over because she is about to die. Toby's Fetch, May Daye, is there to lead Toby behind the veil when she dies. Then just a few short hours later Toby is informed that quite a few fae children have been kidnapped by Blind Michael. She knows that she has to get the children back before Blind Michael can transform them all into his strange army. Tybalt even asks for Toby to get his peoples' children back.

Toby has to undergo one of the toughest challenges that I have ever encountered in urban fantasy. How can you defeat someone who appears to be a god and the only choices are between who dies and who gets left behind. Toby can't save them all. Every time it seems like the story is over, it is not. I kept going there are

too many pages left, what is going to happen now?

There is a really intense scene where Toby is being chased by the Riders. I was holding my breath for what would happen next. There was some really funny stuff going on too. The banter between Toby and May is hilarious. Plus, I kept anticipating the scenes with Tybalt. He and Toby have such a complicated relationship. I want to know now how this plays out but I also don't want to spoil it for myself. The Luidaeg continues to be one of my favorite people in this series. She is crazy, deadly and so complicated that I love to see what she does next. I secretly think she has a heart of gold but prefers people to fear her. I'm still really conflicted about the Toby/Connor thing. I feel bad for him but I also don't think that Toby is the answer.

Toby continues to grow and learn more about herself. She learns a terrible truth that everyone around her can see but she doesn't quite realize it until it is pointed out. Toby finds that she is completely okay with the truths that she finds out about herself.

An Artificial Night did bring a few tears to my eyes because of the loyalty of friends, the love of family (even if they aren't blood relations) and the overall tragedy that life just isn't fair. There is quite a bit of exposition at times but I have really enjoyed this series so far. I really enjoy the banter between characters and the humor. Toby and I have a similar strange humor. I can't wait to see what is next! There are so many things left open. (FYI, this story was completely wrapped up, it's just the ongoing little things that bug me. There are so many places for the story to go.)

Notable Scene:

"Lily!" I threw the quilt off my legs, trying to stand. It didn't work. "She drugged us!"

"Yup," agreed the Luidaeg. "Really got you good. Invoked Mom's name and everything. Do you have any idea how long it's been since I've heard that invocation? That's the Undine equivalent of breaking out the good china."

"But—"

"She wanted you away from your Fetch, and frankly, I think she was right."

I stared at her. "But she drugged us."

"That is no longer news, dumbass. Are you going to ask why she drugged you?"

"All right," I said, narrowing my eyes, "Why?"

"Because, dear October, you're the most passively suicidal person I've ever met, and that's saying something. You'll never open your wrists, but you'll run head-first into hell. You'll have good reasons. You'll have great reasons, even. And part of you will be praying that you won't come out again."

Her words struck a little too close to home. "That's not true," I protested, weakly.

"Isn't it?" She stood, moving to the window and looking out onto the street. "Faeries live forever. Humans don't, but they know they're going to die; it's in their blood. Your blood doesn't know the way, and I think you're trying to teach yourself." She shook her head. "You mean well, but you've never been all that bright."

FTC Advisory: DAW/Penguin provided me with a copy of An Artificial Night. No goody bags, sponsorships, “material connections,” or bribes were exchanged for my review.
