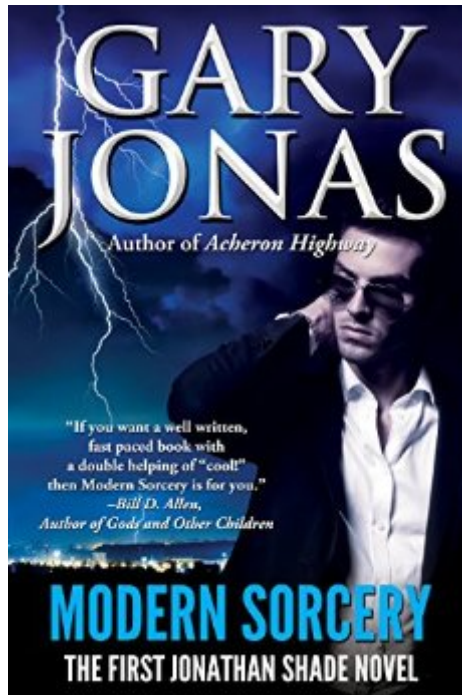


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Modern Sorcery: The First Jonathan Shade Novel



Synopsis

A SAVAGE MURDERER husband armed with a sword hacks apart his wife in a Denver grocery store. There are dozens of witnesses, and the crime is captured on the security cameras. To the police, it's an open-and-shut case. To Naomi, the daughter of the couple, it's evidence of dark magic. She hires her ex-lover, a private investigator named Jonathan Shade to prove her father is innocent. Shade specializes in paranormal cases, but he isn't buying it. Still, he takes the case, hoping to rekindle their relationship. Instead, Shade finds himself mixed up in supernatural intrigue with wizards, magically engineered assassins, and an ancient sorcerer returned to life who's willing to kill anyone who stands in his way. Too bad Shade doesn't have any magic.

Â The Jonathan Shade series so far: Modern Sorcery Acheron Highway Dragon Gate Anubis Nights Sunset Specters Wizard's Nocturne Razor Dreams

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The label urban fantasy seems to cover wide ground these days, but if you're in the mood for a deftly executed example of this popular subgenre, then Gary Jonas's Modern Sorcery is likely

perfect for you. It contains arguably all the best elements of urban fantasy, crafted together with a hardboiled yarn and rolled into a smooth and satisfying package complete with uncluttered, humor-laden prose, quirky characters, and a perfectly paced plot. As you might expect, the blend of magic and everyday life (and crime) takes center stage, along with nonstop pacing filled with dangerous encounters and cinematic swordplay. Set in wizard-infested Denver, in a present in which magic exists but is weakening, *Modern Sorcery* skillfully blends the genres without ever becoming melodramatic or self-conscious. Protagonist Jonathan Shade is a typical PI - quick with his sardonic quips - but even though he is surrounded by magic-using characters, he himself has no personal magical capability and magic doesn't affect him directly. His beautiful, mysterious partner Kelly Chan teaches martial arts and kicks butt with glee (and a sword). Shade's secretary, Esther, is actually a ghost physically bound to an antique Underwood manual typewriter, which itself makes for surprising complications and, occasionally, solutions. When former lover Naomi Miller seeks Shade's help proving her father innocent of murdering her mother though the crime was captured on surveillance cameras, his feelings get in the way. Of course the case isn't as simple as it seems. A set of three crystals is the key to resurrecting a powerful wizard, and it's missing. Naomi is a low-level wizard. Her parents, who worked for an engineering firm fronting for wizardly hijinks, are also wizards as are most of their coworkers.

Excellent urban noir fantasy. The world is solid and complex, and best of all, the author doesn't spend chapters detailing every way the book's world differs from our own. The characters are well done, with enough questions and hints to let us know there's a lot more to them than might be visible in this particular story. And sadly, or oddly, it's these characters that cost the book a star. Mostly the main character, Shade...I get really tired of gritty investigator tough guys who constantly get their butt kicked. There's a lot of fighting and action, and in virtually every instance, Shade gets his butt kicked and has to be rescued. Every once in a while would be fine, but every fight? C'mon, Mr Jonas. Secondly...Kelly. Wonderful, awesome character...until the last two pages. For the entire book, she *has* Shade's back. The one person he can trust absolutely. Sure, she's a magically engineered warrior who lives to kick butt and kill things, but she is Shade's...well, 'partner' is such a tame word. They're bonded, and she will do anything for him...even smack him when he needs it. So it seriously offended me that in the last two pages, she betrays everything we thought we knew about her...because the bad guy was cute. The Kelly we interacted with for the vast majority of the book would never consider it: that cute guy would be dead. Sure, it may have seemed a nice funny twist to throw in, lighten up the Drama, but it absolutely did not fit with the story OR with Kelly's

personality. For most of the book she's willing and ready to kill Naomi...because she's a wizard, because she broke Shade's heart, whatever...but the guy who tried and almost succeeded in killing Shade several times? Let's date him!

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