

Death Sworn

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Ileni, a seventeen-year-old Renegai sorceress, is sent to tutor magic for the students at the Assassin's Cave, a place where hundreds of boys are trained to kill, in order to help bring down the Rathian Empire that tyrannizes the land. Her people, the Renegai folk, don't believe in violence or murder but in exchange for risking her life and serving the Assassins, her own people will be safe. However, this doesn't stop the men from holding their suspicions and desires to kill her, since both of their kinds don't typically get along. Ileni also knows that the last two Renegai sorcerers that were tutors before her, died at the hands of these very Assassins. With Sorin, one of her best student assassins, she tries to get to the bottom of the truth behind the mysterious deaths of her people and to also keep herself alive. However, she has a secret. Her power as a sorceress is gradually slipping away and her chances of survival are very grim.

I loved the danger and the risk in this book. In a place of hundreds of skilled assassins, and an institution that values pain, hierarchy and glory, there are many possible unfortunate fates that could come to the weak and fearful. However, this is not the case for Ileni. Despite the fact that she is the only female at the place, and also one of the youngest teachers, she carries a bit defiance, authority and courage that the boys learn to respect. Her adventures with Sorin take much courage and can occasionally get bloody. The many secrets and the mysterious ways around the institution only make the book harder to put down and I found myself hooked on the action. There really wasn't much to dislike about the book. I grew a liking for all the characters, which were well developed, and also the plot, which was well-woven and riveting from the start.

This is more of a young adult novel for readers at least thirteen years old. There are mentions of blood and murder, and some scenes may be graphic.

In all, this is one of the best books I've read this summer. I'm really glad I picked it up. If you're a fan of dystopian style thrillers, fantasy-like adventures or mysterious murder crimes, this is the book for you.

Recommended titles:

- Divergent by Veronica Roth
- Midnight Thief by Livia Blackburne
- The Shadow Prince by Bree Despain
- Legend by Marie Lu
- The Young Elites by Marie Lu