



Quis Custodiet

Manna Francis

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Quis Custodiet Manna Francis Where are all the good guys?

No protests, no bombings, no subversion. Is it possible that in one part of the European Administration at least, almost all the citizens are happy with their lot in life? It seems unlikely. When the numbers don't add up at the Athens branch of the Investigation and Interrogation Division, Para-investigator Toreth is sent there from New London to review their procedures. With sunshine, a less-than-urgent assignment, and hosts who seem anxious to ensure that he has a good time, it seems like the perfect chance for a holiday on Administration time.

Or it would if he didn't have to leave Sara and the rest of his regular team behind. Working alone for once, as the investigation becomes more complex Toreth finds himself surrounded by people he can't trust. Worse than that, he has to leave Warrick on his own in New London, a situation further complicated by the reappearance of an old adversary.

The fifth book in the Administration series contains the novella *Quis Custodiet* and seven short stories, following the careers of para-investigator and inveterate trouble-magnet Val Toreth and ambitious, if occasionally blinkered, corporate Keir Warrick in the near-future dystopia of the European Administration.

Quis Custodiet Details

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Author : Manna Francis

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From Reader Review Quis Custodiet for online ebook

Christina says

Re-read: 02/2015; 04/2017

Quis Custodiet - 5 stars

Ipsos Custodes (paperback only) - 4 stars

Gratuitous Kink - 4.5 stars

Then And Now - 5 stars

Friends In The Right Places - 3.5 stars

Smoke and Cameras - 4.5 stars

Sunday Game - 5 stars

Paw for Thought (paperback only) - 4 stars

karen says

oh, i do so hope boycop is watching! i would love to be scolded on teh internets again for how lame and boring my sense of humor is. come to me, boycop, i have read the fifth volume of the administration series, and am eager for your judgment of me, please! here - i will repost your own review of this book here so i can refer to it more easily. i need to know what is the most acceptable form of review for books in this series.

As the title implies, the plot is mainly about the political machination of the Administration, but with enjoyable insights into Toreth's inner demons.

Manna's writing is once again excellent. The characters are alive and believable, but also broken and incomplete (as humans), but the writing never perpetrates into sentimentality or easy solutions.

yes, that was very informative. thank you for showing me how it ought to be done. and for your well-reasoned arguments in the past. remind me to be grateful later, when i am finished using my sense-making skills to even understand your criticisms of me.

so. volume five. this book reads like the fifth or sixth year of a perfectly matched relationship. the fireworks are predictable, there are petty jealousies and quiet nights and a couple of role reversals to keep it spicy in a world where where "no" doesn't mean "no" so much as "ask again." but it's fine - i still love the characters, i am just waiting until the sixth volume - the one that makes dana's eyes go all faraway.

as far as it goes - i thought the novella that opened this collection was among the strongest (except the first one, which got me started in my love for these two characters), but i always find her resolutions to be a little

abrupt and weak. but before that part, it was very strong - plenty of intrigue and some changes in toreth that make me hopeful for his prospects for humanization. the stories were good, but i didn't get the same aspect of character development that other stories have offered. but. i still love this series, and i am apprehensive that there are only two more. especially because of the presence of stories that only have one of "my boys" in it, or different characters altogether! it is seriously frustrating.

those are my opinions. they are not meant to be humorous.
i apologize if any humor leaked out.

Laura says

I should probably discuss the frustration and anger this story pulled out of me with the twisting & turning mind games, deception, omissions, jealousy, paranoia, and CARNAC! Carnac all dressed up in his slimy charm and treachery brings out a very scary, insecure Toreth to play and sets my nerves on edge. I mean teeth grinding anger edge! But all I have in my eyes and heart right now are stars....

"More stars than he'd seen in his life. More stars than he'd ever imagined existed. Even the gaps between them looked different—a deep velvety blue only a shade away from black. The unexpected beauty of it held his gaze, leaving him unaware of time passing."

Quis Custodiet held one of the most beautiful, romantic, and heartfelt moments of the series for me so far. A moment I will keep close to my heart. Breathtaking words and images swept me right in. Stars and Warrick...

"Warrick still lay against him, light in the water, holding him securely to stop the currents pushing them apart. He breathed slow and steady—very nearly asleep."

I have said it before, but I will say it again...I love Manna Francis! The force of her words, tone, and pace can bring me to my knees! These stories and characters produce such a potent, indescribable mix of tenderness, need, comfort, anger, desire and mutterings out of me! I'm loving every single word.

I can't recommend this reading experience enough. Read it! Please.

Lenore says

To be honest, this story deserves more than five stars. I won't start on how much I love Toreth and Warrick and about the quality of the writing.

BUT. Yes, there is a but.

I'm so mad at Warrick right now. For hell's sake. The man had you followed. That's how much he trusts you. He embarrassed you in front of your colleagues and friends and endangered the future of your beloved company. He also keeps fucking around (note: someone please shoot that syrupy guy, Paul, for me. I would

be eternally grateful) and lies to you all the time and he genuinely believes he's justified and allowed to do it and he would leave you in a heartbeat if you asked him to stop.

He would also kill you first than see you with anyone else but you don't know that so ok, maybe you haven't realized the full extent of his pathological jealousy and possessiveness.

But the point is, how much more of Toreth's shit are you willing to take Warrick? How much more, damn it?

ElaineY says

I accidentally deleted all that I typed for the first three stories in this 5th book and can't be bothered to retype everything! I wish there were an auto-save feature in GR:(

QUIS CUSTODIET

This is one story you'll have to read to fully appreciate Toreth's talent for getting into the shits with Warrick.

As we have come to expect, Warrick forgives Toreth, of course, so it's 'back to business' as usual and where Toreth is concerned, that means back to fucking and lying and more fucking and more lying.

And Warrick will, again, forgive him. Rinse and repeat should be the alternate title for this series.

IPSOS CUSTODIES

Tells the PI debacle from Warrick's perspective and it's at times like these that I get very angry with Warrick for being so willing to settle for whatever he can get from Toreth. Warrick will hop and jump and rant and rave like Rumpelstiltskin but in the end, he's a toothless tiger and will never leave Toreth even though there will be more men like Carnac who will show Toreth up.

GRATUITOUS KINK

Toreth and Warrick attend the Shop's 21st birthday party. The Shop is where Toreth bought Warrick The Wardrobe. Toreth at a party organized by a sex shop? Do we need to say more?

In the end, TA is just a story of two pathetic men who can't live without each other yet can't let the other *live*. Toreth needs Warrick bad enough to kill his competition, if need be, but can't give Warrick the peace of mind and heart by ceasing his fucking everything with a pulse; Warrick loves and needs Toreth like no other but will never be able to give Toreth the freedom to fuck a duck if that's what T wants because Warrick just isn't wired that way. So Warrick will continue to hop and jump and rant and rave like Rumpelstiltskin at Toreth and the latter will be contrite for about five minutes, or for as long as it takes for Warrick to say, "You can fuck me now.'

I probably lost all hope for Toreth here and am not keen to continue but I've reformatted the stories for my reader such that I have all the stories from Book 5 in a single file so I'll continue to flip my reader and, perhaps, Ms Francis may give me a break.

THEN & NOW

It was a 'pleasant' surprise to see Toreth reminiscing about his childhood (minus the family parts, though) and it fills in the gaps as to how he got to be what he is today. We get to learn why sex coupled with love is a combination that could never occur to Toreth. We learn why sex is just the result of an impulse that's

indulged, an itch that's scratched, regardless of who it hurts.

'Then', Toreth was a helpless victim. 'Now', he's still a victim. Just an older one. He may have found love now, but is too damaged to recognize it or know what to do with it. For Toreth, this looks like *As Good As It Gets*. I felt sorry for him early on in TA. Now, I truly pity him.

FRIENDS IN THE RIGHT PLACES

A short of Toreth at work again. This time, he's asked to give the son of a corporate scion a scare after the brat has been dabbling in anti-Administration games. No Warrick here. I enjoyed this break from the inevitable, unavoidable, obligatory sex scenes which are getting to be rather repetitive and ho-hum.

SMOKE & CAMERAS

Toreth is invited to a Sim-tech celebration. The first production run is done and soon, Warrick's baby will be ready to be marketed. Nothing much in this short story except for a quick grope while they are stuck in a lift when the power goes out.

At least, that's how it looks until I got to the part where something happens to take Toreth another step further concerning Warrick's place in his life. One, small, scary moment and I hope it does lead to more.

SUNDAY GAME

Just another short kinky interlude from Warrick's POV.

PAWS FOR THOUGHT

This short story is about Tom, the cat-boy that Toreth fucked at the Shop's 21st birthday party's in *Smoke & Cameras*. I thought it was a dreadful waste of paper (this is available only in the paperback) and opportunity. It's obviously just something tacked on for the paperback version and I would have preferred another story, say one of Warrick, giving us a glimpse of his past to help us understand his hard-on for pain. Or Toreth's childhood years at home. Whatever, it would have made more sense to me than a story about that cat-boy having a sim session. I really did not get the point of this story and its inclusion. A surprisingly weak ending to this installment.

SUMMARY OF QVIS CUSTODIET:

Apart from *Quis Custodiet*, the stories in Book 5 are short but even then, Manna inserts, in each one (apart from *Paws For Thought*), an important piece of the puzzle to the Toreth picture and his relationship with Warrick. At this point of the series, I confess I am getting a little worn out and have taken to reading another old comfort in the hope that the break will restore my now-flagging interest. I find the entire Toreth-Warrick relationship exhausting and, from what the other readers have told me, there's not going to be much to hope for and my conclusion, based on what I've been told, is that there may not be enough difference in Toreth at the end of the series to justify my plowing through 2,400 reader pages.

I'm not sure when I'll start Book 6, *Against the Wall*. I'll need to find a motivating factor first. Perhaps, I'll just tell myself to read it for Manna Francis' superb writing and forget about the content per se.

Penny says

Rating Clarification: 3.5

This review is divided in two parts: About the novella, and about the short-stories.

About the Novella:

Just like with Mind Fuck (The Administration, #1) , and the novella Control (The Administration, #4) , I wasn't interested in the investigation. This time I actually skimmed most of it and concentrated in the parts that had something to do with Warrick.

I don't know why Warrick is not pushier, or why he lets pass so much to Toreth, he allows him way too much, and I am not sure if is for fear of losing him or because he accepts it completely and doesn't really mind it. We mostly hear about Toreth, but it would be nice, for once, to know about Warrick's feelings clearly, it would make me understand him better. It's so frustrating to have so little of his voice and head when we have so much of Toreth, whom is not really evolving lately, Toreth seems to be stuck (if we don't count the increasingly and worrying jealousy that is starting to turn Toreth into a crazy person).

About the Short-Stories:

I am disappointed, I expected much more.

I was expecting the relationship to advance more, I wanted more moments of intimacy between them. Yes, there were nice moments between the two of them, fun and entertaining stories, however it wasn't enough. This time everything is the same, emotionally speaking, their relationship is stuck.

We still know nothing of Warrick's real feelings about the whole thing, except perhaps that for the moment he is perfectly satisfied since he doesn't do anything to change the situation. This frustrates me, Warrick frustrated me. I really feel like we don't know him well enough.

My reviews of The Administration series' books:

Book 1: Mind Fuck - 3 Stars

Book 2: Quid Pro Quo

Book 2.1: Unlucky Break - 2 Stars

Book 2.2: Friday - 3 Stars

Book 2.3: Pancakes - 5 Stars

Book 2.4: Surprises - 4 Stars

Book 2.5: Family - 4 Stars

Book 2.6: Mirror Mirror - 4 Stars

Book 3: Games & Players - 5 Stars

Book 3.1: Game, Set - 4 Stars

Book 3.2: As Long As It Lasted - 3 Stars

Book 3.3: Fuck of the Day - 3 Stars

Book 3.4: Wine, Women and Cushions - 2 Stars

Book 3.5: Playing with Fire - 5 Stars

Book 3.6: All Work and no Play - 3 Stars

Book 3.7: Gee - 2 Stars

Book 3.8: Shopping & Fucking - 5 Stars

Book 3.9: Pool School - 3 Stars

Book 3.95: Without the Game - 4 Stars

Book 4: Control - 4 Stars
Book 4.2: Wait For It - 4 Stars
Book 4.3: Caged - 5 Stars
Book 4.4: Unaccustomed as I Am... - 3 Stars
Book 4.5: Helen - 4 Stars
Book 4.6: Shopping, No Fucking - 4 Stars
Book 4.7: Losing It - 4 Stars
Book 4.8: Coming from America
Book 5: Quis Custodiet - 3.5 Stars
Book 5.2: Gratuitous Kink - 4 Stars
Book 5.3: Then and Now - 4 Stars
Book 5.4: Friends in the Right Places - 2 Stars
Book 5.5: Smoke & Cameras - 4 Stars
Book 5.6: Sunday - 3 Stars
Book 6: First Against the Wall - 4 Stars
Book 7: For Certain Values
Book 7.1: Family Values
Book 7.2: Boy's Toys - 3 Stars
Book 7.3: Make it a Surprise
Book 7.4: Prodigal
Book 8: Blood & Circuses
Book 9: Corpora Delicti
Gratuitous Epilogue

Lena♥Ribka says

4, 5 stars!

Almost perfect.

Keyword: **TORETH!**

Toreth jealous....FUN!

Toreth is working in Athen!... FUN!

Being in **Toreth**'s head!.. FUN!

Toreth in panic!.. FUN!

Toreth shows weakness!.. FUN!

Toreth and Warrick.. as always together FUN!

T-O-R-E-T-H FUN PURE!

Susan says

1 star – A Carnac sighting!

1 star – Paul (but let's get real...Paul is worth 5 stars on his own) How FANTASTIC is HE?

1 star – jealous Toreth...love me some jealous Toreth

1 star – patient Warrick; I love him more and more the more and more he puts up with Toreth

1 star – I found out that Sara is Asian! How did I miss that before?! My peeps!

1 star – Paul...oh, wait...I gave him one already right? He's hysterical!

1 star – brilliant writing

Oh dear, I've given out too many stars!

Toreth – as I mentioned, I do love jealous Toreth. But he scares me when he talks about killing Warrick if he catches him cheating. I have a love/hate relationship with this man.

Warrick – true, he should have given Toreth a harder time about having him investigated & followed. But, I love how Warrick knows how to handle Toreth. He loves him. He deals with him. He owns him. I want him.

One of my favs in the series. Even though, again, I would have loved more Warrick, he was perfectly placed in the parts he was in AND he was never far...always in Toreth's thoughts.

Aleksandr Voinov says

Manna Francis does it again - she's a captivating writer with great insight into her characters and spellbinding writing. Great stuff, very much recommended.

Irina says

Sigh

What can I say. It made me sad. I keep hoping for a change of character, but really, leopards don't change their spots, do they.

At least there were a few promising albeit subtle moments that made all the sufferings almost worth it.

“Who needed words anyway, when they had this?”

It would've been nice to hear it anyway :)

3.8 stars

BR marathon with Sofia - thank you!

Katerina says

This series gets better with every part.

Book 5 is my favorite so far.

Toreth bursting with jealousy and leaves Warrick monitored by a private detective. All this comes to day light and Toreth will sink into the ground with shame (ha, ha).

From Carnac is heard only in passing.

Too bad. I would so like to have a proper jealousy experienced (hands rub). I mean, Toreth and Carnac face to face. And it was so good to read about Warrick's POV of Carnac visit.

And then the thing with the drowning (goose bumps) ...

If Warrick hadn't been fucking Carnac before, he had every incentive now that the bastard had saved SimTech.

He'd kill Carnac before he'd let him take Warrick. He'd kill Warrick. Rage spiraled up, frightening in its intensity. Dead—he'd see both of them dead before he'd even think of them together.

Ilhem says

It feels kinda indecent to be so fascinated by them.

Shelley says

I guess it was okay. Paul was a nice colourful distraction, up until ...well yeah, not hard to guess what comes next huh?

Toreth is just such hard work and Warrick, well...

I just don't know what to do with you.

I'm getting tired of their drama now...

Sofia says

[seeing Toreth run around like a rat in a maze with his jealousy made me sad (hide spoiler)]

Jenni says

My review is for the book *Quis Custodiet*, which included Quis Custodiet, Ipsos Custodes, Gratuitous Kink, Then and Now, Friends in the Right Places, Smoke and Cameras, Sunday Game, and Paws for Thought.

Proceed with caution, mild spoilers ahead.

As much as I love the Administration series, this book was, for the most part, a complete miss for me.

While I thoroughly enjoy seeing both Toreth and Warrick in their working element, I more thoroughly enjoy seeing them **together**. Working on...each other.

Let's break things down, shall we?

In **Quis Custodiet**, Toreth travels to Greece for *sigh* another long, drawn out investigation, zzzzz. He has Warrick trailed because an old nemesis returns to town, *jealous looooover* (...okay, that part was fun).

Ipsos Custodes sees Warrick working, *blah, blah, blah*. Toreth gets busted with the trailing, *BOOM*.

Gratuitous Kink was delicious good fun, with Toreth on his best/worst behavior and Warrick outsmarting us all because--> *wise to the naughty all along and accepting Toreth for being Toreth, thank-you-very-much.*

Then and Now, background on Toreth, informative, but zzzzz.

Friends in the Right Places, what was the point of this story? I'm still not sure, except maybe Toreth is Alpha Male Interrogator(TM), *hear him roar?* Actually, I suppose this little story might be set-up for something later down the road...

Smoke and Cameras, fairly exciting. Insight into the (now very strong) bond between our boys. And, **BONUS!**, Dilly is going back to Mars?!? YAHOO! (My thoughts on that are that she finally realized after Toreth saved her brother's life that Toreth really does truly, deeply care for Warrick. Yes?)

Sunday Game, sex, sex, sex. *Too short.*

Paws for Thought...just...*weird*. And somewhat pointless in my opinion.

Well. Here's hoping things pick up in *First Against the Wall*, pretty please with sugar and Toreth on top.
