



Le Frere de Sang

Eric Giacometti , Jacques Ravenne

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Paris, 1355. Un homme est brûlé vif en place publique. Nicolas Flamel assiste à l'exécution : l'horreur ne fait que commencer car celui qui deviendra un célèbre alchimiste est sur le point de plonger dans les terribles révélations d'un livre interdit. Paris, 2007. Le commissaire franc-maçon Antoine Marcas découvre deux crimes rituels commis par l'un des siens, baptisé le " Frère de Sang ". Un indice le met rapidement sur la piste d'un secret séculaire, entourant le mystère de l'or pur. De Paris à New York, une course contre la montre s'engage alors entre le serial killer et le policier, autour de deux lieux hautement symboliques, la statue de la Liberté et la tour Eiffel...

Le Frere de Sang Details

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From Reader Review Le Frere de Sang for online ebook

Connie Huddleston says

Good story well written

I was hesitant but decided to take a chance on a translated book. I found one error! Plus the book was interesting and full of action.

Sara says

Another great read from Le French Book. Anne Trager, publisher and translator, has taken it upon herself to provide wonderful French mysteries and thrillers to English speakers. She personally has translated this book and it reads smoothly and effortlessly.

This is the second book in a thriller series. Shadows Ritual was the first book starring Antoine Marcus. This book involves more than one murder, Freemasons in France and in the US and the obsession for gold. The two authors know their freemason history and for readers like me who don't know much except the names of famous freemasons alive and dead, this was an interesting educational read as well as a "can't put it down" thriller.

The chapters jump back and forth between the killer who is only known as the killer, M. Marcus whose friend was the second person to die and a mysterious group who seem to be regulating the price of gold. It's never clear until the end whether the group's motive is greed or otherwise.

Marcus feels obligated to get to the bottom of the murders. And as the facts emerge so do fascinating and, I have to believe, made-up symbols leading to sacred spots that only the Freemasons know. Lafayette's sword plays a part in the symbolism and direction and misdirection.

This book is fun. I applaud Ms. Trager for bringing me such fascinating french books. For although I live in Paris, my french has never been good enough to enjoy reads like this one.

pdarnold says

I received this eBook via Netgalley for review.

An interesting take with the Free Masons as subject matter. I normally don't mind when a story skips back and forth between two different time periods, but here it felt more jolting. The two stories don't cohere until nearly the end. This one was OK, although I probably won't seek out other books in the series. I didn't dislike the story, but I didn't care much about most of the present day characters, the characters from 1355 were more fascinating. The tale is dark and gruesome at times, there is reference to rape but without any details, along with other brief sexual content. International intrigue, secret corporate gold monitoring, past and present colliding, self righteousness, greed, alchemy and Free Masonry.

Marlene says

Originally published at Reading Reality

Just like the first book in this series, Shadow Ritual, Shadow Ritual, The Lafayette Sword reads very much like a thinking person's DaVinci Code. Only better, because the story in the end is much more firmly grounded in reality and makes much more sense, while still taking the reader on a thrill-a-minute ride.

In this book, we actually begin with three stories. In the 21st century, our hero, Paris Police Detective Antoine Marcas attends a regular meeting of his Freemason Lodge, only to discover not one, but two dead bodies inside the sanctuary. One is an initiate, and one is an old and dear friend. His chase of the killer nearly ends in his own death, but the killer, spares his life at the last moment for reasons unknown to Marcas. He's heard his assailant's voice, but the face was masked.

Also in the 21st century, we read the emails of a mysterious cartel code-named Aurora. Aurora's purpose is to manipulate the price of gold, for the benefit of its members, of course. Aurora buys up the gold uncovered in Shadow Ritual, but it isn't necessary to have read that book to enjoy Sword.

But if you love thrillers, these are marvelous.

There is also a plot thread in the 14th century. We follow Nicolas Flamel as he is forced to record the confession under extreme torture of a young woman. She accompanied Isaac Benserade to Paris, and her late master was burned to death by the Crown for plotting against the king. In truth, it was all a plot to find Isaac's book of alchemical formulas. The Crown is broke, and desperately needs a miracle. Turning base metals into gold would certainly qualify as that miracle.

For those wondering why the name Nicolas Flamel sounds familiar, Flamel was a real historical figure, but he is better known to 21st century readers as the creator of the "Philosopher's Stone" or "Sorcerer's Stone" that was sought by Voldemort in the first Harry Potter book.

Back to The Lafayette Sword, and, the search for it.

As the story progresses, at first the reader is left wondering why these three threads are bound together in this book. They do not seem connected. All very interesting, but not necessarily converging.

But as Antoine chases the killer, and the secret that the man is searching for, these disparate trails come together. And when they do, the action, and the danger, heat up to boiling point. Or to the temperature of gold fever.

Escape Rating B+: For the first half of the book, the reader is wondering how and why the various disparate plot threads are finally going to come together. At the halfway point, they start to braid together in a way that will keep the reader turning pages furiously until the end.

For those who enjoy complex riddle stories like The DaVinci Code and National Treasure, there is plenty of meat to chew on. The quest for the killer and what is driving him delve deeply into Masonic history, and also into the history of both the American and the French Revolutions.

But like so many good thrillers, we also get a fight to the death both at the base of the Statue of Liberty and

among the metal lattice of the Eiffel Tower. Both tourist destinations are linked by a surprising secret.

In the end, however, the mystery comes down to very human motives, and very human reason. Or unreason. One man has gone off the rails, pursuing a secret that for once, really does exist – but can't be revealed.

We see the chase through the eyes of Antoine Marcas. He is both Freemason and cop, and in this case must parse his divided loyalties in order to reach justice without revealing secrets he is sworn to keep. And we see his internal conflict, not just about the almost opposing calls on his loyalty, but also his doubts and fears. And his abiding concern that his devotion to his duty has taken him away from his son. Marcas is both a dogged investigator, and a deeply troubled man.

And that makes him fascinating to watch. I am looking forward to hopefully next year, or whenever the next of his adventures will be translated into English.

Lara says

I wasn't certain about this book at first. I received a review copy from the publisher through NetGalley and it sounded interesting. The chapters are very short and alternate between present day and 14th century Paris before adding additional locations. Perhaps due to the short chapters, I found the book read quickly. There were some scenes that worried me, particularly in the past, but they didn't devolve into graphic unpleasantness, thank goodness. And it eventually turned into a modern day treasure hunt.

This is not the first book in the original French series, but I didn't have any trouble getting a feel for the setting or the main protagonist, a French police officer who is also a Freemason. Freemasonry plays a central role in this book, as does alchemy, and a few historical people. Much of the book is about figuring out and following clues as the hero investigates in Paris and in New York City. There is another plot following a cabal of gold investors and the American security expert who works for them. It took me a while before I figured out the connection as the initial scenes are not necessarily related to the main mystery.

The book shows roots in the Indiana Jones movies as well as Dan Brown books. While the initial mystery seems to be one of a mentally unstable murderer on some unexplained killing spree, by the end there are secrets from the past and dramatic action scenes. It developed that larger than life feel of these types of stories as they are told on film. Overall, it was a lot of fun, though there was a high death toll.

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

I read the previous book, Shadow Ritual last year and I was thrilled to get the chance to read the sequel to it. If I understand the translation order is this book 4 and the previous book translated is book 2. But, it doesn't matter, this book was easy to get into and you don't have to have read Shadow Ritual before you read The Lafayette Sword.

So how was this book? I do admit that I was a bit less charmed by this book than the previous. It's still an interesting and fast-paced book and the mystery with the Lafayette sword was fascinating. And the historical angle with Nicolas Flamel's POV which gives the reader the clues to the present story was fascinating. However, I found that the story lacked the intensity from the previous book and I missed Jade that Antoine

Marcas was teamed up with. I liked their chemistry and just having Marcas, well it felt like something important was missing. However, I did find the alchemy angle fascinating and Flamel POV really intrigued me.

The Lafayette Sword may not have intrigued me as much as the Shadow Ritual did. However, I think that this series is definitely something you should read if you like adventurous treasure seeking books with a deranged killer.

I want to thank Partners In Crime Virtual Book Tours for providing me with a free copy for an honest review!

Joan says

This is probably the most interesting mystery I've read in ages. It is a gold mine of information on Freemasonry and alchemy. All of the information is woven carefully into the plot so that it reads very well.

The novel originates in France where much of the action happens. Two murders occur at a Freemason meeting. One of the brothers, Marcus, is a policeman. He happened to discover both bodies and feels responsible to bring the killer to justice.

It becomes apparent (to readers) that gold is an essential aspect of the plot. That brings in alchemy. The novel's narrative includes following a story about alchemy from the 1300s. The novel alternates between the present and the past and we eventually see a connection that spans the centuries.

Marcus follows the trail of secret symbols that will lead him to the murderer. He encounters danger on the way as he uncovers cryptic sayings, ancient conspiracies, and desperate people.

I thoroughly enjoyed this novel. It is well crafted. The structure of the novel, interweaving the contemporary story with the one from medieval times, really worked well. The stories were written in a way that kept my interest in both of them, even before I knew of their connection.

What I liked best about the novel was all the information it contained about Freemasonry. The facts were included in dialog in such a way that the narrative entertained as well as informed. And the translation from the French is wonderful.

I highly recommend this book to those who enjoy novels about conspiracies and secret societies, all wrapped up in a thrilling plot. Note: there is a torture scene in the medieval story that is a bit gruesome but realistic, I am sure.

I received a complimentary e-galley of this book through Partners in Crime Virtual Book Tours. My comments are an independent and honest review.

Rosemary Standeven says

I received this copy from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

This is a book along the lines of a Dan Brown novel – but MUCH better written and realised. The book was going along quite nicely with two threads – both set in Paris but over 700 years apart – a couple of murders, a bit of medieval torture in the name of God, when suddenly a third global conspiracy thread erupted, with a secret cabal trying to corner the world market in gold. That somehow linked into the study of alchemy, international hitmen, American and Free Mason mythology with a bit of Harry Potter thrown in for good measure. It all got really weird and so much fun! If you like your thriller to be based on believable facts, then leave this well alone. But if you like a rollicking, fast paced, leap around famous American and Parisian landmarks, centuries of mystery and protagonists in mortal danger, then this is for you. I promise you that after reading this book, you will never look at the Eifel Tower in the same way again.

A wonderful book that doesn't let reality get in the way of a great story.

Mark Jones says

This is a great read for folks who enjoy history, symbology associated with secret societies and a good who done it. This is the second book in the Antoine Marcas series. I have had the pleasure of reading both books this year. I would highly recommend them to you. I am avoiding any spoilers because I don't need to relate the story to recommend this book to most readers. The elements of interest are diverse enough to capture the interest of most readers.

Cherei says

Antoine Marcas uncovers a conspiracy about alchemy gold after the murder of an initiate and an old friend during an initiation ceremony at the Freemason temple. He finds himself on a journey that takes him beyond the USA as he chases a madman who seeks to cleanse the Freemasons of members who are only "in the club" for personal gain.

I learned quite a bit about Freemasons. The author knows his stuff! I really enjoyed how the story goes back and forth from modern day to 1355 and the tale of a scribe who must write down a "confession" during torture sessions with a young woman who holds the "truth" of how to make the elusive alchemy gold. The story is steeped in history and lore. I had never heard of the 'Book of Adam' and it now has me wanting to find that book for myself! Not for the recipe.. but, for the history! The characters are well developed and truly come to life. On par with the Davinci Code. I can recommend that most readers will be fascinated with the conspiracy that could be true! And, if it isn't true.. it should be true!

Jennifer (JC-S) says

‘When would everyone just drop the Masonic conspiracy thing?’

Antoine Marcas is both a Freemason, and a detective. Which is just as well because, when serving as the grand expert for an initiation ceremony, he enters the chamber of reflection to find the initiate dead in a pool of blood. The murderer, he quickly finds, is another Freemason.

The story jumps backwards in time to 1355, where Nicolas Flamel a scribe, is closing his shop. An execution

is about to take place, and riots are feared. A Jewish person is about to be burned at the stake. Nicolas is dragged unwillingly to the scene of the execution. Nicolas's new neighbour, Jehan Arthur, is a torturer and he involves Nicolas Flamel in taking a record:

'I simply need a man who knows how to write what is being said and to forget what he has heard. Are you that man, Master Flamel?'

In the present, another Freemason is murdered, a priceless sword is stolen. There's a clue pointing to a mystery, a hint about pure gold. And given the importance of gold and its role in the world economy, any likelihood of pure gold need to be explored. The clues point to the Statue of Liberty, and the Eiffel Tower. But what does it mean?

The novel shifts between 1355 and the present in short, sharp chapters that kept me reading to find out what would happen next. What's the truth about the pure gold, and where do the events of 1355 fit in?

I enjoyed this novel: great escapist fiction, a conspiracy theory with a twist. One part, though, jerked me out of the story: did women really wear panties in 1355? I admit to being somewhat distracted by this, but it is of no great significance to the story.

Note: My thanks to NetGalley and Le French Book for providing me with a free electronic copy of this book for review purposes.

Jennifer Cameron-Smith

John says

Review to come.

Marilyn Buehler says

Thoroughly enjoyed this book. The plot was interesting and entertaining. Characters wer different but real.

Andrew says

4.5 Stars

This book revolves around the Freemasons and the desire for alchemists to make gold from metal. It starts off with two strands to the story, the murder of two Freemasons (one an initiate) in modern day France; the second strand takes place in 1355 with the execution of a man by fire observed by one Nicholas Flamel. In the book a French policeman and Freemason seeks to hunt down the killer and to do this he must discover the reason for the murder, this takes him across Paris and eventually onto New York.

The book is fast paced, with short chapters in the main, until the end, alternating between the modern day

story in France and the back story which took place in the mid 14th Century and centres around the well known alchemist Nicholas Flamel. Good links within it are made between alchemy and the American Revolution, as well as taking the reader to the two biggest monuments in France and New York. The book held my interest throughout, and I certainly learnt a lot more about Gold! As the book marched towards its culmination the tension was ratcheted up and I felt I couldn't put the book down as I had to find out how the story ended. I thoroughly recommend this book and look forward to reading the first book in the series and hope more books in this series are translated into English. Despite being the second book in the series, it reads very well as a standalone and I didn't feel I'd lost anything by not having read the first one.

Christopher says

Great

A true heart-pounding page turner.

The blend of historical figures and events with that of Freemasonry makes a diverse background and provides a well of ideas to draw from. An excellently woven and well thought out plot.
