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The Dark Days Pact: The Lady Helen Trilogy, Book 2



Synopsis

Sequel to New York Times bestselling author Alison Goodman's acclaimed *The Dark Days Club* - a smashing combination of *Buffy* and *Jane Austen*! Summer, 1812. After the scandalous events at her presentation ball in London, Lady Helen has taken refuge at the fashionable seaside resort of Brighton, banished from her family and training as a Reclaimer with the covert Dark Days Club. She must learn to fight the dangerous energy-wielding Deceivers and prepare to face their master, the elusive Grand Deceiver. As she struggles to put aside her genteel upbringing, Helen realizes that her mentor, Lord Carlston, is fighting his own inner battle. Has the foul Deceiver energy poisoned his soul, or is something else driving him towards violent bouts of madness? Either way, Helen is desperate to help the man with whom she shares a deep but forbidden connection. When Mr. Pike, the hard bureaucratic heart of the Dark Days Club, arrives in Brighton, he has a secret mission for Helen: find the journal left by a mad rogue Reclaimer, before it falls into the hands of the Deceivers. Coerced by Pike, Helen has no choice but to do as ordered, knowing that the search for the journal may bring about Lord Carlston's annihilation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I just finished listening to *The Dark Days Pact*. This YA novel was written by Alison Goodman, and it is the sequel to *The Dark Days Club*. For those of you who might be unfamiliar with the series, imagine Regency England- but with demonic creatures who have taken on the guise of everyday citizens and living amongst the general populace. The Dark Days Club is tasked with maintaining

order, and eliminating the “Deceivers” who threaten the social order. Right before her Presentation at Court, Lady Helen Wrexhall discovers that her late parents were members of the Dark Days Club, and that she has her own connection to the Club. The Dark Days Pact picks up several weeks after the events in the first book. Lady Helen is spending the summer in Brighton, residing with her new friends in the Dark Days Club. She plans to spend her days learning more about the Club and preparing for some additional initiation rituals. Unfortunately, the enigmatic Lord Carlston appears disjointed and more mercurial than usual. Lord Selburn shows up in Brighton, still determined to rescue Lady Helen from what he perceives to be an ignominious situation. And then there’s the mysterious journal that Lady Helen has been tasked with recovering. This was a wonderful follow-up to the first book. The story is expanded, secrets are revealed, and questions are answered. Lady Helen must delve into the seedy underworld that she never could have imagined existing before leaving the sheltered world of Proper Society. Goodman’s use of period details adds layers to the narrative, enhancing the reading/listening experience. Also, love triangles are a fairly common staple in YA fiction, but it works well here. There are some interesting plot elements that complicate matters, and it will be interesting to see what happens in the next book. Ultimately, Lady Helen prioritizes herself and doesn’t rely on either Lord Carlston or Lord Selburn any more than necessary. I would absolutely recommend The Dark Days Pact. Readers should start with The Dark Days Club; the backstory is an invaluable resource for understanding the backstory. This book is full of action and intrigue, and I am certainly looking forward to finding out what the future holds for Lady Helen and her friends.

The problem with being a talented author who drops an epic first installment of a new series, is that you become the tough act you yourself have to follow. Allison Goodman’s The Dark Days Club was a little piece of perfection, a whip-smart supernatural story grafted onto the whalebones of the most proper Regency romance. The sequel, The Dark Days Pact, is to the original what Pinny is to Prince Charming. Pact picks up a few weeks after the dramatic close of the first novel, with Lady Helen having been cast out of her uncle’s home due to the scandal of her presentation ball and taken up residence in Brighton with the Hammond siblings. Nominally she’s there to hone her Reclaimer gifts and train to fight the supernatural threat presented by the Deceivers (just go with it), but mostly she’s just trapped inside a house learning how to dress like a boy and mooning after Lord Carlston, who’s becoming increasingly erratic and moody. Soon Helen finds herself tasked with tracking down a magical journal stuffed with dangerous secrets, and...oh, who the hell cares? Did I mention Carlston is increasingly erratic and moody? Because that seems to be all the author wants

to focus on, instead of the actual plot. Many of the problems I have with Pact mirror issues I had with Goodman's Eona, namely that everything hinges on all of the characters telling each other absolutely nothing - except for Helen telling people she's a Reclaimer, which by the end I was expecting her to take out an advert in The Times about as it would be the only possible way she could bring more people in on the secret. Goodman also doesn't seem to know what to do with her male lead, let alone his burgeoning romance with Helen, and her response is pure fanfic - an awkward, ill-explained magical madness - when her characters would have been better served by just exploring the real-life obstacles to their union (say, the fact they don't really know each other that well, or that he's still married, or that Helen's been disgraced socially, or...anything, really). And then there's the whole dress-like-a-boy thing, a romance novel trope from way back that I was so thrilled they dodged in the first book as it allowed an exploration of the difficulties a woman of that era would have in fighting evil while under chaperonage. I'll admit that Goodman handles the challenges and difficulties of passing oneself off as a man well, but it still irks me. Alison Goodman is a strong writer, and The Dark Days Club remains one of my all-time-favorite teen novels, which is probably why I'm so disappointed in the sequel. But I still have faith in Goodman to finish the series strong, so - no matter my issues with the second installment - you won't see me breaking from this Pact any time soon.

I have to first say I'm a little mad I read this book. I read the first one in August and it felt like torture waiting for the second to be released - now I'm afraid I have to wait from 9 months to a year for the next and I just don't think I can handle that!!! lol but seriously it will be hard. As with the first book the beginning is a little slow - filled with beautiful writing and lots of details but a little slow and then somewhere around chapter 8 I was completely hooked all over again. The book was exciting, frustrating, a little heart breaking at moments but overall just so good. Lady Helen is strong and balanced and although she got herself a little in over her head I like how independent she is... Lord Carlston is swoon worthy to say the least. Him! I have always loved anything from the Regency era ESP all things Jane Austen but I love that this is Jane Austen with a bad ass twist and a little more "tension" - seriously a great series. I highly recommend it!!!!

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